

MAN O' MEN

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BY

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*To Mother and her
Three lovely daughters.*

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CHAPTER I

The low, soft, melodious notes of the violin gradually ceased. The dancers applauded and then gathered here and there in small groups upon the ball-room floor. The candles had burned low and the flame from the sperm oil lamps sputtered and flickered from lack of nourishment. From the hearth there was an opalescent glow from the dying embers which cast fanciful shadows upon the low ceiling. This, the last social event of the season, was slowly drawing to a close.

It was the year 1770. Place, the village of Tarrytown on the Hudson, a day's ride from the city of New York. Squire Warner, a pioneer of that Colonial town, was entertaining. 'Twas the month of April when the death-like brown of Winter's touch was just changing to life and green of Spring. The hour was nigh unto midnight.

The violinist, a tall, spare man, arose, stretched, flourished his bow above his head, and in his harsh nasal voice, announced an intermission, to be followed by the last dance of the evening. Thereupon, he sipped of the punch and taking a goodly chew of tobacco, settled comfortably in his chair.

On hearing this announcement, a young couple drew apart from the others and silently sought a vacant corner. When they were quite alone the girl, quickly grasping her escort's arm and looking appealingly at his handsome face, said softly:

"On the morrow, David, you say, you are leaving? I

am so glad to learn you have succeeded in getting such an opportunity, but—but, I do not believe you realize just what this will—”

“Yes, Miriam,” interjected the man, “I fully realize all it will mean. I dislike to go, yet I cannot feel but it is necessary. There is no other way. England will mean so much more to me. There are so many more advantages. So many opportunities for a professional man, and especially for one who has chosen the vocation of a physician. I will be able to obtain far more practical experience and, furthermore, a greater chance to procure advance study than the Colonies have to offer. I can ill afford to miss this opportunity. One I have looked forward to, for so long.”

“Oh, I know you are right, but David, you do know I shall miss you, don't you, O, so badly? I dislike to think of it, 'tis so long. Five years? Will you be away that long—honestly?”

“Yes, my little lady, at least five years, and there is a possibility it may be longer. That will, of course, depend a great deal upon myself.”

“You mean?”

“Upon my ability and self-denial.”

“Of these neither do I question. I know you too well, David. I am so delighted. I love to think of all that you are trying to do—really, I am glad, but I am also sorry—sorry because it so happens that you have to leave at this time.”

“Sorry—at this time—why? I fail to understand,” said David, with a look of perplexity and surprise.

“Well,” she said, wistfully fingering at the lace upon his vest, “what has happened recently and all that you have told me heretofore has caused me to think much of late. 'Tis your attitude toward the Loyalists, your indifference toward the King, that I fail to understand. I know that you have tried to be frank with me, and I appreciate that you are sincere, but just why you should

differ so greatly in your views as to those of Carl and others, I must admit, I fail to comprehend. Carl recently told me that your associates and your activity in this regard would cause trouble for both you and Howard."

"Miriam, I dislike very much to discuss this subject. 'Tis not the time or place. My associates are friends, and my friends are Patriots. I care not one jot or tittle for Hutchinson. His own selfish interests would supersede his honest convictions. His conscience is mute. He will induce you to believe that he upholds the acts of his King because of loyalty and family pride. Mark my words, Carl has another purpose—an ambition he would realize, a mission he would fulfil, that he now disguises clothed in the reputation of a Loyalist. Miriam, listen; must I, must others, ever bow to the burdensome mandates of our King because our ancestors happened to be English-born? Must we, who have borne these injustices e'er so long, without active complaint, now become a footstool for His Majesty?"

"But, David, you—"

"Hush," whispered David, as at that moment a young man, tall of figure, broad of shoulder, erect, with keen brown eyes set rather closely together in his handsome face, approached the speakers. David turned and faced about as Carl Hutchinson came near and addressed Miriam.

"I believe, Miss Ward, that I have the honor of this dance," he said, bowing low, and then smiling at David, continued: "I trust that I am not intruding, Mr. Otis, but inasmuch as this is the last dance of the evening, 'tis my right and my dutiful pleasure to interrupt," at the time offering his arm to Miriam, as the music began.

"Quite right, Mr. Hutchinson, I assure you. Occasions like this demand untimely interruptions of this nature," replied David, bowing low to Miriam, and then

continuing: "I trust that you will enjoy your dance as much as I have mine."

David Otis, twenty-four, tall, with steel-blue eyes and a handsome but determined face, his appearance embellished and most striking with his powdered hair, plush coat, knee breeches and black silk stockings, silently watched Carl and Miriam as they joined the dancers, with a puzzled frown upon his face. Turning, he quickly made his way to a group of boys chatting near the entrance.

"Howard," he called, "I would have a word with you."

Howard Otis, not as yet seventeen, slender, alert, quick of eye, fiery and passionate, drew apart from his associates and joined his brother.

"Boy," said David, "the hour is growing late. It is high time that we were on our way. The morning bids that we must get an early start for we have many a mile before us. We will await this dance as I desire to bid Miriam my adieu. Methinks I have learned much this evening and I loathe to think of leaving you at this time. However, I feel that you will take good care of thyself. I wish, Howard, during my absence, that you will see much, and mind you say but little."

"Now, Dave, don't you start at this late hour to worry about me. I promise you I will take good care of myself and, also, that I will keep in touch with you. I am old enough and know enough to always do my part. I'm not afraid of any man. You say that you have learned much this night? I, too, have news for you. Listen, Carl's uncle, old Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of Boston, has bid Miriam to his next ball. Did an Otis get a bid? Did Hancock or Adams get a bid?"

"I understand, Howard, I know of that you speak. I have already learned. Little do I care. You know as well as I, why an Otis was cut and a Ward invited. 'Tis Carl's doings. He would be in a position to arrange such

an affair. 'Twould not be Miriam's will. I wager she knows nothing about it. I must and do believe in her. Do you not think, Howard, 'tis her environment and not the heart that would sway her sympathies with the Loyalists?"

"That may be true, but I cannot say your leaving will improve her environment. What think you, Dave?"

"Of that I cannot be the judge," replied David. "I realize that Carl will grasp this opportunity to gain her affection and I also predict he will resort to every ruse to prejudice her against our cause."

"You forget thyself, David, the name of Otis will also suffer."

"Methinks you are right, but Miriam has made me a promise. I have her word that she will wait until I have fully completed my studies. Until such time I do not believe I have just cause to—"

"Ah, look!" interposed Howard, "there she comes, and on the arm of that snob, Hutchinson."

"Tut, tut, not so loud," whispered David, "thy words might create a scene."

"And little would I care," snapped Howard.

"Hold thy peace," reprimanded David.

"I have just learned you are leaving for our Mother country on the morrow," said Carl, with an exaggerating show of urbanity, as Miriam and he approached, "to continue your learning. It affords me great pleasure to learn that you have such an opportunity. I trust this is your sole purpose and that you have nothing in common with such bigots and blackguards as Adams and Hancock."

Hardly had Hutchinson finished before Howard uttered an angry exclamation, and turning in a flash faced Carl with both hands clinched. Hutchinson, hearing Howard's retort, snickered, and with a haughty smile, turned to meet the boy's indignant gaze. Howard advanced and Carl made ready to meet him. Premonition

made David act quickly. He stepped forward and caught Howard's arm and in his cool suave manner smothered his brother's retaliation.

"You cur!" cried Howard, struggling to free himself, "I'll make—"

"That remark, Mr. Hutchinson," interjected David, with suppressed dignity, looking Carl fearlessly in the eye, "was entirely uncalled for and a low, dirty, mean insinuation without demonstrable foundation. Far below the dignity and bearing of a gentleman, sir, and furthermore, it was degrading and blasphemous to those two American Patriots who are not present to answer for themselves, and methinks, well for thy good, they are not."

"American Patriots! Pooh, ha, ha," laughed Carl, "I would that they were here. 'Twould have been the same. I have nothing to retract. Their ears may harken to my words at any time or place. 'Tis well for them they herd together, black sheep that they are. Wait and see where my uncle will place them on his calling list. I take pleasure in informing you that their traitorous activities are about to end."

"I have little doubt but that their names appear upon thy worthy uncle's list, but your illustrious Governor will undoubtedly postpone his contemplated call. I have reliable information that his name appears first upon their calling list and that he will receive a call he will not appreciate," replied David, defiantly.

"That remark could be interpreted as treason, sir," sneered Carl. 'Tis well you are leaving. You will have time to reflect after losing the associations of your traitorous friends."

"You are at liberty to give it such interpretation as you may desire,—treason, if you wish. 'Tis thy company I decry, not theirs," calmly replied David, with his eye upon Howard.

Miriam at this instant stepped between them and

taking each by the arm, smilingly inquired of David:

"Howard,—where is he going to stay, and what will he do?"

David turned from Hutchinson, and looking down into the troubled eyes of Miriam and that white expectant face, he grasped the small hand pulling at his sleeve, and tenderly said:

"Howard, my little lady, will stay in Boston during my absence. I have arranged an apprenticeship for him with an old friend of our family. He is pleased to go, and I have no fear for him."

CHAPTER II

South of the picturesque village of Tarrytown and extending for miles to the Sound, bounded on the West by the swift majestic Hudson, the country was divided into many large estates. The great majority of these large holdings were appropriately ornamented by beautiful homes. In fact, the surrounding country all about gave every evidence of prolific management and prosperity.

It was in this locality that Josiah Ward had lived and prospered, only to succumb to the frailties of man as he neared his sixtieth year. It was here that Miriam Ward, the only child, now twenty-two—with blue eyes, and light hair, slender, vivacious, graceful and pretty—had spent her childhood under the strict, yet generous, faultless teaching and guiding care of her aunt, her mother having passed away years before Miriam had attained her majority.

Near the Ward homestead, and extending for miles to the South, John Hutchinson had by thrift, shrewd dealing and frugal habits, acquired and maintained his magnificent estate. Later, in the war with France, this proud Loyalist gave his life with Wolfe at Quebec, for the Crown. He left one heir, a proud, arrogant, indolent son, Carl Hutchinson.

Here, too, a neighbor of Ward and Hutchinson had lived, Andrew Otis. A staunch American. Fiery and firm. Not so well-to-do as Ward and Hutchinson, but the proud father of two handsome boys, David and Howard. To his sons, Andrew Otis denied nothing within his means. He tried to teach and instill in them the true meaning of the existence of man. Taught them to ever exemplify that virtue and to keep the name of Otis beyond reproach. Well had he succeeded, fulfilling

the last promise he had made to his devoted wife, as she closed her eyes for the last time, at the birth of Howard.

It was Andrew Otis who first encouraged and finally persuaded the folk to build and maintain a place for holy worship. It was Otis who insisted upon a plan of education, and who, after many rebuffs, succeeded in getting Ward to donate the bit of land upon which they erected the first school, a little upright frame building of one story, plain but comfortable. Here their children, Miriam, David, and Carl, learned the first rudiments of a common education.

It was here that Miriam witnessed the first altercation between David and Carl, which arose over a dispute between them as to whose turn it was to accompany her the short distance to her home. It was at this time Miriam intercepted Carl's blow as he pinioned David beneath him.

Is it little wonder that Miriam on this evening in April, at the home of Squire Warner, in Tarrytown, just as they were about to step the last minuet, had anticipated trouble between David and Carl, and, realizing the occasion demanded quick action, had intuitively interjected the query as to Howard's welfare?

Miriam Ward's almost daily association and companionship with both these young men, had instilled in her a fondness and a sincere belief in both. She loved the firm and determined qualities and kindly disposition of David Otis, and she also admired the suave, polite, and immaculate Carl Hutchinson. Miriam, fully convinced that she knew each and understood their respective temperaments, trusted and cherished both. She, however, knew but little of the deception and guile which dominated the spirit of Carl Hutchinson, which of late had enlarged so rapidly and disclosed itself so manifestly at every opportunity while in the presence of David.

Carl Hutchinson delighted in the activity of David in behalf of the Patriots. His taunts in this regard, he knew, were fuel for the fire. David was well aware of Carl's guile in this respect. He seemed to know Carl's very thoughts. He knew Carl was a Loyalist, at least by word and reputation, and his efforts to influence Miriam in behalf of the Crown had not been in vain. He therefore avoided Carl's company, and upon every occasion he would refrain from colloquy with Carl for fear of trouble over their differences of opinion.

After listening attentively to David's answer in reference to Howard's welfare, Carl gazed silently at Miriam and David. He apparently was satisfied with Miriam's sudden intrusion, and with a supercilious smile he turned and amicably walked away.

Howard Otis followed Carl's movements closely, a look of defiance, disgust and indignation upon his boyish face, and then turning to David with a sigh of relief, was about to speak. Noticing that his brother was otherwise engaged he, too, slowly strolled away.

David, still holding the dainty hand he had taken at the time of the altercation, silently escorted Miriam to a seat and sat down at her side.

"Miriam," he said, appealingly but with effective deliberation, "I offer my apology. I also desire to thank you for your timely interference, not that I did not fear for the outcome,—'twas not the time nor place. I trust I did nothing in your judgment that might exceed the bounds of propriety. Carl's taunting remarks cut deep. I was first in a mood to let events shape themselves. I am glad it did not reach that limit. I am very sorry it should have happened,—happened at this time. This of all evenings, my last,—with you,—for some time. I trust you do not blame me."

"I am also sorry, David, that it should have happened upon this evening. I was so happy, have been so happy the entire evening,—and now this would mar all. I can

overlook this, but I fear the final result. Carl was wrong. I do not censure you, I only wish it had not occurred. Now that it is over, let us forget and try to forgive, for the hour is getting late. 'Tis well, David, you are going away, for this affair will end, at least, for the present, and methinks time may do much to blot out what enmity may remain."

"'Tis as you desire, Miriam; I will forgive, but to forget, that is different. 'Tis our attitude which must be mutual to be forgotten. Miriam," continued David, "as a last favor, would you grant that I may accompany you home this evening?"

"David!" exclaimed Miriam, "you should not ask, you know that Carl brought me here. Had he not, I would gladly consent."

"Yes, I know," he replied, anxiously scanning her face, "but surely you will remember it may be the last time. Do you not realize it may be my last opportunity?"

"Quite true, David, but you know, as well as I, it would not be right. I also fear my consent might cause another scene—yet—you may—with Carl's approval."

"Miriam," he said deliberately, with his handsome face set, "Carl Hutchinson would be the last person of whom I would make such a request."

"Your reply I expected—I must refuse."

"Certainly, my lady, but I can be honored with your presence for at least the remainder of the evening. Though the time be short, surely you will grant me this?"

"'Tis thy almost constant presence with me this evening, methinks, bespeaks Carl's attitude. Do you not think so?"

"He would do better to use such foresight as he may be endowed, for he should know he will not encounter my presence, if an obstacle in his path, for some time to come. All I ask of you, Miriam, is that you keep your

promise,—that you will wait until I have completed my studies.”

“You have my word, David, regarding that. I will do as I say.”

“I believe you, Miriam. I leave you with faith and confidence, and now as I notice Carl approaches, I will leave you. I bid you good-night and good-bye.” David Otis brought the hand he held to his lips. Then he slowly released her, motioned for Howard, who awaited him and, with his brother at his side, stepped out into the night.

CHAPTER III

Our narrative opened during the month of April, 1770. Five years have passed since David Otis took his leave and embarked for England. The charred embers of discord and chaos have been ignited by the many burdensome levies inflicted by Parliament and the invidious precepts of His Majesty in reprisal for the famous "Tea Party." Thence closely followed the battles of Lexington and Concord.

A bell had just ceased tolling the eleventh hour. The night was still, except for the rhythmical play and splashing of the waves against the vessel's side. The sky was lined with low fleecy clouds which moved slowly from horizon to horizon. Stars, innumerable, played at hide-and-seek behind the downy floating objects. The moon, now and then piercing the clouds, revealed a sentry at his post, or walking to and fro at his watch upon the deck.

In the cabin below, several British officers were still hovering over their glasses. There was much good cheer and fellowship. One, a man of striking appearance, bedecked in a gorgeous uniform, arose and with his glass on high, proffered a toast to their commander, Sir William Howe. They drank to this toast with much laughter and great cheer.

"Ah, Clinton," said Sir William, "methinks you make far too light of this talk of rebellion. I fear we have a serious problem upon our hands. The spirit of freedom and liberty is born of beasts. We limit that only by captivity. In this uprising 'twill not apply. You forget these men are Englishmen. Our own blood and fiber. Well know we, all of us, that trait. Well know we—"

Sir William was interrupted by the opening of the

cabin door and the hurried entry of an officer, who at once saluted his superior and stood at attention.

"Captain Bradtock," demanded Sir William, "why this sudden intrusion? For what came you?"

"I would ask for a word with thee, sir. Methinks I have a bit of information which demands thy sound judgment and quick action."

"Speak, tarry not, I will listen."

"This, Sir William—I ask thy advice. Read," and he forthwith gave his General a bit of folded paper.

"Ah, a note, Captain, but pray why the secrecy. It has not as yet come to pass that you have to make known thy wants in script."

"I pray you read, Sir William," said the Captain.

The dignified General slowly turned the note over and over in his hand, as was his custom, then ordering a light brought near, he proceeded to unfold the note and began reading:

"Dear Brother:

"I dislike to say so but it is absolutely necessary that you return at once. We will need you and methinks need you badly. Undoubtedly by the time this letter reaches you, you will have learned of the fight at Lexington. I was in the thickest of the conflict, David, and I tell you the old rifle barked long and strong for liberty. You ought to have seen those regulars run. Do you know, Dave, one American can lick six of the King's red dude dummies and then do a good day's work.

"The Tories have caused us a great deal of trouble, but we have most of them cooped up in Boston and those at large are anxious to join their friends. I just learned that Carl is in Boston, but you know one can not rely much on hearsay.

"Word from home brings the news that Miriam's aunt is very low. I dislike to cause you any anxiety, but

I still believe you have the wrong impression of Miriam. I trust that you may be right.

"Carl has been as dirty towards me as ever. My only hope is that he takes a musket and fights for his King, but of course he won't—the coward.

"David, do you remember once while we were in Boston with father, of meeting a man by the name of Paul Revere? He ran the little watchmaker and engraving shop. Well, he was wonderful just before the fight at Concord and Lexington. He rode like the wind arousing everyone from their beds, and how they did pepper the British! The Red Coats finally captured him, but he had finished his ride.

"David, you must get home some way. Join the Red Coats and let the King bring you back. You know what I mean.

Howard."

"Humph—humph" grunted Sir William, as he finished. "Where did you get this?"

"From one of my command, Sir."

"How came it in the possession of your trooper?"

"He, Sir, tells me that he found it this evening."

"Found it where, if you know?"

"Below, Sir."

"The hour?"

"It has just been reported to me, I know not the time, Sir."

"Who, or what is the name of the trooper?"

"Howard, Sir, John Howard."

"Bring Howard here at once."

"Aye, Sir," said Bradtock, about to retire.

"Tarry, one moment," commanded Howe. "What think you, Clinton—this demands immediate action?"

"I would so advise, Sir William," said Clinton, "and perchance some strategy."

"Quite correct," replied Howe. "Order Howard here at once."

"Aye, Sir."

Sir William was impatiently drumming the table with his fingers upon the return of the Captain with trooper Howard.

"This,—er, this note, Howard, where did you get it?" said Howe, exhibiting the same to the trooper.

"I found it at the side of my bunk as I was about to retire, Sir."

"Did you report this to your Captain at once?"

"I did, Sir."

"Do you know to whom it may belong?"

"That I cannot tell, Sir."

"Enough. You may return," commanded Howe.

For the next few minutes all remained silent. At last Sir William broke the stillness.

"Have you any new enlistments in your command, Captain?" he asked, his face suddenly glowing with quick inspiration.

"I have, Sir," replied Bradtock, "five, I believe."

"Methinks, Clinton, this man, David somebody, has recently enlisted in our ranks. It would further appear from this note, that he is from the Colonies and has taken steps to return. He has a brother, a rebel, is also quite apparent. This man is now within our midst. He has had a good opportunity to secure information. If he should make his escape off this ship he will undoubtedly join the rebels and furnish them with such information as he may have. The ass, methinks, might perchance at some future time blow our heads off. I have this in mind, Clinton. Bradtock," he continued, "return, order the new recruits to relieve the present guard. As soon as this change is completed, make every effort to learn the identity of this man David, by a search of the recruits' baggage and all the personal effects they may have."

"Aye, Sir."

"What think you, Clinton, have I taken the right action, or have you something to suggest."

"Much wisdom have thee displayed, General. I have naught to offer, nor could I improve thy device."

"My orders, Bradtock, and 'tis well you spare neither time or effort in apprehending this culprit."

"Aye, Sir."

"Hold, one minute," commanded Howe, "find this man and bring him before me at once. I will make an example of him, by Gad, such stupidity will not be countenanced by His Majesty. I charge that you bring him hither."

"Aye, Sir," replied Bradtock.

CHAPTER IV

Miriam had just left her aunt, who had dozed off into a peaceful and much needed sleep. "Dear, dear auntie, so sweet and so patient," thought Miriam, as she reached the door and stepped out upon the veranda.

It was an ideal day. As far as the eye could see, the ground lay carpeted in green. From the hillside upon which the home was built, she could look far, following the course of the river. The high, almost perpendicular, banks on both sides of the stream, seemed to blend at the foot with the dark green water, and then to rise and meet the sky until lost in the great canopy of blue.

"Soon," reflected Miriam, "it will be pleasant enough so that auntie may join me here and then I know she will surely regain her strength." While thus engrossed in thought, her attention was suddenly attracted by a lone horseman, approaching from the south. As they drew near, Miriam recognized both the rider and the horse, and when they stopped at the block and the man dismounted, Miriam was there to welcome him.

She threw her arms about the neck of the large white beast, rubbing her face across its velvety nose, playfully and fondly patting the arched neck of the wonderful white stallion.

"Oh, Carl!—he is such a beauty, so noble, so human—just wonderful. Look! See those ears! I know he understands every word I am saying," cried Miriam, with manifest delight, hugging the large white neck and patting it again and again.

"The very best money can buy," boastfully replied Carl, "Would you like to own him?"

"Would I like to have him,—would I" Oh, Carl, just think what it would mean to me! Would I!"

"You may have that pleasure, some day. Such an acquisition lies entirely within your control. I know my proud General will not object to you as his mistress, and well do I know his present owner is ready and willing to surrender his title, upon but one condition. I trust it is—"

"Isn't it lovely out?" exclaimed Miriam, changing the subject abruptly, without glancing at the bewildered Carl.

"Yes, indeed," he replied, "by far too nice to tarry here. Come, let us stroll over by the river, I want to talk with you and would prefer that we be quite alone."

"Oh, that would be fine were it possible, but you know, Carl, Auntie just this minute fell asleep and I would not dare to leave her. Come upon the veranda, for I, too, have much to say."

"Carl," said Miriam, after they were comfortably seated, "I have so many, many things on my mind. You will appreciate since my aunt's sickness I have had much time to think."

"Think!" said Carl, rather disgustedly, "anybody, be they deaf, dumb or blind, fool or otherwise, has to think. Are your thoughts of interest to me? You know 'tis the right kind of thoughts of the one present, which bring comfort and joy. Come, bear with me and let me share thy thoughts."

"Very well said, Carl, but should you not also be kindly, too, and welcome such thoughts as I may have for those not present?" shyly inquired Miriam, watching the expression on Carl's face.

"That depends, I would say, greatly upon one's disposition and even more so to whom you refer. But come, Miriam, tell me what you have in store, that is, your thoughts of me, inasmuch as I am present."

"Why consider our own selfish interests?" replied Miriam seriously. "I have by far more important things which are of greater moment to you and me."

"Oh, yes, I surmise what you mean,—this idle talk—"

"Yes," interjected Miriam, "this talk of a rebellion. Are not you giving it any consideration?"

"Rebellion!" Carl laughed loud and long. "My lady, King George has to strike but once. The rebels will disband. Their leaders will meet punishment, and your talked-of rebellion is at an end. Pray worry not over that situation, for I know of what I speak."

"Oh, are you right? Did that happen at Lexington? Does the activity of the Patriots amount to naught?"

"Lexington! Pooh, that was nothing but a skirmish. The rebels resorted to ambush like heathen Indians. They did not dare to meet the Regulars face to face and fight like men."

"Isn't that warfare? Isn't that the way our fathers fought? Could you expect a handful of untrained troops, poorly equipped, to stand and do battle with the seasoned, well-trained and fully equipped Regulars of the King? Surely you will give them far more credit than that. Besides, Howard Otis says that 'all is fair in war.'"

"Otis!—Oh, don't mention the name! Will you kindly refrain from speaking of either of them, at least, in my presence?" rejoined Carl, with considerable emphasis.

"Why?" asked Miriam, endeavoring to look perplexed, but knowing well his reason.

"Now, just why do you ask that?" cried Carl, angrily; "you know as well as I what happened the last time we met. Could one have a better excuse for the asking of my request?"

"David promised to forget that affair. I believe that he has. I ask that you, also, forget and that you forgive."

"Would he forgive? No indeed."

"Do you think that David would nurse hatred? Do you think he would incite trouble, that he would encour-

age war? Do you believe that he would like to see trouble between the Colonies and Great Britain?"

"I know that he would. I contend that that is just the reason he went to England. He is in league with Hancock and Adams."

"I know better."

"You mean, you think you do," replied Carl.

"Nay, I know I do. David is not of that disposition. He has always contended that these men were not fighting the English people—only the British Crown."

"Bah,—isn't two and two—four? Don't, please, don't mention his name again."

"You are loyal, Carl?"

"I am. Why do you ask?"

"If you are so sincere and loyal to your King and wish to further his interests in the Colonies, why don't you cast your lot with His Majesty? Surely your standing and your loyalty would merit a place of rank with the King's troops. Methinks they would welcome you."

"I should enjoy nothing better, Miriam, if it were not for the management of my estate. That fact alone makes it impossible. There is no one but myself capable of handling the vast and important duties connected with my holdings. I also know that I could secure a commission commendable of my position and rank, as you say, but I cannot get away at this time. However, do not think me entirely idle. There are many other ways of giving help to our cause than that of actual service in the army."

"Others with equally as large estates, and even greater than yours, have thrown their destiny with the Patriots."

"Quite true, I will admit, Miriam, but a foolhardy act, you will have to acknowledge."

"Why do you claim 'tis foolhardy?"

"Well, if the Colonies lose, they in turn will lose,—

and that will mean not only such property they may possess, but also their lives."

"If the King win, then what your lot, Sir Carl?" asked Miriam.

"If," said Carl, "and we will just eliminate that little word 'if,' it means recognition both at home and abroad, influence, wealth and eventually the Governorship of New York."

"You aspire for more than you already have?"

"Aspire for all that I can get,—including you, my lady."

"Supposing," queried Miriam, "contrary to your expectations, that the Colonies should win their independence. What then, Sir Carl?"

"Should the rebels win," and Carl laughed long and hard again; "if they should win, why, I would give a third of all I possess to help stabilize their government. 'Twould be a sad day for us who have wealth. The robbers would demand all. They win, I fall, but I'd doff my hat to Adams and his rebel crew."

"You state that with jest and vaunting, but I am sincere. Is it a promise?" asked Miriam.

"It may be so considered if you insist."

"I do."

"I promise," he replied rather seriously, "but, mind you, I doubt that I never have to fulfill it."

"'Tis time that will tell. Now that we have a wager, and have discussed the rebellion, are you willing to withdraw your limitations heretofore required?"

"Limitations! May I ask to what or whom you now refer?"

"David, and the name of Otis."

"Oh, well,—my disposition has changed since first I came, therefore with the barrier removed allow me to ask regarding his welfare. What do you hear of him?"

