



## Chapter I

DEAR NABBY

*Bright Venus, in her rosy car,  
Invites to scenes of harmless war,  
Young Cupid lends desire;  
Sweet scenes, which tho' they stop my breath,  
Cause but a momentary death,  
And fans the lover's fire.*

BEING once more in possession of liberty, while of too restless a temper to enjoy its comforts, in domestic repose, I set out in quest of new scenes, and new adventures. Not long had I paced the varied amphitheater of life, ere chance directed my steps to Greenland.

Whether my good or evil genius conducted me thither, at this season, is a problem I cannot even now resolve. Whether I ought to felicitate myself on what befell me there; or, to deplore the consequent events, are mysteries, alike, too deep for my investigation. It so happened that I there saw, and conversed, for the first time, with a young woman whose name was Abigail Kennison, who resided with one William Foss, of that town. Though a widow she was both young and beautiful; her manners soft and engaging, and her personal charms uncommonly attractive; such, at least, did she appear, at that period, in my, perhaps, too partial view. On further acquaintance, find-

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ing her disposition amiable, I did not hesitate to pay her my devoirs, as a lover; during which, being quite a stranger to her and the family, I palmed myself upon both, under the fictitious name of Gideon Garland. Once a week, for three months, I visited, privately, this alluring object of my vows, at the end of which term she unfortunately proved to be pregnant. Having a knowledge of her situation, I grew timorous of consequences, and discontinued my customary visits; though, to conceal nothing, my feelings were greatly wounded by that restraint. My inclination plead strongly in her behalf; for she had in fact, bewitched my fancy, and riveted my affection, in a manner, which no other woman had hitherto been able.

For two long months, from my unmanly dereliction, she waited in patient expectation of my return, without seeking the means of redress; by that time, however, she had discovered my real name, and besides, that I was already married, and had a large family. Upon this unpleasing discovery, she went before a magistrate, and, legally charged me, on oath, with being the father of the child of which she was then pregnant. She then advertised me by letter, that seeing restitution by marriage was out of the question, if I would meet her in Stratham, the place of her former abode, at a time she particularized, the affair should be there settled in almost any manner, I might choose. Accordingly, I sent her word, that I should not fail of attendance in obedience to her summons, and in this I was punctual; but found, to my surprise, that her

honorable proposals terminated in her having an officer who seized me, the moment I entered the house. This treacherous proceeding, as I certainly conceived it, did not a little ruffle my spirits. I had anticipated, no such treatment, and was, therefore, quite unprepared for defense. In a few minutes the officer, in accents of abuse and irritation, requested an explicit declaration of my intentions. "You appear to be extremely knowing folks in business, said I; how indeed am I to settle this?" By paying the money, undoubtedly; or, if you prefer it, by going to jail, replied the officer. "I choose to go to jail, then, and you shall find out whether you have a fool to deal with or not." Having uttered this, I was taken, first, before a magistrate, and then as a legal consequence, carried to Exeter jail, where, as the keeper was seeing me properly disposed of, I jocosely said, "I have come to pay you another visit, Capt. Ladd; but not in a criminal capacity, therefore you cannot put me in irons, this time." Here, however, I stretched the truth. "Yes I can, exclaimed he." "We'll try your hand at it" repeated I. At this he gave vent to several reproaches; but, after blustering awhile, thrust me into the best jail.

Being thus confined, my mind was busily exercised in trying to devise ways and means to avoid paying for a child, which, nevertheless, I thought really my own. Though I really entertained a passion, however criminal, for the poor girl; yet I resented the rough treatment, I had lately received at her instigation; and resolved, how

well soever I had deserved that treatment in fact, to lay a plan, to requite the transaction. Many were my serious reflections, on this knottiest of subjects; but still the proper measures to be pursued did not so readily occur. At last however, I conceived, that, in case, I could bring the girl to settle, and take my security, while in prison, I should, in no wise, be compellable to discharge the security (in which, perhaps, I calculated without my host) or, if no other advantage accrued, I should obtain, at least, the privilege of absconding, which might serve my turn altogether as well. I concluded, therefore, to send her a letter, the first opportunity, with an offer of settlement either with herself or friends. But, as it happened, I was fortunately saved this trouble, for on the third day of my imprisonment, two of the Selectmen of Stratham made me a visit, as well in behalf of the complainant, as of the town itself. After a few cursory observations, it was asked, what I allotted to do in relation to my imprisonment. "Have you authority to settle, demanded I, "Yes, our power is sufficient, as may appear by these papers." Accordingly, knowing I had a horse in Exeter, and supposing, perhaps, I might own other property, they offered to discharge me on my giving an obligation for forty pounds, lawful money. I acceded to this, and the jail doors being opened, they introduced a table, paper and ink, to conclude the business; but while this was transacting, the gates were closed upon us all. A note of hand was then written for forty pounds, which I signed; and they, on their side, gave me an acquittance against all further de-

mands. This done, the doors were again set open, and I was informed, that I was at liberty to depart, when I saw fit. I marched out with the rest, and was ushered into the sitting room, to talk the affair over, further; and in the meantime, to share, in their honorable company, a bowl or two of grog; a matter of course on these occasions. As we sat drinking and chatting over the liquor, I said to them, in a rallying way, "Now that the business is so far compromised, who shall pay for this bye-blow, you or I." "Who but yourself?" cried they. "Not so, Gentlemen, by your leave, retorted I; for, let me tell you, a prisoner's obligation is irrecoverable in law, and consequently void." "Think you as much (quoth one of them) by my troth, I will have that question decided in a few minutes." Without addition of a syllable more, he suddenly left the house, with his colleague, and away they hied to confer with a certain gentleman of the profession, residing at Exeter. Having stated facts, shown my obligation and requested his opinion, they received, for their consolation, as they themselves acknowledged, a repetition of the doctrine, that I had so lately thundered in their ears. The obligation, he assured them, was invalid for that, I might plead duress, at the time of making it, in abatement of any action they could bring; so that, on the whole, he advised their compromising with the complainant, poor Nabby, in the best manner possible.

With this displeasing answer they posted back to the prison, not a little chagrined at having overshot themselves thus, but finding it too late to mend a bad bargain,

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they concluded to let it remain as it was, so mounted their nags, and set out for the town of Stratham. How the difficulty was adjusted with Nabby, I do not remember to have made inquiry.

Directly upon their departure, I called for my horse, discharged the bill of keeping, and returned to my family, feeling no small exultation, at the kind issue of an affair, which in the outset seemed to threaten me with long imprisonment and great perplexity.

Scarcely had three days elapsed, before curiosity enticed me to revisit the comely Abigail, though I still felt a degree of indignation at my late rough usage. I was desirous of an interview, to learn the drift of her late conduct; and to see in what manner she stood affected at the fruitless termination of her process. I knew not but this might be the last visit she would ever receive from me.

When I entered her presence, I found her absorbed in tears, and apparently in much trouble and affliction. I was both surprised and softened, at the sight of her distress. No sooner did poignancy of grief permit utterance, than she gave vent to her complaints in strains the most pathetic; a faint specimen of which follows.

“Unfeeling man, (exclaimed she) your cruelty has undone me; my peace and happiness are destroyed, forever! Why, to compass my ruin, did you conceal your present marriage, your real situation in life? Why betray me with false promises, not in your power to perform? Had

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I been apprised of your conjugal connections, nothing could have bribed my consent to the lewd intercourse we have been guilty of, nor should temptations have allured me from the path of virtue and decency! But now, alas! the fatal die is cast; my wretchedness is complete and remediless; my reputation blasted forever, and destitute am I left of all earthly comfort. . . .”

Here sighs and tears, intervening, obstructed her broken accents, and she was silent. The sight of her misery gave my heart a sympathetic pang, and sighs of compassion escaped from my swollen bosom. At that moment, I had made with cheerfulness, any sacrifice, however painful or great, to have lessened her distresses, or contributed to her peace of mind.

“Calm those fears, and cease those unavailing complaints, I beseech you, (cried I, taking her fondly by the hand) and believe me at all times your devoted friend. Believe me yet inclined, notwithstanding the trivial circumstance that has obstructed our harmony, to render you every assistance in my power. My heart is not formed of such obdurate materials, as to be insensible to your misfortunes, nor has my former love sustained the smallest diminution. On the contrary, most joyfully would I remove, to the extent of my abilities, all anxiety from your breast; most gladly, contribute to the advancement of your felicity.\* . . . ”

\* This preposterous conversation has been cut by about one-half. Of course, the author was merely trying his hand in the style of 18th Century romances.  
—E.P.

Having thus disclosed our thoughts to each other, we made a firm and faithful agreement to flee away, in concert, to some sequestered spot, far from the reach of those who might be able to molest us, or should be opposed to our union. However, as cold weather was just at the door, we thought fit to postpone departure, till the spring ensuing.

In this way did we adjust all former grievances, and heal every subject of uneasiness. And now, that the storm of her passions had subsided, her mind grew calmer by degrees, till at length it recovered its accustomed serenity; this was an event which brought pleasure to my heart. . . .

Parting from the woman of my heart, I returned home, full of the thoughts of my novel resolution, but anxious, at the same time, to keep the whole affair a profound secret, till I could carry it into complete execution. Meanwhile I paid my mistress a number of visits, through the course of the winter, and made all suitable provision for her approaching illness. If I happened to move the subject of our intended departure, a momentary dejection would sadden her countenance, and some expression of reluctance escape from her lips. Her scruples were of the conscientious kind, as she appeared to be apprehensive, that my family would be injured by our elopement.

In the course of the winter I made a tour to Fairfield, a town lying northwardly of Pigwacket, and as land was cheap in that quarter, I pitched upon it as the place of our

future retirement, should my paramour be disposed to attend me thither.

With design to know her mind more fully on that important question, I paid her a visit early in the spring, found her in health, and was presented with the first pledge of our mutual love. No sooner had we retired, than I addressed her, to the following effect. "My dear Nabby! I have now come, on the wings of love and impatience, to visit you for the last time, as I trust, ere we shall bid adieu to these unkindly shores. I have presumed to call you mine, and it is a privilege I claim by all the ties of love and tenderness. The object of my present visit is to converse with you, the real mistress of my heart, and to know your mind more fully on the subject of our intended expedition. In a few days, if I meet with no obstruction on your side (which heaven forbid) I shall be in preparation for the commencement of our journey. I have considered that it may be best to repair to the town of Fairfield, because I have friends in that place, who are ready to receive us; there we may reside, unexposed to the shafts of the busy and revengeful. May I flatter myself with no demur on your part, or must I feel the pangs of disappointment, in a matter so near my heart?" . . .