"Many, many things, Carl," she replied with a smothered sigh. "Poor boy, he is so anxious over this

affair. He did so hate to start for England because of the many whispering sounds of trouble. Now he will learn of the fight at Lexington. That of itself will convince him of that which eventually must come and he will drop his studies and start for home. That, I know, and when he reaches home once more, I also know he will take up arms for liberty."

"Unless he started some time ago," replied Carl laughingly, "he will have a hard time reaching home."

"What do you mean?" asked Miriam incredulously.

"I understand that transportation has been cut off between England and America."

"That may be—discontinued to everyone—but David Otis. He will find some way to reach his friends. You and I know David."

"Yes, that is so; he might come back—in chains—" replied Carl, with spurning satire, "for I still believe he went to England for other purposes than that of study."

A tinkle of a bell at this moment interrupted their conversation.

"Auntie! Carl, excuse me."

Miriam soon returned. "She wanted a drink, the dear. We were taking about David. O, yes, about his return."

"Well," said Carl, getting to his feet, "for the time, at least, let us forget David. I came to-day, Miriam, for but one and only one purpose," and he took both her hands in his, drawing her close. "Miriam, I want to ask you to marry me."

"Carl!" replied Miriam, feigning astonishment and looking somewhat perplexed, as she stepped from him. "I hardly know what to say,—only—this, I cannot give you my answer today. I like you, Carl, very much, indeed—but—I have promised,—"

"Promised! What do you mean?" he cried. "Promised—that—"

"Nay—nay—not that, not what you would infer. Don't get excited, Carl, 'tis only a promise to wait."

"To wait! Wait—wait for whom?"

"For David,—that is, wait until he finishes, so he—"

"What!" interjected Carl, savagely, "wait for that spy, that traitor! Are you—would you consider him?"

"He is not a spy! He is not a traitor! He has not taken up arms either for or against the Crown, Mr. Carl Hutchinson."

"He hasn't, you say,—listen, if I can prove to your satisfaction he has, that he is exactly what I say, then will you marry me?"

"You prove that David Otis is not true to his cause, or that of the King; that he has proven himself a traitor to the Patriots, or a spy and traitor to his King, as you charge. Prove this, Carl Hutchinson,—and—yes, I will marry you."

"Your word, Madam?"

"My word, but remember, though part in jest, I have a promise from you."

"Jest, yes, but most sincere if you so wish."

"I do."

"You have my word."

CHAPTER V

John Stearns, a tall, blue-eyed young man, from the city of Cambridge, England, had made application and had been accepted as a Regular in the British army. He had enlisted for service abroad. Within the next few hours, Sir William Howe would set sail for America under orders of the King, commanding him to proceed at once to subdue the revolting Colonies. John had experienced no difficulty in his enlistment; in fact he was gladly received. It was quite apparent at the time the King would have to resort to mercenary help, as His Majesty was having difficulty in procuring recruits for service in America. John had had some military training. He wanted to go to the Colonies, he told the examining officer. His parents were dead. He had no relatives in England and was out of employment. He was thereupon accepted without further parley.

Time dragged slowly for John Stearns at sea. The occasional guard duty and other daily routine work became a pleasure to perform. Such tasks he welcomed. Evenings he joined his fellow companions with song and good cheer. At last came the report that they were nearing their destination, and one evening as John was about to retire, word was quietly passed around that they would anchor outside Boston harbor at midnight.

The news naturally created some excitement amongst the troops. They grew jubilant. The trip had been long and tedious. Song broke out anew. Goodwill and sport became prevalent. Boots, belts and other objects of personal attire began flying about. John joined in the merriment. Missiles of every description flew thick and fast, one of which struck John fully in the face. He immediately retaliated by throwing his coat.

At that moment a hush fell upon the scene of activity as an officer suddenly appeared. At once all was quiet and orderly. The soldiers sought their bunks. John recovered his coat and stretched out upon his cot. He tried to sleep but thoughts of the morrow made this difficult. He could not place his mind at ease. The rocking and swaying of the boat, accompanied by the splashing and breaking of the waves against the ship's side, enticed sleep. This, in itself, ought to be a sufficient panacea for a restless, tired mind. To John, however, this proved insufficient. He was powerless. Had he lost complete control of his faculties? Tomorrow would be the 25th day of May. He had made no plans in advance, in contemplation of the landing. He realized that he had profited by this experience. The service had been a pleasure. He wondered of the future, his mind traveling here and there, until he finally, from sheer exhaustion, fell into a deep sleep.

It was nearly midnight when John was suddenly awakened by someone pulling and shaking him by the shoulder. He started, sat up and looked about him. In the dim light he recognized his captain at his side.

"Stearns," said Bradtock, releasing his hold upon John, "dress and relieve the guard at post number two, forward, at once."

John was dumfounded. It was far from his turn to do guard duty, but he realized, without comment, that orders from his officer must be immediately obeyed. He was fully dressed by the time the captain had aroused four others, in the same manner, and with like command. Without delay John grabbed his musket and started for the deck and to his post of duty. He quickly reached the hatchway. Here he hesitated and then stopped and stood silently as if meditating. Next he stepped upon the deck and then quickly approached the side of the ship and looked expectantly in the direction of Boston. Then, without further hesitation, he quickly removed

the bayonet from his gun and flung it into the sea.

"There," he muttered to himself, "that will afford a sufficient excuse if I am questioned as to my return." Thereupon he hastily retraced his steps to the hatchway and noiselessly descended. Carefully and quietly he peeped within. To his astonishment and total surprise he saw his captain, in company with two other soldiers, literally tearing his bunk to pieces and, as he watched, mystified by this action, he beheld them commence to do likewise with his personal belongings.

Stearns commenced to think, quick and hard. His hand sought his coat pocket. Then he rapidly searched all his pockets. It was gone. He at once hurried forward to his post. As he approached he received the usual challenge and immediately gave his answer and took his position. Anxiously he awaited the dying footsteps of the retiring guard. As the stillness of night closed about him, John quickly removed his coat, kicked off his boots, then climbing over the ship's rail, he dropped into the sea.

Sir William Howe and Clinton alone remained in the cabin awaiting the return of Captain Bradtock. Half an hour passed. Howe arose impatiently and began to pace to and fro. Henry Clinton filled and refilled his glass. Suddenly the captain returned, followed by two soldiers bearing a gun, coat and a pair of boots.

Howe was first to speak.

"We have anxiously awaited your return, Captain. Ah, you have two men. Have you no choice betwixt them?"

"We have not the man, Sir; these soldiers helped me make the search."

"You mean," demanded Sir William, "that he has escaped?"

"The man, Sir, John Stearns, made good his escape; we found but these, his clothes," replied Bradtock.

"Damn!" responded Howe; "well, make every effort you possibly can when we drop anchor to find him in Boston. Methinks he will land there first. Begone."

"Aye, Sir."

Near the Northeastern limits of the town of Boston, on one of its cobblestone streets, there stood a one-story frame building. Attached to, and just above the entrance of this building, hung a dilapidated and weather-beaten sign, but a passerby, after some study, could make out the words, "Ritchey's Tavern." A few spaces from the tavern, and to the left, was a lane or alley, narrow and long, winding and twisting its way through Boston town, and eventually ending some two hundred yards or more from the bay.

Proceeding beyond the entrance of this lane, from the tavern, one would soon reach the limits of the town, finding a scattering, residential district.

Isaac Ritchey had opened this tavern and conducted it for years. Here with the help of his wife, Isaac had lived and prospered. He was a staunch Patriot. A very large man with an enormous round face. Isaac was always smiling. Time was, and not far back, when his tavern had been a gathering place for those of his own belief, for those who were growing vexed and tired of the ever growing and burdensome taxation. Isaac had always welcomed them. He sympathized with them, planned with them, and did all in his power to lend a helping hand. What was his was theirs for the cause of liberty.

It was at this home that Howard Otis procured board and room during his stay in Boston. He was, however, no longer with Ritchey. Due to Howard's activity in behalf of the Patriots, it was necessary that he leave Boston. It was also from this home that Howard, in company with many others, had sallied forth in the war

paint of the Mohawks and dumped the King's tea into Boston harbor.

Alas, now how changed! Isaac's old friends called only after hours, or dropped in only for a short stay and secretly left. Burden upon burden in the way of taxes were levied upon the Colonies by Parliament by order of the King. Isaac stood his grief without complaint to others. He was sorely vexed and discomfited with the ever-growing incumbrances, but he complained only to his wife and she said but little.

British soldiers now frequented the place. They came and went. The hour they might come or the hour of their departure meant naught to them. They were often disorderly, rude and haughty, and nearly always overbearing to both Ritchey and his wife. Isaac harkened to their commands. He gladly accepted what they might tender for his wares, and tried to be content. As the night lingered they often became rough and broke his glasses and furniture. Indeed, too soon it came to pass, that Mrs. Ritchey remained in her room for fear that her presence might cause trouble.

Isaac, ever patient, struggled on, ever hoping for the best. Hoping that a change might come. He was peaceful, ever accommodating, ignoring all insults and striving to maintain his temper under almost constant pressure. 'Tis little wonder that he was always thankful for the close of day.

CHAPTER VI

It was the evening of the twenty-fourth of May. The day had been exceedingly warm. To Rithey the hours had dragged slowly. He was tired and discouraged. Time after time, all the day, squads of British soldiers had been in and out. There had been much drinking and a great deal of merriment amongst them.

Many whispered words of caution had been passed by Rithey's friends that day. Talk about the town was high. A break between opposing forces, the Americans on the surrounding hills and the British in the town, was expected hourly. Rithey's friends had come and secretly departed. The day was slowly drawing to a close.

It was late. Isaac had decided to retire. He hurriedly placed the tavern in good order and, after a brief rest, he turned the key in the lock. As he turned away from the door, he heard a noise from without and stood quietly awaiting the outcome. The latch moved. There was someone at the door. Thinking more soldiers had returned, Isaac unlocked the door. It opened and a man clothed only in shirt and breeches, and dripping with water, staggered into the tavern.

"Great Cats! David Otis, be that you? By jiminy! I thought you be in England," cried Isaac, as he threw his arms about him. David grunted under the affectionate pressure of the strong man's embrace.

Isaac released him, shook himself, wiped off his chin, exclaiming, "There now, see what you do—get me all wet—you drowned rat!"

David laughed heartily over Rithey's seeming predicament, as that good-natured soul once more locked the tavern door and beckoned David to follow him to the rear.

"Now," said Isaac, "come, what you say?"

"A bite to eat, first, Ike, and then you get the whole story."

There in the dim light, in the rear of the tavern, while David satiated his appetite, he told Isaac of his trip to England, how he loathed to go because of the threatening trouble between the Colonies and Great Britain; told him of Howard's letter wherein he learned of the battle of Lexington. How he had decided to come back and of his enlistment in the English army in order to get transportation. How the King was having difficulty in getting his troops to respond to service in America, and of the talk of mercenary help. He told Isaac of the tedious trip across the water, and the loss of Howard's letter, and how he, John Stearns, had to take a dip into the sea to make his escape.

"And now," concluded David, "I am in the hands of my friends."

"That you be," said Isaac, his red face beaming with pleasure and satisfaction, seeming all aglow in the soft, yellow light of the candle, "but, David, such a fool you be to carry Howard's letter around with you."

"Fool, indeed," responded David, "but a lucky fool to say the least."

"That be quite a swim for you, and they no come after you?"

"Yes, it was a long swim, but I took my time as I did not fear pursuit. Tell me, Isaac, all the news. Just what is the present situation in this rebellion?"

"The Britishers all over the town. They come in here a-plenty,—come too often. Our friends are just outside on the hills. Look like there be a fight most any minute. Much talk and many whispers there be. I just wait. Howard he leave me long ago. I no hear much from him, but methinks he be with our friends."

"I trust that Howard is well. I want to see him badly.

I hope that I may be able to get in touch with him soon. The wife, Isaac, how is her health?"

"Good, she be good health. She hide most of the time. The British they be so mean that she no like to stay around in the tavern. I think she be better out of sight."

"And business?" continued David, glancing about the place.

"Business be very good—lots of it that I can get along without. I no like the British, but they come. They do as they dum please. I no care just as long as they leave me and the building."

"Well, it takes more than a mean man to do you ill, I have discovered. You hang on, Ike, I know that we are going to win in the end."

"I think so, that I tell my wife, but I fear that it be a long way,—that end."

"Now that I have reached Boston what do you think about getting away? Do you suppose that we can arrange some plan so that I may be able to get away from here?"

"You just leave that to me. I fix it. I fix it."

"All right, Ike, I hereby consign myself to your care, protection, and do hereby abide thy orders."

For the next few weeks it seemed to David that the very minutes expanded into hours, and the hours lengthened into more than days, as the time passed so slowly. He remained in his room the greater part of the day, venturing forth only after hours with the permission of Ritchey. David realized that the British would make an effort to find him in Boston, but to what extent they would exert themselves to accomplish his capture, he did not know. It was, therefore, but a matter of caution and prudence that he expose himself as little as possible. He also did not want to jeopardize the safety of Ritchey.

"They be after you," Isaac told him one evening;

"they snoop around the tavern all day and ask me many questions. I know nothings. They be looking for a man whose first name is David and whose last name be unknown."

"This news," replied David, "only goes to strengthen my belief that I should make an attempt to reach our lines. I believe that I will be able to get through. I cannot help but think that my presence here will sooner or later involve you in serious trouble. You know, well, what it will mean if I am discovered hiding in your place. I would better leave you, Ike."

"Nay, tut, tut, my boy," said Isaac, affectionately patting David's shoulder, "listen, when the time come that I no want you here, I just kick you out. You wait, our time come. I fix it."

"You win again," responded David, resignedly, "but I fear much my stay."

That evening, after the closing of the tavern, Isaac and David discussed a plan of escape.

"What you think?" asked Isaac, as he slowly unfolded his scheme and anxiously scanned David's face for approval.

"I believe we can do it, but remember, I pay if we fail."

"You but pay attention to what I have to do and say,—that all you pay," stormed Isaac.

"Again you win," laughed David.

Tension had reached the highest ebb. The mutterings of the dark war cloud hovered over Boston. Hate and envy were everywhere. Persecution was rampant. Feeling was tense. It was the night of the 16th of June. David and Isaac had decided it was time that they place their plan in execution. Every precaution had been carefully taken, their doings well guarded. Mrs. Ritchey knew naught of their secret.

Boston, under orders from the British commander, was being well guarded both day and night. Just above

the tavern they had established a sentry post. Isaac had learned from the soldiers that gathered in his place, the time the guard near his home was relieved. For the last few days and during the time our friends' plan for escape was in its infancy, this relieving guard had made it a practice to stop at the tavern, on his way to his station for a bit to eat and drink, and very frequently he would also, later in the night, call again for the same purpose.

On the night of the 16th this guard had made his usual stop, and as he made ready to leave, Ritchey extended to him a special invitation to return later.

"I have something new," said Isaac. "You have always been a good customer and have been decent in my place, and paid for my wares. I would that thee drink with me. It is a new brand, Sir."

"I thank you," said the sentry, "if all is well, at about the hour of eleven I will call."

"That hour, I will await you," replied Ritchey, beaming with delight.

The night was warm. Isaac was patiently waiting. "'Tis ten-forty," he sighed, glancing at the clock, and as his words died, there was a noise at the door, and in stepped the expected visitor.

The British sentry stood his gun in a corner, and took a seat at Ritchey's bidding, at a table. Isaac produced his new brand. He shook the bottle and held it to the light, watching the white pearly bubbles on the fluid as they slowly disappeared.

"Ah, see that, what you think? Notice those beads? They go away slow—good stuff," said Isaac.

The sentry nodded approval, and Ritchey opened the bottle and poured a generous portion for his unsuspecting guest.

"Now, what you think?" asked Isaac, as he watched the guard quickly drain the glass.

"I can tell you better when I partake of another," replied the guard, with evident approval.

Ritchey was still more generous. He refilled the glass and once more closely watched the movements of the sentry, as that individual proceeded to empty the second glass of the liquor.

"Now, one more," said Isaac, "and I drink with you."

Again he filled the glass and gave it to the guard and then with his eye on his guest, he began to slowly pour out a drink for himself, but he did not drink. The sentry lifted the glass, but it failed to reach his lips. Isaac smiled contentedly as the man's head began to lower and finally came to a rest upon his arm stretched out upon the table.

Isaac at once jumped to his feet.

"Come, David, we will have to work fast," and without further words he made ready to take the guard to the rear.

Ritchey grunted and snickered with delight as they hurriedly bore the man to the rear of the tavern.

"He will revive in about twenty minutes," said David.

"You make your change and I will take care of him later, and you be quick," snapped Isaac.

Within a very few minutes thereafter the door of Ritchey's tavern was quietly opened, and David Otis, once more in a King's uniform, that of a Regular, musket in hand, stepped out into the night.

CHAPTER VII

There were many Tories in Boston. They were haughty, arrogant and proud. The majority of them were also wealthy. This acquisition, like a bond, united the Loyalists by its traditional growth, thus leaving but a few men of means in sympathy with the Patriots' cause. The Tories cared naught for censure. They expressed themselves openly. The most prominent of them, not only in Boston but throughout the Colonies, were known by the British.

There was great rejoicing and much merriment amongst the Tories in Boston upon the arrival of Sir William Howe and ten thousand of the King's best troops. The Tories, though bold in acclamation, were cowardly and treacherous in activities in behalf of the British. They also furnished the British with such information as they possessed.

Boston was also the retreat for a goodly number of Patriots. They were men of character and good repute, who had sacrificed and would continue to do so, for the cause they supported. They, or rather their sympathies for the cause of liberty, were known only among themselves. Some who had been active and taken some initiative part in the trouble between Great Britain and the Colonies, had left Boston. Others remained at their peril. Often they held secret meetings, the outcome of which provided means of furnishing their friends about Boston with information regarding the strength and movement of the British troops. They endured great hardships, but regardless of persecution they remained loyal to the cause and to those who had risked both lives and property, to become leaders in the forthcoming strife.

The Tories, especially those of prominence and wealth, often entertained the British. They gave parties and dinners of a very elaborate nature. Drinking was quite prevalent at these social functions, which at times terminated with disorder and debauchery.

At one of these social drinking parties on the evening of the 16th of June, at the home of Thomas Hutchinson in the town of Boston, many of the prominent Loyalists were present, as were also a number of British officers, including Clinton, Burgoyne and Pitcairn. This affair was sponsored by no other than that estimable gentleman, Carl Hutchinson, of Tarrytown, near New York.

Like most events of this nature, freedom of drink and freedom of tongue were prevalent, the drinks undoubtedly predominating. Discourse grew thick. The glasses clicked and men revelled.

Pitcairn, flushed of face, boasting of Lexington, volunteered that a mere handful of Redcoats could dislodge the rebels from the hills. 'Twas Clinton that pulled Pitcairn to his seat and wagered that he could do that much alone.

Carl Hutchinson did not join in this discussion. Carl had just begun to realize that he had reached his capacity. He decided that a walk in the open air was by far the better than to remain, and by far the better than a bed. He skilfully managed his exit and, unnoticed by his revelling companions, slipped from the house.

The hour was nigh unto eleven. "A smart walk," thought Carl, "will soon restore my faculties." He wandered aimlessly about the town, first in one direction and then another. Frequently he was halted by a diligent sentry and after a sufficient explanation, would proceed, taking a different course.

Shortly after the hour of eleven, Carl passed the inn known as Ritchey's tavern. He took notice of the place, but decided he would not stop as he did not care to in-

dulge at that time. Heretofore he had been suspicious of Ritchey's place

He had learned through his associates that it was a hangout for Patriots. He did not know Ritchey. Carl, however, decided to stop on his way back. He might profit by a visit, inasmuch as he was not known.

He gradually approached the limits of the town, momentarily expecting a challenge from the sentry. Carl was surprised as he continued to advance that his approach was not a cause for alarm. He coughed and made other noises to attract attention. There was no challenge. He stopped, turned about and looked in the direction of the tavern.

"Back there at that grog shop," he muttered, half aloud; "don't know as I blame him, but I'll have a little fun with the fellow at his expense." He began retracing his steps toward the tavern.

Suddenly, as he neared Ritchey's place, he saw the door open and a British soldier step out. Carl stopped in his tracks and remained silent. Slowly the man in uniform approached, then as Carl watched, he noticed that the soldier hesitated an instant, and then advanced slowly forward.

The advancing soldier had noticed the figure of a man ahead of him in the darkness, and for one brief second he halted, then quickly making his decision he came on and, as he drew near to Carl, sharply gave his challenge.

"A friend of the Crown, Sir, Carl Hutchinson, of Tarrytown," said Carl, and then continued with assumed authority: "Sentry, are your duties here or at yonder bar?" advancing nearer as he spoke.

"Halt!" commanded the sentry, lowering his gun with bayonet in position.

Carl Hutchinson for a second scanned the face before him. His lips parted and curled with an angry snarl.

"Oh,—I see!" he exclaimed, "so this is John Stearns,

first name David, last name unknown. You spy—you dog—you traitor!”

“Stop!” demanded David, with bayonet at Carl's breast.

“Bah! You cur—'tis as I thought. My suspicions have been fully confirmed. You went to England for no other purpose than to spy upon my King. Let me pass, you—”

“Hold, man!” commanded David.

“Let me pass, you cur. I will report this at once.”

“That, Sir, may be thy pleasure, but allow me to inform you that such report as you may desire to give, will be somewhat tardy.”

“You mean—”

“Exactly,” replied David, “your suspicions have been once more fully confirmed.”

“You dog!” hissed Carl. “Throw down that gun and meet me like a man.”

“Fool,” sneered David, “and have a dozen grenadiers upon my back at the slightest alarm. I promise you, Mr. Hutchinson, that you shall have such an opportunity later. You will now—”

“You are a dog and a black—”

“Stop!” commanded David; “another word from you and you die. Elevate your hands above your head, Sir, at once. Take the lane to your left, and proceed ahead, and mind, the slightest alarm from you, be it by word or action, and you are a dead man.”

Hutchinson realized that Otis meant exactly what he said. He stole time to glance hurriedly about. Not a person in sight. Not a sound met his ear. With hands on high he stepped into the dark alley and proceeded slowly forward. He could hear David following, and he kept steadily on, awaiting further orders.

Slowly through the night, without words, almost noiselessly, marched the two men. No sound came to them but the dull thud of their feet, in perfect unison, in

contact with the ground. On and on they tramped and eventually emerged from the lane. Before them, like a boundless blanket of darkness, spread out the bay.

"You will kindly halt," said David.

Carl obeyed without comment.

"I want to take a look around before venturing further," said David, as he stepped into the open and hurriedly glanced about.

In the bay, David could see the British vessels at anchor. The sky was cloudless. The light from the moon fell about them, and from the beach came the rhythmic song of the waves as they broke against the sands. There was not a person in sight. He turned to Carl.

"You may lower thy arms, it might rest you."

Carl did so, without a word.

"Proceed!" commanded David.

Silently, step by step, not a word passing, they neared the beach. Within a few feet of the water, David called a halt.

Stepping to a position about ten paces from Carl, David asked him to turn about and the men now faced each other.

David thereupon reversed the musket and with a quick movement drove the bayonet deep into the soil and stepped back. He then removed his coat. Hastily examining the pockets, he found a bit of folded paper which he shoved into his breeches, and threw the coat to the ground. He kicked off his boots and retrieved the gun. Quickly removing the bayonet with a twist of his arm he sent it spinning out over the bay.

Carl, highly interested, watched David in silence, wondering what his next move would be.

David took the musket by the barrel, near the end. Once, twice, three times he whirled the weapon around his head, and with a lurch released it. The gun, following the course of the bayonet, with a splash, disappeared from sight.

"There," said David, facing Carl with a smile playing over his handsome face, "it affords me great pleasure to silence the first enemy's gun of the rebellion. Now, Mr. Carl Hutchinson, you are at liberty to make your report. Is it your desire that I accompany you? I gave you my word that you should have this opportunity. I am ready." And David began rolling his sleeves.

Carl Hutchinson, at this sudden turn of events, a surprise that he little contemplated, was nonplussed and frustrated. He was facing a man of his equal, in weight, height and strength. All effects of his recent revelry had completely passed. He was in full control of his faculties. He hesitated and then mumbled a reply.

"I beg pardon?" said David, politely.

Carl did not attempt to repeat his jumbled words. He began to fumble at the buttons of his coat.

David smiled contentedly, as he watched Carl's clumsy efforts in this behalf. Apparently Carl had a plan of action but he decided not to put it into execution.

"We will meet at some other time, Mr. Otis," he said, and with these words, he turned abruptly and started toward the town. David watched him for some time. Then bidding him good-day, he stepped into the water and struck out with a steady stroke for the other shore a mile or more away.

CHAPTER VIII

At about three o'clock on the afternoon of June the 17th, 1775, at the hour the British were attacking the Americans at Bunker Hill, a church bell was solemnly tolling at Tarrytown, while silently, with almost measured tread, the folk of that quaint village entered the little church to pay their last earthly respect to the one who had departed this life.

Miriam Ward, pitifully beautiful in the plain, distinctive dress of mourning, with eyes that spoke of suffering, was supported on the arm of Squire Warner. She looked long and tenderly upon the face of that one whom she had known better than a mother,—the one who had been her constant advisor and ever willing companion,—and the one person she had known through life who had shared equally with Miriam both her pleasures and sorrows. Now the end had come. Bending low over the flower-laden casket, Miriam wept profusely and then was tenderly borne away by the kindly squire.

Double had been the anguish and sorrow of Miriam upon that day. The one she had loved and the one that had loved had departed. The companions of her girlhood, those who heretofore had always been with her, on that day of days, were not present. At that hour when she could have thrown her arms about either of them and received help and comfort, they, neither one of them, was within her call.

Little did Miriam realize that at that hour the long impending strife between the Colonies and Great Britain had broken; that the peace Franklin had long courted had been crushed and vanquished; that at that hour one for whom she longed, Carl Hutchinson, from his uncle's home in Boston, watched the long line

of Redcoats as they advanced to storm the Hill,—watched them twice retreat, panic stricken, before the Americans' fire, and at last cheer with enthusiasm, as he saw the Regulars storm and take the hill.

Little did she know that at that hour, behind the American breastworks, on Breeds' Hill, the firm, fiery and quick-tempered Howard Otis, time after time, picked out his man from among the ranks of the oncoming British. Little did she know that it was Howard who held the head of that God-fearing and illustrious Patriot, Joseph Warren, as death in its mad race, smote him.

Little did she know of the terrible sacrifice the British had to pay to dislodge the Americans from their position.

Little did Miriam know that at that hour, one also for whom she longed, David Otis, had been captured and was now a prisoner under guard.

"Aaron, I say, did you see that?"

"See what?" asked Aaron Short, as he dropped his pick and taking up a long-handled shovel proceeded to scoop up the loosened dirt upon the summit of Breeds' Hill.

"See—that—whatever it was."

"Where?" inquired Short, resting on his shovel.

"Well, now," said Jim Harris, "you just wait until the moon comes from behind that cloud and then look right over there!" pointing with his shovel, "mighty close in and near that point."

Both men silently waited, shovels in hand, while the cloud slowly passed across the moon.

"There,—right over there!" cried Jim, pointing and much excited.

"Waal, I'll be darned!" exclaimed Aaron, "if it isn't a man in the water, and he is headed this way. A darn

Britisher and a spy just as sure as your name is Jim Harris!"

"Reckon as how you are right," replied Jim, "we must tell the boys."

"Boys, nothing. I reckon as how this finding is going to be the taking. We will just sneak down to the shore and when he lands, that Britisher is going to get the surprise he deserves." Both men took up their rifles and quietly stole away.

David was just about exhausted. The swim had been a long one and the second swim he had recently experienced. It had been accompanied by some danger, as he had had to divert a direct course in order to miss by far the English vessels. As he felt his feet come in contact with the beach, he straightened, and slowly walked to the shore, and for a few minutes stood, carelessly at ease, as if doubtful of his next move.

"Ye, put up yer hands and ye want to be mighty quick about it, too," said a deep drawl voice a few feet from him.

David obeyed at once, as two men approached with rifles at their shoulders.

"Who are ye?" demanded the gruff voice again.

"David Otis is my name, Gents. I am a Patriot. I have just made my escape from the British. I had to swim the bay to get away. I am very glad, indeed, to find friends."

"Waal, I reckon as how we will have to look ye over a bit," said Aaron.

"To which I gladly consent," replied David.

Handing his gun to Harris, Aaron at once proceeded to make a careful search of their prisoner.

"Mighty fancy British breeches," commented Aaron, as he slipped his hand into David's pockets. "Guess ye have nothing in them—only this," and Aaron extracted a bit of water-soaked paper, that which David had

taken from the coat of the sentry the last moment before he plunged into the bay on the Boston side.

"I don't like yer outfit," Aaron remarked after the search, "but of course, it could be made to fit yer story about yer escape. I rather reckon we will have to take ye to Colonel Prescott. Ye come along with us and mind ye don't play any of yer British tricks on the way, for if ye try anything of that kind yer journey will end—ye get me—and Jim and I can go back and throw out more dirt to stop yer pesty pellets. Don't pay to get inquisitive, eh?"

"I am very sorry that you men doubt my story and my identity, but I am confident that everything can soon be satisfactorily explained," said David in his natural tone of voice.

"Ye shut up!" commanded Aaron, "no more noise. Ye wait until I bid ye speak."

David did not know Colonel Prescott. He was willing, however, to submit to the wishes of his captors. David was confident that someone under the command of Prescott would know either Howard or him. At least, the time would now be short when he should have established his identity and, as he hoped, find Howard.

It was a glorious experience in the lives of Aaron Short and Jim Harris, to march their prisoner over the newly constructed earthworks and along the American lines, on the summit of Breeds' Hill that night. David paid little attention to the many groups of men as they bent at their task. Words were not spoken. Noise was throttled that night while fast played both pick and shovel.

After considerable search and after many inquiries they finally found Prescott. He was very busy but he listened to David's story. He did not know Howard, but he had learned of a family by the name of Otis. David, by his sincere manner and open expression,

strongly impressed the colonel. He was about to accept his story of the escape from the British as the truth, and welcome David to join them, when of a sudden Aaron remembered the bit of water-soaked paper he had found in David's pocket, and he immediately produced it.

"I found this in his breeches, Colonel, I don't know as it amounts to much, but ye might take a look."

Colonel Prescott took the paper from Aaron and carefully unfolded it. He then knelt in one of the newly constructed trenches and by the light of a flickering candle, spread the bit of paper upon the blade of a spade, and slowly read:

"God be with you, son. May you safely return.
Long live the King. Your Mother."

David was nonplussed. He endeavored to explain, but to no avail.

"Take this man to Cambridge and keep him there until such time as you may receive further orders," commanded Prescott, addressing Aaron.

"Aye, Sir," replied Short, as he beckoned David to follow. Noiselessly they picked their way down the slope of Breeds' Hill to the flats below, and then around the foot of Bunker Hill to Charlestown Neck. Silently through the night marched Short, with David a few feet in advance. They crossed the Neck and very shortly headed in the direction of Cambridge. David was dejected and discouraged.

"Do you know," said David, as he walked along at Aaron's side, his hands bound firmly together, and his captor walking contentedly with gun over his shoulder, "do you know, I have about decided that I do not know who I am."

"Waal," grunted his guard, "I can't tell who ye are, but I know where ye are going."

"Quite true, Sir," replied David, with a laugh. "I heard thy orders."

"I think ye are a British spy, and have ever since Jim saw ye in the water. Ye are going to Cambridge and Aaron Short will be right with ye every minute."

"My friend," replied David, "I have told you the truth. Think of it. There I was cooped up in Boston since the night of the 24th of May. From the first I have been continually on the watch for an opportunity to escape, and at last with the aid of my good friend Isaac Ritchey, we managed to dope an innocent guard. I relieved this fellow of his uniform and taking his gun started for your lines, but it so happened that I had to meet an old friend, a proud Tory by the name of Hutchinson. Being armed, I forced him to accompany me to the bay, and after disposing of the gun, I politely asked the Tory to take me a prisoner. It will appear that he did not think himself man enough to do so, at least he did not attempt to take me back. I also found that note in the coat, which was the cause of my being in this predicament. Anyway I had to swim the bay and was glad to have you and your friend take me, for I was positive I was in the hands of friends,—but I was mistaken,—I now find myself on the way to Cambridge, a prisoner, to be placed under guard, how long, God only knows."

"Waal, that is darn hard luck," commented Aaron, "if it is the truth, but a darn slick British trick, be ye lying."

"I am not lying," replied David appealingly. "I know the facts and circumstances surrounding my capture, from your viewpoint, are strongly against me. They were made more so by the finding of that note upon my person, but what I have told you about that note is the truth,—absolutely the truth."

"Waal, I can't just see that,—I can't understand why ye would want that thing,—be ye telling the truth; if ye

had taken something of value it might look different to me."

"I understand what you mean. I admit that it does appear queer. I had only my friends in mind at that time. I thought that note might contain something that would be of some value to the Patriots. I knew not what it did contain."

"Waal, just forget the note. You were curious about the other side of the bay, eh?" snickered Aaron.

"I was pretty anxious to get over there, I'll admit."

CHAPTER IX

The town of Cambridge was originally named Newton, the first settlement having been made by some of the members of a company of English colonists on Massachusetts Bay during the year of 1630. An order of the colony court in 1636 provided for the planting of a college at Newton, but because of the number of citizens in the colonies who had received their education at Cambridge, the seat of learning in England, Newton was renamed Cambridge. This town was situated on the Charles River, about three miles from Boston.

During the earlier days, the inhabitants of Cambridge had erected palisades upon what is now the present site of the college halls, within which the settlers found protection for themselves against the Indians.

The three miles or less to Cambridge passed all too soon for David. He suddenly found himself within these palisades, locked in a small room. The light from a half-consumed candle disclosed a small table and bed, also two chairs that were barely able to stand alone.

Aaron, somewhat reluctantly, removed the cord from David's hands, and after some remarks about the surroundings and as to David's behavior, assured him that he would see him in the morning, and bade him good-night.

David, as Aaron departed, threw himself upon the bed. He was tired and exhausted. Sleep, after a battle with a benumbed intellect, eventually won, and David did not open his eyes again until late the following morning.

Aaron Short, true to his word of the night before, called that morning, but he did not stay long.

"I will be back soon," he told David. "I want to learn

what the Britishers thought of our job on the hill last night. I'll bet it was some surprise to old Howe."

It was after three o'clock before Aaron returned that afternoon. He was greatly excited and as David partook of the meager lunch he had brought, Aaron nervously paced back and forth. Suddenly he stopped short.

"Listen!" he fairly shouted at David, "do ye hear that roar? Do ye hear those guns? It's the British trying to take the hill. I might as well be locked up with ye, as I am. Can't do a darn thing. Wish I had never found ye!"

David could distinctly hear the firing—the sharp reports of the rifles and the booming of the cannon from the British vessels in the bay. The hour of liberty had arrived.

"Waal, I can't stay here with ye," exclaimed Aaron; "I am going to leave ye for a short time. It's darn hard luck that I have got to miss the fight."

"I am sorry, too, sir," rejoined David, "but you may go. I wish you to go. I will not attempt to escape. I assure you I will remain right here."

"Waal, I am a-going and I am going to take a chance with ye. I have my orders and I suppose it is my duty to stay right here with ye. Mind ye, I won't be gone long."

"If you think they will need you, your duty is there, as is mine. I will remain here until you return. At present that is all I can do. I regret it much."

It was late that evening when Aaron returned.

"Waal," he said, as he sat down, "the Red Coats took the hill, but it cost them a man for every shovel full of dirt we threw out to make those trenches that night on Breeds' Hill. I have got to blame you for my not being there."

"Yes," replied David, "I presume you are correct. You would have been there and given a good account of yourself, had I not been so anxious to join my friends, but you should also realize that had it not been for you,

I, too, might have been in the thickest of the fight—the first opportunity to fight for our country and the liberty we seek. God knows, I would have liked nothing better than to have been there and at your side.”

“Waal, Sir, do ye know I have a mind to believe ye? I am going to find Prescott this night and find what about this business.”

“I trust that you may succeed. I wish that you would also make inquiry as to the whereabouts of my brother, Howard. I believe that he must be with our troops.”

Aaron did find Prescott, but the colonel refused to extend help at that time.

“You must hold him,” Prescott replied to Aaron's request. “I am not, at present, in a position to take the proper action.”

“Ye know, if I had my say, I'd let ye go right here and now,” exclaimed Aaron after his return, rather disgustedly, to David. “I am getting darn tired of this business.”

“I realize that you are acting under orders, those of your superior officer, and I'll remain right here until such time as I may be released. Did you obtain information about Howard?”

“Nay, not a word can I learn, though I made known your wants to many.”

Howard Otis had gone with Arnold on the night of the 9th of May to take Ticonderoga. Here he had remained for some time with General Knox, who at this time was making arrangements to drag the guns from that Fort to the fortifications around the town of Boston.

Days passed and still found David a prisoner with Aaron Short, his lone guard.

At David's request, Aaron once more called upon Prescott and that personage sent him to Putnam, but all he could learn was that just at that time no one appeared to have the authority to take action in David's case.

"We are patiently awaiting word from Congress," said Putnam; "'tis well that you and your prisoner wait for a few days. I believe within a short time a Commander-in-Chief will be named, then this matter can be disposed of at once."

Thus it stood until the third day of July, at which time George Washington was, by act of Congress, appointed the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army and immediately assumed command. The following day Aaron Short escorted his prisoner before that personage.

David at once recognized the bearing and intelligence of the man, and his expression of sublime devotion, and immediately placed his confidence in him. He told his story from the time he first left for England, up to and including his capture by Short.

Aaron, though somewhat reluctant about telling his narrative, told of David's capture, and of the efforts he had made to get a hearing of the case, finally ending by exclaiming dramatically:

"I know this boy is not a spy. I have watched him each day and night since he has been under guard. He has had many an opportunity to make his escape. Ye can't tell me that a spy would wait around to hang. He is a man, through and through, this boy."

"Your name is David Otis?" asked Washington.

"It is, Sir."

"Am I to understand that you have a brother, Howard, who is now in the Continental army?"

"True, Sir."

"Do you insist that the contents of the note found upon you at the time of your capture, you know nothing about?"

"I swear before you, general, and my God, that I did not," replied David with conviction.

"This brother of whom you speak, have you any knowledge of his whereabouts?"

"I have not, Sir. The only information I have is that contained in a letter from him that I received before leaving for America. The letter I lost while at sea and I have reason to believe the British found it."

"I have been informed that you are a physician. Am I correct?"

"I am, Sir, but I had not completed my studies at Cambridge."

"Did you know Dr. Warren?"

"I had learned of him, but I did not know him personally."

"Should you be released, would you be willing to offer your services, both professionally and with my staff, to the Continental army?"

"My services, and my life, Sir, if demanded in the name of this movement for liberty."

At that moment a young man hurriedly entered. A smile of recognition came over the face of Washington.

"Arnold!" he said, "I am pleased to see you."

Benedict Arnold passed in front of David and grasped the hand of Washington.

"I notice you are engaged," he said, glancing at David and the others; "I will call later—say within an hour?"

"Very well," replied Washington. Arnold turned to leave. "One moment, Arnold; might it be you know of a young man by the name of Howard Otis? This man," indicating David, "claims to be David Otis, a brother. He also claims he is a Patriot. The circumstances, however, are quite at variance with such proof as he offers. He was captured deliberately making an entry within our lines. I am led to believe him under pay of the King. His story, though quite probable, I shun to believe."

"Howard Otis, General," replied Arnold, "I know well. He has told me often of a brother, a physician, now in England. This man, though I will admit he re-

sembles Howard, must be an imposter. With your permission, General, we may very soon determine."

"Gladly, Arnold, what mean you?"

"Howard Otis is just outside. He came with me."

"Good!" exclaimed Washington; "will you command his presence here at once?" and then turning to David, "Will you kindly step into this room?" and as he opened a door, David and Aaron passed within.

Howard Otis entered in company with Arnold.

"This is Otis, General," said Arnold.

"Mr. Howard Otis, have you a brother?" asked Washington, as he released Howard's hand.

"I have, Sir."

"His name, please?"

"David, Sir."

"Where is he at present?"

"In England, Sir, at the University of Cambridge."

"His age?"

"Twenty-nine, Sir."

"When did you last see him?"

"It has been five years or more, Sir."

"You have corresponded with Him?"

"I have, Sir."

"Do you recollect such time that you wrote him last?"

"I do, Sir, methinks it was the day after the fight at Lexington."

"Did you urge that he return in that letter?"

"I did, Sir."

"Did you suggest a means of getting transportation?"

"I did, as it appeared to me to be the only way he could possibly get home."

Washington stepped to the door of the room in which David and Aaron were concealed and threw it open. David appeared. Howard uttered a cry of surprise and joy and threw his arms about David, burying his head upon his shoulders. David wiped away the

tears that forced their presence and, holding Howard in his arms, tenderly and fondly smiled down upon him, and then kissed him again and again.

Washington with his ability to sense the deeper emotions of human life, remained silent, watching the brothers, a look of fond devotion upon his countenance.

Aaron Short, struggling with a lump in his throat, coughed and choked in an effort to expel it. At last having succeeded, he approached the brothers and taking each by the hand, exclaimed: "God or man never before ever saw the like! What I missed at Bunker Hill has been fully repaid!"

"Aaron," said David, with tears and voice broken, "I have looked forward to this hour which I knew must come—a fitting climax to our coerced but accepted friendship, which will ever endure."

"Young men," exclaimed General Washington, advancing and gripping each by the hand, "I would that I had an army made up of men like you—liberty would soon be ours."

"You will find each of us ready and willing to serve you," replied David.

"Aye, Sir," answered Aaron and Howard in unison.

CHAPTER X

Carl Hutchinson had tried every conceivable plan to get away from Boston and had finally succeeded. He fully realized that David was with the American troops just outside the city and it would mean serious trouble for him to fall into his hands. He was determined, however, to get to Tarrytown and he finally succeeded in getting in touch with one of the American generals, who at that time retained the respect and confidence of the people and also of Congress.

One night early in September, Carl was secretly conveyed through the American lines. He was now at his home near Tarrytown.

The British army was effectually cooped up in Boston. Colony after Colony had joined the rebellion, and great numbers of troops had enlisted in the Continental army. The American forces, with General Lee on the left and General Ward on the right, with Washington commanding the center, had the situation around and about Boston well in hand.

David and Aaron were with Washington and Howard had gone with Arnold, who had been sent to aid Montgomery in an expedition against Canada. In an attempt to take Quebec, during a blinding storm, Montgomery was killed. The expedition was a failure.

During this time of seeming inactiveness, words of criticism were whispered about the commander of the Continental army. Washington realized that something must be done to hold the confidence of the people and his troops. Congress was receiving complaints. A demand was made upon that body to relieve Washington of the command and fill the position by promoting General Charles Lee. Lee at once took advantage of the

situation to spread unwarranted propaganda.

Washington had planned to fortify Dorchester Heights, which at this time, he considered the key to the entire situation. If he could accomplish this and manage to hold the Heights, it would mean that the British would have to evacuate Boston. If he succeeded and the British did evacuate, he was confident that New York would be their next objective.

The Continental forces were sorely in need of financial help. Washington had received promises of aid from New York and Philadelphia. By reason of David's acquaintance in New York, and his knowledge of that territory, the Commander-in-Chief frequently asked David to counsel with him. If the British evacuated Boston, Washington deemed it necessary that he have all the information regarding the conditions in and about New York in advance.

On a bright Fall morning, following a secret meeting attended by Ward and Washington, David Otis in company with his staunch friend, Aaron Short, left Cambridge, their destination known, as they were informed, only to their commander and General Ward.

It is many a day's ride from Cambridge to New York. David and Aaron, however, were fully prepared for the trip. Each fully realized their responsibility. Each placed with the other the highest confidence and trust.

'Twas on this journey that each learned more of the other; that the bonds of love and friendship ever tightened; that David told of Miriam and of his hopes and ambition for the future. It so happened upon this occasion that Aaron saw the proud and haughty Tory, Carl Hutchinson; that the experiences they were to face, and pass through, did forever bind and seal that love and affection that David had said would "forever endure."

"Aaron," said David, one evening as they lay on their blankets resting after the day's ride, "what a relief, joy

and sense of security it affords me to have you with me at this hour."

"Waal, I was taken by surprise, I tell ye, when I was asked to report at headquarters. I am mighty glad to be with ye, but reckon that ye could take care of yerself," replied Aaron, with a broad smile showing upon his dark, bewhiskered face.

"I have a great many reasons, which I did not disclose, why I desired that you accompany me on this trip. It may be that you will learn of them. I trust you, Aaron—I would with my life."

"Waal, I hope that I don't disappoint ye."

In the impending struggle, New York took a prominent and decided part. The sympathies of the wealthier and more aristocratic portion of the community, as in Boston, were largely with the British, but the middle and lower classes were imbued with the spirit of liberty, and carried all before them. The many acts of taxation imposed by the King were energetically resisted, and though it is not authentically recorded in history, New York, like its sister city of Boston, also had a tea party, the ship *Nancy* losing its cargo on April 22nd, 1774.

David had no difficulty in getting in touch with the Patriots in New York. They would prepare for and welcome the coming of Washington. The information which he desired and the plans of secret activity that he gave, had all been accomplished. He had fulfilled his mission. Aaron and he faced about and started for Cambridge.

One evening—it was the latter part of October—as they were about to make camp, Aaron, glancing around, looked at David, an inquisitive smile playing over his face.

"I suppose that we will head to the North in the morning," he said.

"Well, Aaron, you know that I haven't seen her for a

long time, and there is no telling when I will get another opportunity. 'Tis less than a day's ride from here, and I feel that I should call upon Miriam," he said, dismounting and proceeding to remove his saddle and bags.

"Waal, I don't blame ye. I'll look after the horses and get a fire started, if ye will run over to the river and get a little water."

Upon his return, David noticed Aaron intently examining his horse's foot.

"What's the trouble?" he asked.

"Waal, I noticed yer nag sort of limped a bit, and I find about half an inch of the shoe and the calk broken off. A little stone had become wedged in the hoof,—there, old girl, I guess that will feel better," and he patted the horse's side and released her foot.

"That is one of the many reasons that I wanted you with me, Aaron; nothing, be it ever so slight, escapes your notice."

"A blind man would have seen that thing," grunted Aaron with an embarrassed show of pride.

Nigh unto the noon hour the following day they passed the old Otis homestead. Here David halted. He did not speak, but looked long and fondly at the place of his birth. Next they reached the Hutchinson mansion, and then slowly approached and rode past the Ward home. David named and indicated each place to Aaron.

"I thought ye'd stop?"

"It is so near the noon hour, and inasmuch as I do not wish to bother anyone at lunch, I believe that we will go on into the town."

Carl Hutchinson was in almost constant communication with his Tory friends. He knew many along the route from Boston to New York. They passed information and kept well in touch with the movements of both the Patriots and the British.

Hutchinson had learned of the departure of David from Boston. He also knew that he was bound for New York and he had been informed as to his mission. Carl surmised that David would visit Miriam and he was fully prepared for such time as David might arrive. His plans in this respect also involved Miriam.

Carl Hutchinson had a hireling. Some time previous to his disconsolate stay in Boston, he had procured a man whom he called Henry. Henry's duties were many. He looked after Carl's personal attire, kept the house in order and attended to such other tasks as Carl might direct. He was of the same calibre as his master, a sly, slippery, deceptive, spare little man, with a narrow bald spot, starting at the top of his forehead and running back to the crown of his conical-shaped head. This, with his long hooked nose and small beady eyes, immediately reminded one of a bird of prey.

At Carl's bidding, Henry had been on watch both night and day, and on this day he was quick to notify Carl of the approaching horsemen.

Carl, with jealous eye and hopes of revenge, watched David and Aaron as they rode past. He knew nothing of Aaron.

"Someone riding into town with him," he muttered, in answer to Henry's inquiry.

He had no information to the effect that David would be accompanied on this trip. Carl observed them closely as they neared and finally passed the Ward home, and turning to Henry, said:

"A mighty poor time to call, eh, Henry?" and he laughed at great length.

He knew that Miriam was not at home and that she would not return until late that evening.

"What is your guess, Henry, will he return at once, or will he wait the lunch hour, before he makes his call?"

"I would not venture his plans, Sir," replied Henry,

"but it might be far better for us that we tarry not. Should we be late, thy plan will avail but naught."

"Methinks you are right. Get my horse and we will leave immediately. We will have ample time to arrange for his reception later."

Henry soon returned with Carl's horse and they left at once for the Ward home.

From the lips of Squire Warner, David first learned of the death of Miriam's aunt.

"'Twas a sad day for her. A sad day for all of us. We did all we could at that time, and have since, to comfort and console her. Ah, David, I shall never forget that day of the 17th of June," continued the squire, with head bowed and voice somewhat broken with emotion. "I shall never forget that look upon her sweet face; it bespoke relief and sorrow. Relief, I presume, because the suffering and pain was o'er; of sorrow, because it meant to Miriam her all."

David remained silent. He was stung and dejected. He did not tell the kindly squire of that which befell him upon that same day. He did not tarry long with Warner, but sought Aaron.

"Aaron," said David, "I am going to Ward's. I make you this promise. I will not stay over one hour and a half, well—say, not over two hours.

"Aye, Sir," replied Aaron, "I understand, in two hours we start for Cambridge. I will await ye."

"Two hours in which to review all which has happened for over a period of five years, is certainly brief," thought David, as he galloped along the highway leading South from Tarrytown. There was considerable Miriam should know, and yet, there were a great many things it were better at that time that she did not know. He did not want to conceal anything from her. He would tell her all if questioned, but just what he would tell he had not decided. He would leave all to be han-

dled as the occasion might demand.

That he would be welcomed, this he did not doubt. Certainly the length of time he had been away, and her last words that night of the ball at Warner's, bespoke a kindly welcome at such time as an opportunity might come to pass.

He turned into the yard and dismounted. With a thrill which accompanies such occasions, and a heart beating with throbs of delight, David bounded up the veranda steps and sounded the alarm. Anxiously he awaited a response.

"Elevate your hands, and at once, Sir," came a terse command, from off his right.

David turned instantly. He was looking into the muzzle of a large pistol held in the hands of Carl Hutchinson.

David elevated his hands, but in so doing he also at the same moment elevated his feet, and with superhuman strength sprang straight at Hutchinson.

This unexpected and catlike movement of David's was instantly followed by a sharp report. There was a dull thud as both men hit the ground. Over and over they rolled, striking and kicking—each trying to get the better of the other—first one uppermost and then the other.

David at last succeeded in pinioning Carl beneath him, both heavily breathing and flushed of face. At that moment a figure darted from the shadow of the house. A pistol butt descended upon David's head. Carl rolled David's limp form from off him and arose.

"Damn him!" he snarled, "he was upon me like a tiger. I wish that ball had hit him, 'twould have been a case of self defence. Come, Henry, help me load him across my saddle, then you get his horse. We will have to move fast before some one happens along."

CHAPTER XI

Aaron Short had been waiting, awaiting patiently for two hours David's return. He was still waiting. Two hours had passed,—two hours and a half. David had not returned. Aaron was getting nervous. He decided he would wait no longer.

"I guess it is time that I took a stroll by the Ward place," he reflected, and accordingly Aaron mounted and rode slowly in that direction.

As he gradually approached the Ward home, Aaron watched the road carefully, and as he arrived, he muttered:

"Turned in there, all right, and out again."

Aaron continued straight down the road, and as he drew near to the Hutchinson place, he leaned far over his horse's neck—apparently adjusting something about his saddle, but his eye was on the road.

"Yes, just as I thought,—in they go, but they don't come out." Aaron, however, did not hesitate, did not stop. He rode carelessly by the Hutchinson home at the same gait that he had approached, and as unconcerned as any passerby might be with a destination further on.

For a mile or more Aaron rode to the South. Suddenly he halted, looked back, and dismounted. He led his horse to a thicket at the river side. From here he again came to the highway, crossed it, made the top of an embankment to the East and disappeared from view.

"Well, how is the patient?" asked Carl, as his man Henry silently joined him at the window.

"He appears to be breathing all right, but he is still unconscious. Would I better try to revive him?"

"Nay, leave him alone. He will come to soon enough, You mind the road and see that you report at once anything which bespeaks suspicion. I am going to lie down. I feel I need a rest. Call me if you hear that fool making any disturbance. I will have a few words with him."

David slowly regained consciousness, and as he did, a faint and hazy recollection of what had happened gradually came to him. He cautiously opened his eyes and looked about. He found that he was lying on the floor of a room which was richly furnished. He listened quietly for a very few minutes, then attempted to arise, but discovered that both his hands and feet were securely bound. There was also a slight ringing in his head, and furthermore it ached somewhat. For this, David could not account.

He did remember the sound of the shot, but he did not feel any pain, nor had he suffered from the loss of blood. It was quite apparent to David that the ball had not hit him, for he had succeeded in getting the best of Carl. Someone had suddenly appeared upon the scene—that, no doubt, accounted for his present predicament. Just what had happened David could not tell.

He remained in thought for some time. At last David raised his feet and brought them down upon the floor.

"That ought to bring someone," he muttered.

It did. Almost immediately a door directly across from where David lay, opened and a man peeped within, and then as abruptly as it opened, it was closed.

David said nothing, although he was somewhat startled by the rat-like appearance of the face that peered in at him. He did not have long to wait, however, for within a few moments the door once more opened and in stepped Carl Hutchinson, a look of enmity and maliciousness written deep upon his face.

"That was a mighty celever coup of yours, Carl," said David.

"Ah, yes, thank you, Mr. Otis, 'tis lucky that you are alive."

"Indeed, Mr. Hutchinson, I was not aware of impending death."

"It would have been death had that ball hit you, rather than the butt of my gun."

"Quite true. My present captivity, however, I warrant is due to your gun, perhaps, but in the hands of another, as is the usual custom of all cowards," replied David with sarcasm.

"Indeed, little do you know about it. When I am in need of help to foil my adversary it will be at such time that I have more to cope with than you, Mr. Otis."

"You deny that you did have a confederate?"

"I have so stated, at least I did so by implication."

"You did not answer."

"I did not. Is that sufficient?"

"Then you have lied," replied David calmly.

"No man dare call me a liar," cried Carl, infuriated, white with anger, and advancing to David's side.

"That I have done."

"And that you will retract—or I will—"

The door opened suddenly and Henry entered.

"A horseman, Sir; I think 'tis well that you come," said Henry.

Carl hastily followed his man from the room.

"'Tis the same man that passed during the lunch hour with thy prisoner," said Henry, as Hutchinson joined him at the window, "but I do not like his actions."

"Methinks that he has trouble with his saddle—yes, that is all—see, he does not stop," replied Carl.

Both carefully observed the lone horseman as he passed, and watched his movements until he disappeared from view.

"There was nothing to command attention about that

chap. I have further business with that fool, Otis, so do not interfere again unless absolutely necessary," and Carl again entered the room in which David was a prisoner.