[The rest of their high-flown talk is omitted.]

Thus having arranged with the delight of my eyes, our whole plan of procedure; I hasten to mention, that the next morning I returned home, and, with all due secrecy,

made the necessary preparations for departure. Within the time, prefixed, I was at her habitation in Stratham, with my horse and a cart and wheels, for, in conscience, I could not dignify my homely vehicle with the appellation of chaise. She was soon ready with her baggage, and we set off conjointly, she in the cart, but myself on foot, in the capacity of driver.

I passed with the carriage through Lee, to take in a few articles, as yet there, in the hands of a trustee; this, however, was a miscalculation, for, of necessity, I must now pass near my own house. My wife, too, had gained some inkling of our meditated elopement; wherefore, being much irritated, she flew out of doors in a paroxysm of passion, and exclaimed with much volubility, "I have often heard of hell upon trucks, but never had a sight of it before now." To this most righteous invective I made no reply, but, leaving her in the height of her philippics, drove onward with great velocity, till quite out of sight and hearing of the family.

The distance from Stratham to Fairfield is one hundred and thirty miles, and it was our intention to remove thither, without useless loitering upon the passage. While this lengthy migration was performing, fortune bequeathed not a single indignant frown, nor played us one antic trick; on the reverse, our whole tour was but a scene of varied recreation. We proceeded by slow and easy stages, and received, from every quarter, the kindest hospitality on the road. Two whole weeks were consumed

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in this journey; but at last we had the satisfaction to reach the desired harbor, in prime spirits, and to put up at the house of Joseph Jackson, whom I regarded as a peculiar friend.

As Fairfield was at that period but thinly inhabited, the best land was obtainable, on very moderate conditions. Hard by my place of residence, was a tract, containing one hundred and seventy acres, for sale, of a superior quality. As I intended to settle in this quarter, I disposed of my horse, and every other article I could spare, and purchased that valuable tract. After which acquisition, I made no useless delays, but proceeded heartily to work, at felling trees and clearing land. In this business I made so rapid a progress, that my neighbors assured me I should soon have a good farm. My prospects continuing to brighten, I built a house, resolving to sit down contentedly for life, and bid adieu to roving forever.

With my new companion, whose mental endowments were excellent, and whose disposition was extremely agreeable, I now lived in love and harmony, enjoying more real quiet, than I had seen for many years before. Each day added to the flattering probability, that Fairfield was to become the requiem of my toils. I saw nothing now to blight my hopes or disturb my tranquillity, except the fears I yet harbored, lest haply I might lose my land by prosecutions for former miscarriages. To remedy this imaginary evil, I laid a plan to save my purchase, by con-

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veying it, through the medium of a deed, to Jackson, my near neighbor, and, as I then supposed, firm friend.

I conferred with him, on the subject, told him my apprehensions, and the resolution I had formed of putting my land, for safety, into his hands, as into those of a friend, in whom I could repose unlimited confidence. He approved of the calculation, and promised to be faithful in whatever trust I might choose to invest him. Accordingly, without further reflection, and even without exacting counter security, I gave him a good deed of my whole land, which he was to reconvey to me at an hour's warning.

After this transaction, having a mixture of concerns to adjust, at Lee, and Newmarket, the place of my nativity, I made an excursion to those parts, and there collected a number of small debts, which had been a long time due. After this, I negotiated sundry other important matters, and bade farewell to all my friends, not expecting to revisit them for some time to come.

Departing hence I made the best of my way homeward, till, on the path, I met with a vagabond Frenchman, who persuaded me to help him steal a brace of fat sheep. Just as we had dressed them, the owner caught us in the fact, and obliged us to refund two other live sheep, and pay him exemplary damages: This scandalous piece of business impeded my journey for several days.

But another mishap, far more grievous than the one just related, befell me at this juncture; for I must here

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relate, that while I was absent from Fairfield, a man, called Squire Dow, went to that town with a pretended sheriff named Allen, in quest (as he said) of a horse, stolen by Henry Tufts, from Dow's father. In searching for my property, he heard of the conveyance I had made of my land, therefore, went and requested Jackson to give him a quit claim, bidding seventy-five dollars, by way of inducement; but threatening to drag him to jail, in event of his non-compliance. Jackson, disliking the requisition, persisted in refusal one whole day; but, being ignorant of the affairs of law, he, at last, was so far intimidated and wrought upon by Dow's threats and persuasions together, that he gave him a deed of my whole land, for which he received seventy-five dollars, the gratuity promised.

Dow's greediness was far from being satiated by this acquiescence; for he next repaired, with his engine of iniquity, Allen, to my dwelling-house, where those remorseless knaves, in spite of all my housekeeper could say, or do, to the contrary, pillaged it of every valuable article; and, without legal authority, sold the whole at vendue, in which they were assisted by one Jesse Barker, who bought a part of the goods.

Dow was now about to decamp; but the people of Fairfield, supposing I should hear of the catastrophe, and not return; insisted on Dow's conveying my housewife to Stratham, her former residence, or, at least, some part of the way thither. To satisfy their murmurs he consented,

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though reluctantly, and set out with her for Conway, in Pigwacket; between which town and Fairfield there was then a large tract of woods, twenty-four miles in length, without a single inhabitant. As it happened the way was rough, and our travelers so belated, that encamp they must, all night, in the wilderness. Having whiled away the sleepless hours till morning dawn, Dow, with some others arose from the dewy couch, and renewed his journey; leaving Allen, who was unready to start, to conduct Abigail to Conway. As the gentleman last named (if the appellation, when applied to him, be not a profanation of terms) had a few amorous ingredients in his composition, he showed a vehement inclination, before resuming his journey, to dance Sallanger's round\* with his tempting charge, seeing he had her alone in the bushes. Each art was tried, and every method attempted to win her consent, but she as constantly resisted his advances. At last, finding her inexorable, and that bribes and entreaties were alike fruitless, he grew outrageous, and drawing out his knife, swore he would finish her on the spot, if she obstructed the gratification of his wishes. Unmoved by these menaces, she was virtuously steadfast in her refusal, till Allen, whose ardor knew no bounds, caught hold of his intended prey, and endeavored by main force, to rifle those charms, which he despaired of tasting by

\* Farmer and Henley, in *Slang and its Analogues*, trace this circumlocution to "Sallenger's Round,—a loose ballad and tune *tempus Elizabeth.*"—*E.P.*

other methods. His female opponent made the best possible resistance, and in the long struggle, received upon her fair bosom two cuts from Allen's knife. The scene was horrid in the extreme, but the hasty ravisher, struck at the sight of blood, as it issued amain from the wounds he had inflicted, and thinking too, that her fortress of virtue was impregnable, desisted from his ungodly undertaking. Allen, however, was much chagrined at the mortifying rebuff, while the injured fair, her spirits ruffled, and strength exhausted, sat down at a distance. Tears fell from her eyes, but, after the respite of a minute of two, she arose to take the horse, wishing to abandon the detested spot. Allen prevented her, swearing he would leave her to perish in the wilderness, as a punishment for her obstinacy. She was vastly agitated, insomuch that the ruffian was afraid to execute his menaces, and finally, gave her the horse while he went on foot, in which order they advanced to Conway.

She applied immediately, to the next Magistrate, complained of Allen's violence, and took out a warrant against him. A number of men turned out to assist in taking the culprit, but did not overtake him, till he had reached Eaton, where they found him at a grist-mill, waiting while his horse should champ a feed of corn. A sharp conflict ensued. Allen defended himself resolutely with his knife, and cut the hand of the foremost assailant, then darting through the midst of them, he made off, like a sturdy fellow, toward the thickets. The wounded man, pur-

sued, with a cudgel, overtook and knocked Allen down, swearing he should surrender or die. Others running up to the combatants, Allen was secured, and, presently after, conducted to the main road in Eaton.

Here I met them on my passage from Newmarket. Dow, observing me, stepped up with two of his myrmidons, saying, "I will secure you." Accordingly, they took me prisoner, and hurried me away into the woods; it being their drift to prevent my yielding succor to my mistress, or being present at Allen's examination and trial. In this manner was I harassed and bamboozled, by those insidious knaves. Meantime, my faithful female, indignant at such treatment, like a true amazon, mustered seven or eight men, and placing herself at their head, sallied out for my rescue. Dow, at sight of those people, drew out a pistol, and presenting it to my breast, swore he would blow me through, if I moved a single step. My blood boiled at the tyrannical mandate, yet prudence restrained me, till my rescuers should have gotten within shot; but no sooner did this happen, than, by a sudden coup de main, I knocked the pistol from Dow's hand, and hurled it toward my friends. The heroic Nabby seized the pistol, and advancing toward Dow, (virago like) protested she would shoot him with his own weapon, if he did not instantly set me free. Dow refused, declaring I was his prisoner, and threatening, with the utmost severity of the law, his annoyers, should they attempt the smallest interference. At this moment

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one of the company running up, smote Dow upon the back of his hand with a fusee, and fractured three of the bones; this was a decisive blow, and put an end to the contest.

Having regained my liberty, we were preparing to set off for the Justice's house, with a view to be present at Allen's trial; but we had not proceeded ten rods, ere obliged to halt on Dow's account, whose hand grew so painful, he could proceed no further. I undertook the office of surgeon, seeing no other was near, and replaced the bones, in the best order possible, binding up the wound with a linen handkerchief. This done, we all repaired to Captain Wood's, in Eaton, where we found Allen in custody.