"'Tis damn lucky for you I was called away. Hot words bid ill results. It matters but little how I accomplished my end. You are here. You are in my power. The tables, now, have turned, eh, Mr. Otis?"

"For the present, at least."

"And for some time to come, Mr. Otis. You are my guest, my dear traitor, and you will remain here until such time that you are turned over to the British."

"So that is your scheme? I did not know there was a price upon my head."

"I ask no recompense. 'Tis a pleasure, I assure you, Mr. Otis, to serve my King."

"I can do naught but submit to your fancy."

"As I did to yours of late. The night of the 16th of June at Boston."

"At that time you first proved yourself a coward. I gave you such an opportunity as you demanded."

"Bah, at that time I was indisposed. Were it otherwise, I would not have dirtied my hands upon you. I awaited my time."

"I am glad to learn that you think you have cleansed them with this foul stratagem of yours. 'Tis by far the dirtiest of any of your noble exploits."

"Hold, man!" cried Carl, "I do not care to listen to your damnable sarcasm! 'Tis best for you that you do not anger me! I warn you!"

"Just so long as you remain, you shall hear all I have to say."

"You seem to forget thy condition. I can throttle that wag of yours if necessary, at my pleasure."

"Resort to anything that you may desire, Mr. Hutchinson. I know of nothing too low for you to stoop to."

"You most impudent cur!" cried Carl, snarling with rage.

"Indeed, that epithet, a favorite of yours, vile and base as it is, certainly bespeaks the aptitude and geniality of thyself," calmly replied David.

"'Twould pay you far more to keep thy measured phrases for others—perhaps—Miriam?"

"You dog!—you blackguard!" hissed David.

"You would better control thy temper. I have warned you, Mr. Otis. Do not anger me. I might be compelled to be disrespectful to the pet of the Great Washington. Did not expect to find me at home, did you? You may thank one of your Patriot friends for my presence here. You may also thank the same gentleman for safely conveying me through your rebel lines, and for the timely information that you were on your way to New York. Your visit here I expected. The rest was easy. Let me also add to your discomfort and misery, that your friend and fellow rebel, Mr. Ritchey, is in the hands of the British at Boston awaiting court-martial."

"I thank you," replied David, politely; "have you no further news to divulge?"

"Nay—only of a personal interest. Methinks you will be delighted to learn that I am dining with Miriam this evening. May I bear thy regrets?"

"Methinks that you will not acquaint her of the brilliant strategy displayed by thyself and thy hireling. Little you will say of my presence. I will wager that all you tell will be naught but lies."

"You fool, remember that you are in my hands! At my mercy! Don't compromise me."

"I have naught to fear from the hands of a coward—like you, Carl Hutchinson."

"You damnable cur!" cried Carl, stepping nearer; "another word of the like from you, and I swear I will cuff that deceitful face of yours."

"Strike, Mr. Hutchinson, 'tis a coward's golden opportunity."

"Damn you,—take that!"

Carl delivered a smashing blow full upon David's upturned face.

David struggled desperately, endeavoring to burst the bonds which held him. He was securely tied. The blood oozed from between his lips. It ran into his throat. He choked and coughed. Looking up at the white, angry face bending over him, he gasped:

"You dog! You coward! You blackguard!"

Carl, at these words, dropped to his knee at David's head, and raised his clenched fist to deliver another blow. David looked him in the eye and did not flinch. He smiled at the distorted face of that incensed madman, and said with calm deliberation:

"Strike—Carl—but remember some day you will pay the penalty."

Hutchinson hesitated with arm raised. His face was white and ashen. His lips moved as if to speak. Suddenly he jumped to his feet and rushed from the room. The door slammed, shutting out the jeering laugh of David.

Carl soon joined his man at the window.

"Damn him!" said Carl, "I had to get out of there before I lost my head and killed him. Have you seen anyone, Henry?"

"Only what I have already reported, Sir."

"Methinks we have naught to fear now. Let me know at once when Miriam returns. You would better keep watch. 'Twill pay us to be careful, yet awhile. I am going to lie down as I feel sorely in need of rest."

CHAPTER XII

Tarrytown was situated on that part of the Hudson River which had gradually gained in width and expanded into what is now known as Tappan Bay. To the South this bay terminates at the point where the Palisades arise on the West. On the East, though the country is much more level, yet it is punctuated with knolls and hills, the general topography being a gradual slope to the river.

From the Hutchinson mansion, erected on a site chosen by Carl's father for the magnificent view it afforded of the surrounding country, one could command a view of the Hudson for miles to the South and North. Directly South of the home and on the right side of the highway, there arose a knoll, the top of which was thickly covered with low brush.

Lying at full length in this thicket, which afforded an uninterrupted view of the Hutchinson home, lay Aaron Short. For the last hour or more he had been patiently awaiting developments. He had arrived at one conclusion, namely, David was unharmed and a prisoner in that home. He had discovered nothing, nor had he seen anything to disprove his conviction. The facts and circumstances confirmed this hastily but logically drawn conclusion.

David's horse had surely turned in at the Hutchinson home. There was nothing to indicate that the horse or David had left the place. There was no horse in sight, but the horse was there some place and so was David.

There had been no evidence of a struggle or violence along the way, therefore it was quite apparent to Aaron that David was not injured.

Aaron was thinking. He was trying to work out some

plan of rescue. Darkness was his only ally. He therefore decided to await the falling of dusk—'twould not be long.

The last hour but few persons had passed his place of concealment.

Just at dusk he noticed signs of activity at the Ward home. Shortly after this discovery, he also saw a man emerge from Hutchinson's. From the description that David had given him, he recognized Carl Hutchinson. Aaron at once glowed with delight and renewed interest. He slightly changed his position so as to obtain a better view.

"Waal, that fellow is darn nervous," he muttered, as he watched Carl pace to and fro upon the wide veranda. As he watched, suddenly he saw Carl joined by another.

"That means," muttered Aaron, again, "two for Short, which will be short work for Short," and he smothered a snicker, forced unconsciously by his joke.

It was quite apparent to Aaron that Carl was giving the other some orders, for directly the man left, and Hutchinson once more continued his pacing.

"Waal, he has got something on his mind," commented Aaron, "but he is going to get some relief very suddenly, just as sure as my name is Short."

At this juncture, the man returned, leading a horse with saddle ready to mount.

"Mighty fine-looking nag," thought Aaron, as he watched Carl remove a large pistol from the saddlebag and hand it to his servant.

"Waal, it is just as I thought," Aaron muttered aloud, "David is a prisoner and they are looking for trouble. Waal, they won't have to wait long. I might have use for that gun myself."

After a few more words, Carl mounted and rode away to the North. His man remained on the veranda and appeared to be examining the gun.

Aaron watched both. He saw Carl turn in at the

Ward home and finally his man, with the pistol, after looking about, entered the house.

"Waal, that only leaves a man with a gun for Short," he grunted, as he dropped again at full length upon the ground.

Half an hour later a figure crept stealthily toward the Hutchinson home. Dodging from shadow to shadow, and creeping at full length at times, slowly, but nearer and nearer, Aaron gained his objective. Finally he made the rear of the house and then silently approached the stables. Here for a full minute he remained motionless, then he slipped within. In a very few moments he reappeared, a highly satisfied look upon his face.

From the North side of the house, a very dim light appeared from beneath a lowered curtain, from one of the windows. Toward this Aaron stealthily crept. He reached the window and, slowly arising, peeped within.

In about the center of the room was a small table. Upon this table a candle gave forth a weak, yellow light, and nearby the candle lay a huge pistol. Seated at the table sat a man, his head resting upon his hands, apparently thinking or half in a doze.

Aaron thought quickly, and then deliberately approached the front entrance, used the knocker and made ready his answer. He heard footsteps—then the latch moved, the door opened only slightly, and a voice asked,

"Who's there?"

"A friend," replied Aaron.

"What do ye want?"

"I must see Hutchinson at once."

"Sir, Carl is not at home."

"Waal, I must see him. 'Tis news that I have."

"I told ye that he was not here," said the man, at the same time attempting to close the door. Aaron, however, had his foot between that article and the casing.

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"Waal, can't a fellow come in and wait?" asked Aaron.

"Wait on the outside if ye want to," said Henry, pushing hard at the door.

"Hold, man, ye have my foot caught," and Aaron squeezed further into the room.

"Get it out, and ye get out, too!" commanded Henry.

"Hold now, just a minute," drawled Aaron, forcing a further entrance.

"I have orders not to admit anyone, and I want ye to get out and be quick."

Aaron was now looking down the barrel of the large pistol.

"Don't shove that gun too near my face. It might explode. I am afraid of the thing!" cried Aaron, feigning fright.

"Then ye get out before I have to carry ye out!" commanded the man with his finger on the trigger of the gun, much excited.

Aaron suddenly raised on his toes, shook his head, looked above and beyond the man, exclaiming emphatically:—

"Nay,—nay,—David, don't shoot! We don't want a corpse on our hands."

A look of awe, astounding amazement and surprise, swept over the face of Henry. He turned for only an instant. That instant was enough. The long, muscular fingers of Aaron closed about his thin neck. The pistol was wrenched from his grasp. Aaron slowly bent him backward. The man's eyes began to protrude from their sockets. His tongue emerged from between his white lips like a creeping worm, and he grew black in the face. His beady eyes became glassy, and his baldness a fiery red.

Aaron lowered him to the floor and released his deathlike grip. The man coughed, gulped and blinked, as he slowly regained his natural color.

"Stand up," commanded Aaron.

He at once obeyed.

"Where is David Otis? Tell me and be mighty quick."

Henry, still gasping for breath, shook his head and made other peculiar motions. Aaron understood and patiently awaited his recovery.

"Where is David Otis?" again demanded Aaron as soon as Henry regained his composure.

"Don't know him," replied Henry.

Aaron, upon this answer, shoved the big gun into Henry's face as the long fingers on his left hand entwined about his hooked nose, causing that individual to wince with pain.

"Tell me, will ye—before I twist thy beak from off thy weasel face."

"In there," he said, pointing to an adjoining room.

"Waal, open that door," commanded Aaron, shoving the man across the room before him.

Henry opened the door. It was dark within.

"Get that light and get in there."

The man got the candle and entered, with Aaron close upon him. As the flickering rays of the light sought out the darkness of the closed room, Aaron quickly noted the form of a man lying on the floor. He snatched the light from Henry and rushed to the form upon the floor.

"David—David—my boy!" he cried.

"Ah—Aaron," said David, his voice weak, "I have long expected you. I am glad. Thank God you have come."

"Just a minute—till I take care of this chap."

"Ye go over there in that corner and face the wall and put yer hands as high above yer head as ye can reach."

The man obeyed without comment. David was quickly released.

"There," said Aaron, "now we will have to take care of the weasel over here, and then we will go over to

Ward's and settle with Hutchinson. Come here!" he commanded the frightened man.

"Lie down!" At this the fellow began to beg.

"Down, I tell ye!" commanded Aaron, preparing to enforce his order.

He obeyed.

"'Tis darn hard luck, old chap, but ye might make too much noise with that blat of yers," said Aaron. After securely binding him hand and foot, he stuffed a piece of soiled cloth into his mouth which he fastened in place by a band around his jaw. "I reckon," continued Aaron, "that yer boss will show up soon and look after ye. I will take this old gun—thank ye."

"Now, David—" With these words he stopped short and looked at David for some time. "What's the matter with your mouth?"

"Oh, nothing serious, I guess," replied David.

"Looks like ye had a mouth full of something, and there is blood on yer lip."

"'Tis nothing. Carl's hand slipped when we met and shook hands. That is all."

"Did ye let anything slip in return?" queried Aaron, with a broad, proud smile.

"That I might have were it not that I had my hobbles on."

"I understand," replied Aaron rather sadly. "Yer horse is down at the stable. I left mine a piece down the road. You wait here until I get my nag, and then we will go over to that Ward place and thrash that snob. I mean that I will see that ye do."

"Nay, Aaron," replied David, "I dislike to disappoint you, but that is a matter which can wait. We have other business of far more importance. Do not misunderstand me, Aaron, I would not that you think me a coward, that I dare not return and face this man."

"Ye mean to tell me," cried Aaron, "that ye are going to let that snob beat ye like that and forget?"

"I'll not forget, Aaron, do not think that, but I do want to get back to Cambridge. As I have told you we have other duties that demand immediate attention."

"Waal, ye are the boss."

CHAPTER XIII

Miriam Ward had returned from New York. She had reached home earlier than she had contemplated that afternoon. She had enjoyed the entertainment afforded by Carl's friends. He had arranged for her visit. He had previously planned the invitation she had received. Miriam, unaware of the source of the solicitation, had accepted.

Miriam expected a call from Carl that evening, but she hardly anticipated he would arrive so early.

"Well—well," he exclaimed, as Miriam answered his alarm at the door, "you certainly do look superb! What a change a few days in the city has wrought! You must have had a fine time. I knew you would not want for entertainment. I hated to think of you leaving, but my selfishness won a reward, for did I not know you as I do, I must admit, I would be inclined to be jealous—of someone."

"I thank you, Carl—but tell me, why this early call? Can it be news of great importance—or—did you—want—only to see me?"

"'Tis both," replied Carl, "but well you know the latter predominates. I have missed you. I do not like to have you away, even for a day. Believe me, Miriam, I am lonely—have been so miserable without you. I assure you I am most thankful for thy return."

"That is very nice of you, Carl, but I sometimes feel you say those things, as—well, as if it were just a habit."

"You little tease!" cried Carl, his arm slipping about her waist, "you know better. I am not a man of idle words. I flout the man with fluent words of deception and flattery. I court conviction, and I trust that you have found in me all of which I speak."

"Thy words and thy manner regarding our personal relations, I have no reason to doubt. I accept them. Your activity and disposition concerning another matter, I dislike to countenance. It troubles me."

"'Tis not hard to guess to what you refer. Come, why discuss that situation again? We certainly have no control over that state of affairs. If there is to be a rebellion, surely we cannot prevent it. Tell me, what did New York have to interest you?"

"I had a lovely time. Your friends, Carl, are royal entertainers, but regardless of the merriment, you could hear the same talk everywhere—the talk of rebellion, and you, Carl, have ever been so confident that there would be no trouble."

"I have not learned of a declaration of war up to the present time. I still believe this trouble between Great Britain and the Colonies will be adjusted without going to that extreme."

"Word from Boston would make it appear to be quite to the contrary. Washington is certainly going to drive the British from that town. New York expects news of the evacuation at any moment. It would seem the Patriots have the British at their mercy."

"Pooh!" exclaimed Carl, boastfully, "didn't I leave Boston and walk right through the rebel lines? Did a man dare to stop me? Wait and see what will happen. I tell you the Regulars can blow the rebels from the hills about Boston, any time they may desire. Did they not do so at Bunker Hill?"

"Yes, but 'twas little to their credit. We all have learned just how that came to pass. I have often wondered how you managed to get out of Boston. I hesitate to doubt you—yet—I—"

"Well, to relieve your mind, I'll tell you. A friend of mine, that is, an old friend of my father, a man of influence, a leader of the rebels, a Patriot, gave me such help as I needed."

"You say a Patriot? I would not consider such a man, though a friend of yours, a Patriot. I would say that he was a traitor. Would he not be such?"

"That which he did might be so considered, I would say in most instances, but what he did for me, as I consider myself a noncombatant, would differ considerably."

"As you would look at it from your viewpoint, Sir Carl, but not as they, and even I, would consider such an act."

"In thy emphasis of the pronoun 'I' would I infer that you care to enter into personalities, or would you look for an argument?"

"Nay, I care not whether it be you or some other person. Such an act could be committed by no other than a traitor."

"Necessarily, taking your position, be it well founded or not, I must be an enemy of the Patriots, being a friend of this traitor?"

"You are a Tory, are you not? What interest you have taken, be it dormant or active, in this impending strife, has been in behalf of the Crown. You have expressed yourself publicly against the cause of liberty and even humiliated others in my presence, for the position they have taken. The Patriots are pitted against the King. You certainly are not. Therefore you must be their enemy."

"I'll not argue with you. You are right. I am an enemy of theirs, and well do they know it. I am not in sympathy with their cause, nor have I anything in common with the leaders of this insurrection. Have you more that might be of interest?"

"Yes, I also learned that General Montgomery is leading an expedition against Quebec and that Washington has sent Benedict Arnold to assist him."

"Watch that bubble explode like the rest of their noble exploits."

"Of all men I think you are the most pessimistic!"

"And I would believe that you were a member of the rebel army or a niece of the Great Washington, the way that you continually reprehend me."

"Well," replied Miriam teasingly, "I do adore many who are at present members of that body. I admire them for reason of their sincerity to their cause and their loyalty to their leaders."

"Oh, indeed—perhaps this might be of interest to you. Did you know that David Otis has a price upon his head?"

"Beg pardon?"

"I said a price upon his head."

"Why?"

"For deserting the British army, and furthermore for being a spy."

"Deserting the British army—Carl, how silly and foolish!" cried Miriam contemptuously. "David was never in the British army, and I know that he is not a spy!"

"I know if I told you that you would not believe it, but I have learned of good authority that he enlisted in England. I presume his motive in this respect was to strengthen his relations with you. He took the oath of the King and he has violated that oath and is now a deserter."

"Certainly I do not believe a word of this. David Otis is not that type of man. 'Twould matter but little to David—my sympathies—if his duty, as he saw it, was otherwise, and I would admire him for it, too."

"Oh, well," replied Carl resignedly, "let it be or let it be not, I am telling you only what I have learned, and," he continued, smiling fondly, "I take this opportunity to remind you of your promise."

"I should want proof, Carl, I would demand positive proof. I would have to see such a thing with my own eyes, before I should even give it consideration. I ap-

preciate I have made you a promise. If this you say be true, I will keep my word, but mind you, I am far from being convinced of the charge you make against him."

"All right, my lady," joyfully exclaimed Carl, "in less than a fortnight you shall know, and methinks witness overwhelming proof that David Otis is the deserter and spy that I charge."

Carl Hutchinson was highly pleased with himself and his day's accomplishments. As he rode home that evening, he formulated a plan, the culmination of which was to place David in the hands of the British. His time had arrived. The time to enact the final crushing blow. He would accomplish this before the very eyes of Miriam. He decided to give a dinner and have a number of the British officers present. He would, at just the proper time, and if possible during the discussion of David in the guise of John Stearns, which discussion he would proffer, have the arch traitor and deserter brought before them—in chains. Carl was delighted. With a boyish fancy he drew a mental picture of the whole affair. Miriam seated at his side. His command to bring the deserter before them. The expected hush, followed by cries of surprise—Miriam undoubtedly in tears, and in his arms, as they marched David from the house, a prisoner. He would arise and shout: "Long live the King!"

Carl reached home. He quickly dismounted and called for Henry. Called again. No response. Angry and disgusted he hastily approached and threw open the door. Again he called. Again no response.

"Damn that man!" he muttered. "Always out of sight when wanted. Probably in the room with David." He looked. Henry was not there. David lay on the floor just as he, Carl, had left him.

Carl put up his own horse. He returned and once more called Henry. The man did not respond. He began to grow anxious about his hireling.

"Well, anyway," thought Carl, "everything appears to be all right, except the missing man, and I am not going to worry over his absence. Everything is just exactly as it was at the time I left for Ward's."

Carl dismissed further thought of Henry and made ready to retire.

"I might offer that poor fool a drink before I lie down, but if I do he will probably curse me. Well, anyway I'll find out." Carl procured a glass, cursing Henry while he stumbled in the darkness, as his candle-light expired. He succeeded in getting the water and silently entered the prisoner's room.

"David," he said, very low and friendly, "I trust you will not be offended if I offer you a cool drink. I am about to retire."

A noticeable gurgling and kicking was the only reply.

Surprised at such action, Carl advanced closer to the form lying on the floor. Again he very solicitously made known his mission.

The same gurgling and kicking of feet, was the only response.

Carl held his light close and intently looked into the face of the manacled man.

"My God—Henry!" he cried, "what does this mean?"

Henry looked, gurgled and kicked.

"Speak, you fool!" commanded the infuriated Carl.

Again there was no reply, but at last Carl understood. He released his man Henry, and while doing so, emitted violent oaths. He cursed Henry, David, and the whole Continental army.

CHAPTER XIV

David silently watched the smithy, as he removed the broken shoe from his horse, and then with mechanical certainty fitted another. As that rustic, bearded-faced, genial individual cast the broken shoe from him, David picked it up and approached Aaron, who at that moment was absorbed in carefully examining a large, menacing-looking pistol.

"You know," said David, as he turned the shoe over and over in his hand, "I have been wondering about that affair of last evening. I failed to understand how you knew where to find me. I will have to admit I was stupid. This shoe left a mark in the road."

"Sure," grunted Aaron, without taking his eye from the pistol, "nothing smart about that. 'Twas plain as could be. Couldn't have missed it."

"One more reason why I wanted you with me, Aaron, and no other person. I suppose, were I sentimental, I should keep this," he continued, as he tossed the shoe from him.

"That thing ought to be around the neck of that snob, Hutchinson, and then be pinched together, that's just where it should be," commented Aaron, as he raised the weapon he held and sighted along the barrel, "'tis not such a useless old piece," he remarked, returning the gun to his saddle-bag.

"Nay, 'twould make a good cudgel at short range," said David. "That might be the same instrument which inflicted this bump on my head."

"Waal, methinks ye are right. I am going to keep it, time may arrive that I can return it."

"'Twould mean naught but ill for him if you ever succeeded in getting that close to him, Aaron."

"Ye are right, but tell me, I cannot understand ye not wanting to give that fellow a good thrashing when ye had the opportunity?"

"Human nature and common decency would have at least prompted an attempt," replied David, "but, Aaron, Hutchinson told me something which I have no reason to doubt, and which requires my presence in Boston. He would not have told me had it not been the truth. The British have Isaac Ritchey in custody. They are holding him for court-martial. I know this is for the part he took in helping me to escape from that town the night you and Jim Harris accidentally captured me. I feel that Isaac needs me. Believe me, Aaron, I did loathe to go and leave that man Hutchinson without at least making some retaliation, but that would only mean a further delay attended by indefinite results. It also might mean a possibility of being tardy, if not already so, in relief of my friend. I wish to get back for I fear Isaac may need me at this hour. Aaron, what say you, will you help me?"

"Ugh, ye fix the higher-ups, and I will be with ye."

Carl Hutchinson had told David the truth regarding the incarceration of Isaac Ritchey. On the night of the 16th of June, just after David and Carl had stepped into the dark alley and begun their silent march to the bay, the door of Ritchey's tavern again opened and Isaac peered out. He looked carefully around in every direction and listened intently. He re-entered and soon reappeared carrying the limp form of a man in his arms. It was the doped sentry. Isaac carried him up the street a short distance and then very carefully deposited him on a doorstep. After making the man as comfortable as possible, Ritchey retraced his steps to the tavern.

On the 18th, the day following the fight at Bunker Hill, a squad of British soldiers under command of Captain Bradtock, with Carl Hutchinson the informer, entered Ritchey's place.

"I believe that gentleman is the man," said Carl, pointing to Isaac.

"Are you the proprietor of this tavern?" asked Bradtock of Ritchey.

"That I be," replied Isaac, with a show of pride, accompanied by his usual broad smile. "What can I do for ye?"

"Is this the man?" asked Bradtock, turning and addressing one of the squad.

"Yes, sir, he is the man, and this is the tavern where I drink and forget all."

Isaac, at these words, instantly recognized the man and, as a look of horror replaced his smile, he gasped.

"What this mean?"

"It means," replied Bradtock, "that it is my duty to place you under arrest in the name of the King."

"Why, you—me—arrest? This be my home. I do nothing."

"I arrest you for aiding and assisting the enemy."

"Me—me, I have no enemy."

"Why argue with that fool in his guise of ignorance?" exclaimed Hutchinson.

"I know my duty, I ask of you no advice, Sir," replied Bradtock.

"Beg pardon, Sir," replied Carl, "I did not presume to act authoritatively."

"My friend," continued Captain Bradtock, addressing Isaac, "it is my duty to place you under arrest. You are charged with aiding and assisting the enemy. There is no necessity of an explanation from you at this time, nor do I have to apprise you of the nature and extent of this charge. I ask that you will kindly follow me."

Without further parley, Isaac was marching through the streets of Boston town, the central figure in a group of nine.

Day after day, and week after week, Isaac patiently submitted to the orders of the British guards. To his

many inquiries regarding his release, he would always receive the curt reply that he would have to await trial.

"Trial, ye say, trial? What ye mean by trial? I think I have trial enough."

The first of November found Isaac still incarcerated, still patiently awaiting his trial. He had lost the welcoming smile. His clothes hung loosely from his large frame, and a look of misery and abomination had worn into the enormous face, which had lost much of its vivid color.

His wife could visit him but once each week, and these calls were limited to thirty minutes. Upon each of these occasions that she called, Isaac expected some good news, and being always disappointed, he would slowly bow his shaking head and murmur pitifully,

"David—ah, David—if ye only knew—if ye only knew."

'Twas Captain Bradtock, and he alone, of the British, that would talk with Mrs. Ritchey. He sympathized with her, but could do nothing to help her in the trouble. Tired and worn but ever patient, she worked steadily on. She hoped and prayed for her husband's release and that the strife might end.

Late one evening, two strangers entered the tavern. These men were both clad in homespun clothes. Both with heavily bearded faces and most untidy appearance. One wore dark goggles and the other had a black patch over his right eye, held in place by a soiled cord drawn taut around his head. These men partook but lightly of drink. They sat apart from the soldiers that entered the place that night. They did not join in the festivities, nor did they answer, by retort or otherwise, the many insults and insinuations directed to them by the drinking British soldiers.

They took a room and remained at the tavern that night. In the morning the man with the black patch over his eye took his leave, and the other bargained with

Mrs. Ritchey for his lodging at the tavern for the remainder of the week.

This man, after the departure of his companion, remained in his room the greater part of the day and also during the days that followed. He would appear only at such times that Mrs. Ritchey was alone in the tavern.

He asked her many questions. Some she was reluctant to answer. Occasionally, after the closing hour, he would help her to put the place in order. He learned of her husband and his plight, but he offered no help nor did he suggest any means of escape. His name, his business, or where he was from, Mrs. Ritchey could not learn.

CHAPTER XV

"A farmer to see you, Sir," said an orderly, as he saluted and addressed Captain Bradtock.

The man with a black patch over his eye was ushered into the presence of the captain.

"What can I do for you, my friend?" said Bradtock, laying aside the maps and other papers with which he had been occupied.

"Sir," began the farmer, "I think ye are the right officer to come to talk with. Ye see I have been thinking this thing over for the past few weeks, and I have about decided that it is time I got caught up on the right side. I am getting mighty put out over getting nothing to eat, going without clothes, and not having any money. We can't sell a thing outside of the town. They can't buy, for they have not the money. Time was when we got along. Now we have trouble. I reckon the King is good enough for me. I don't know how long this trouble will last, but methinks if there is going to be an end, I want to be on the right side. I come, Sir, to offer my services. Sorry that I did not come sooner. I cannot shoot much 'count of this eye, but if ye can use me, I can do most anything else except dance."

"That is fair enough," laughed Bradtock, "you, my friend, are but one of many who have recently left the American lines and volunteered their services in behalf of the King. We highly appreciate your act and assure you it will meet the high favor of His Majesty. 'Tis well that you came, for methinks the rebellion is at an end. You will fare well by this step and will hold all you may have."

"Jenks," commanded the captain, "take this man to the barracks and see that he is properly supplied with an

outfit, and then—well—I presume there is nothing that he could do at present but guard duty—place him where you think best.”

“Aye, Sir,” said Jenks, saluting and beckoning for the farmer to follow.

When Mrs. Ritchey made her usual call upon her husband that week, she told him of the two strangers who had come to the tavern and she also took pains to describe them both accurately.

“What that?” whispered Isaac, looking astonished; “ye say, a man with a black patch over his eye? Just look over yonder,” his wife stole a glance in the direction that he indicated, “be that the man?” continued Isaac with caution.

“Yes, that is the man,” she replied.

“That fellow, he be a devil. He be the meanest man I ever saw. He prick me with that spear on his gun every time I no move fast enough to just suit him. He answer me no questions, and he call me a damn rebel and laugh at me. He make laugh of me all the time to the other Britishers. He come just a short time ago, but I hope he will not stay. Ye say that he have a partner and that he is at the tavern?”

“Yes, the other man hire a room for the week.”

“Well, he no bother me but he be a friend of this devil, and I no want him there. I tell ye what ye do. Ye tell him that ye no want him there. That he must leave. They be spies or they plot. I know they mean no good to ye or to the tavern.”

The guard with the black patch over his eye at that moment demonstrated his meanness as portrayed by Isaac, by suddenly advancing and separating the man and wife by the use of his gun, and uncivilly informing Mrs. Ritchey that it was time to move.

As she stepped into the street, she met the roomer face to face, and, as they passed, she turned to see where

he might be going. She noticed the guard with the black patch and the roomer at that instant exchanged signals, but she did not see either speak, nor did the roomer stop. This action immediately confirmed all that her husband had told her, and she decided to act upon his advice and ask the man to leave at once.

That evening the sky darkened. The wind arose with fury and the snow began to fall. It was cold. The tavern groaned and creaked. Callers were few at the inn. Mrs. Ritchey made the place in order and patiently awaited the return of her roomer. The wind increased in violence and drove the snow in blinding sheets before it. Suddenly just at the height of the storm's fury, in walked the roomer.

Mrs. Ritchey, reluctant about carrying out the orders of her husband at such a time, hesitated about speaking. She remained silent as the man procured a seat near the hearth and proceeded to warm himself. She decided because of the rough night, to let him remain until the morrow.

"Madam," said the man, as he turned from the fire, rubbing his hands which still bespoke the cold, "have you a pushcart?"

"We have, Sir, a very large one."

"I would like the use of it this evening, say, only for a short time."

"You may take it." And Mrs. Ritchey told him where it could be found.

The man thanked her and again resumed his position at the fire.

At about the hour of ten, the storm had not diminished in its violence. The snow drifted through every crevice in the walls of the tavern and drifted here and there upon the floor. The candles flickered from the battering violence from without, as now and then a gust of wind would penetrate the worn siding of the tavern and exhaust itself within. The fire in the hearth leaped

and crackled with renewed energy from the draft caused by the mad elements.

Suddenly the door of the tavern was thrown open, admitting a blinding blast of snow, from which emerged the man with the black patch over his eye, and following close on his heels was Ritchey.

Mrs. Ritchey gasped and uttered a cry of delight and surprise. The roomer jumped to his feet and tore off his dark goggles.

"David—my boy—my boy!" cried Isaac, "I knew ye would come. I knew it," and the big man embraced David, weeping with joy.

"Come! Nothing could keep me from you, Ike. I am sorry that I did not learn sooner. I feared we might be too late. I thank God that we were in time. Meet my friend and Patriot, Aaron Short."

Aaron, at this introduction, removed his black patch.

"Great Cats!" exclaimed Isaac, peering into the smiling face of Short, "ye—ye, be damn mean to me. I no could understand why ye take me to see my wife. I come but think ill of ye. Ye have been so much of a devil."

"Waal," said Aaron, breaking into a laugh as he noticed the expression of amazement glowing upon Isaac's large face, "I had to use ye as mean as I could. There were other guards and I did not want them to get suspicious. But, come, 'tis time we moved. The guard will think me tardy."

"Everything is ready, I have the cart," said David.

"Good!" ejaculated Aaron.

"Madam, have you a bedspread or blanket?" asked David.

Mrs. Ritchey soon produced a large blanket.

After a few hurried instructions and a promise to return as soon as possible, Isaac kissed his wife. With many groans and considerable grunting, he crouched down into the cart. David carefully covered him over with the blanket, and then with Aaron, musket at his

shoulder, patch in place over his eye, and David pushing the cart before him, they started on their journey for Boston Neck.

Silently the snowclad figures, battling the wind and snow, fought their way through the deserted streets. Slowly, carefully, ever alert, they approached the narrow neck.

The British had placed two guards on this narrow strip of land which connected the peninsula with the mainland. Aaron was on his way to relieve one of these guards.- As they drew near to this post, Aaron advanced and David pushed his cart into a nearby alley. Here he lifted the blanket.

"I stand for a minute?" asked Isaac; "my bones, they be all run together."

David gave his consent and Isaac, with many accompanying groans, arose to his feet.

For a period of five minutes or more they waited. Suddenly they heard the footsteps of the relieved guard. David watched him as he disappeared into the falling snow and then, after crowding Isaac once more into the cart, he wheeled out and started down the street.

They had advanced but a few rods before they were challenged. David halted as two men emerged from the snow. Both were armed, and one wore a black patch over his eye.

"Where bound?" demanded the guard without the black patch.

"Across the Neck," replied David.

"Do you not know our orders?" said the sentry.

"I was not aware of further orders, Sir," replied David. "I would thank you to be so informed."

"No one is permitted to leave the town without a signed order from the commander."

"I am sorry, Sir. That I did not know. It is necessary that I cross, that I can assure you. Will you kindly let me pass?"

"I cannot. You must return and make known thy wants to our commander. He alone can give thee permission to leave," and then spying the cart, he continued, "what have you here?"

"A load, Sir," replied David.

"A load of what?" demanded the sentry.

"Scotch-Irish," replied David calmly.

"You are trying to be a little cute, my friend. I will take a look."

As he advanced to the cart not a word was spoken, but as he made ready to lift the blanket, David cried:

"Hold, man, I pray do not touch that blanket!"

The sentry turned and looked at David. The next moment a damp, snow-covered blanket engulfed the inquisitive man. His smothered cries for help and frantic struggles availed him naught. He was lifted bodily and deposited head first in the cart. At once the three friends vanished into the dense and blinding snow.

CHAPTER XVI

Twisting great loads of marsh hay into ropelike strands and winding it around cart wheels, greasing axles and wrapping old rags around the metal parts of harnesses, was entirely a new occupation for Isaac Ritchey. He gloried in this work. It meant much to Isaac to be active in the cause of liberty. The time had arrived to take and occupy Dorchester Heights.

All was ready for this great objective. At sunset the ground fairly shook from the detonations of the guns mounted by the Patriots on the breastworks at Somerville, at Cambridge, and also from around Roxbury. That night, while the guns pounded, making the night air heavy with noise, a long column, with stealthy tread and under whispered words of command, silently made its way to this key of the entire situation, Dorchester Heights.

All the night the picks and shovels did their part. All the night the troops of Washington worked at their task. All the night the cannon, heretofore the property of the British, muffled the sound of the entrenching Americans.

Morning came, and with it, surprise and chagrin to the British commanders. Washington had brought his resourcefulness into action. The British would have to evacuate Boston. From these heights the Americans commanded the waters.

On March the 20th, the Americans made formal entry of Boston. There was great rejoicing. The Tories left with the British. Ritchey once more joined his wife and bade welcome to his friends.

"Waal, I never expected to be throwing out dirt this side of the bay so soon, David," said Aaron one morn-

ing the last of March. "It is a darn bit harder digging than it was that night on Breeds' Hill."

"Nor do I expect to swim that bay again right away," replied David, looking across at the ruins of Charlestown. "I have just learned that we may leave for New York as soon as these fortifications are repaired. I should certainly like to see Howard."

"Ye would take another chance to see someone else, wouldn't ye?"

"Yes, and I would welcome the opportunity to square a few things with that blackguard, Hutchinson, who disrupted my last call."

"Waal, ye just leave him to me; ye take the lady."

"Yes, Aaron, I should like very much to see her, and I also have good reason to believe that you would like to see the man, Hutchinson. I trust the time may come."

"Waal, I hope so; ye know I have a bit of his belongings I should return."

"I doubt much that he is at all anxious about that gun, Aaron, but you have my permission to return it at such opportunity as you may have."

General Charles Lee arrived at New York in advance of his superior officer. He at once established his headquarters. Lee, a man of great repute, both in the Colonies and abroad, had a large estate in Virginia. Lee courted notoriety. He loved to be honored. At the outbreak of the rebellion, with his ever-selfish motives in view, he offered his services to the Colonies.

During the seeming delay of activities about Boston and some time before Washington undertook the occupation of Dorchester Heights, Lee had in many ways started criticism and agitation against the commander of the Continental army. Whether or not his activities in this regard were known to Washington, we do not know, but after the evacuation of Boston, confidence was again restored and Lee at that time abandoned his

scheme, that of ousting Washington and placing himself in command of the Continental army.

Upon arriving at New York, Lee again became active in this regard. He was thus occupied formulating some plan by which he hoped to gain the position he had long coveted, when his orderly announced a visitor.

"Have you his name?" asked Lee.

"Nay, Sir," replied the orderly.

"Obtain the caller's name and report."

The orderly returned and announced the name of Otis.

"Admit him."

Otis was ushered into the presence of Charles Lee.

"You will be excused," said Lee, addressing the orderly, who at once retired.

"Otis!" said General Lee, laughing. "A fine Otis you are!" and he grasped the extended hand—the hand of Carl Hutchinson—with an intimate and firm grip.

"I thought it best to use that name," said Carl. "Some surprise for you to see me?"

"Well, rather," replied Lee; "I did expect a call from you, but little did I look for you so soon. The name—it was very clever of you. 'Tis well that you did so, for you know 'tis best at this time. Ah, a Patriot like me can ill afford to be intimate with a scoundrel Tory like you."

"Scoundrel—did you say? I presume that may appear true in the eyes of many of your associates, General Lee, but you know me to be a loyal friend of yours and our King."

"Thy King, Carl, not at present my King."

"Nay, Sir Charles, thy King also, but thy loyalty now clothed as it were in a cloak of deception."

"That depends upon the happening, or possibly the not happening of a great many events."

"We both stand in about the same position. This day one must have that foresight to enable him to vouchsafe for the future. I agree with you, at present our po-

sitions may seem to differ, but we are both working toward the same goal, that of influence, wealth, and authority, to be vested in us by His Majesty—or by the Continental Congress.”

“Which I consider a very selfish motive,” laughed Lee. “What can I do for you?”

“I called today, General, to pay my respects and also to thank you for past favors. I did not have an opportunity to call before. I want you to know that I appreciate very much the help you have extended to me, regardless of thy risk of exposure. I experienced no trouble reaching home after our separation that night outside of Boston. My unexpected arrival at Tarrytown caused some comment. I assure you, however, I have kept thy confidence. I also desire to thank you graciously for the information regarding the trip of Otis to New York.”

“I learned of it. It was planned by the Great Washington. I was not consulted about that trip into New York, and I thought the knowledge might be of some weight for you, so I passed it along thy line of informers. I am pleased to learn the news reached you. I did not care in particular about Otis; I had another plan, but it failed me.”

“I trust I may be able to render you some service now you are in New York. If there should be anything that I may be able to do in your behalf, I will appreciate a call.”

“All I may have done for you I assure you that you are most welcome. I have considered it but a matter of personal friendship, both for you and thy departed father, whom I knew well and loved dearly. I thank you for thy offer. I may call upon thee. Up to the present time my plans to depose Washington have failed, but I am not discouraged. I know my time will come, and at such time, I will undoubtedly need your services. 'Tis

well our relations be strictly confidential. I have the fullest confidence in you."

"Believe me, Lee, all that passes between us, I will hold inviolate. When you wish me, do not hesitate to send me word. I am but a day's ride from here, at Tarrytown. I will be there for some time to come. As I have my fiancee with me today, I will bid you good-day."

General Charles Lee was highly pleased with the visit of Carl Hutchinson. He had planned to involve Washington the night that he had secretly conveyed Carl through the American lines, by claiming that Washington was responsible for Carl's escape from Boston. After making some inquiry, however, he learned to his disappointment that Carl and Washington were not acquaintances. This was a dastardly scheme, unknown to Hutchinson, which, had it succeeded—and it might have, had the Commander-in-Chief known Hutchinson—would have caused complications and chaos to the cause of liberty.

Both these arch conspirators, Lee and Hutchinson, now planned to make a tool of the other to further their own selfish interests. Lee was working out a program, which, if he was successful, would place him at the head of the Continental army. This he had long coveted. His plan, however, involved much turpitude for himself and also required a great amount of ingenuity. This scheme must for the present lie dormant, until the military operations in and about New York dovetailed with the foundation and substance of his plan. When that crucial time arrived, Lee determined to use this proud Tory to his great advantage. He did not hesitate in using Carl in the consummation of this treacherous plot.

Carl Hutchinson arrived home that evening in practically the same state of mind as that of General Lee. He could use Lee, and the time was not far away. He had Lee at his mercy. The confidence that Lee had so graciously bestowed upon him, Hutchinson, he would use as

a club. Lee would do as he desired and follow his orders or he would expose him. Carl would make that coward crawl.

"I will bow to his requests," thought Carl, "at present, and thus ever tighten my hold upon him. The time I may use him is as yet far distant."

Carl did not tarry long with Miriam that evening. He had many things of importance upon his mind. He desired to be alone.

CHAPTER XVII

The situation in and about New York, at this time, was cogently strategic. This province lay in about the center of the Colonies in the rebellion. Thus it will appear that New York City naturally was the key to the center of the insurrection.

Sir William Howe realized the importance of this city. If he could take New York, he would thus sever the enemy. It will also be remembered that New York had been and was at this time reluctant in its resistance to the British.

Washington, having previously received all this information from David, had assumed when Howe left Boston from Halifax, that he would return to strike first at New York. This blow was about to come.

David Otis and Aaron Short were with Washington. Howard had returned with Arnold and was now with Charles Lee, who had been given the command of the right wing of the Continental army stationed at Harlem Heights. Howard had been promoted upon the recommendation of Arnold and was now a lieutenant under General Charles Lee.

Thus it came about that David and Howard met in New York. This meeting, the first for many months, was to be the last. Little did either suspect or dream of what fate held in store for him.

In the engagements which followed Howe's arrival off the coast of New York, the American forces suffered defeat. Washington was well aware that he could not hope to hold New York. His force was far inadequate. It was necessary that he retreat.

Following the Battle of White Plains, Washington moved over to North Castle, which he considered a

stronger position, and Howe immediately took a position at Dobbs Ferry. Washington at this time divided his army. He left General Lee on the East side of the river, while he moved over to the West side of the Hudson.

From this position Washington sent Putnam into New Jersey and Heath to Peekskill, while he, a short time thereafter, in company with David, left for West Point to inspect the fortifications at that position.

Two forts near the mouth of the Hudson, under the command of General Green, on account of their station and by reason of the advance of the British, Washington considered of little moment, and he ordered Green to evacuate. It appears, however, that for some reason Congress forwarded orders to Green to defend them. Upon his return Washington found the British vessels in front of Fort Mifflin, and on the 16th of November the British stormed the fort and took it.

During these different maneuvers, General Charles Lee remained on the East side of the Hudson at North Castle. And at this time he was engaged in trying to poison the mind of Congress against the Commander-in-Chief. On the 13th of December he decided that the proper time had arrived to execute the plan he had fostered for so long. This scheme, one of deceit and treachery, Lee was more than capable of achieving. He cared naught for the outcome, for if he failed, a homely excuse would suffice; if he succeeded, his goal was in sight.

He immediately dispatched a messenger to Carl Hutchinson. Carl responded at once upon receipt of Lee's note which assured him of an audience, under the name of Wood.

General Lee was nervously pacing the floor upon Carl's arrival. He at once dismissed all present, and as they retired, motioned Carl to a seat and sat down at his side.

"Hutchinson," began Lee, in a soft, low voice, "the

time has at last arrived when I can use you. I little expected to call upon you so soon. 'Tis thy offer of succor, so recently and kindly made me, that I accept."

"I fully appreciate thy confidence," rejoined Carl. "What have you, my General, that I may serve?"

"Listen," continued Lee, nervously glancing about to assure secrecy, "I have received orders from my superior officer, General George Washington, to join him at once. This order I have failed to obey. I have delayed and done so intentionally. I have taken the position that the order was discretionary. I have fully decided to further my delay. I am not going. The Great Washington," continued Lee, expressing both mirth and contempt—"and Congress—that body of scoffing fools—have not, nor will they ever appreciate my worth. They have failed and, from all appearances, will continue to fail to recognize my ability. The broad experience I have gained, both in the Colonies and abroad, previous to my service with the Continental army, is of naught to them. Congress has placed a green, inexperienced, untrained man over me. 'Tis far more than I can endure. I have borne up under this insult and disdain ever thinking that a change might perchance be soon forthcoming. The people have long clamored for a change of commanders. Congress will not harken to the cry of the populace nor will they heed my plea.

"I have arrived at this conclusion. There can be no other. They will not recognize or award to me the credit and honor to which I am rightfully entitled until—until, well, until I am suddenly taken from them. Until they miss me, miss my superior training and ability.

"I have given this much thought, and it would appear to me, if I suddenly disappeared, then and only then would they awaken to my real importance.

"I trust that you understand. Pray do not think me boastful, but without my services, this rebellion, methinks, will crumble. I have decided, with thy help, to

take a most radical step—a step, Carl, I would disclose to none other but you, for in you I have the most profound trust and confidence.”

“I thank you, Lee,” interjected Carl; “you have naught to fear. Well do you know we have much in common. Thy trust and confidence, with me will remain.”

“I fully believe in you. Had I not, you would not be here. Now, listen—” and once more he glanced cautiously about the room; “I want that you arrange my capture by the British.”

Carl grasped his hand, smiling blandly.

“Good! My dear General, that can be easily accomplished, and I am the man who can arrange such a capture properly. Ah,—’tis great!”

“So I thought,” replied Lee.

“Have you some measure of plan wherein this can be executed?” asked Carl, apparently in deep thought.

“I have. Relying upon thy help, I have arranged to dine this evening with friends by the name of Clayton. They live near Basking Ridge. ’Tis not far from here. Across the river, but below the British lines. Do you know the Claytons?”

“Yes,” replied Carl, “that is, I know of them, but I must say, my General, I have always been doubtful of their position in this conflict.”

“I know exactly, Carl, so there is no necessity of our discussing the subject further. As I was telling you, I am to dine with them tonight. Can you arrange for my capture at this home—say the hour of eight-thirty?”

“I can,” replied Carl. “In taking this step, I cannot blame you. I appreciate that you have been snubbed by Congress and Washington. You have patiently borne insult after insult. I know thy worth, and I am glad you have called me to act thus in your behalf. General, the plan meets with my hearty approval, and I am confident it can be accomplished. Will you be alone?”

"Yes, quite alone. Not a soul, but you, know of this I speak."

"I will do this for you, General, and I trust that in the near future I may ask of you—"

"Have you something on thy mind at this time that I may perchance be of help to you?"

"Yes, I have, General, but 'twould be impossible at present. When I spoke, I was thinking of an ambition of mine, a desire that I covet, but 'tis but a fancy I fear, for me to hope to interweave my scheme in harmony with that of yours. Were it possible, I could ask of you no more.

"Pray, what have you? My plan is yet susceptible to thy wants. The end which I desire undoubtedly may be reached by other paths which perchance may pass thy door."

"'Tis that I would another might be with you this night."

"Ah—I beg thy pardon. You are most certainly welcome. I request thy presence."

"Nay, nay, General, 'tis not I, thank you."

"Speak, to whom, I pray, do you refer?"

"Otis, the man Otis, I wish that he were to be with you."

"Otis!" exclaimed Lee. "Great Heavens!" and he jumped to his feet and slapped Carl on the back. "Otis! What luck for you. Otis is in my command. What do you desire?"

"What do I wish?" cried Carl, trying to throttle the surge of delight and surprise within him, that was so visibly manifest. "I want to crush him. I want him at Clayton's tonight."

"Otis will be there this evening," replied Lee.

"Good," exclaimed Carl with delight. "And now, General, inasmuch as I have much to do before dusk, I think it well that I bid you adieu."

Carl turned, but hesitated, then again addressed Lee.

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“So I thought,” replied Lee.

“Have you some measure of plan wherein this can be executed?” asked Carl, apparently in deep thought.

“I have. Relying upon thy help, I have arranged to dine this evening with friends by the name of Clayton. They live near Basking Ridge. ’Tis not far from here. Across the river, but below the British lines. Do you know the Claytons?”

“Yes,” replied Carl, “that is, I know of them, but I must say, my General, I have always been doubtful of their position in this conflict.”

“I know exactly, Carl, so there is no necessity of our discussing the subject further. As I was telling you, I am to dine with them tonight. Can you arrange for my capture at this home—say the hour of eight-thirty?”

“I can,” replied Carl. “In taking this step, I cannot blame you. I appreciate that you have been snubbed by Congress and Washington. You have patiently borne insult after insult. I know thy worth, and I am glad you have called me to act thus in your behalf. General, the plan meets with my hearty approval, and I am confident it can be accomplished. Will you be alone?”

"Methinks, Lee, 'tis well to speak of the final outcome of thy plan. Have you given that any thought? Do you contemplate thy release, or what have you in mind?"

"Yes, but little thought have I given it. It is of but minor consequence to me, the outcome of my capture. If I do not miss my guess, the news of my being taken a prisoner will at once incite a demand for my release. Congress will have to harken to the cry of the populace. My release will be quickly accomplished through the medium of exchange. 'Tis not of me to worry. I await thy action. My capture I welcome with pleasure."

"Much wisdom, my General, I assure you."

"Ah, yes. Mind you, my release will mean my zenith. This bit of stratagem of ours will eventually dispose of the Great Washington and place me at the head of the Continental army. When that time arrives, Hutchinson, well,—you know, that all men have their price. I am but a man."

"'Tis well. May the Creator hasten the time. Good-day, General. Eight-thirty, you say?"

"Eight-thirty is the hour."

CHAPTER XVIII

General Lee felt that he had not only granted Hutchinson's request, but that he had encouraged him. He had to do so. Who was Otis? He had been with Lee but a short time. Both Arnold and Washington had recommended his promotion. Lee had discovered in young Otis a man of much promise. It was despicable to sacrifice this boy to satisfy the revengeful spirit of that man Hutchinson. He personally liked Otis, but how could it be avoided? Hutchinson would expect and demand that he fulfill his promise, and this man Hutchinson had much in common with him. Lee decided that he could not dodge the situation. His interests were certainly paramount to those of his subordinate officer. He immediately dispatched his orderly to summon Otis.

"Otis," said Lee, as his lieutenant entered, "might it be that you are not engaged this evening?"

"I am not, Sir—that is, nothing of importance."

"That is good. I would that you dine out with me."

"I thank you, General. I certainly appreciate this courtesy."

"It affords me great pleasure to extend it. I shall call for you shortly. We will ride to the Ridge and dine with the Claytons, warm friends of mine. I think it best," continued Lee, "that you bring thy side-arms. The trip is not barren of some danger."

"I shall be ready, Sir," replied Howard.

"That is all," said Lee.

Carl Hutchinson at once sought Captain Bradtock, and was soon in his presence. The captain listened attentively to Carl's request for aid and, as he finished, said rather abruptly:

"Very well, indeed, Mr. Hutchinson, but do you not realize that such an expedition, especially in that territory, would be extremely hazardous? I do not feel that we should respond to all the whims and imaginative inspirations of our noncombatant friends. We have much to look after of a certainty."

"Hazardous!" exclaimed Carl, frustrated by the cool, unassuming answer; "surely you have learned that the rebels have retreated across the Delaware. Pardon,—wherein lies the danger?"

"You forget that such a trip would necessitate the fording of the river. We know of Washington's retreat, but we know not the extent of his patrol in that territory. I do not care to heed thy request."

"'Tis true that your troops would have to cross the river, but that could be done far below the rebel lines."

"That would incur—"

"One minute," interjected Carl, excusing his interruption politely, "but kindly allow me to ask if you remember the deserter, John Stearns?"

"Very well, indeed."

"Would the capture of Stearns and also that of General Charles Lee, be any inducement for you to undertake the expedition which I beg?"

"Were I to have the honor of taking those two Americans, I tell you I would risk a brigade."

"'Tis these two men to whom I refer," said Carl, now highly delighted at the apparent change in the attitude of the captain.

"We are to arrive at Clayton's at eight-thirty, you say?"

"You have the hour," replied Carl.

"A party of dragoons, with myself in command, will be there."

"Good!" exclaimed Carl. "And may it please you, I should like much to appear at the crucial moment of the capture."

"I have no objections. You must assume thy own risk."

"Certainly," replied Carl.

Howard Otis was in the highest of spirits. He felt immeasurably complimented as he rode by the side of General Lee that evening on the way to Clayton's.

Howard had the most explicit confidence in his General, as everyone did at that time. He did not know the Claytons, but that, of course, did not concern him. The invitation he had received, and the honor of accompanying his superior officer out to dine was in itself something worth while. To him it was an occasion to be long remembered. He would delight in telling David, and he knew that David would be pleased to learn of his good fortune. It would also mean rapid promotion, for he was positive that he could now rely upon a recommendation from General Lee, should the opportunity arrive.

He had given no thought to the trip being in the least dangerous. He had, however, come prepared, as the general had suggested. Howard considered this but a matter of precaution on the part of General Lee.

Lee said nothing about the object of this trip, nor did he speak of Hutchinson to Howard. He talked much of the military movements and advised Howard that he expected soon to join the Commander-in-Chief.

"I have received my orders, and methinks that the morrow's sun will find us well on our way. Loyalty," continued Lee, as he glanced at Howard to ascertain the effect of his words, "is one word of great import. Keep it ever in mind, my boy, 'twill mean thy success."

They encountered no obstacles on their way and shortly drew rein at the Clayton home.

As the evening advanced, Howard soon became quite at ease and gradually took an active interest in the con-

versation. He admired their host and hostess. He found them to be well informed, and they also proved to be excellent entertainers. During the evening they talked much of the rebellion, but Howard was unable to ascertain from their remarks, that is, to his satisfaction, just Clayton's position in the conflict which at that time centered around them.

General Lee related at length his various experiences. He told of his service as a captain of the grenadiers under General Braddock; of his friendly relations with the Mohawks, and of his adoption by that tribe of Indians. He spoke of his service in Portugal, and lastly told of his famous duel with an Italian officer, whom, after a hard fight, he dispatched.

"Thou must be a clever swordsman," remarked Clayton, as he finished this narrative, "the Italians are cunning with the blade."

"I do pride myself, but, mind you, this crafty enemy managed to take his toll," and Lee displayed his hand, showing two missing fingers. "Had the weapons been like those pistols above the mantel, I doubt that I fare as well."

"Ah, yes," replied Clayton, arising and removing them from their holding, "a fine brace of pistols, General. I only recently purchased them in the city—a matter of precaution, I would say. I have them loaded and primed."

"'Tis well," replied Lee, examining the guns; "hate, war and envy know not a friend."

As the hour grew later, Howard noticed evidence of uneasiness and discomfort intermingling with the amiable disposition of Lee. He appeared to be nervous and bored. Later, during a talk with Mrs. Clayton, in which she inquired about Howard's family, he mentioned his brother's name. Howard thought he noticed a startled look of surprise pass over Lee's face, but he

dismissed the thought without comment, and resumed his conversation with his hostess.

Of a sudden from without there came a noise of approaching horses. This was followed by a command. There was the sound of footsteps, and the clanking of arms. The door burst open and a British officer entered, followed by other troopers, all armed.