Here my companion gave me a particular detail of the mischief perpetrated by Dow and Allen, in their stripping me of all the property I possessed on the face of the globe, and of the shocking treatment that she herself had particularly sustained from the hands of Allen. Had I ever rendered my despoilers any injury, had I given them cause of complaint, I could now have borne, less indignantly, their nefarious conduct; but such was not the case, for in truth, I never was principal or accessory in stealing horse or other property from Dow or his father, during my existence. At the diabolical devices, then, of Dow and Allen, I felt the utmost indignation, and threatened both with plenary vengeance, the moment I should be at liberty to take them to task. Allen could expect no

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lenity by reason of his atrocious attack upon Nabby, he was, therefore, quite anxious to compromise that part of the tragedy. To this end, he made us sundry proposals; but, at last, offered his horse, saddle and bridle, which, after some consultation, we accepted, and gave him a discharge in full.

This being settled, we went forward to Fairfield, to look after the wreck of our affairs there, and to visit Jackson, who had betrayed, so preposterously, my ill-placed confidence. I wished, among other things, to be thoroughly satisfied, whether he had really intended roguery, or not. On meeting, I reproached him with his venality, his perfidy, in bartering away my land for a song, miserably sung; demanded the seventy-five dollars he had received of Dow, and intimated my expectation of further reimbursements; but, to my great surprise, he refused paying even the paltry sum I demanded. The case was, by no means, even dubious; no remedy, beyond expostulation, was left me, for I had neglected counter security, when I gave him the deed. In a word, as my ill fortune would have it, I finally lost my land, and got nothing therefor, it being a clear case, that my credit was at too low an ebb at court, to undertake the prosecution of Jackson or Dow.

However, as my companion in sadness was legal owner of all the goods sold at vendue, she brought an action against Jesse Barker, for taking them from her house, and it justly cost him a good horse to compromise the

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affair. I must also take notice, that a short time after this, Dow disposed of my [land?] for five hundred dollars, and that, in fact, it has mortified my feelings, even to this day, to see into how excellent a farm it has been made.

Very possibly (do I sometimes exclaim) might that farm have yet continued my own, but for the folly and treachery of a pretended friend. O! truth, probity, justice! were you visible to mortal eyes, how captivating would be your charms! On the contrary, what a frightful figure do fraud, fallacy and deception compose! The poet and philosopher have exerted their ablest powers in eulogy of the former, and in showing the horrid nature of the latter! those are, indeed, the props and ornaments of society; these, the plagues and curses of human life! !

## Chapter II

### "GADDING ABOUT QUACK-LIKE"

*Accepto, claduenda est janua, damno,  
When the steed is stolen, shut the stable door.*

[Financially ruined, and sustained only by the love and sympathy of Nabby, Tufts leaves Fairfield. They go to Norwich, Vermont, where he practices Indian medicine, as well as the black art of magic. Difficulties, legal and other, cause him to remove to Bennington; thence to Pownal. He describes himself as "gadding about quack-like."]

While residing at Pownald, I made an excursion to Waterbury in Connecticut, and put up for the night at a new tavern, just opened in that town. The landlord had lately moved into the house, but not having brought home the whole of his furniture, I was obliged, much against my will, all may suppose, to lodge in the same room with a young woman, who was a guest there, as well as myself. I had been in bed about one hour, when, in the adjacent room, I heard a rough voice vociferating loudly, "God d——n it! where is my axe?" I was greatly alarmed, at the exclamation, thinking some mischief most certainly intended. I listened, but the bustle without, continuing,

with a clangor, ill suited to alleviate my apprehensions, finally, much like a coward to be sure, sprang out of bed in my then situation, and pushing up the window, attempted to jump through, but my linen being caught by a nail, I was held fast in the passage. The young woman screamed, as all pretty women will, "murder," when instantly the door of our apartment flew open, and in bolted with wildness of aspect, the landlord, to enquire the cause of the uproar. Instead of answering queries, I demanded, the moment I could disengage myself from the window) what he meant by calling for his axe at that late hour. He replied, that having taken several of his children into bed, they had so besmeared him from head to foot that he had been hunting for an axe to make a fire by which to cleanse himself. Repeating this, he left us; wherefore, the mystery being thus solved, I returned quietly to my lodging. But the young woman's fright, as was also natural, subsided not. She appeared to be still more alarmed as the danger disappeared, and refused to be soon comforted, beseeching me, in accents of terror, to protect her from harm. I assured her she had nothing to apprehend, for that the noise had been occasioned by a mere blunder of my own; yet, if she deemed herself unsafe, I advised her to sleep, for better security, in the same bed with me. To this she made some demur; yet, soon after, as I wished, embraced the proposal; and to say truth, which I always intend, I was as highly pleased with the person of my fair associate, during the residue of the night, as I was

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anxious to obliterate an idea of the terrifying adventures of the evening.

The next morning we arose early from our delicious banquet, and, not regarding the invitation of the host, to stay to breakfast, called for our horses and immediately departed. On her way, I escorted my new acquaintance several miles, but before parting, invited her into an inn, and gave her breakfast, then bade adieu, and journeyed toward Pownald, meeting with nothing worth recital till I reached home.

Soon after this, I removed with my partner Nabby, and two children, to Wallingford in Vermont, where we abode some time. Here I procured a habit, befitting a doctor of physic, and set out on foot to make a tour through the country. Roving along I came to a place near Number four, where I halted at an inn, and was presently joined by a female guest, who had fortunately requested lodgings for the night. With this miss, who was indeed amiable, I soon scraped acquaintance, and so contrived matters, that one bed sufficed for us both until morning; I then attended her in quality of a lover, to her father's house, seven miles distant. Here certain seeming casualties protracted our courtship for the length of eight days, at the end of which I forsook my clysium by bidding the young lady farewell for the present. Hence I prosecuted my journey in a circuit toward home, and the first night brought me to a tavern, occupied by a beautiful young and debonair widow. Finding this wom-

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an approachable, I made immediate love to her cheek, as delays are dangerous, boasted of my great riches, and, to speak all in a word, obtained her favor to the utmost latitude of my wishes. Having dallied in her company two nights, I took my leave with assurances of a speedy return, and straightway revisited my Abigail.

At the end of two weeks I paid the blooming widow another visit, and was most cordially received. In fine, we agreed upon marriage. But on my urging the declaration, when I might hope for its consummation, she replied, that to save the speech of people, it was her mind to cut the matter short; so we named a time, in which I was to come and stay with her, till the nuptial ceremonies should be over. Having settled the preliminaries with this agreeable woman, and partaken largely of her favors, I departed; but it was not my intention, nor in fact, did I ever happen, to set eyes on her more. The above is one of those unhallowed transactions, which though they please some readers, should afford no kind of satisfaction to the perpetrator, in the retrospect; of a truth, this and parallel instances of infidelity and deception fill me with shame and remorse, whenever they occur to mind.

On my way home, I passed, one evening, near a certain farm house, where seeing some clothes hanging upon a line, I ventured up, and grasped a man's shirt. At that instant a young woman came out to strip the line; but not finding the shirt, she cried out to her mother, "I can't

find grandfather's shirt." "No matter, said the mother, you will find it in the morning." Knowing, however, she would experience a disappointment, I hastened along, and made out to reach home the next day.

Soon after, I commended to my partner a speedy removal to Connecticut, or New York, alleging, as the cause of my wishing to reside in one of those States, that I had friends and connections in both. As she expressed entire resignation to my better judgment, I packed up our scanty all, and with the family, consisting of my temporary wife and two children, directed my course to Connecticut, but finding in that State no situation quite to our liking, I continued roving, till we had penetrated beyond the middle of New York.

My finances, by the time of finishing this expensive tour, were brought to the very lowest ebb, so that to support myself and family, with any sort of decency, required diligence, dexterity and finesse. Mauger all care, our straits were sometimes pressing; yet, with much cheerfulness, I exerted every nerve, the better to sustain the woman of my heart, and the tender offspring of our mutual love.

In no one place did we abide long at a time, but followed a straggling, irregular life, till heartily sick of so many unceasing migrations.

One day, as I was traveling to pick up a small matter of money by doctoring, I happened to approach a well-looking house; when, feeling a degree of fatigue, I went

in, though merely with an intent to rest my weary bones, for a few short minutes. Here I learned that the man of the house was very low in health, having been confined to his chamber with a lingering illness, for a long time. On requesting to see the invalid, I was introduced into his apartment, and after a short discourse, forgot not to intimate my profession as a doctor. Hearing this, the specter of a man desired me to feel his pulse, and communicate what I thought of the nature of his disorder. I did so, and hinted, that by exposing himself to cold, unwholesome weather, and the noxious damps of nightly air, he had contracted so vicious a habit, that he never could shake off, (unless by great care) the effects of his imprudence. He asked if I could supply him with anything sanative in his situation. I told him I could; and immediately gave him a variety of medicines, with instructions for their application. He then enquired if I had received no item of his situation prior to my arrival at the house. I answered in the negative; for, indeed, I had heard no more of the man than the bare mention of his name, as Doctor such a one; but by that clue I had drawn conjectures as to the nature of his disease. Finding me, at length, about to depart, he requested my bill; but I let him know I should submit that entirely to his own generosity. After a short pause, he insisted upon knowing my demand, though, he said, he had made up his mind from which he should never swerve. I was still reluctant; yet, as he seemed so urgent for my naming a sum,

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I told him, he might give me about a dollar. "Twelve, said he, will be little enough; do, my dear, (speaking to his wife) take them from my bureau, and present them to the gentleman." I was really unwilling to receive so large a compensation for a service costing me so little; but he insisted upon my taking the whole, saying his own calling of a long time had been similar to mine and that my account respecting his frequent exposure to intemperate weather, and nocturnal effluvias, had been literally true. Thanking the gentleman for his liberality, and wishing him a speedy recovery, I took my leave, and a while after, had the satisfaction of hearing that my patient had regained a complete state of health, and was practicing physic as formerly.

For a number of months back my chief earnings had been derived from medical channels, and I may here say, with propriety, that my experience in medicine, however small, afforded me frequent relief, when destitute of all other resources. My amiable companion, at this period, grew discontented with our itinerary mode of life, and was so importunate for my returning nearer to the place of her nativity that I even acceded to her wishes, and removed back, to Connecticut first, and soon after to Marblehead, in the Bay State.

### Chapter III

#### THE HANGMAN DRAWS NEAR

*Oft, when incautious man forebodes no ill,  
But fondly dreams of greater blessings still,  
Does keen affliction mark him for its prey,  
And as a besom, sweep his joys away.*

IN Marblehead I hired a room in a house belonging to Lawyer Sewall, and having purchased some apothecary's drugs, and gathered such a farrago of roots, herbs, barks, etc. as clearly entitled me to the reputation of a pharmacopolist at least; I commenced business upon a more extensive scale than heretofore, visiting many patients, and having employment both from high and low. With so much diligence did I attend to my appropriate functions that I cleared, one time with another, at least three dollars per day. This tide of success remained stationary the whole time of my employment at Marblehead, which was nearly six months, and the fame of the notable cures I effected extended to no small distance.

Thus was I prospered at this period in all my lawful undertakings, and meant to pursue the same, still in a way of truth and uprightness, not once dreaming of the fatal calamities now in embryo and which I was on the eve of suffering; calamities neither to be avoided nor procrastinated.

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My luckless journal has now arrived at that dread epoch of my life, by me never to be forgotten; when the most trying event, or rather tissue of events, of my checkered existence, received their unwelcome birth and configured me a devoted victim to woes unnumbered and bordering upon the confines of death. Although particular remembrance of those disastrous scenes are painful in the extreme, and my lacerated mind recoils at their recollection, yet a just regard to truth compels me to lay them before the patient reader.

In the spring of the year 1793 I bought of a John Stewart one silver tablespoon and five teaspoons of the same metal, (would to God I had never set eyes on them or him!) He told me he found them in clearing out a cellar, as he came from Philadelphia. Stewart being bare of clothing I supplied him with a fustian coat and pair of stockings by way of payment and thought no more of the transaction.

My little family made daily use of the spoons; but one morning, while I was eating breakfast, a young woman entered my apartment, who happened to espy and know them. Leaving the house away she posted to the former owner, Daniel Jacobs, of Danvers, and informed him of the circumstance. My apprehension was the immediate consequence of this. I was presently convened before Esq. Sewall, and questioned as to the manner of my acquiring the articles; my answer to the court was that I had bought them of one John Stewart. For this man,

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then, immediate search was made; he was found, brought forward, and examined, but his testimony was hardly so explicit as I had wished; however, it amounted pretty nearly to a confession that he had sold me the spoons. Thus far all was right, and I thought myself in expectation of a ready acquittal, as soon as Stewart should be brought to a proper acknowledgment of the truth, which, saving self crimination, I expected he would. But a certain sheriff, (who was, as was generally the case, no friend of mine) being present, and fearing, I conclude, that Stewart would confess all, to his own detriment without doubt, called him aside to sift, as I then thought, something more from the witness. What their private conference was, I know not, but Stewart immediately took leg bail and made his escape; never after was it, most unfortunately, in my power to investigate the place of his retreat.

By the above and other proceedings it was plain that my adversaries were contriving to fasten upon me the crime of burglary, in respect of Jacobs' house, of which enormity, God knows, I was then, as I am now, entirely innocent. I had no other witness than Stewart whose testimony could assist me in the least; I could, therefore, make no further defense; and the shocking result of the whole was my commitment to Salem jail, there to abide trial at the sitting of the next supreme court.

My housekeeper, Nabby, however adulterous our connection, was deeply afflicted at this most unlucky turn of

my affairs. How piercing to my heart were her complaints, her tears and lamentations! With what infinite regret did I leave, at this fatal period, her amiable society, and that of our innocent and beloved children, in exchange for the dreary mansions of a jail! But fate, cruel fate, had thus ordained the series of events, and to its rigid decrees I must submit of necessity.

Our parting scene was tender, was affecting, far beyond my feeble skill of utterance. Scarce did the smallest ray of hope soothe my imagination, that the exulting joy would return to me, of participating again in the cares or the comforts of my little family; but on the contrary, gloomy presages of the nameless miseries awaiting, erected their dark dominion over the strongest powers of my fancy.

The sheriff, named above, led me to the horrid mansion pointed out for my present reception; and when the grating bolts announced a close, an insuperable bar, "seem'd plac'd 'twixt happiness and me."

Ten desponding days I lingered in "durance vile," without a straggling ray of hope to beam on my benighted mind; but at the end of those days of torment, I received a visit, welcome, though at the grates, from a man and woman of former acquaintance. They purposely gave me much verbal abuse; but, at the same time, furnished me privately with two compass saws, a screw auger, and gimlet; and having rendered me this capital

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and unexpected service, took their leave by bidding me "a speedy passage to the gallows."

This unexpected turn of fortune in my favor, so far removed disconsolate reveries that with the implements I fell briskly to work in the sanguine hope of cutting a passage through the walls of the prison. After a tiresome operation, I brought the process near to its completion; when unluckily, at a critical moment I was betrayed by a negro prisoner who informed the keeper of my design.

My removal to Ipswich jail, the strongest, esteemed, in the county, was the consequence of this disaster, but I had the address, as I thought fortunately, to secrete a compass saw between the outer and inner soles of my shoe. I had been cooped in this latter prison scarce twenty-four hours ere I began a resolute attack upon the grates, and so very rapidly drove my purpose that, in three days I sawed off all the irons appertaining to one of the windows. My success thus far had been brilliant; everything seemed to concur in favoring my escape, insomuch that I fixed upon the next evening for breaking bulk. How did my heart leap at this juncture! how palpitate after that liberty which I thought myself on the verge of realizing! again, with what rapture did I anticipate the pleasing felicity which, in some secluded spot, I might enjoy in the arms of my dear mistress! How vexatiously mortifying then was my disappointment when I saw my plan of escape once more defeated. The keeper had made discovery of the whole; at first I knew not

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how, yet afterwards learned that to one, Lumber, a shop-lifter, were my thanks due for the revelation of the secret.

The prison keeper rebuked me sharply for the mischief done to the jail, and then ordered my removal into another cell, of superior strength to the former. Now, as a punishment for late misdemeanors, and for better security, I was strongly handcuffed and chained by one foot to the floor. Fortunately, however, I still retained my little saw, and the day of trial drawing near, I spent no time heedlessly, but fell industriously to work, and cut through my shackles in such a peculiar way that I could put them off and on at pleasure. Thus was I at liberty to explore the limits of this horrid cell; but, on research, it proved so invincibly strong that most people, I think, would have abandoned the thoughts of attempting its fracture, deeming the task altogether romantic. But, as I had learned by long apprenticeship to encounter any difficulties where was visible the least prospect of success, so now, with patient pains, I began the elaborate process of digging through the floor. This was a tedious undertaking, by means of the interruptions I experienced continually, not only from casual visitors but also from the prisoners themselves, who obliged me to use extreme caution as the least disturbance in my cell was a sufficient token for alarm.

I was thus critically circumstanced; yet, in spite of the many obstructions that environed me on all sides, I succeeded so far in the course of a week, by dint of mere

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perseverance, as to drill a hole quite through the flooring. Its circumference was ample, and afforded me an easy gangway into the prison office, or vault, which, by the feeling, I thought might be penetrated with a mere trifle of pains. Upon the whole, no obstacles seemed capable of impeding my exit save a quantity of dirt and stones which lay beneath the floor, and which I found must be removed to facilitate a sub passage into the jail yard. These difficulties were soon vanquished, except that one huge stone lay across the way so as to afford insufficient room for passing it on either side. This was an impediment I had not anticipated; it was now obvious that no door of escape could be opened unless the fatal rock should by some stratagem be displaced. The task appeared Herculean, yet I set about it with all the fortitude I could muster. In the first instance my efforts turned to the sinking of it by undermining; but, after repeated trials and much labor expended, that method proved impracticable. I next essayed to dislodge it by the help of a small pry, but it stubbornly refused to give ground to the feeble instruments within my limits.

For three whole days and nights did I wreck my invention, and waste my utmost strength in plotting and executing ways and means to surmount this only remaining obstacle to my freedom; yet did constant disappointment attend all my exertions; the fatal rock was not to be removed.

Faint and dispirited with bootless toil and sleepless

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nights I sat down upon a bench, wholly resigning myself to those gloomy thoughts which the idea of my situation naturally inspired. Hitherto I had flattered myself with the prospect of achieving a deliverance by breaking the prison walls; but this last hope, like "the baseless fabric of a vision," had now vanished into air, and left but a span for the arrangement of new measures. Indeed, the day of my impending trial was near at hand; a day much dreaded, the mere thoughts of which, alas, staggered my resolution and agitated my enfeebled frame.

Wishing, however, a momentary respite from the pressure of distracting care, I stretched my limbs, exhausted with ceaseless watchfulness and toil, upon a bed of straw, seeking alleviation from repose; but gentle sleep refused to shed its wonted, balmy blessings on my head. The whole of this depressing night to me was sleepless; and nearly in the same sad situation was I when the Thursday next following the second Tuesday in June, 1793, (the same being the day of trial) made its ill boding appearance.

About eleven o'clock in the forenoon the sheriffs conducted me from the prison to the court house, where the solemnity of the court, and the silence of the spectators who had collected in crowds to hear the interesting trial, conspired to render the scene awfully impressive upon my feelings beyond description.

At the reading of the indictment the attorney general, James Sullivan, Esq., demanded if I knew for what crime

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I was about to be tried; I answered negatively; on which he gave me to understand that I stood charged with burglary, a capital offense in the estimation of law, and that, consequently, the trial affected my life. The court demanded whether I had any counsel? I replied, no, and was directed to nominate such persons as I wished to assist me. I named Theophilus Parsons, Esq., but he declining, several of the bar recommended to my choice, Messrs. Sewall and Dana, as gentlemen of probity and talents who would certainly do justice to my cause. To those gentlemen, then, I made application; and, without much hesitancy they undertook the arduous, uninviting task of making my defense; I shall ever think myself under the highest obligations to these honorable characters for their goodness to me on that momentous occasion.

The attorney general arose first in behalf of the Commonwealth, stating the charges against me with candor, and even, as I thought, with tenderness. Two witnesses were produced, Daniel Jacobs and Margaret Medossy, his maid, who swore that the spoons in question were the property of the complainant, Jacobs; that his house had been broken open in the night, when the same were carried away; and that they saw, at the time, (though they confessed it to be a dark night) some man running out of the house in a great hurry. This man, by legal construction, was interpreted to be myself, since the property had been found in my custody. I had no witness to produce on my side, as Stewart was not to be found.