Howard at once leaped to his feet, as did General Lee. "Ah—ah—" exclaimed the officer, "a fine prize, indeed—two American officers. Gentlemen, you are surrounded. I ask that you surrender in the name of King George of England."

Deathly was the silence that followed. Then quietly, slowly, with dignity, arose the gray-haired Clayton. He stepped from his chair, advanced and looked the officer full in the face, a deep scowl embedded upon his brow.

"Sir," he demanded, "why this sudden intrusion? This is my home. These men are my guests. I will thank you to leave at once."

Captain Bradtock, gentleman that he was, bowed very politely.

"My friend," he said, "I assure you that I dislike very much to be disrespectful and especially to a man of thy bearing and age, but it behooves me to do my duty. That is first, my duty to my King. I must ask that these men hand me their swords."

"I do not understand!" cried Clayton. "This untimely action will cast suspicion upon my head! 'Tis wrong! I feel it is my duty to defend; that you take them only after you dispose of me, from across my dead body, Sir."

"Hold, man," cried Bradtock, "let me explain. We were passing by and noticed the horses. I know thee not, my friend. Thou will have naught to answer. Come, gents, your swords," and Bradtock slowly advanced.

Howard and General Lee stood side by side. Neither had spoken a word. Howard's hand unconsciously

slipped to the hilt of his sword. Thoughts flashed through his mind. Would he better cut his way to freedom, or would he best surrender?

At that moment another figure appeared at the entrance of the room. Howard uttered an angry exclamation and a cry of recognition.

"Hutchinson—you dog! General, 'tis a trap!" and he sprang to the pistols that lay on the table, seized one and levelled it at Hutchinson. As the gun flashed, Charles Lee brought his sword down upon the barrel. The ball embedded itself in the floor at Carl's feet. At the same instant two other reports rang out and Howard Otis fell mortally wounded.

'Twas Captain Bradtock that first reached the boy's side, and carefully lifted his head and pillowed it upon his knee. It was Bradtock who heard the dying boy's last words. He tenderly laid him at rest as the brave lad gasped and said no more.

Hutchinson stood as he had entered. He was white—riveted to the spot. Clayton remained motionless with his wife frantically clinging to his arm.

Charles Lee broke the intense silence by coming forward and proffering his sword to Bradtock.

"My friend," said Bradtock, advancing to Clayton, "it gives me much that there had to be bloodshed. I did not deem it necessary. I cannot blame my men. They have acted in their line of duty. I cannot express my sorrow over this needless sacrifice. The situation resolved itself beyond my control. It was sudden and entirely unexpected. I shall expect you to take due care of this body. It deserves thy best consideration."

"I promise you, Sir, that it shall receive a burial befitting this boy's station and rank."

"I thank you. And now," addressing General Lee, "come, we must be on our way."

Without words or comment, General Charles Lee of

the Continental army was on his way to New York, a prisoner of war—by consent.

Carl Hutchinson also at once left Clayton's. He did not look toward Lee. He mounted and rode his way, a terrible burden upon his conscience.

CHAPTER XIX

It was just at the break of day that a horseman drew rein at the Hutchinson home. He slowly and very unsteadily dismounted, and with bowed head and heavy feet made his way toward the house. His face was drawn and white, while across his brow deep furrows bespoke much worry and trouble. The man was Carl Hutchinson. He had ridden all night. He was tired—completely worn out—and greatly distraught.

Carl ate slightly of his breakfast and shortly retired to his room. Here he remained, alone, for an hour or more. He was terribly worried. He wanted to be by himself and think. Howard's death would undoubtedly reach the ears of David. David, of course, would not have the facts, but Charles Lee did, and that arch plotter would sell friendship for a farthing. Carl had misplaced his confidence. David would connect him with the death just as soon as he learned of the manner in which Lee was captured. David Otis would hound him to the end. Carl fully realized that he could never shake him off his track. This event spelled his doom unless he could manage in some way to dispose of David. The only conclusion which Carl reached was that David must be taken. If he was successfully captured, Carl was certain that the influence and money which he possessed, would find a means of getting David out of the country. He formulated a plan which demanded immediate action.

Carl bathed, shaved, and changed his clothes, and after a short interview with his hireling he returned to his room and patiently awaited the noon hour.

Although Carl did appear and feel considerably refreshed, due to a hot bath and entire change of attire, yet Miriam immediately noticed, upon his arrival, a look

of anxiety and apparently the effect of a sleepless night upon his countenance.

"Miriam," began Carl, as they were enjoying a dainty lunch prepared by her, "I want to ask a favor of you."

"'Tis not hard to read thy mind, Sir Carl. Your action, bearing, and even your face bespeak trouble and uneasiness of mind. Of what do you wish to speak? Pray tell me. You know a confession may be of ease to you."

"The request I would ask, I wish to defer, at least for the present. 'Tis news I bring. Sad news, I fear. I am sure 'tis this that has left upon my face the trace of anxiety you have discovered, for I have rested but little since I have learned."

"What is it, Carl? I can listen. With all that I have passed through, I feel I can withstand anything."

"Miriam," he said, casting his head down to avoid her searching eyes, "Howard is dead. He has been killed."

"Howard!" she exclaimed, excitedly, "Howard Otis, you mean? He has been killed?"

"Yes," he replied, still avoiding her glance.

"What has happened? Tell me!"

"I said, he has been killed!"

"Killed!—How? And where?"

"Oh, now, please don't get excited. I dreaded to tell you. It appears, from what I can learn, he was killed resisting his capture and also that of General Charles Lee. I know not where this happened, nor do I know who was present. It seems Lee and Howard were dining outside their lines, and that they were surprised by a party of British dragoons. Howard attempted to escape and was shot. I learned of this in New York last evening. I was so dumfounded and worked up over the news that I rode all night to get back to see you."

"That was certainly splendid of you, Carl, I am so grateful to you, but isn't it terrible? Just think—think of poor David."

"Yes, David should learn of his brother's fate. 'Tis

of this I wanted to consult you. He would take little heed of hearsay. He must learn of this from someone in whom he has confidence. Methinks this sad news from you would tend to lighten the burden and bring some comfort and solace, but a word from me—'twould but be adding insult to his injury—of that I am confident, no matter how sincere my desire or intentions.

"I trust that you understand me, Miriam. David, I know, would construe any message that I might send to him, as but mockery and raillery, in belief that I gloried in his misfortune. I know, however, that word from you, although bearing the same sorrowful tidings, would affect him far differently—would bring some comfort and consolation. 'Tis this we seek at such an hour. You well know of that I speak. He richly deserves thy words of comfort. I realize that David cares naught for me, and I care not for him, but I have a heart large enough to grant him this courtesy in this hour of bereavement which soon must be his."

"Yes, Carl, you are right. David should learn. I have faced the hour of which you speak and passed beyond. I can help David and I will. Where can he be found?"

"I know of his whereabouts."

"Yes, grant that you do, how am I to reach him?"

"By letter. You write him a note and I will see that it is delivered."

"But, Carl," said Miriam, with sudden distrust, "I—I—yet, why should I mistrust you, or your motives, knowing you as I do?"

"Think you it is more than I would ask? Do you doubt my sincerity? Have you a reason; if so, inform me."

"Forgive me, Carl. I believe you. Your attitude in this matter should demand my admiration, rather than suspicion. I seriously doubt if David would do as much for you. Tell me of your plan."

"I have told you what I wish you to do. Write David

of this sad affair—but, wait—methinks I have a far better idea. It might be he could come to see you. Write and ask him to call, if possible, and to let you know at what time he will be able to do so. 'Tis by far the better way. You could tell him all you have learned. He will appreciate thy comfort and consolation by word of mouth."

"Carl, I do want to see David, and I think this the better plan. I will do as you suggest."

"Good, Miriam, that is splendid of you. Believe me, my heart is for David. Perhaps I am far too sympathetic. Perhaps 'tis far more than David would even think of doing for me. I feel, however, because of the past, it is my duty. I trust I have not erred."

"Dear boy," said Miriam, endeavoring to erase the deep furrows in his brow with the tips of her fingers, "no man could do more. I will do as you direct."

Carl followed her hand with a jealous and revengeful eye, as he watched Miriam pen a note to David. She folded the epistle and very carefully placed her seal upon it, and gave it to Carl.

"Thank you, Miriam. 'Tis but little to me. To him, however, 'twill mean much. I will see it is delivered."

David learned of Howard's death the following week. The details of the death he received were meager. What had actually happened he could not ascertain. All he knew had been told to him by the troops from Lee's command at the time they joined Washington across the Delaware.

Harassed both by day and by night, by Cornwallis, who with a large force awaited the freezing of the river; great numbers of the Patriots deserting, the cause of liberty at that time ebbed low. With the news of Howard's death, David became nearly despondent. Washington, alone, consoled him; advised him not to attempt the penetration of the British lines in an effort to obtain

the facts about Howard's death. These were the dark days of the rebellion, the dark days of the life of David Otis.

It was this accumulation of sorrow, distrust, criticism and discouragement, that brought about the necessity of some concrete action. Something must be done. The feeling was high. The lost confidence of the people must be restored, both in the cause and in its leaders,

The reaction that General Lee had counted upon at the news of his capture did not appear. It was well for our heroes that this presumptuous and haughty general was a captive within the British lines.

David advised with his commander. Washington listened. They fostered a plan which was put into execution. It was a master stroke; the surprise and capture of General Rall on that ever-eventful Christmas day. The country responded to the call of their leader, and with renewed confidence and a mighty determination the Americans followed their fearless leader, who, within the short period of two weeks, succeeded in driving the British from their position and from New Jersey.

CHAPTER XX

Carl Hutchinson had found it a difficult task to deliver Miriam's note to David. Due to the various military operations and also to the great precaution of both forces, Carl's line of communication, which heretofore had supplied his information, had failed. His hireling was unable to locate David. Miriam's note, therefore, remained within the British lines.

After the surrender of Rall and after the British had been driven once more to the East side of the Hudson, and Washington was holding the Jersey shore, Carl finally succeeded in getting the epistle delivered.

David's heart lifted as he read and reread the few lines from Miriam. His blood fairly tingled with new life, hope and joy. His ambition, that of claiming Miriam as his own, which heretofore seemed lost, now returned. The darkness and gloom which had been dispelled by the victorious movements of the Americans in conjunction with the tidings from Miriam, brought a flood of light, peace and happiness about him. He immediately penned a reply. 'Twas not far to Tarrytown. He could get there with ease in a day's ride. The river could be crossed above the British lines without danger.

"This is Tuesday," thought David; "by Thursday, word of my coming could be returned, and the trip completed."

He therefore sent word to Miriam that he would call the following Thursday evening at the hour of nine. David very carefully sealed his reply and dispatched the bearer.

Late the following Wednesday evening, Carl Hutchinson learned Miriam's note had been delivered and he also knew a reply had been received. He had no knowl-

edge of what the reply contained. He had instructed his hireling not to tamper with the seals upon the letter. He asked that they be promptly delivered, and that he be notified of the time.

It was, of course, absolutely necessary that Carl learn the contents of David's reply to Miriam's note. At least, the day and hour if he was to pay her a call. Just how he was to obtain this information, he did not know. He decided not to mention David's name, nor would he ask Miriam regarding David's answer. It was necessary to have an excuse for his call at such a late hour, but that was easy. He wanted to get the information he needed without Miriam's knowledge or consent. There were many crafty schemes, any of which could be consummated, provided everything worked out as he planned. Accordingly Carl ordered his horse and rode to Ward's.

He very successfully excused his late call by claiming he just returned home to learn someone had left word that he was to call as soon as he arrived, that his man gave him to understand she desired to see him at once.

"There must be some mistake, Carl, I have not been there, nor did I send word this day to you."

"I am very sorry to disturb you," replied Carl; "it is quite apparent there has been a mistake. I will return for I have much to do this evening. Can I call—say, on the morrow shortly after the noon hour?"

"I fear not, Carl, I dislike very much to disappoint you, but I cannot see you tomorrow."

"But I simply must see you. May I come later during the evening, say nine, or thereabouts?"

"Please do not persist in thy request. Friday I shall be at liberty and you may call if you wish, but on the morrow I shall be engaged, after the noon hour, I presume, until quite late."

"I thank you, Miriam. Friday I shall be pleased to call."

Carl returned highly satisfied with himself and his

accomplishments. There was no question in his mind but David would be at the Ward home the following afternoon. Miriam had refused him a call for no other reason. He was positive he had held his composure so there was no room for doubt or suspicion about his untimely visit.

He immediately sought his room and prepared a note to Captain Bradtock. He made several drafts, none of which seemed to convey just the right information, or rather the information in just the right way. He was not at all susceptible to everybody's fancies. Carl had to be very particular, and he was. There was no mistake to be made this time. The man he wanted would be there. He also called Bradtock's attention to the fact the deserter was outside his own lines and within British territory. He signed and sealed his note and dispatched the bearer.

Hutchinson was a man who always gave much thought to his contemplated actions. He did not believe in hasty decisions and the regret which usually follows. He had, however, overlooked one matter before he sent his message, which now gave him much concern. This was Miriam's attitude. Did she really mistrust him? If she did not, why had she not spoken of David, at least inquired as to whether her note she had intrusted to him had been delivered? It might be that David had cautioned her regarding his visit by requesting her not to disclose his movements. It was perplexing, to say the least. He decided to dismiss the affair from his mind. "She will never know, and 'tis best, for she cannot blame me for that which is sure to come."

It was dark on that Thursday evening when David rode by the Hutchinson home. He had so planned it. It was better no one knew of his visit, especially Carl, and he had so informed Miriam in his reply to her request that he make her a call. He was also confident that she would not violate his confidence.

David had taken the precaution to dress like a farmer and, although he had been questioned once, he had experienced no other trouble on the way. David was glad that this opportunity had at last arrived, though it was unexpected. He wanted to enjoy the comfort and consolation that Miriam, and no other, might offer him.

With a pounding heart and that expectancy that surges to the breaking point, David impatiently awaited his alarm at the door of the Ward home. He did not wait long. Almost immediately the door burst open and Miriam threw herself into his arms. Laughing, crying, sobbing, she led him, facing him, with both hands grasped in his, to the large sitting room.

"Oh—David—David," she cried, "I cannot tell you how glad I am to see you. Sit down. Tell me all about thyself. Tell me all that you have been doing. I simply can't wait."

David remained standing. He slowly drew her to him—pressed her close to him, and there in the dim light, looked long and anxiously into the deep blue eyes. Then, kissed her again and again.

"Miriam," he said, as he tenderly stroked the silken hair about her forehead, "I love you, I adore you. Thank God that I am here: that I have this opportunity to be with you." Then slowly, very slowly he released her, his eyes still feasting upon her countenance, a boyish smile playing upon his handsome face. "Tell me, Miriam, all you know of Howard," he continued, escorting her to a seat and sitting down at her side.

"Ah—poor boy. It was such a shock to me to learn of his death. Just what happened, all I know is what I have been told. It seems that he was dining out with General Lee, and that they were surprised by the British, and that Howard was shot resisting his capture. I have learned no more. I feel for you, David—I am so sorry."

"That, too, I have heard," replied David. "I am unable to learn more. I shall, however, before I return, make inquiry as to where this occurred and also endeavor to find out who was present at the time. I cannot at this hour blame any person. I will wait until such time that I am fully satisfied. I do dislike Charles Lee, and I fear ill of this man in the untimely death of my brother. I will not abate my investigation until I have learned all."

"I do feel so sorry for you, David. I had to see you in some manner. Carl knows that I have sent for you, but he knows not the day or the hour that you may arrive. Nay, not a soul but myself, David, knows of thy presence here. Are you frightened?"

"I am not, Miriam. Why should I? I have implicit trust and confidence in you. I have naught to fear. The British are far below. I left our lines in secret and so arrived. If 'tis God's will I can die, like Howard, in defense of country and liberty. No, I fear nothing."

"You are wonderful, David. But, come, tell me something of thyself—think, how long it has been since I last saw you. 'Twas the night of the ball at Warner's. Do you remember?"

"Remember? Yes, indeed. Tell me, how could I forget? Methinks there are others who also remember that evening, other than thyself."

"Quite correct. Myl David, I was frightened. I expected—"

"Blows," interjected David, tenderly taking her hand.

"Yes, blows. Carl was so sarcastic, so malicious with his insinuations aimed direct at you. And you, David, were so calm, so dignified. You had both thyself and Howard to control. I did expect—well—I know I am glad it all ended as it did."

"I presume there might have been more said and perhaps blows between Howard and Carl, had I not been

present. I did not fear any action from Carl, but, mind you, I did fear the temperament of my brother."

"David, you have much to tell me, I know. I want to learn of thy work in England, how you came home, and why you have not called long before this day. Surely you have had some opportunity?"

"Now—now, not so fast, tarry. Let me answer one question at a time. I have been in America since last May. I did call, but you were not at home."

"I was not at home? Pray tell me of the time?"

"If my memory faileth not, 'twas the latter part of the month of October, last."

"That is a long time to try to remember back, but—let me think—I was—"

"You were in New York. Carl was kind enough to inform me."

"Carl told you I was in New York? Did you see him? I cannot understand. He has never said a word about this to me. You say, he told you I was in New York?"

"So he informed me, and as I stated he did so very kindly."

"You emphasize 'kindly' so emphatically, apparently 'twas just the reverse. I fail to understand. Will you tell me, David?"

"'Twould avail us nothing. Let us—"

Of a sudden there was a noise from without. Footsteps sounded on the veranda. David jumped to his feet. The door was thrown open and a British officer hurriedly entered. He was followed by others all armed.

Miriam stood, bewildered, mystified, beautiful, in the mellow glow of the candlelight about her. Suddenly, with a scream, she threw herself into David's arms. He tenderly drew her to him.

"I pray the meaning of this!" demanded David.

"This place is surrounded. You are my prisoner," replied the officer. "I ask that you surrender."

"To whom?" asked David.

"King George of England. I am Captain Bradtock of the British army."

"Sir," cried Miriam, releasing herself from David's arms and stepping forward, "this man is my friend, and my guest. You have no right nor authority to enter my home in this rude manner. I insist, Sir, you leave, and at once."

Captain Bradtock, gentleman that he always was, bowed very politely, and advanced.

"My dear Madam," he began, "upon my own behalf I desire to apologize for this seemingly unwarranted intrusion. I dislike very much this, my duty, but I find it quite imperative. This man, your friend and guest, I have been informed is a rebel, a member of the Continental army. I take him as a spy, for he is within our lines."

"He is not a spy, Sir, I know," rejoined Miriam.

"Madam, I have tried to explain my position. I can do no more," said the advancing officer.

David stood with his eyes cast down, but now as Bradtock advanced, he raised his head to meet the English officer's eyes.

"Faith, of all things!" exclaimed Bradtock. "Madam, thy friend is no other than John Stearns, a deserter from the British army."

"There must be some mistake," cried Miriam, turning to David with expectant confidence; "he is David Otis, not John Stearns. This I can prove, Sir; and I can also prove he is not a—"

"Nay, there is no mistake," said another, and Carl Hutchinson suddenly appeared and quickly stepped before them. David, startled by his appearance, uttered a curse which died between his teeth. Carl with his ever-haughty air, advanced to Miriam's side. David turned from him as Bradtock reached his side.

"I will surrender," David whispered to the captain.

"Let us go at once. I fear for that man if I should tarry longer."

"You surrender?" asked Bradtock of David, in a loud command.

"I do," said David.

"David," cried Miriam, "can this be true?"

"True, Miriam, but I am not a spy. I did desert the British army, but that was—"

"That will do," commanded Bradtock; "you will have an opportunity to explain at some other time and place. You will kindly follow."

"Didn't I tell you that he was a deserter and a spy! I have proven it. He has been apprehended before thy very eyes," said Carl with bravo and great delight, to Miriam, just as the door closed behind Bradtock and his prisoner. "I remind you of thy promise."

David heard these words, the last he was to hear from the lips of Carl Hutchinson for some time to come.

CHAPTER XXI

For a period of two weeks or more following the capture of David Otis, Carl Hutchinson was a busy man. Through the use of a substantial bribe and other subtle means, he succeeded in making David a visitorless prisoner and also one held under the strictest of discipline and orders.

Carl rejoiced in this line of activity. It was Miriam's repeated requests to see David which prompted his action and secured the desired results. He cared naught for the cost. He was, therefore, very highly elated at the time he accompanied Miriam to New York on a special trip to see David, that they were very abruptly refused admittance and informed not to return again upon the same mission.

Negotiations for an exchange of prisoners were immediately placed in action, as soon as the commander of the American forces learned of David's capture. All efforts in this behalf proved fruitless. Washington, however, did not give up hope until he received a final word from William Howe—decisive, indeed—"that the charge of being a spy brought against the prisoner, Otis, alias John Stearns, undoubtedly could not be substantiated. He had been taken outside of the American lines, but not within the British. He was a deserter from the British army, of this there was sufficient proof to justify their holding him. He was not, therefore, according to the military code, eligible for exchange. Otis would have to face a courtmartial. Inasmuch as the act of desertion was committed upon the high sea, the British commander would have to await orders from the King for a proper disposition of the prisoner's case."

"Waal, I'll be darned!" exclaimed Aaron Short, when

he learned of David's fate. "What a mess again, that boy won't know who he is, or who he belongs to."

Hutchinson was keenly interested in the negotiations concerning David's exchange. What information he obtained was mostly hearsay, but it was of sufficient moment to keep Carl continually worried and to keep a number of subordinate officers upon his payroll. He was delighted over the final outcome of the long negotiatory proceedings.

Carl had succeeded in dealing the blow that won. He had crushed his rival before the very eyes of Miriam. He had reminded her of the promise she had made him. Carl knew, however, that he must not lie idle. David must be returned to England, and he would see that this was done. He discussed this subject with different members of Howe's staff. He did not receive the desired assurance and accordingly called upon Sir William Howe. He was received with considerable aversion. Howe was gruff. He declined to answer Carl's questions and dismissed him abruptly, much to that haughty person's humiliation.

Hutchinson brooded over this situation. The more he thought about David, the more determined he became. David must be taken to England, and in chains—to answer to his King. With David incarcerated in an English prison, he would have nothing more to fear. To this end he would devote his time and, if necessary, bribe the British officers.

He disliked to go to Bradtock, for he had found in Bradtock a number of qualities that go to make a man. After a careful survey of the entire situation, he decided that there was no other avenue. 'Twas Bradtock he would have to see, and accordingly he arranged a meeting with him. On the following day he was granted an interview.

"What—you again, Hutchinson?" said Bradtock, as

Carl entered and awaited the captain's attention. "What this time, would you ask?"

"I come," said Carl, "to make inquiry as to the good health of the prisoner John Stearns, 'first name David, last name unknown'," and Carl snickered slightly and helped himself to a seat.

Bradtock caught the snicker with a decided frown of disapproval, then quietly waited until Carl had made himself comfortable, and responded without taking his eyes from the maps spread before him.

"I fail to understand why you should be further interested. I do not know, but I am strongly of the opinion, that thy interest in this man should have terminated with his capture. Why annoy me and take my time discussing his health? I consider the affair closed, at least so far as you are concerned."

"Well, Sir," stammered Carl, somewhat rebuked, "I was just wondering what, if anything, is being done regarding the disposition of his case."

"You have learned, and you know as well as I, the final outcome of the negotiations regarding his exchange," said Bradtock, without looking up from his work.

"Oh, yes, that I know is correct. What I should like much to learn, I have been unable to ascertain. I have asked many of thy brother officers, and may it please you, I have also enquired of thy commander, Sir William Howe."

"To what do you refer?"

"Whether he will have a trial, or be released, and if either, where will it take place? I have never attended a courtmartial, and I did not know if it would be necessary for me to be present. I should prefer not to be in attendance."

"Am I to understand that you have called for the purpose of seeking his release?" said Bradtock, and he re-

sorted to his handkerchief to cover the smile that forced its presence across his face.

"Oh nay, Sir, I would not say that. I have known Otis since boyhood. My interest might be of a humanitarian nature prompted by our long personal acquaintance. I should say that it is. So I feel at this time."

"That is fine," said Bradtock. "I presume the same motive prompted you to send the note telling of his whereabouts the night of his capture," and the captain bit his lips to withhold his amusement, wondering where his visitor would next land by his volubility.

I supposed, inasmuch as I knew of this man having deserted the British army, that it was my duty, as a loyal subject of the King, to inform you where he could be taken. Let me ask you, would I not be guilty of treason or that crime of aiding and abetting the enemy, had I concealed that knowledge? What say, am I right?"

"Yes, you are right in that respect. 'Twas thy duty. I trust that you had no part in enticing this man to the place of his capture. I would add that proviso."

"And pray, my Captain, I ask how would that differ?"

"Twould not differ from a military point of view, but would, I should think, differ greatly from a moral view, by reason of thy former relations."

"Tut, our relations have been severed for some time. I now consider him but one of the enemy. I am a Loyalist, but regardless of that situation, I will say that I am innocent of any scheme or plot to entrap him. I learned of his visit to the Ward home, and I feel that I have done naught but my duty."

"Well, little does it matter to me, be it a trick or otherwise. We have the man. What I should like to know is just why you should be now concerned? What does it matter to you where he be tried or whether he be released? If he be tried by a military court, thy presence will not be required. If he be released by the order

of our commander, you should rejoice in his good fortune."

"Captain Bradtock," began Carl, in a low voice and with a show of conviction, "I have always been loyal to our King, as was my father, who gave his life at Quebec. I have been to you. I have extended help, both personal and financial, to the Crown and to thy troops. I stand at this time ready and willing to do what I can to further the cause of His Majesty in the Colonies. I have succeeded in placing in thy hands an arch enemy to our King and to you. I also aided you in the capture of that noted strategist of generals, Charles Lee. Have I ever asked of you or demanded a reward of any kind nor nature? Let me ask, what more can I do?"

"I ask no more. The King can ask no more. We did not ask of thee this of which you have spoken. We do appreciate thy activity. I have no reason to doubt that at the end of this strife you will receive thy reward. This man Otis is to me no more than any other prisoner of the Patriot army. If I feel that way, I his captor, I fail to understand why a Loyalist—a noncombatant—should be so highly interested in the prisoner and the disposition of his case. This, you must appreciate, you have thus far failed to inform me. I ask again."

"You shall hear. For all that I have done, both for you and our King, I ask but this." Carl hesitated and cleared his throat.

"Proceed, I am listening," interjected the captain.

"I ask this much," said Carl, talking slowly and distinctly, his eyes upon the captain, so as to catch the least expression in his face, "I ask that David Otis may be returned to England—in chains. I ask he be tried for the many acts of treason he has committed. And that he be hanged or imprisoned as the King may dictate."

"Tried! Hanged! Imprisoned! For what?" demanded Bradtock, growing impatient with Hutchinson and his demands.

"For a spy and for desertion."

"Hutchinson, you are not an ass, not a fool. Why make such a request from me? You know as well as I that this man is not a spy. Thy request appears most ridiculous. I have in mind to dismiss you without further parley."

"But the act of desertion," blurted Carl, his face growing hot and flushed, frustrated and excited over the captain's attitude, "that charge, captain, is surely well founded. You have personal knowledge of that act."

"Committed, but what I might term a technical violation," corrected Bradtock.

"What defense has he?" demanded Carl, with considerable emphasis.

"None whatever," replied Bradtock, "that is, of my own knowledge."

"You have the authority to order that he be returned to England, have you not?"

"I have—at least, I can so recommend."

"And such a recommendation would be followed?"

"Undoubtedly, should I insist."

"What then, Captain Bradtock, is thy answer?"

"I should have to give such a disposition of Otis' case some thought and a little more consideration, therefore I am not prepared to give you my answer today."