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Mr. Sewall opened my defense in a masterly and ingenious manner, the particulars of which I recollect but indistinctly, for, indeed, my mind was too greatly distracted at that time to permit my being master of much recollection. He clearly and forcibly urged the incompetency of the witnesses who, he said, was disreputable people; known frequently to be intoxicated; to keep a disorderly house, and to be, generally of such bad fame and character as rendered them unworthy of credence in cases like the present, where the life of the respondent was at stake. He stated, also, the probability of Stewart's having sold me the spoons, and dwelt on the moral impossibility of the witnesses being able to discriminate a man running out of a house in a night so dark as was confessedly the one in question.

Mr. Dana also exerted himself to convince the jury that I ought in justice to be acquitted, placing, in a conspicuous point of view, the extreme hardship of my being convicted and condemned to death, in a case of this kind, upon the testimony of witnesses so worthless and abandoned as were those who had appeared on the trial. In a word, both Mr. Sewall and Mr. Dana argued the cause, from beginning to end, in a very plausible and moving manner, but without the good effect of obtaining my acquittal.

As soon as they had closed the defense, Mr. Sullivan again addressed the jury, telling them, among other things, that it was indeed a hard case, and that they ought

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to be cautious, especially in an affair of life and death, in what manner they gave credit to witnesses of suspicious characters, such as those of Jacobs and Medossy. He observed further that, although burglary was a capital offense by the laws of man, it was not so by the laws of God, but if their verdict should declare me guilty of that crime, legal rigor would exact my life. He told them they had a right to consider the matter as they should think equitable and just, and that if they acquitted me altogether, nothing could be objected to their verdict. In short, I conceived the whole strain of his discourse to be as much in my favor as his official character would suffer him.

Justice Paine gave the principal charge to the jury in terms calculated to strengthen such impressions as might favor my cause, signifying, (as well as I remember) that the peculiar circumstances of the case then confided to their decision required some degree of caution and lenity in the construction. The jury then withdrew, and after a while returned into court "not agreed," Mr. Thurstin, one of the twelve, not coinciding with his brethren to bring in the verdict, *guilty*. They were sent out a second time, but the same gentleman was still against declaring me guilty of burglary. The other jurors were unanimous, but being unable to convince him, they went into court as before without coming to a definite conclusion. They were then sent out a third and fourth time; but the dissenting juror was told that sufficient time for considera-

tion had been taken, and that it was necessary to agree upon something. Now it was that much altercation ensued, but at last Mr. Thurstin, by some means or other was prevailed on to concur so far with the opinion of his associates that an unqualified verdict declaring me guilty of the burglary was returned into court and recorded by the same. I was in court when the tidings of this fatal determination saluted my ears; a few minutes after which I was conveyed to prison; but, within an hour was again brought back to court to hear the definitive sentence. It was repeated to me by Judge Paine, and contained, among other things, these dreadful words, by me never to be forgotten. "*That I must be carried from thence to the place of execution, and there hanged by the neck until dead.*" The dismal ceremony of reading my destiny having ended, I was remanded to prison, six weeks only being given me in which to make the last necessary preparations for death. The day prefixed for my execution was Thursday the fourteenth of August, 1793.\*

\* On the subject of this trial, and later events of the same summer, described in the next chapter, see note on page 347, "The Six Silver Spoons."—E.P.

## Chapter IV

### AND THE GRAVE IS DUG

*Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*

BIBLE.

*Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus.*

VIRGIL.

BEING thus under condemnation of death, I was put into rigid confinement and loaded with chains. It was industriously rumored that despair would hurry me on to strenuous exertions with a view to effectuate an escape; to prevent which, the strictest attention was paid to every movement. Well might the vigilance of the keepers have discouraged any one, it certainly did me, since I was not only intimidated from attempting to break jail, but for a number of days lay entirely lifeless, a prey to corroding care and fearful expectation.

At this deplorable season an uncommon stupor benumbed my intellect; the usual fertility of my invention abandoned me and death only, in haggard form, arose to my fearful view. But my faithful partner forsook me not; she visited me in prison at all possible opportunities, endeavoring to appease my wounded spirits and, with the balm of comfort, to alleviate my afflictions. Such was her benevolence that she freely imparted whatever she could

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procure when she thought it would contribute in the least either to my ease or advantage. Her kindness tranquilized, in a measure, the dreary chaos of passions that reigned within my breast, and lessened those distresses, corporeal and spiritual, which else, in this extremity, had been intolerable. Through her instrumentality I conveyed divers letters to my friends and to others whom I supposed able or willing to afford me assistance. A number of my acquaintance condescended to make me repeated visits, bringing money and other necessaries, while everybody seemed to pity my forlorn condition and think my fate extremely hard.

Mr. Thurstin, above-named, soon greatly regretted his consenting to the verdict of condemnation, on which account he went to Governor Adams and the council; told them his opinion, and how uneasy he had been since agreeing, contrary to his better judgment, to the verdict returned. Moreover, with much zeal, he represented me (and that more than once, I believe) as deserving the particular notice and compassion of his excellency.

Meantime, I prepared a petition, couched in becoming terms, and sent it to the governor, who, as I was told, had the power of pardon in his fee, beseeching that my punishment of death might be remitted, or exchanged for confinement to the castle during life. To this petition I received no answer whatever. I afterwards forwarded another to much the same purport, but obtaining no answer, could not but consider his taciturnity as an in-

to most excellent your Honor of Boston that  
I am not the continuer of the business  
for John Simson went with me and did  
the crime he had my shoes and said  
he wanted to go a little way and he did  
the paper next morning and he had  
come to me in the night and said he  
had got some things as good to you as the  
money and you must sell me your  
Cafe and these things is as good as money  
to you and I sold him one Cst and for  
part of stockings as show as I am alive  
that is true and the chance that I  
sent after my hand will do me hurt  
I mean and said he would do me hurt  
if he had said I beg the favor of  
your Honor to see all you can for me now  
and the Counsel to do for me pray do  
for me if you need as god you need  
and I don't of friends out nobody but god  
for me to help me now as I am in the  
hands of god I hope that god will help  
me to find a little longer to repent  
of my sins and transgressions that I have  
committed in the body of my dad in his  
your Honor's of my dear now at this  
time and let me find a little longer  
for my repentance

Henry Tufts

Henry Tufts' petition to Governor Adams

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auspicious omen. I wrote also a petition to the students of Cambridge college, praying them to intercede with the governor in my behalf, by petition or otherwise, as best suited their convenience, and this they had the humanity to do, for which they have my sincere thanks. But beside those several applications, entreating a mitigation of my doom, another address from Ipswich, signed by many ladies of that town, was preferred to his excellency the governor, stating the peculiar austerity of my doom, and recommending me to consideration and clemency. To those humane and compassionate ladies, who in the hour of my adversity, condescended to intercede thus in prevention of my untoward fate, I tender the most humble acknowledgments; of their goodness and beneficence I shall retain, ever, the liveliest remembrance. Beyond the foregoing, divers other applications were made to the governor to move his mercy and justice in my peculiar case, but, above all, my reputed wife, Nabby, whose native eloquence was unexcelled, went in person, and in most pathetic terms addressed the governor and council, in my stead, praying that the punishment of death might be waved, and exchanged for confinement in the castle. The fervency of her supplications made a deep impression upon the minds of the members of the council, who confessed they never heard woman, nor indeed person, make so moving and pathetic an address before.

But to all those petitions and requests I received no kind of reply, nor indeed of encouragement, that anything was

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likely to be effected in my favor; but rather did common report insinuate the contrary. This dark and dubious complexion of things filled me with horrible prognostics; bereft me of the prospect of pardon or reprieve, and blasted all my hopes concerning the petitions I had transmitted. No longer did I profit or expect advantage from the intercessions which had been made by others to promote my rescue from the fangs of death.

To prepare, then, for departure hence seemed to be high time, since to me, according to the deadly sentence, two weeks only were remaining on this side the grave. The awful thoughts of exchanging worlds, in my present unprepared state, smote me with horror of mind, and with a dismay the most exquisitely painful. How short a time, in which to make those extraordinary preparations necessary for changing time for eternity, did two weeks appear! How impossible to set about so great a business, in my present distracted situation, did I think it; especially as my life and conversation had been always so totally repugnant to every consideration of a religious nature! How bitterly, then, did I deplore former follies, and the fatal consequences of my glaring misconduct! Alas, thought I, to what a miserable end am I born! how completely wretched has my past life ever been! how many hardships and distresses have I borne! how many follies and crimes have I committed! how many trials have I encountered! how many dangers, escaped; and with how many calamities and evils have I, at all times,

been surrounded! what a gloomy retrospect do the horrid scenes of my strange life afford! the aspect, how somber, of the ruthless picture, and how totally thrown into shade! In fine, how small a portion of happiness have I experienced, and how few and fleeting have been the halcyon days of my melancholy existence! With reflections similar to the above was my perturbed imagination perplexed incessantly, at this momentous period.

But to resume my irksome tale. The days that yet remained to me being few and passing away with a rapidity that awakened amazement; and as whatever I intended to do must be speedily, if ever, effected, it occurred to my thoughts afresh, that I had better, once for all, make a last final effort in procurement of deliverance. Wherefore, with a saw, which I had hitherto preserved, I fell to cutting off the grates, though of a monstrous and forbidding size. I soon made considerable proficiency; but, as destiny ordained, my design, when all but completed, was entirely discomfitted by the prisoners, who notified the jailor of my desperate attempts.

On this side the grave I knew of no other device, of which to profit, save the one I had last attempted; it was plain, therefore, I could do nothing more nor less, than await, with resignation, the approach of my awful fate, and prepare for a final exit from this fluctuating scene of things.

One morning, as I was sitting in a very disconsolate posture, a devotee to misery and despair, I was visited by a

certain physician, who accosted me with an affability and good nature, not always to be expected from a stranger. Indeed, sunshine sat upon his countenance, and honey distilled from his lips; but, after continuing his discourse some time, and presenting me with the grief dispelling goblet, he introduced the subject of his business, which was, to purchase my body, after death, for a skeleton. He thought there could be no harm or inconvenience in this, but to tempt a more cheerful compliance, proffered me a couple of guineas, in hand, beside other favors. Notwithstanding his easy introduction, the proposal struck me with horror ineffable, so that I repelled his suit with an asperity that prevented further solicitation on that behalf.

Directly upon this, I was visited by another gentleman, from Newburyport, who offered me seventy dollars for license to publish a narrative of my adventures. I informed him, that, in present circumstances, I had neither leisure nor inclination, to bestow the thoughts of a moment upon matters of that nature. But, to obviate this, he suggested, that he wished me to sign a paper of three or four words only, for that he knew enough of my history (with what he should be able to pick up) to make out a handsome narrative. On hearing the gentleman say this, it struck my mind, that, although I should have no use for the seventy dollars, myself, yet that sum might be serviceable to my companion, and requite her, in some small measure, for the numerous kindnesses she had

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shown me in my recent adversities. Accordingly, I told the man I would take a week for consideration, and to consult with my friends on the subject, at the end of which time I would give him a suitable reply. He approved of this caution, and, having promised to return for the result of my deliberations, left my cell for that time.

A few hours subsequent to his departure, came along Esq. Manning, a gentleman whom I much respected. I acquainted him with the proposition I had received for a narrative or journal of my life, and begged him to assist me with his able advice. He said it was his opinion, that I ought, by no means, to concur with any plan of the kind, at present, for it might frustrate the effect of the petitions and other measures, which were in operation to avert the consequences of my sentence. Furthermore he counseled me not to despond, but hope for the best, adding, that he himself would go to the governor, and do all in his power to have me reprieved, or sent to the castle. The counsel and encouragement of this good man infused a gleam of hope into my desponding heart; always shall I preserve a due sense of the prompt and substantial benefits, which I received at his hands.

The next day was brought me an anonymous epistle to the following purport.

*Ipswich, August 5th, 1793.*

SIR,—I HEARD, last evening, by mere accident, of your receiving a visit from a gentleman belonging to Newburyport; and that

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his object was to procure toleration to publish a journal of your life. At this crises of your fate, I must advise you, as a friend, to listen, in no respect, to a proposal of that kind, as the transaction would presently take air, and obstruct, perhaps, the good effect of the petitions and other expedients, which have been used to effectuate your rescue from the gripe of death. It is suggested, too, that you are to furnish some final answer to his proposal, within a week. As you value your life and safety, I admonish you to be firm and steadfast in refusing this and every other similar application, at least for the present. I hope you will improve these friendly hints to your own advantage, and, of this scroll, keep the contents to yourself.

From your well wisher, &c. ———

Before the receipt of this letter, I had fully made up my opinion, as to the subject of which it treated. The advice of Esq. Manning, had confirmed me in a decision to decline all overtures, for the present, relative to my narrative, or its publication. Thus, when the gentleman from Newbury, called again at my window, for an answer, as had been our former conversation, I gave him an explicit denial.

On the Sunday next preceding the Thursday, on which I expected to launch into the world of spirits, I attended public worship, through the kind indulgence of the sheriff, as had been my constant practice for a number of sabbaths previous. I made my appearance loaded, as I was, with manacles and chains, to the end that a stronger impression might be wrought upon the sensibility of the spectators, and their commiseration excited in reference to my unhappy fate. A miserable fellow mortal, loaded

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with trammels, and upon the brink itself of eternity, must, of course, be a spectacle at once solemn and distressing! Well might the sight of such wretchedness agitate the feelings of the humane and reflecting! Even so, at this time, did my appearance in the meeting excite universal compassion; the sympathetic sigh escaped from the benevolent breast; and soft emotion was visible in the countenance of each beholder. But the heartfelt distress, the horrible forebodings, which on that memorable day, I myself experienced, especially during performance of divine service, remain deeply graven, on the tablet of my memory, in characters too indelible to be effaced by the corrosions of time. My distress, however, arose not so much from the fears of death, though awful, indeed, in itself, since a few momentary pangs would complete its triumph, as from the dreadful thoughts of appearing, in my present unprepared state, before the tribunal of that judge, who knoweth the heart, and who maketh not a shadow of allowance for obstinate transgression.

After divine service I was again consigned to the same loathsome station in prison, which hitherto I had occupied, and measures taken to preclude even the possibility of escape.

My friends, still continued to visit me, and to administer to my necessities in the kindest manner. Here gratitude prompts an acknowledgment of the great obligations I am under to divers gentlemen of the priesthood, for favoring me with repeated visits during the horrors of this

imprisonment. For their pious admonitions and zealous endeavors to promote my spiritual welfare, and fortify my mind against the shafts of adversity, they are entitled to my peculiar thanks. Particularly, I feel much indebted to the Rev. Mr. Frisbey,\* of Ipswich, who gave me frequently, the wholesomest instruction, and endeavored to elevate my thoughts above the servile fears of death; to enlighten my understanding, and to inspire me with the hopes of a blessed immortality: I trust his godly counsel and fervent petitions, for my spiritual amendment, will not be wholly thrown away.

With pleasure, did the limits of my paper admit, would I particularize the many favors of a temporal nature, that were shown me by a number of well disposed persons, witness to my cruel sufferings. But I must repress diffusion, and observe only, that most of my visitors treated me with great kindness; seemed heartily to pity my oblique fate, and endeavored to soothe the bitterness of my afflictions. Their attempts were unavailing, my heart was inconsolable, since hope, the cork of life, was beyond my grasp.

If I took a cursory view of past life, I could discern nought therein, which was capable, in the least, of affording satisfaction; for little else than dissipation and mischief had been its uniform productions. I now felt the

\* This was the Rev. Levi Frisbie, pastor of the First Church of Ipswich, 1776-1806. See T. F. Waters: *Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony* Vol. II.—E.P.

want of the support of religion and virtue, and found, with the force of conviction, that the great, the primary source of peace to the human mind is the consciousness of having traveled in the paths of uprightness; that, in proportion as a man's life is well or ill spent, his real happiness or misery may be calculated. Alas! of this happiness I could only lament the want; each successive day, by abridging my momentary span, loading me with increased apprehensions, and presenting to my view new traits of misery and wretchedness.

How gladly, at this juncture, had I drunk of the waters of Lethe, and quaffed everlasting forgetfulness? but, in vain were all my wishes and imaginations; they availed not to suppress the rising sigh or ease the mental pang! Even my slumbering hours were not exempt from disquiet, since, from the day of condemnation, I could scarce close my eyelids in sleep, but images of deep distress would present themselves to my distorted vision. Very frequently I dreamed of being hurried to the place of execution, and of swinging off the stand, though it generally seemed, as if the rope gave way, and that my body was dashed precipitately against the ground. This I was willing to construe into a distant prognostic, that, by some means or other, as yet inscrutable, I should finally evade my terrific doom. Sometimes fancy painted me as creeping out of jail, beneath the floor, with amazing difficulty; sometimes did I imagine myself at large in the open

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street, but with little or no strength to flee from my pursuers; thus was I agitated whether sleeping or waking.

One day about noon, as I was lying on a bed of straw, I received a smart rap on the crown of my head; I was wide awake at the instant, and could therefore be liable to no misconception or delusion. I cast my eyes about, but saw no living object, not even a mouse was stirring; indeed I was wholly alone in my cell at the time. The singularity of this occurrence alarmed me greatly; I knew not in what maner to account for it, nor have I to this day made out the least probable solution of the mystery.

The day next before my expected execution, the faithful Abigail made me, for the last time, a visit in prison; but her presence, by bringing to mind former happiness, served only to enhance the bitterness of our present evils. Having bewailed our hard destiny and accumulated misfortunes, till evening had spread her sable mantle around the prison walls, we took a solemn and final farewell of each other, expecting no more to meet on this side eternity. Good Heavens! how many, multiplied sufferings, both of body and mind, have fallen to my share?

But now appears the dreadful morn of August the 14th, which terror had depicted, as the last I should ever behold. Between the hours of two and four, afternoon, if I recollect exactly, was my sentence of death to receive consummation. On this day, every object meeting my eyes seemed to be enveloped with a deeply tinged gloom, and to assume the ghastly visage of death, while every

sound invading the ear increased my perplexity and distress. Although, so many repeated messages had been transmitted to the governor, I learned not that grace was likely to prevail, or that measures had been adopted for my pardon or reprieve, but the contrary.

About eight o'clock I descried the sexton passing by with his pick axe, hoe and shovel, to dig my grave beneath the gallows. This horrid sight almost petrified my senses, and fixed me as a statue, in speechless astonishment.

An hour or two after, a certain schoolmistress, coming in, and looking through my window, exclaimed in a tremor, that she had just beheld an awful sight, namely, a coffin made and a grave dug for a living man. Her abrupt speech affected me with new surprise, and augmented, if possible, my unutterable consternation.

By this time multitudes of people were fast arriving in order to be spectators of the melancholy execution. I saw them in crowds, through the grates, and heard them often inquiring, "Where is the man who is going to be hanged?" "At what time will he be hanged?" At last Edward Brock, a prisoner overhead, damned them aloud, and said, "I am in good hopes you won't see that sight today." At this exclamation some of the people cried out, "Dear me! hear how the man swears, when he is just going to the gallows." The last hour of my surviving time drew near, I shuddered at the sound of every foot-step, as it had been the approach of the angel of death!

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Each moment, was my imagination upon the rack, lest I should hear the iron bolts resound, and the prison doors grate, on their revolving hinges, to open a passage to the scaffold.

While brooding over these images of terror, my attention was suddenly arrested by the arrival of several deputy sheriffs; at sight of those ministers of vengeance a general tremor pervaded my whole frame. I verily believed, that the curtain was about to drop upon the last closing scene of my life's disastrous drama. They perceived my perturbation, and, from motives of humanity, were solicitous to administer consolation, declaring, that, although they came on this ungrately errand, they still felt for my misfortunes, and should be happy to procure their alleviation. The accents of philanthropy, even in my forlorn condition, sounded gratefully in my ears; may I remember to succor, (when ability permits) the distresses of others!

At three o'clock, afternoon, the officers gave me notice, that they had received no orders for my removal, as yet; but were now in momentary expectation of a warrant for conducting me to the place of execution. To pave the way for extremities, they inculcated the invincible necessity of a due submission to the laws; yet, were anxious to appease the agitation of my spirits. While those extraordinary scenes were on the tapis,

The wheel of unremitting time was rolling on  
Toward th' important hour of four, the time prefix'd,

said Henry Dufts to be done and performed in all things, according to the form and effect of the said Judgement; for which this shall be your sufficient Warrant.