"Captain," said Carl, exhibiting manifest encouragement, "I should not want you to construe what I am about to say as an attempt to bribe you, but I desire it understood I am ready to pay, and pay well, for such favors I may ask and receive from thy hands."

"Ah—I see," replied Bradtock; "by the way, which of you paid for the death of young Otis? You or Lee?"

"Beg pardon, Sir? I fail to catch the drift of thy question."

"Very well. Methinks you will understand this. How much did you have to give thy friend, Charles Lee, for getting the wrong Otis for you, or was Lee's subtle cap-

ture planned and executed by you, Otis being the consideration?"

This statement was a direct declaration. The captain awaited a reply with considerable expectation. If Hutchinson ignored the insult, Bradtock felt he was justified in making a charge that both Lee and Carl had planned the capture and that young Otis had been sacrificed in this manner to further their dastardly scheme.

"That was an awful blunder upon the part of Lee," replied Carl, shifting his look uneasily from Bradtock to the floor.

"Yes, I would not speak more of him. I care naught for him."

"I consider General Lee an honest, upright, conscientious man."

"I do not care to discuss his qualifications," snapped Bradtock. "I have learned from you, not all by word of mouth, the kind of a man he is. 'Tis what I expected. He will bear watching."

"I trust I have done or said nothing to lower him in thy estimation."

"You certainly could not have done more," rejoined Bradtock. "However, I do not care to continue this interview. I will promise you my answer within the next day or two. Good-day, Sir."

"I thank you, Sir. I trust I have not offended. Good-day."

At a late hour one night within a fortnight after Carl Hutchinson had called upon Captain Bradtock, a man, a member of the Continental army, left his command without permission from his officer. He crossed the Hudson without mishap and by the noon hour of the next day was well on his way to New York City.

This man wore no uniform, neither was he armed. He arrived in the city, and during the remainder of the day made inquiries.. The following day, just after lunch

hour, he presented himself at the headquarters of Captain Bradtock. Both his appearance and his tongue bespoke he was a farmer. After considerable delay, due to many preliminary questions, he was admitted to the presence of the captain.

Bradtock was engaged at the time with an outlay of maps and other papers, and upon being notified of the visitor, he somewhat reluctantly consented to his admission. The man entered and the captain continued with his work for some time.

The farmer, a man of dark complexion, a heavy bearded face, and a broad, firm chin, waited in silence. His keen blue eyes noted each and every movement of the officer before him.

Bradtock, at last apparently fully satisfied with his findings, laid aside his work, and looked up at his caller.

"Well, my good friend, what can I do for you?" he asked.

"Waal, sir," said the farmer, advancing until the captain motioned that he halt, "I have come, Sir, to have a talk with ye. I have learned that ye are the officer with whom I can talk. I want to ask a favor of ye—if such it might be called."

"Have you produce or something of the sort to sell?"

"Nay, nay, Sir. I have nothing to bargain. I ask that ye buy nothing. 'Tis far from that I come."

"All right, I shall be at liberty for a short time. I will hear what you have to say."

"Ye have a man, a prisoner—David Otis?"

"Before I apprise you of my answer, I must know from whence you came, and thy name. Of thy mission I will learn later."

"Waal, Sir, ye have asked and ye shall know. I am Aaron Short. I am both a farmer and a Patriot. I am a friend of David Otis. I am at present within the British lines, but only a day's ride from the headquarters of my commander, General Washington."

"I expected as much, sir. Thou are taking desperate chances by this bold act. You have entered our lines without commission. 'Twould serve you right that I call the guard and have you taken at once."

"Ye have that right. I will not dispute ye, but being that ye are both an Englishman and a gentleman, Sir, I ask that ye hear all which I have to say. I come for no other reason than that of which I speak. I am not a spy. I have no arms. I believe ye to be honorable. I have so learned."

"Methinks if 'tis subtle flattery that you speak, it will avail you but little. Thy appearance belieth thy tongue. If you be sincere, speak as thyself."

"I know not yer words, Sir, but methinks I can understand. 'Tis far from that, Sir. I have not much of fine speech. I deal square with man, Sir. I can ask no more from ye."

"You would believe in all men, and trust man, even in this time of hate, war and hell?" queried Bradtock, highly interested in the frankness displayed by his visitor.

"'Twould be the same, Sir. 'Tis the man. Not his position. Not the time and not the place."

"Man, for the time being you are quite safe. I cannot help but admire the rank and file of you Americans. Speak, what is it that you desire?"

"Waal, Sir," began Aaron, "this man, David Otis, is a doctor. A good doctor, Sir. We need him. Ye need him. Not where he is, for there, neither can use him. To him both friend and foe, Sir, those wounded and dying are the same. To each he would give aid and care. I, Sir, have learned to love and admire him. 'Twould be the same with ye, Sir, did ye know him."

"I am but a farmer, rough and without education, used to hard work and unhearkened to the cries of the injured, but my eyes have watered many a time, Sir,

in his presence, as I have watched him care for the wounded and dying, thy men and my friends, Sir.

"I have stood at his side, Sir, as he lifted the head of a dying Red Coat, saw him wash the blood from the wound and listen to the last words of the dying man.

"'We are all Englishmen, Aaron,' he would say. 'God forbid that I shall ever be found wanting.'

"Sir," continued Aaron, with compassion, "David Otis is more to your cause and mine, than I will ever be to God or man. Can't ye take me and let David go? 'Tis all, 'tis the last I can do for him. 'Tis doing as much for ye."

Captain Bradtock did not answer. He remained silent for some time. Presently he asked:

"David Otis is a physician?"

"Aye, Sir, and be there none other his equal."

"Do you happen to know where he received his training and education?"

"Both here and in England, Sir."

"Might it be that he was in England at the outbreak of this rebellion?"

"Aye, he was, Sir, but he came home at once."

"I understand."

"Ye mean ye know how he came back?"

"It will suffice to say that I was his commanding officer."

"Waal, I'll be darned!" exclaimed Aaron.

"How long have you known him?" asked the captain.

"Since, waal, just before the fight at Breeds' Hill, Sir."

"Has he a brother?"

"Aye, Sir—did have. His name was Howard. He was killed. I know not how. 'Tis been hard to learn the truth, Sir."

"Might it be that you also know a man by the name of Hutchinson?"

"Aye, Sir, and darn well, too. If ye have any dealings with him, 'twill pay ye to watch him."

"Isn't there a girl, somehow, interwoven in the lives of this man and David Otis?"

"Indeed there is, Sir. A mighty pretty girl, too."

"I believe I understand this whole affair, then. I thank you for all you have told me. You may have my trust. No, I cannot grant thy request. I admit the motive is commendable. I admire thy exemplification of friendship. I know you are sincere. Thy plea is masterful, yet I must refuse. I will make this promise, however, that no harm shall befall thy friend, David Otis. As for you, though an enemy of my King and within our lines, I bid you go."

"Waal, Sir, I thank ye. I did hardly expect yer consent. Will ye tell David of my call? I wish him to know."

"David shall learn," replied Bradtock.

"By good grace I salute ye, but not yer King," said Aaron as he retired.

Captain Bradtock was well into his fifties. He had spent the greater portion of his years in the service of the King in some department of the army. He was a bachelor and well-to-do. He was a man of sterling qualities, a profound student of human nature, and a most ardent admirer of strong character.

Bradtock, being in the service of his King, fully recognized his duty, but he had never been in full accord with the actions of the King and Parliament toward the Colonies. He had taken this position from the start of the rebellion and, after his arrival in America, his belief that the King had exceeded his good grace by burdensome taxation and a dominating spirit, had been ever strengthened by his personal contact with the situation. He was, however, loyal. He might be right. He might be wrong. Wrong or right, just so

long as he remained in the service of the King His Majesty's orders would be enforced.

He had become very much interested in the man David Otis. From the numerous experiences and the personal contact he had had with Hutchinson, predicted by the information he had received from his last caller, Short, he had been able to quickly sum up the whole story. He now despised Hutchinson. At all times, up to and including the capture of David, he had acted in good faith and relied and acted upon the information furnished by Carl.

Bradtock now understood it all. He saw just how he had been fooled. How this man Hutchinson, clothed in a badge of loyalty, had succeeded in duping him and making a tool of him and his troopers. Hutchinson had used him only to further his own selfish interests.

This man had crushed Otis in order to win the girl. Thus far he had succeeded. Hutchinson should have Captain Bradtock's answer. He was ready to grant Carl's request.

"Pay!" thought Bradtock. "I think that he will pay, and pay well."

CHAPTER XXII

After the final outcome of the negotiations for his exchange, David, discouraged and despondent, resigned himself to such disposition of his case as his captors might determine, and to that which fate had in store for him, what e'er it might be.

David had given his capture but little thought. He was confident that he had been tricked by Hutchinson, but just how he had managed to accomplish this feat by so accurately timing his arrival and capture, David did not know.

His faith in Miriam remained unshaken. She had been tricked as well as he. Nothing that had happened or that might happen would destroy the confidence and reliance that ever existed in him for Miriam. He realized that at the time he was taken from her home, a prisoner of war, and before the haughty, smiling Hutchinson he had lost her. Those words, her last, with no opportunity to explain, he could never forget. He had been tricked, duped and crushed, in one final blow.

With Howard gone, and now the last of his remaining happiness banished from him, what had life? He had nothing to look forward to. What, if anything, did his release mean?

Carl Hutchinson paid Captain Bradtock's price. He paid dearly and, although Carl demanded an acknowledgment or something in writing to show the passing of a consideration, he received nothing from the hands of the captain.

"'Tis thy own proposition," said Bradtock; "it matters not to me whether I take or not. You have my word. 'Tis surely on a par with thy own."

What he paid, Carl considered well worth the officer's

fabulous demand. With David out of his life, the day of his marriage with Miriam fast approaching, the future bade well for him.

The day of days had arrived. Their wedding day. And with it should have come peace, happiness and comfort. Those component parts which blend soul with soul and fill each heart with joy and compassion, on this day of all days were lacking. Miriam was doubtful. All that Carl had promised had been fulfilled. The charges implicating David had been proven. He would be exiled—imprisoned—never return to face the disgrace. She would never see him again. The day, too, took her back to the day of June the year before—when she had lost the one she loved. Miriam was sad.

The following week Carl arranged a reception for his bride. This social event was at New York, and Carl's friends sent the invitations. It so happened this was the last affair of this nature to occur before the departure of Sir William Howe upon his campaign against Philadelphia. Carl spared neither money nor time to make this the pre-eminent social event of the season. It was in honor of Miriam and also to pay homage to his King.

All the British officers were present, and 'twas at this time that Captain Bradtock formally met Miriam. Carl disliked the captain, and he very reluctantly presented him to his wife.

Captain Bradtock decided to attend this reception upon receipt of the invitation. He disliked formal occasions of this nature, but there was one thing he wished to extricate from the mass of deception and deceit surrounding the lives of the groom and the man Otis. He knew that Miriam, could he succeed in getting her to talk, could enlighten him.

As if prompted by some premonition, Carl succeeded in dodging the captain and thus kept Miriam from meeting Bradtock, until he deliberately stepped into his path and forced Carl to present his wife.

Later during the evening he managed to be her escort, and while thus alone with her, at a time of relaxation in the festivities, he spoke of the night of David's capture. He was convinced from their conversation, that she knew nothing of the plot. Having fully satisfied himself in this respect, Bradtock accompanied her to a seat and, politely excusing himself, joined his brother officers.

The party continued late into the night. There was much drinking. Captain Bradtock, much to his dislike, took a part in the hilarity. He indulged to some extent with the other officers, but long before the event closed, he retired and sought his quarters.

Upon the twelfth day of June Sir William Howe embarked from the city of New York, but one of his staff remained. The morning following Carl's reception, Captain Bradtock did not arise. He was still confined to his bed on the 12th. He at once notified his superior officer of his plight.

Howe, disgruntled and vexed because of Bradtock's physical condition, immediately sent an order that as soon as health permitted, he was to follow and resume his command.

Thinking it now necessary to summon a physician, the captain called an orderly and dispatched him for Doctor Swain. Very soon the orderly returned and reported that the doctor had been out the previous night and refused to respond to a call.

"Very well," commented Bradtock, "go to the barracks and bring the prisoner David Otis. I bid you act quickly."

"Such a mandate, Sir," replied the orderly, "will necessitate a written order."

"Paper and quill, then, only hurry," commanded Bradtock.

The proper order was hurriedly prepared.

"There—begone," snapped the captain.

Within ten minutes thereafter, David Otis stood at the bedside of Captain Bradtock.

"Is that all?" inquired the orderly.

"Get out!" was Bradtock's order to the inquisitive soldier.

"Otis," said the captain, turning his parched lips and blue-white countenance toward David, "I am a sick man, a very sick man. I am unable to get my physician. Will you prescribe for me?"

"Gladly, Sir," replied David, at once removing his coat and rolling the sleeves of his shirt.

For the next half hour David very capably and patiently made a careful and thorough examination of the patient.

"May I ask," inquired David, as he finished, "how long you have been confined?"

"Since, to the best of my recollection, the week of the first of the month."

"I fear you have waited too long the advice of a physician. I will conceal nothing from you. There is great danger, but you still have a chance."

"Is it that serious, Doctor?"

"Yes, indeed, Sir," replied David, as he hurriedly penned a prescription.

"You may call the orderly for thy wants."

David dispatched the astonished orderly, and proceeded to make his patient as comfortable as possible.

"There," said David, as he finished adjusting Bradtock's pillow, "now I ask you to kindly refrain from talking. Lie as quietly as possible. I will remain here with you. Have no fear. You may trust me."

"You shall stay. I trust you."

Half an hour later David gave a sigh of relief as the captain passed into a sound sleep. For the next five hours David sat at his bedside. Occasionally he would solicitously feel the pulse of the sick man. Once the cap-

tain opened his eyes, smiled at David, asked that no one be admitted, and dropped off into a deep sleep.

Throughout the night and the day following, David remained at his bedside. He closely followed every move of his patient, watched his breathing, tried his pulse time and time again. David now realized that a change for better or worse must soon come. David hoped for the best.

It was late in the afternoon of the third day that Bradtock rallied. David was delighted. His patient wanted to talk. David insisted that he remain quiet, but after fruitless efforts in this regard, David gave his consent.

"Otis," said the captain, talking slowly and resting between words, "I—want—that—if—something—happens—that you—look out—for—thyself."

David nodded approval, and thereupon the captain completely resigned himself to David's wishes.

The summer had come and gone. The winter had once more grasped New York, before Captain Bradtock regained his strength. The fever, at last, parted from its victim, due to David's unselfish, tender and most constant care, but the scourge had left its mark. Captain Bradtock was now partly blind.

He realized that his military career was at an end. He had grown to love David. He admired him. David was now his only companion, his only comfort. It now fell upon David to keep in touch with the military situation. He apprised the captain of the various maneuvers of the two forces and accurately described their different positions.

"David," said Bradtock one evening, after a discussion regarding the British commander's tactics, "I contend that Howe had made a great mistake. I venture to say that he will not hold his command long."

"Upon what do you base thy opinion, my Captain?"

"His foolhardy campaign against the American forces

to take Philadelphia. The seat of government in the time of war never, I will venture to say, remains at ease. It is movable, which is quite necessary. What did he get by taking Philadelphia? Nothing but Philadelphia. What did it cost? How has he spent the winter? Having his usual good time. What is Washington doing? Suffering, enduring hardships at Valley Forge, but nevertheless always alert. Sacrificing his own personal comfort that he might share the burdens of his men, but building a confidence in his men, and such a confidence will eventually mean that England must pay."

"You are right, Captain."

"For my part," continued Bradtock, "I shall return to England at the first opportunity. I would have done so, David, regardless of my present physical condition. I have seen enough of this conflict. I care not to fight men of thy type. I trust thy friends will win. I shall return, and David, I promised that friend of yours, the big man with the heavy voice—his name?"

"Short, Captain?" asked David.

"Yes, that is the name; I promised him that you should never face a court-martial, while, on the other hand, I made a promise to the man Hutchinson, that you should go back to England in chains. I am going to fulfill my promises, both of them. Will you go with me?"

"Captain Bradtock," replied David, "I also made you a promise. I am still thy prisoner. I will go with you where e'er thou direct."

"'Tis good. You will go with me, but as you now stand, for the chains you bear, David, will be no other than the bonds of good-fellowship and love that have joined us each to the other for the past six months and more."

CHAPTER XXIII

Captain Bradtock had prophesied correctly. Sir William Howe was severely criticized by both Parliament and the King for the campaign of 1777 and he forthwith resigned his command. Henry Clinton was immediately placed at the head of the British forces in America.

On the 18th day of May of the year 1778, after an elaborate banquet and pageant, Sir William Howe departed for England. On the ship which transported this lowly General from the shores of America were also Captain Bradtock and his orderly, none other than David Otis.

Once more we find David attired in British uniform. Again we find him within the British ranks, but he did not enlist. He had been adopted, so the captain said, "adopted into the British army." David accompanied the captain willingly—in fact he was anxious to go. He had but one regret. It was necessary he leave without adieu to Short and Ritchey. Carl Hutchinson he had long blotted from his mind. Such punishment or reward this man deserved, David was ready and willing to leave to the Maker of all. Miriam he had lost.

"You can't desert this time, David," said Bradtock, "if you do leave me and the British army, I hardly know what charge to place against you. 'Twould be but running away, I guess."

"Methinks I will have to run, my Captain, when we reach England. The authorities are going to have trouble finding my military record, from which to issue a discharge."

"We will leave that trick for me. Have no fear," replied Bradtock.

Captain Bradtock owned a large estate near London. After he had secured a formal discharge from service and also a like dismissal for his orderly, he took up his residence at this home. David remained with him.

News of the struggle in America reached David from time to time. He learned of the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, which occurred a short time after his departure for England.

Later he learned that the American commander had driven the British into New York, where they held practically the same positions as the two forces did in the Fall of '76, only this time the Americans were the aggressors.

During the month of November of '81, the report of the surrender of Cornwallis reached England.

"Ah," said Bradtock, after the dispatch had been authoritatively confirmed, "Lord Cornwallis, my proud General! Well, 'tis but the beginning of the end. The time for His Majesty to pay has arrived. I am satisfied the majority of the subjects, and the heads of Parliament, are growing tired of this strife. It should have ended long ago. There is one thing which I will regret at such time as peace is declared."

"Thy regret, Captain, if I may ask?"

"Ah, yes—David,—thy company. I fear you will not wish to tarry long with me. I shall, however, keep my promise. When a treaty is signed, you are at liberty to do or go as you may desire."

"The peace of which you speak, is not yet," replied David. "I dislike to think of leaving. I was anxious to come with you because all which I had looked forward to had been cruelly torn from my very grasp. Glad to come because of the death of my brother. That he might have lived, Captain, I would have courted his fate. I will await peace, and then let you have my decision."

During the month of November of the year '82, England acknowledged the independence of the Ameri-

can Colonies. David and the Captain were having lunch at the time the news reached them.

"I suppose the time has arrived for my answer," said David, arising and taking his friend by the hand.

"Tarry," said Bradtock, "be seated. True, thy time is near at hand, but you know as man declines, he also becomes, shall I say, selfish and peculiar. People would say he is eccentric, foolish, demented, or the like. Pardon me, David, for taking a slight advantage of you through our understanding and by reason of the complications incident to peace and a formal confirmation. It is true peace has been declared, but a treaty has not as yet been signed. Hence, by agreement, I do not lose you at this time."

"Egad, you are right," cried David with a burst of pleasure. "It matters not, I'll not question thy statement. I shall remain with you until His Majesty doth sign."

At Versailles, the month of September of '83, a treaty of peace was negotiated between England and the Colonies and formally signed.

It was with manifest reluctance that David gave his answer, and forthwith prepared to take his leave from the home of Captain Bradtock.

"You are more than welcome to remain," pleaded his friend, with tears which bespoke love and friendship. "My years are numbered; few, I fear, remain. I have no relatives. I care for you, boy. I have learned to love and trust you. All I possess, should you decide to remain, is thine. Thy future is thine own, pray, I only would make it brighter for thee."

"My dear Captain, thy words mean much to me. Thy kindness I can but ill manifest. I admire and love you. I feel I should return—but I also feel that I have a duty over there that should have my attention. I want to find the last resting place of my brother, where e'er it may be, and mark it. 'Twould be but a last act of brotherly love. I can do no more. I should also like to meet and

again grasp the hand of that man and true friend, Aaron Short. These two things accomplished, my dear Captain, and I will return."

"'Tis well," said the captain. "I question not thy duty. To me it would be the same. I will patiently await thy return, and inasmuch as you have given thy word, I think it is my duty, before you depart, to tell you of many things which I have heretofore concealed from you. My reason for withholding the truth from you, I know you will quickly percieve, and thus hold naught against me.

"First," continued Bradtock, "allow me to present you with this," and he pressed into David's hand a fancy leather wallet, upon which appeared the initials "C. H." done in gold. "That," said the captain, "contains the price that Hutchinson paid to have you returned to England—in chains. Inasmuch as I failed to carry out the literal meaning of the compact, I presume the consideration failed, and the wallet and contents should be returned to its original owner. Take it, sir, for I believe, after I have spoken, you will deliver it, as I have given it, intact.

"Secondly," and Bradtock hesitated for some time, then slowly began, "did you ever learn the truth about thy brother's death?"

"All that I ever did learn was to the effect he was killed resisting his capture and that of General Charles Lee."

"'Tis false, 'twas a base hearsay lie. I know of which I speak. He was captured, but there was no necessity for bloodshed, and would not have been were it not that Hutchinson suddenly appeared upon the scene."

"Hutchinson!" cried David. "My God! Do you say Hutchinson was present at the death of Howard? Tell me, Captain, tell me all!"

"Yes, he was present. He played a very prominent part in the capture of Charles Lee and more so, I may

state—in thy brother's death. I commanded the expedition which made this capture. Listen—I believe I am right—Hutchinson thought you were with Lee on that night. Lee did take an Otis out to dine with him, but Howard proved to be the wrong Otis. It was I who received the information from Hutchinson that Lee and the deserter, John Stearns, were dining outside their lines. The surprise and capture was complete, and all was well until Hutchinson suddenly appeared. Ah, I can never forget the look of scorn and contempt which came upon thy brother's face when he saw that man!

“I heard thy brother's cry of treachery—a warning to Lee, and then I saw him leap forward and snatch a pistol from the table and level it at Hutchinson. I saw Lee, simultaneously with the flash of the gun, strike the pistol with his sword. The ball spent wild. My men, surprised by this sudden action, knowing nothing of Hutchinson, fired, and thy brother dropped mortally wounded.

“I was the first to reach his side, and as I lifted his head, heard these, his last words: ‘Tell David how I die—Hutchinson, the dog and traitor—’

“His last words, David, to no one have I ever told them.

“I ordered their host to care for the body. Charles Lee I took to New York a prisoner of war. I cannot prove it, but from what I gained later, methinks this capture was planned by Lee and Hutchinson.”

David, standing like an image during the captain's narrative, remained speechless. His hands clinched. His eyes dimmed. An expression both of anger and remorse hovered across his face. At last he spoke.

“'Tis well, my Captain, that I did not know of this before. I understand thy reason for keeping this within thine own breast. You did right.”

“Lastly,” continued the captain, “I believe you know

that thy capture was planned by Hutchinson. The lady had no part in that plot. She was innocent."

"Thank God—I thought so. Thank God I was right!"

"I have no more to tell. I trust I have committed no wrong in thy sight. I could not tell you sooner. I needed you. I was sick and selfish. Tell me, David, that you have naught against me?"

"My dear Captain," said David, accepting the proffered hand of Bradtock. "You did exactly right. 'Tis far better that I have learned this now. I fear the result had I known before."

"You have now, I contemplate, another duty, David. I trust that you will exact it with justice. I know that you will; that thy God and thy good judgment will not let you err."

"Yes, I find that I have another duty. Carl Hutchinson must pay again. 'Tis not gold. We must meet—'tis his life or mine."

"No man had more a just cause," said Bradtock.

CHAPTER XXIV

During the interval between the time of the departure of Captain Bradtock and David from the Colonies, and the news of the signing of the treaty between Great Britain and the American Colonies, many things had happened in and around Tarrytown, New York.

Aaron Short had remained with Washington. He had suffered with the troops at Valley Forge; had joined in that triumphant attack against the foe which delivered New Jersey from the enemy; had rejoiced with the thousands upon the surrender of Cornwallis.

With the ecstasy of this last great victory still ringing in his soul, yet Aaron was not content. He missed David. Missed him as one would a brother. Aaron had a scheme. He called upon his Commander and returned from this interview with his heart pounding with joy and expectation.

The following week Aaron left for New York. He had requested and had been granted this permission. He was on his way to New York to open up negotiations once more with the British Commander, Henry Clinton, for the release of David Otis, by an exchange of prisoners. Aaron had with him the proper credentials, executed and formally acknowledged by his Commander.

Aaron was aware that Sir William Howe had already departed for England, but he had no knowledge that Bradtock and David had left the Colonies with him.

He arrived safely at New York and was received by the British Commander, but his mission proved fruitless.

After an exhaustive and careful search, the prisoner, David Otis, could not be located. The records disclosed that such a man had been captured and incarcerated

within their lines, but there was nothing further. His release or the disposition of his case, could not be determined from the records at their disposal.

Aaron was discouraged. There was but one last hope. He would find Captain Bradtock; perhaps that English gentleman could give him some information regarding David's whereabouts. This also ended with dismay, for he learned that Captain Bradtock had left with William Howe.

Aaron faced about. There was nothing for him to do but return. Suddenly he was possessed of another idea. He would go and find Hutchinson, and if that haughty snob knew of the disposition of David's case or of his present location, he, Short, would choke it from him. Aaron had long itched to meet Hutchinson. He had in his mind something for Carl which the slightest provocation might release. He wanted to see Carl and he hoped that that assuming gentleman might by some act or word arouse the rancor that had smoldered within him ever since the episode at the Hutchinson home. For that which David had failed to do at that time, Aaron now welcomed.

It was a beautiful day the latter part of October, in the early afternoon, that Aaron rode leisurely along the road in the direction of Tarrytown. He had proceeded for eight or ten miles when he noticed a horseman approaching from the North and, as this traveler gradually drew near, Aaron discovered to his great delight and satisfaction that the horseman was none other than Carl Hutchinson.

As Aaron slowly advanced, he reached into his saddlebag and drew forth a very large pistol.

Carl Hutchinson, mounted on his white stallion, raised his hand as in salute, as he came abreast Aaron, and then a look of startled amazement and chagrin swept over his face. He found himself staring into the muzzle of a very large gun.

"Dismount!" said Aaron.

"Road agent?" asked Carl, with indignation. "I have nothing but the steed."

"Dismount!" commanded Aaron, raising the menacing-looking weapon.

"I beg of you—I—"

"I say, dismount—damn ye!" thundered Aaron.

Hutchinson obeyed without comment.

Aaron was at his horse's head as Carl's foot left his stirrup.

"Ye picket yer nag over yonder," said Aaron, pointing with the gun to the right of the highway.

Carl hesitated, but the minute Aaron came nearer, he immediately started with the horse as directed. Aaron followed.

"I want to talk with ye a minute," said Aaron, as Carl halted at the spot indicated; "just leave the horse and come along."

"What you have to say can be said right here."

"Right ye are, but ye won't hear what I have to say, if ye don't move and be darn quick about it!" And Aaron advanced with weapon raised.

Carl decided hurriedly to comply with this request. The fellow might carry his threats into execution. He had proceeded about fifty feet when Aaron, who was following closely behind, called a halt. The men stood facing each other some distance from the road, and just over the peak of a knoll and from the sight of anyone who might pass by.