Herof you'll not at your peril, and make return of this Writ with your doings herein into our Secretary's Office, within Thirty days.

In Testimony whereof, we have caused our great Seal to be hereunto affixed. Witness Samuel Adams Esq; our Governor and Lieutenant in Chief at Boston, this twenty seventh day of June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred and ninety four, and in the Eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

By His Excellency's Command, with  
the advice and Consent of the Council.

John Avery Secy. Gen. Secy.

Samuel Adams.

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Ere which to close my fate. The hour I wish'd o'erpast,  
Adjudging it the crisis of my fearful doom.  
At length, with tardy steps, reluctant, did arrive  
The moment big, and mark'd, by iron hand of time;  
Its knell brought tidings sweet and grateful to my heart;  
Did joy dispense, and hope and transport to my breast;  
Since now the pangs of death I fondly thought to shun,  
And live again to happiness, and blest repose.

In other words, at four of the clock precisely the flight of the fatal hour was announced by the deputies, who assured me, that no message to my detriment had arrived, within the time; so that the matter was now made certain, that execution was respited; but for how long they could not avouch. These were thrice grateful tidings, yet the business seemed enveloped in mystery insoluble; for the residue of the eventful day, however, I met with no new alarm or fresh disturbance.

Thus by the goodness of God, did I at this time, very contrary to my fears and expectations, escape the bitterness of death; and although I knew not the length of my reprieve, yet the present deliverance exonerated my feelings of a vast load of inquietude. Peradventure some may admire that the thoughts of death should excite in me such wonderful alarms; but I can tell them, from experience, that the stoutest heart will quake even at its anticipated approach, and that the poet's ideas were correct, when he said,

“Death at a distance we but slightly fear;  
He brings his terrors, as he draws more near.”

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The people, who had collected to the number (as was said) of three thousand, dispersed in the same manner as they came; but seeing their gathering had been little gratifying to my feelings, I was far from regretting their departure.

Soon as the shades of evening prevailed, I betook myself to early repose, for in truth I had received small refreshment, from sleep or food, I know not for how long. Now then, being retired from the converse and bustle of the world, and having a fit opportunity to contemplate on my surprising deliverance, I found abundant cause (wicked and inconsiderate as I generally was) to thank the Father of mercies for his divine interposition in my behalf. The ensuing morning I awoke from sleep, in better health and spirits, than I had lately enjoyed, and received a visit from my companion Nabby. Upon review of this unexpected turn of things in my favor, her transports were excessive, and her belief sanguine, that my punishment, in the end, would be exchanged for confinement at the castle. I received visits, also, from others of my friends, who congratulated me on the present favorable aspect of my concerns.

Soon as conveniency admitted, I sent to Governor Adams, to know the result of my destiny, but could obtain no intelligence in the least. I lingered in uncertainty until the eighteenth of the then next September, when information was brought, that I was to be sent to the castle for life. These had been doleful tidings, at any other

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period, yet I now received them with joy and thankfulness.

No long time was given for contemplation, ere a sheriff arrived with the order of removal, and conducted me to the castle, which is situated on an island in the harbor of Boston.

The castle, so called, is a fortress of some strength and commands the entrance into the harbor's mouth. About thirty pieces of artillery were then mounted on its battlements, the whole being occupied by a company of soldiers, stationed there, to superintend the works and guard the criminals. At the time of my arrival, fifty or more persons, of that description, were under confinement, and doomed to hard service. They were a motley crew, consisting of different kinds of people, as well black as white, and of divers nations and languages; to wit, some French, English, Dutch, Spanish, Irish and American convicts; the latter, however, were the more numerous order. On further acquaintance, I found them a heterogeneous mixture of as vile miscreants and execrable wretches, as human conception could have framed ideas of; there had been no impropriety in pronouncing them the mere dregs of human nature; the refuse and offscouring of the whole globe.

In such detestable society it was impossible to see either peace or comfort. The principal employment assigned them was nail making, of which the soldiers had the

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superintendance, and, upon the smallest appearance of idleness or obstinacy, would beat them like dogs.

I was immediately set to work with the rest; but in truth, had no particular gust for my new employment, and still less for the company of my associates. They were, in fact, addicted to every species of villainy, which they could possibly perpetrate with impunity, such as cursing, swearing, cheating, lying, quarreling and stealing from one another, for which misdemeanors, they were frequently reprimanded by the sentries, and sometimes treated with inhuman cruelty. But rigorous treatment was so far from reclaiming, that it served only to increase their vicious habits, and to inspire them with a spirit of revenge against their overseers, whom, as well as the rest of mankind, they considered as enemies, on whom they were justified in making whatever reprisals.

Such was the company among whom my hard lot had now fallen, and the contemplation which arose was a source of unceasing vexation. I incessantly pined after that liberty, of which, by folly and indiscretion, I saw myself so totally divested.

At the termination of each day's labor, we were all shut up in prison, as sheep in a fold, and, for prevention of escapes, in the night, were critically guarded by sentinels without. . . .

The majority, while prisoners, being very restless and refractory under the severity of their discipline, and the hardships they endured, were continually projecting

methods of escape, and not altogether unsuccessfully; for, once in a while, one or two, and sometimes more of them, mauger the circumspection of the guards, would find the means of elopement. Recollect, that once in particular, eleven of them absconded in a body, by the connivance, as was supposed, of the sentry, their guard. They left the island in a fishing smack, which they made bold to seize; but, being hotly pursued, had to fight in self defense, before passing the harbor's mouth; some circumstances, however, turning up in their favor, they, at last, made shift to get out of harm's way, and finally escaped. Those and similar desertions would have thinned the ranks, and greatly diminished our numbers, had not the occasional arrival of new malefactors, as bad or worse than the former, furnished ample supplies, and thus kept the stock good.

Our provisions, for the chief part, were coarse bread and bullock's heads only, the same being usually tainted before leaving the shambles. Horrid stuff! the nausea arising from which was so extreme, that I had much ado to swallow even a quantum sufficient for the sustentation of life. By degrees I became emaciated, nearly to a skeleton, yet was not the less compelled to turn out, and perform ordinary duties with the rest of the prisoners.

One day, as I was helping unload a vessel, I had the misfortune to tumble over a wharf, and break one of my arms! As I had no surgeon to attend me, the accident was peculiarly distressing. I lay, for a long while, in a

perilous position and suffered so dismally from the want of suitable medicines, attendance, and the necessary comforts of life, that I frequently despaired of any recovery. Many a time I wished, that the sovereign arbiter of events had been graciously pleased to end my complicated miseries by a speedy death; yet, considering that life was sweet, even to the beasts that perish, and to the animals of the lonely wilderness, it would return to my thoughts, that man, more particularly, should live in the use of means, and cherish self-preservation, as a duty indispensable.

While I was in this unfortunate situation, my supposed wife, Nabby, once in a while, would come to my new residence, bringing clothing, and such cordials as might be purchased with her scanty earnings; thus alleviating by her friendly help, my uncommon calamities.

After two months painful illness, I regained strength to cripple abroad, but having neither shoes nor much clothing, and it being, too, the extreme of winter, I felt myself in a very slender condition. On this account, however, I was nothing favored, for soon as my convalescency became visible, I was set to work, and forced to perform daily labor, in the same manner, as if I had been quite healthy, and well equipped for the season.

To these hardships I submitted with patience, till, by being bandied about so incessantly, barefoot, through frost and snow, my feet and ankles were frozen to such a degree, that the skin and nails wholly dropped off. This new misfortune confined me to quarters for a season, but

no sooner was I in plight to crawl about, than I was driven to and fro, as heretofore, which caused my feet continually to bleed, and prevented their healing. To complain signified nothing, for, with my haughty taskmasters, complaints were but the signals for more blows and greater severity. . . .

As the summer of 1794 advanced, it stood the soldiery in hand to exert more vigilance in prevention of desertions, for the criminals, disrelishing their execrable diet and ill treatment, were continually devising plans of emancipation. My own exigencies were egregiously pressing, so that many a time I had bartered, with cheerfulness, my every particle of property for one comfortable repast; yet could rarely obtain a single mouthful even by purchase. One evening, while in this extremity, I made out, through the assistance of a negro prisoner, to obtain thirty weight of pork from the cellar of Major Perkins, the commandant of the castle. I had renounced the commission of theft in my own person, therefore persuaded the black fellow to enter the premises, while I stood sentry, which accomplished, we made an equal dividend of the spoils, and were so lucky to escape detection or surmise.

Shortly after this I received a visit from sundry of my friends residing at Malden, who offered to disguise, and convey me off the island; this proposal I was at first, tempted to embrace, yet finally my heart failed, and I gave up the project.

Thus wore away the summer of 1794, till drew near the

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fourth of July, the anniversary of American independence. We heard that preparations were making, in many places, for a joyful celebration of the day, in remembrance of that auspicious era, which gave freedom to the western world. To us, poor prisoners, the favor of enjoying this festival was indeed denied, yet it being quite as prudent, under the frowns of malicious fortune, to be merry as sad, and much more delightful to the feelings, I think it not amiss to give place to an ode, written at that time, as much as possible, in the then enthusiastic spirit of the times. The sons of the muses will forbear criticism.

Hail! heroes, patriots divine,  
On whom the rays of freedom shine  
    With the bright meridian blaze,  
Once more conven'd to celebrate  
Your rising empire's glorious date,  
    And Freedom's column raise. . . .

With reeking sword we sought the prize,  
The brightest gem beneath the skies,  
    Whilst blood in torrents run;  
Freedom to Vict'ry stood allied,  
The laurel won, while on our side  
    Fought heav'n and Washington.

Then loud proclaim the' important hour,  
That broke the iron rod of power,  
    And blest this happy shore;  
May distant ages tribute pay  
To celebrate th' auspicious day,  
    'Till time shall be no more.