Aaron surveyed Carl for some time, a wry smile upon his dark face, and then suddenly advancing, handed Carl the gun, reversing the muzzle as he did so.

Carl took the pistol. Wile and cunning thoughts flashed through his mind, but his countenance bespoke suspicion. He was dumfounded.

"Ye know that gun?" asked Aaron.

Carl recognized the gun. He had last seen it the

evening he gave it to his man, Henry. He stood quietly speculating.

"Waal, say something, will ye?"

"Yes, I have seen this pistol before," Carl replied slowly.

"Yer's, ain't it?" demanded Aaron.

"I believe so."

"Ye don't want no guess. Is it or ain't it?"

"It is," replied Carl, meekly.

"Did ye miss it?" inquired Aaron, with a broad smile.

"At the time, yes."

"Waal, it might have been loaded at that time. I know it isn't now." And Aaron chuckled with delight.

"I have no time for hilarity or foolish scoffing," said Carl. "'Tis time I was on my way. I am in a hurry. Make known thy wants!"

"To the best of my recollection, David Otis was in rather of a hurry once upon a fine afternoon like unto this day. Little did ye care. Now I feel like ye did upon that occasion. Darn mean, eh?"

"What do you want? I tell you I am anxious to be on my way."

"Waal, ye won't be going until I do—mind ye that. Don't get excited. I want to know if ye can tell me the whereabouts of David Otis?"

"I haven't the least idea."

"Sure about that, be ye?"

"Why should I know? I have not seen nor heard of him for months."

"Ye knew the Britishers had him. Didn't ye?"

"Oh, yes, I learned of that some time ago."

"Did ye have anything to do with that business?"

"Now just what do you mean?"

"Darn ye—ye know what I mean."

"Nay, I had nothing to do with his capture."

"Who said anything about a capture? Now I don't believe ye."

Aaron Short from childhood had made his own way. He had fought his own battles. During his span of years he had had many altercations which had terminated in a fistic display. He knew but one way to settle differences and, if necessary, they were settled in this manner. From many encounters he had emerged a victor. He had also suffered defeat, but regardless of the outcome, Aaron was always satisfied.

He had decided to force Carl to fight. If he could make Carl fight he would be content, no matter the result. Aaron disliked to fight a coward. If Carl was one he would have to take a thrashing, and if not, just that more interesting it would be for Aaron. One of them was going to take a good drubbing.

"Whether you believe it or not matters naught to me," replied Carl, with a show of disgust. "I am going!" Carl took the pistol by the barrel and backed slowly away.

Aaron leaped into his path.

"Hold man!" he cried, "I tell ye stay. Yer not going until I do."

"You get out of my way!" cried Carl, raising the pistol.

"Fight, ye fool," stormed Aaron, circling around Carl.

"You let me pass or I'll crack that thick skull of thine," exclaimed Carl, again raising the weapon.

Aaron, however, did not move. He stood his ground, jeering and taunting Carl, and then slowly advanced to force an encounter.

Carl Hutchinson had all those things which go to the making of a man that Aaron lacked. He was polished, educated, and refined, but what he lacked, Aaron had. Short was honest, reliable, courageous, and endowed with a goodly supply of pure brawn. Carl was the taller of the two, and he had a long reach. He was quick, but his wind was short. He was possessed with some sci-

ence for the protection of one's body. He had not followed a plow, or wielded a pick or shovel, as had been the lot of Aaron for the past few years.

Carl fully realized that there was no hope of escape; therefore, as Aaron advanced, he braced himself and made ready to deal his adversary a savage blow.

"Ye had better drop that gun and fight like a two-fisted man before I hurt ye."

"I'll fight as I please. Come on, ye big bully," sneered Carl.

Aaron did come, but the weapon in Carl's hands failed to reach its mark. A sharp cry of pain escaped Carl's lips, as Aaron clutched his swiftly moving arm, doubled it back and at the same time twisted his wrist with such force that the pistol fell from his grasp.

Aaron at once released his hold and stepped back.

"Didn't I tell ye?" he exclaimed, advancing again toward Carl, who met him with an avalanche of blows. Aaron ducked and dodged, and laughed hard, as Carl delivered blow after blow and missed. He grew white with anger as he looked into Aaron's sneering face. His breathing commenced to bother him, and he grew unsteady. Again and again his well-directed, well-timed blows failed to reach the coveted spot. At each time he missed, he could see that jeering face and hear the tantalizing laugh of Aaron.

Carl now was desperate. Suddenly he rushed Aaron. That calm, cool individual quickly stepped aside as Carl lunged forward, and deliberately selecting a spot upon Carl's face, let drive a smashing blow full upon Carl's right eye.

For a moment Carl staggered under the effect of the tremendous impact, then fell headlong.

He did not remain long on the ground. He recovered himself and arose to his feet, expecting as he did so to receive another sledge-hammer smite. The blow did not

come. He regained his composure and looked for his adversary.

Aaron stood a short distance from him, a whimsical smile upon his face and, as Carl turned to meet his gaze, Aaron broke out anew with laughter.

"Methinks 'twas yer rush and not so much my push that jammed yer face. Ye look just a little one-sided across yer nose. Not quite balanced. I reckon I can square ye up all right. I want both yer eyes to look like twins."

"You ought to be fully satisfied. I will admit I'm licked. Will you kindly permit me to go my way?"

"If ye think ye are licked now, then ye are going to be twice licked. That eye I decorated in me behalf. Ye have one left for David's account."

"Come, now, my good fellow," began Carl, "I will pay thee well to go thy way. I think much of thy right arm. Name thy price."

"Nay, nay, keep thy gold. For that which ye have received and what ye have coming, there will be no charge. Make ready with yer guard for I come." With these words Aaron again approached his prey.

"Hold man! Pray, I ask thy mercy, I am—"

Aaron was upon him. Carl again struck out with right arm and left. His right eye was closed. That part of his anatomy, discolored and swollen, was now enormous in size. He could scarcely see, but he accounted for himself nobly the next few seconds. The end soon came.

A very short time thereafter, Aaron helped Carl to the highway. He also made ready his mount and saw that Carl was headed in the right direction.

"Yer nag will get ye home. Might try beefsteak on yer eyes. Good-day, Sir."

Aaron watched him for some time as he rode to the North, and then returning to the location of the fight, he recovered the pistol.

“Might jest as well take this along,” he muttered; “don’t think that fellow will ever want to see it again.” He dropped the weapon in his saddle-bag, mounted, and rode to the South.

CHAPTER XXV

The period of reconstruction had arrived. Trading with the Colonies was renewed. Navigation was restored between the mother country and the Colonies. Other seaports, like Boston and New York, had suffered, but Congress immediately responded to the needs of the people. The government slowly but firmly became stable.

The army quietly disbanded and the troops returned to their farms and other pursuits of livelihood. Great numbers of the Tories abandoned their estates and fled to Canada, where the English government provided for them. Others remained and accepted what the Colonial government gave them in an effort, mutual with the Patriots, to establish trade and industry for their common good.

Carl Hutchinson did not keep the promise he had made in a moment of jest—the promise he was so certain he would never have to fulfill. The government knew nothing about this promise. He had to forfeit all his vast estate. The confiscation crushed Carl. It reduced him to the ranks of the most common. He lost that proud and haughty air. It had not been born of him, 'twas acquired. With this also disappeared the desire for deceit and treachery he had coddled within him for years.

It so happened upon a cool evening in the month of October, the year 1883, that David Otis once again set foot in Boston town and, as if it were so planned, on that evening at Ritchey's tavern, a party of Patriots had gathered. They were seated about the hearth. Dusk had just begun to fall. The crackling fire furnished the needed light.

Ventured one Stanton by name, as he refilled his pipe and lit the tobacco with a dying coal from the hearth:

"Ye say, as yet, ye have no learning of the boy David Otis?"

"Nay," said Isaac. "'Twas less than a fortnight back that Short called. He told me at the time he was in New York, he could not find out a thing about David. No records, no nothing at all. He ventured that he must be dead."

"Such an hypothesis I fail to understand," said Stanton. "Ye say he was taken by the British near New York? If that be true, there certainly ought to be some record of his capture, or some person that could give ye correct information as to what became of him."

"Ye be right, 'tis queer. Short, he find something if it be there, for Short he be anxious about David. I know if he find nothing, no one could!"

"Well, give me a drink, Ike, and I will wend my way homeward," said another, as he arose, stretched, and approached the bar.

Isaac poured out the liquor and as he was about to replace the container, the door opened, and Isaac looked up. The bottle dropped from his hand, and in his haste to greet the newcomer, he also knocked the glass from his customer's hand.

"Great Cats!" cried Isaac; "David Otis—David—David!" and the next moment he enwrapped David in his strong arms. All those present jumped to their feet.

Isaac held David firmly clasped to him while his great bulk shook in convulsion. Then he pushed David from him at arms' length, and scanned his face long and intently.

"God bless you, boy—God bless you," he repeated over and over. "Ye be dead. Ye be alive. We know not what ye be. We think much. Tell us where you been?"

"I will, Ike," replied David; "'tis a long story, but you shall hear."

He related the capture. Told them of the friendly relations with Captain Bradtock; of that estimable gentleman's sickness and recovery; of his return to England in British uniform as an orderly of the captain; of the news of the end of the conflict, and of his departure for America.

"Mighty fine fellow, that Captain," gasped Ritchey, as David finished. "He use me wife with much respect."

David smiled as he thought of Isaac's imprisonment and the guard who was so mean to him.

"Just why ye smile at me, David?" asked Isaac.

"I was thinking, when you mentioned the Captain's kindness to your wife, of the guard, Short. Do you know where he is?"

"Short, sure, he be near Cambridge, on his farm. He get the Tory Wiggins' place. A mighty nice farm."

"Tell me, David," continued Isaac, "do you think the man Hutchinson had to do with thy capture?"

"I have told you all. You have learned all the Captain related to me. I have no reason to doubt him. I believe that Hutchinson was responsible for Howard's death and all which befell me."

"He will have to account to ye, David."

"Yes, Isaac, Hutchinson and I must meet. I am leaving on the morrow to see Short. I also want to find the grave of Howard."

"Ah, poor boy," sobbed Isaac, shaking with emotion. "I am so sorry about him."

"From there," continued David, "I shall go to Tarrytown. 'Tis my life, or that of Hutchinson."

"Ye will win!" cried Isaac, "ye will win, I know! That man, he be too mean to live."

"I may, Isaac, if it be God's will."

Aaron Short was surprised beyond description to see

David. He insisted that he must be with David at the final meeting with Hutchinson.

"Wasn't I there with ye before? Ye know, David, 'tis my account as well as thine."

"Quite true," replied David, "but from what I have learned from you, it would appear that you and Hutchinson have held at least one meeting at which I was not present. I received not so much as an invitation. I must insist, Aaron—I beg of you not to press thy desire further. 'Tis not that I do not want you with me. I would settle all—he and I alone."

"Waal, darn ye—go. I know that ye can thrash him. I will stay at home, but ye are to come back, and mind ye don't let him off like I did, with only a couple sore eyes."

"At such time that I meet Carl Hutchinson, Aaron, it will mean his life or mine, that's all."

A few days later David stood at the grave of Howard. Here he once more listened to the story of Howard's death, corroborated in every detail that told him by Captain Bradtock. The grave bore much evidence of the kindly sympathy and care of the Claytons, being well marked, banked high, with a suitable monument at the head.

David spent a day with the Claytons, and after expressing to them his sincerest thanks and reverence, he bade them a fond farewell and headed to the North.

He had returned to America for the purpose of fulfilling what the captain had termed an obligation which was his, and his alone, to fulfill. He had found Ritchey and Short, and visited the last resting place of his brother. David had but one more duty to perform, but one more call to make. He was impatient over this, his last visit—perhaps his last earthly call.

October, especially the latter part, is the time of year that Nature tries her hand at art. Thus, around and

about the Ward home, the fallen foliage from the trees and vines lay spread like a carpet of many colors upon the expansive lawn.

Darting here and there, searching for the brightest colored leaves, was a child, a little girl just past the age of three. She had light, curly hair and deep blue eyes, and a complexion white and pink, of the daintiest hue, perfectly blended.

Her father, Carl Hutchinson, was at rest upon the veranda of the home, which place they had occupied ever since the government had confiscated Carl's property. Miriam had retained her holdings, as the title thereto remained in her father's name.

A change had come over Carl. A most radical change. Ever since the day he had encountered Aaron Short, and that evening had appeared before his wife with bruised and swollen eyes, the light of day obliterated by those two powerful blows, Carl began to view things differently. That chastisement delivered him from his enemy, no other than the proud, haughty, arrogant, deceitful and boastful Carl Hutchinson. The man within him awoke. The outcome of the rebellion; the loss of his property; the humiliation received from the hands of David's friend, and lastly, Miriam's tears, had wrought wonders. The strain was by far too much. He broke. On that eventful evening he told her all.

Told her of the fight, told her of his past deceit and treachery. He admitted his guilt, and was thankful for the punishment he had received. Carl realized, however, that his debt had not been fully paid.

He watched the child at her play—fearless and free. If he could but balance accounts with David, he could ask no more. He wanted to atone, to be fearless and free. To right this wrong and be happy.

At this juncture, Carl noticed the child had been interrupted at her play by one of the villagers who had stopped to talk to her. The man suddenly saw Carl and

thereupon approached and handed him a note.

Carl read:

"Mr. Carl Hutchinson:

If you are not a coward, as of old, you will meet me at the rear of the old school house, at once. I have selected swords. Give the bearer thy answer.

David Otis."

"You may tell David Otis I will meet him," said Carl. Hutchinson watched the messenger as he mounted and rode in the direction of the town, then he arose, went to the stable and returned very soon with his horse.

The child saw him.

"Papa, papa," she cried, running to him. "Where oo go? Baby go too?"

Carl dismounted, pressed the child to his breast, kissed her tenderly again and again and then placed her upon the ground.

"No," he said fondly, as he patted the curly head; "baby can't go this time. Papa coming right back."

He mounted and rode away, waving his hand to the child, who slowly followed to the highway and there stood watching her father as he galloped further and further away. The image of that little face and tender thoughts of Miriam crowded into Carl's mind as he rode away.

He drew rein at the old schoolhouse and slowly turned into the yard. This was the place where, years ago, Miriam, David and he had attended school. It was now abandoned—weatherbeaten, windows out, and nearly in ruins. Carl rode to the rear and dismounted.

The yard was screened in on three sides by shrubbery, vines and trees of all kinds, the foliage remaining on them bearing the artistic touch of Fall. The grass, yet green, was strewn with fallen leaves of many hues. That

which had served, long ago, as a playground, this bright October afternoon was to serve a far different purpose—a dueling ground for two boyhood companions, a place where one sought toll for the years of treachery and deceit of the other, a place of destiny for either Carl Hutchinson or David Otis.

Seated upon a fallen tree, head bowed and resting upon his hands, with elbows upon his knees, sat David Otis. At his feet lay two swords. Across from him and at some distance a squirrel scolded and chattered at this unwonted intrusion.

As Carl dismounted, David looked up. Carl led his horse to one side and stood silently waiting. David arose.

"I had grave doubts of thy coming," said David.

"I would not disappoint you. I have long awaited thy appearance," replied Carl, extending his hand in greeting.

"Carl Hutchinson," began David, spurning the proffered hand and speaking with force and dignity. "My brother's blood is upon thy hands. I have learned all. You must answer to me for his most untimely death. I care not for the many wrongs I have suffered through thy deceit and treachery. 'Tis Howard's dying words that bring me hither—words spoken, dying words—that I cannot forget nor forgive. I ask in thy presence God's forgiveness should I err in all I may do this day. Carl Hutchinson, 'tis thy life or mine."

"I come not to deny you that privilege," said Carl, "nor did I come to ask that you forgive me. Well I know such a request would not be granted. Nay, you would not listen. You would not believe me. I have committed many a wrong against you, all of which I most sincerely regret. I am ready, Sir, to answer."

CHAPTER XXVI

When David arrived at Tarrytown, he first called upon Squire Warner. That gentleman bade him welcome. He was surprised to see David, for he, as all others, knew nothing of David's whereabouts.

David did not inform the kindly squire of his mission. He wanted to learn from his lips, if possible, something of the married life of Miriam and Carl. He was, therefore, bound to approach this subject with caution, which he did, displaying only a casual interest in that respect. The squire told him much, considerable of which David had already learned.

He told David, as far as he knew, the marriage had been a happy one. Told him of the beautiful child, Constance, and of the proud and lovely mother. He also informed David that Carl was living at the Ward home and how he had lost his vast estate.

David decided, as he rode away from the squire's home, that he must meet Carl upon that day. He would send a message to him demanding he arrange a meeting with him at once. Should he refuse, David felt he would have to call at the home. He disliked to undertake this, but Carl's refusal would demand this action. He accordingly dispatched a messenger and was rather surprised to receive Carl's answer. He left at once for the school.

Carl Hutchinson was a good swordsman, as was his father. From his parent he had been taught the use of the blade. He was considered a master at this art. His knowledge of fencing, and his father's sword, were two things the government had not taken from him. His father's saber hung over the mantel in the Ward home.

He loved this weapon his father had used so dexterously.

"Thy life, Mr. David Otis," thought Carl, "'twould be easy had I that blade."

By the time that Carl arrived at the school, he had fully decided he would defend himself only, that he would not take the life of David Otis. If he succeeded in disarming his opponent, and at such an opportune time failed to follow this advantage with a fatal stroke, he was in hopes that David might foresee his intentions by such an action, and understanding, their differences might be adjusted. How—he did not know. He realized David would fight hard. That he was thirsting for his life. Carl was also aware that by reason of his training, he was by far the better with the weapon of David's choice, and he wondered much at the selection.

David's experience and former training with a sword had not been deficient. Of late he had fenced with Captain Bradtock, who knew much of the art. The Captain had taught David all that he knew, and David had been an apt pupil. David knew that Carl was his equal if not better than he with this weapon, but he was confident he could guard as well as Carl.

David had not, as a matter of fact, given the matter of weapons much thought. A duel to death must be accompanied by dignity. He wanted no noise like a pistol shot. A blade was silent, wicked, and sure. Swords it should be.

The captain had taught David a trick which could be used in an encounter of this nature. It was upon this that David relied to win. Should an opportunity present itself, an opportunity to disarm Carl by means of this trick, David was confident he could best his opponent. Regardless of this, David was positive that right must prevail, and he was right. He fearlessly welcomed the fight.

"Allow me first to return this, a bit of thy property," said David, advancing and forcing into Carl's hand the wallet Captain Bradtock had entrusted to him. "That, Sir, contains the price which you paid Bradtock, to have me conveyed to England, and—in chains. I return it, Sir, as you gave it. I was taken to England, but not in chains. The captain claims that inasmuch as I did not return in manacles, the consideration must have failed, and the gold therefore should be returned. I do so, intact, as I received it—as you gave it."

Carl took the wallet with its contents.

"I take this, Sir," he said, "not for the reason of the failure of the consideration, but as an acknowledgment of my guilt."

David, concealing the surprise manifest by Carl's answer, at once resumed his former position.

"I have learned from Captain Bradtock and the Claytons the truth regarding the death of Howard. Had the traitor Lee known that Howard had a brother, Howard would have lived. I cannot blame Lee, but I do place the whole blame upon you. Lee and you plotted together. Were it not so, you would not have appeared upon the scene to witness my brother's death."

purpose of his capture by the British, which terminated

"I admit a plot, as between Lee and myself, for the in the death of thy brother. For Howard's presence, I alone am responsible."

"Cur! You admit all. You dare not deny before thy God."

"I have spoken."

"I have also learned you planned and executed my untimely capture."

"That will I also admit," replied Carl.

"'Tis little I care for thy trickery. I suffered, indeed, but I care not for the wrongs inflicted upon me. I still live. I ask revenge, only, for the death of Howard. For

that I have come. Carl Hutchinson, you must pay, and a payment means thy life. 'Tis thy life or mine."

"David Otis," began Carl, slowly, calmly and distinctly, "I have come. I would not deny you this opportunity. My life will come far from paying all which you have demanded—all that I justly owe. My life will not compensate you for the suffering and trouble my treachery and deception have subjected you to. I cannot and do not blame you for this attitude you have toward me. I ask no quarter. I will have to defend myself—because I owe, at least, that much to my beloved wife and child. Were I alone—no dependents—I would expose my breast to thy sword unflinchingly, that justice might be done. I have come, David Otis—hearken—to defend—not to take."

"You deceitful ass!" cried David, "thy words are but mockery to my ears. What trick, what artifice, have you to foil my plans? What scheme to cheat me of justice? Surely it cannot be you ask forgiveness?"

"Ask, David, yes, but I cannot expect thy grant. 'Tis but idle talk, this, to you. However should I fall—I die, knowing you will earn the truth of which I speak, the truth, David, from one whom you will believe—from Miriam. I have told her all."

"You lie! You cur, I know you lie!" cried David, stooping and sweeping the weapons from the ground at his feet. "Here, take thy choice. I will not tarry longer. One of us will shortly leave this spot, the other will remain," and he extended the hilts of the blades to Carl.

Hutchinson reluctantly selected one of the swords and stepped back. He examined the blade and then carelessly tested it. Slowly, his eye upon David, he removed his coat and rolled his sleeves.

David followed Carl's preparation, and very shortly the two men stood at position.

"On guard, Sir" cried David.

"Ready," replied Carl.

The sky was cloudless that afternoon, and as the men fought, the sun glistened from off their bright blades. The air was still. The squirrel continued to scold and chatter from his position near the wood. Carl's horse, standing near, whinnied and then remained silent, gazing at the combatants. A flock of crows overhead circled and cawed and at last having found a place, alighted in the trees nearby, where they silently awaited the outcome of the impending tragedy.

The men fought back and forth over the leaf-strewn ground—David always the aggressor, fighting hard, swiftly, but with caution. Carl, ever cool and composed, kept well away from David's rushes and mad thrusts. He guarded himself well, turning aside with ease, again and again, the deadly blade of his anxious, expectant, and dangerous opponent.

On and on they fought. David was desperate. Carl, fighting with perfect control and ease, defending himself with skill which bespoke cunning and ability.

Of a sudden David rushed Carl and, as he did so, a dry stick, which lay buried beneath the leaves and grasses, broke and snapped like a pistol report, under his weight. David was startled. He slipped and for the instant lost control of his blade. Carl, at the moment, thrust his sword forward to ward off the lunge. A cry escaped David's lips as Carl's weapon ripped his shirt and cut deep into the flesh of his left shoulder. Carl was stunned by this sudden action he little contemplated, and he quickly withdrew his blade. David was quick to recover and hastily moved back. A crimson spot appeared immediately upon his shirt and spread rapidly upon his arm. Carl gasped, hesitated, and then stood at ease.

CHAPTER XXVII

The coveted opportunity which a duelist would have welcomed and would have been quick to grasp, that opportunity to dispatch his opponent, had come and had passed, to Carl Hutchinson. He had let it pass. He had deliberately and wantonly failed to follow his advantage. The death thrust that was within his power and under his control he had not delivered. He stood thus, hesitating, as he watched David recover, and saw the look of hate and malice follow that of chagrin, upon his face.

The words of Carl, "I come to defend, not to take," the instant that his life was spared, flashed through David's mind. It could not be. He could not believe it. Nay—Carl had blundered. His life meant naught to Carl. The blood oozing from his wound drove him mad. He was furious. Howard's blood, and now his, had been spilled.

With a startling cry of rage and with renewed energy he again rushed Carl, but his opponent met the onslaught with well-measured eye and a perfect guard. Once more David rushed, and this time their blades clashed. There was a rasping, metallic noise as steel met steel and blade followed blade to the hilt. David's opportunity had at last arrived. The time to put Bradtock's trick in play had come. With almost superhuman strength, followed by a powerful twist and lurch of his arm and body which taxed all his resources, David succeeded in disarming Carl.

As his antagonist's blade whizzed spinning through the air, David quickly drew back his arm for the fatal plunge at Carl's defenseless breast exposed before him.

At that instant a sound, a most peculiar sound, caught the ear of David. The fatal thrust was halted on its mission of death. David turned. He looked. Before him, a look of wonderment and unfathomed amazement upon her face, stood a little girl with light, curly hair, wonderful eyes of blue, and a face the perfect image of the one he loved and adored, and had lost.

"Papa! Papa!" cried the little one. "I find oo, baby find papa."

David Otis cast his weapon to the ground, and with a swift sweep of his arms, gathered the child to his breast. Holding her to him he kissed her again and again.

"O, nice man hurt, papa, 'ook!" and she pointed to the crimson stains upon David's shirt. "O, poor man!" and the little arms clasped tightly about David's neck.

With the child still clasped to him, David turned and faced Hutchinson. The little girl reached out for him and David tenderly placed her in her father's arms.

For a brief moment the two men looked each at the other, and then as if of the same mind, slowly their hands lifted until they met in a firm grip.

"David Otis," said Carl, as his hand tightened upon that of David's, "I have but this to say; you, Sir, are a Man o' Men."

"Carl Hutchinson," responded David, "I thank you for thy words. You did not lie. That I have now learned. I believe in you. By both words and action, you have demonstrated the truth. Thy words, 'I come to defend, not to take,' have asked my forgiveness. Thy actions have merited it. I will forgive and forget."

"Thank God," exclaimed Carl with manifest compassion, and he kissed the brow of the child just under the golden locks. "Come with us to the home, David. Miriam will be joyful to see you."

"I will, thank you," replied David.

Side by side, Constance in her father's arms, they left that field—that field transformed from one of hate, to

one of love and honor. Left their coats lying upon the grass; left their swords, where last they fell. Left all that hate, deceit, jealousy and envy, which had been born and nurtured to maturity, by and through a just rebellion. Left it all and made their way homeward.

Miriam met them at the door. She understood. Sobbing, laughing, crying with relief and with overflowing happiness, she threw her arms about them.

"Oh, David—David!" she cried, "I am so glad to see you. Oh, so glad that you have come. We have watched and waited for you. Watched and waited for this hour. I have prayed, day after day, for you and Carl. God has answered, and now I am happy once more. I have learned all. Carl told me. I forgave him. He has been a good husband and a most wonderful father. We could never be happy until the wrongs to you were expiated. Carl had to atone. He worried much. He has wanted long to make all right. Tell me, David, that you will forgive him. Do this for me, for little Constance, for Carl—and I will ever be happy."

"Forgive, Miriam, I have. I will forgive and forget."

Miriam listened breathlessly and with amazement, as she carefully and most tenderly dressed David's wound, to the narration of the duel, as told by both David and Carl.

"'Twas Constance—little Constance!" she cried, grasping the child in her arms. "You dear, sweet child! God gave to you a wonderful mission, that of uniting us all, once more, with bonds of love and friendship."

The time of the clock was late, but the hours had been short, before they retired that night. Peace, happiness and quiet, again fell o'er the Ward home. Like a dark veil all deceit, mistrust, hatred and jealousy, heretofore created in the soul of man by the demon War, lifted, and the light of Truth covered all.

It was just before the break of day the following morn, that a lone figure moved stealthily and noise-

lessly from one of the chambers in the Ward home. From this chamber the figure entered the large living-room, and paused at an open door listening for a brief period to the deep breathing of those who slept within, then silently crossed the room.

The sun, at this moment, just peeped from above the horizon, and from it a ray of light, penetrating a window, fell upon a small crib in which lay a little curly-headed girl, fast asleep. Gradually this tiny ray of light, creeping across the crib, fell upon the face of the beautiful child.

The figure reached the crib and gazed long and tenderly upon the little, upturned face, and bending low over the bed, kissed the pretty brow; then silently and carefully approached the entrance, noiselessly opened the door, and David Otis passed out into the dawn of a new day.

END.