I had already lingered at the castle three-fourths of a

year without seeking the means of escape, but the freedom I had once enjoyed, would sometimes obtrude itself like the image of a delicious dream, and force me to regret my present slavery. Major Perkins had occasionally employed me in many little services, and my alacrity in the performance, had pleased him; wherefore, on my promising not to abuse his confidence, he gave me license to traverse the island, whenever, I saw fit. It contained about twenty acres, enough to afford a tolerable ramble; but, one afternoon, led by an irresistible desire of musing in solitude, I made a more complex circuit, than usual; passing on till I had gained the last extremity of the strand. Here, being a little out of ken, I stood and contemplated the surrounding scenery. The majesty and solemnity of the landscape inspired me with a kind of awe, while various distant objects assumed a disconsolate air, in perfect unison with the gravity of my feelings. I viewed the encircling waters, fatal bar, alas! to my happiness; surveyed the face of the country, beheld the harbor of Boston, and saw the lands lying at rest, as it seemed, beyond the ocean. The prospect before me excited ideas, by no means consolatory; yet would have been undoubtedly delightful, I imagine, to an uninterested spectator. While in this melancholy frame, I observed a quantity of eel grass (no unusual sight in this place) floating in the neighborhood of the shore. A thought now struck my mind, that, peradventure, I might, conveniently, enclose my head in this grass, and, by swimming over the river, make a happy escape.

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By heaven, I'll effect this, articulated I, audibly, or perish in the attempt. O freedom! ever grateful, ever dear and valuable to the human breast, what will man not adventure in pursuit of thee! Should even seas, then, much less paltry rivers form obstructions to thy purchase! The pleasing conception of regaining liberty, had filled my imagination with such animating prospects, that, spurning to reflect on seeming difficulties, I caught a billet of wood, wrapped my head in a tuft of grass, and committed myself instantly to the swelling billows. My progress was slow, but so well timed, that, sure as a *gun*, I had escaped question, if an ill occurrence had not obtruded at this critical crisis. A certain soldier, from his watchtower, happened to espy the bunch of grass floating at a distance in the stream; he, at first, accidentally kept his eye upon it, and found that it progressed in a direction contrary to the current. This was a phenomenon, and naturally created suspicions, where every motion was watched, that some of the prisoners were effecting an escape. Accordingly, several of the soldiers jumped into a jolly boat, and rowed off to unravel the curious mystery. I saw them approaching, and at sight thereof was, literally, in a sea of perplexity; yet I lay still as a mouse in a cheese. They were alongside of me in a trice; unhooded their poor prisoner, and took me into the boat. What could I do, or say? Of a truth, vexed and confounded, as I was, I remained mute as a fish, while they were very merry, on seeing me, sleek as a half drowned rat, and

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shivering with the cold. In this disorder, I was hurried before Maj. Perkins, who bequeathed me a most piping lecture, swearing, that if ever I attempted another elopement, I should be strung up without remedy. The foregoing accident discouraged me entirely, from all further thoughts of escape, till good providence should provide some safer channel of deliverance. . . .

A number of my fellow prisoners were flashmen, (as they termed themselves) an appellation appropriate to such rogues and sharpers, as make exclusive use of the flash lingo. This is partly English and party an arbitrary gibberish, which, when spoken, presents to such hearers, as are not initiated into its mysteries, a mere unintelligible jargon, but in the flash fraternity is, peculiarly, significant. As I have once made mention of the above language, and learned the use of it while at the castle, I here subjoin a specimen of sundry fashionable words and phrases of that infernal dialect. It was imported in gross from Europe, and no part of it, to my knowledge, has been hitherto communicated to the public.

### *Nomenclature of the Flash Language.*

A cove,	signifies . . . . .	a man
Flat . . . . .		a foolish man
Kinchen . . . . .		a child
Mitre . . . . .		a hat
Long tog . . . . .		a coat
Jarvel . . . . .		a jacket
Kickses . . . . .		breeches
Leg bags . . . . .		stockings

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Crab . . . . .	a shoe
Quillpipes . . . . .	boots
Smish . . . . .	a shirt
Clout . . . . .	a handkerchief
Trick . . . . .	a watch
Chiv . . . . .	a knife
Pops . . . . .	pistols
Chant . . . . .	writing of any kind
Briar . . . . .	a saw
Wibble . . . . .	an auger
Gentleman . . . . .	a crow bar
Spiker . . . . .	a nail
Flamer . . . . .	vitriol
Roram . . . . .	the sun
Oliver . . . . .	the moon
Glins . . . . .	the stars
Darky . . . . .	cloudy
Dinge . . . . .	a dark night
Dingy cove . . . . .	a negro man
Dub . . . . .	a false key
Jigger . . . . .	a door
Qua . . . . .	a jail
Qua keeper . . . . .	a jail keeper
Drag . . . . .	a prisoner
Slangs . . . . .	irons or handcuffs
Nipping jig . . . . .	a gallows
Topt . . . . .	hanged
Teasing . . . . .	whipping
Prad . . . . .	a horse
Spread . . . . .	a saddle
Pradholder . . . . .	a bridle
Hookses . . . . .	(neat) cattle
Lour . . . . .	money
Suck . . . . .	rum

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Kin . . . . .	a stone
Snuskin . . . . .	a bed
Quid . . . . .	a guinea
Wheel . . . . .	a dollar
Hog . . . . .	a pistareen
Grub . . . . .	virtuals
Yapster . . . . .	a dog
Thumpkin . . . . .	a barn of hay
Glaze . . . . .	a square of glass
Rum cove . . . . .	a gentleman
Quisby cove . . . . .	a mean fellow
Rum blowen . . . . .	a gentlewoman
Quisby gorge . . . . .	a mean (dirty) fellow
Napping his bib . . . . .	crying
To star a glaze . . . . .	to cut out a square of glass
Undub the jigger . . . . .	unlock the door
Undub the qua . . . . .	unlock the jail
Crack the qua . . . . .	break the jail
To crack a crabkin . . . . .	to break a shoemaker's shop
Douse the glin . . . . .	put out the light
Petre yourself . . . . .	(a watchword) take care of yourself
You're spotted . . . . .	you are like to be found out
I'm hammers to ye . . . . .	I know what you mean
I'm dead up to the cove . . . . .	I know the man well
A horney's a coming . . . . .	a sheriff is coming
He's going to the nipping jig to be topt	
	He is going to the gallows to be hanged
To scrag a lay . . . . .	to take clothes from the hedges
To go upon the bonny lay . . . . .	to undertake highway robbery
Evening sneek, going into a house by night the doors being open	
Water sneak . . . . .	breaking into a vessel
Touching a cly . . . . .	robbing a pocket
To do him of his blowen . . . . .	to rob him of his wife
Prad napping . . . . .	horse stealing

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From this sample it may appear, that nouns and principal verbs, as being the more important words in a sentence, are generally flashified; while pronouns, auxiliary verbs and abbreviations retain their English uniform; so that the flash tongue is nothing else than a mixture of English, with other words, fabricated designedly for the purposes of deception; it can be useful to rogues and sharpers only. I once acquired such a facility in this dialect, as to converse in it with much the same ease as in plain English, although now I have lost its familiar use. But no more of this futile language; may it return to Europe, where it received its misshapen birth.\*

\* This may be one of the earliest vocabularies of slang published in this country. The words, as Tufts says, are English in origin. His remark that they were "imported in gross" from Europe almost seems a punning acknowledgement to Francis Grose's *Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*. But I do not find that they are taken verbatim from any edition of Grose available to me.—E.P.

## Chapter V

### THE ROAD AGAIN

*The castle is (prime truth to tell)  
A little Tartarus or h-ll,  
And its inhabitants, past doubt,  
Are allied to th' infernal scout;  
Troth, 'twas a scurvy hit to be  
Condemn'd to this black company.  
I've pac'd the town and country through,  
Yet never met so d-n'd a crew.*

♦ ♦ ♦ **W**Henever my reflections led to the subject, much would I regret the happiness of those delightful times, when I was at liberty to rove from place to place, and from clime to clime; an employment always congenial to my dearest wishes. Much too, did I regret my late loved mistress, in whose company I had seen so many agreeable hours; a mental comparison of which, with my present infelicities, led me into the subsequent train of reflections, which I have here thrown into a kind of verse; for the insertion of which, I must, again, entreat the pardon of good natured critics.

What doleful scenes are here, compar'd with those  
Which lately to my pleasing vision rose,  
When Happiness, bright goddess, by her power,  
Lull'd all my cares to rest and sooth'd each hour.

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In converse sweet, with my lov'd female friend,  
Contentment mild, did all my steps attend,  
While former sorrows lost their wonted sway  
In the soft pleasures of each blissful day. . . .

Though, while a prisoner, I was unprepared to solve the above queries; yet I may now reply to them without conjectural embarrassment. For having spoken of the manner of living at the castle, and related the more material occurrences befalling me there, I must, to avoid repetition, pass over many matters analogous to those already noticed, and proceed to observe, that my detestable servitude continued, without intermission, five years in the whole, which brought the autumn of 1798. That tedious space having elapsed, a lucky event took place, which paved the way for my deliverance, as well as that of the other prisoners, more effectually, than could have any scheme within the breach of our sagacity. The event was this; the commonwealth of Massachusetts ceded the castle, with its dependencies, to the government of the United States, on which transaction it was predicated, that the removal of the convicts from the island would be a necessary consequence.

Tidings of this favorable event being circulated among the prisoners, joy sparkled in every eye, and transport filled each bosom. For my own part, I now calculated upon a restoration to freedom, as a real certainty, and fondly anticipated the beatitudes of future ease and repose.

Not many days intervened, before my expectations were, in good measure, realized, by the actual arrival of an order for our removal hence, and circular distribution in the common prisons. It was my lot to be carried and shut up, with five or six other of our worthies, in Salem jail; but in this receptacle I had no intention of abiding long, since, in my present idea of things, I had suffered already a competency of evils to satisfy vengeance, the most inexorable, and for imputed crimes, of which I had been in no wise culpable.

While meditating on the best means of escape, I was visited by the jailor, removed by his injunctions into an upper apartment, and there secured till further orders. On taking leave, he vouchsafed to observe, that the room was in a slender predicament, wherefore, I must behave peaceably, if I intended to tarry long. I made no reply, but thought the hint a plain indication of his wishes to be well rid of his visitants. So, losing no time, I examined the limits of my cell, and presently discovered several pieces of movable timber. It was then about the middle of the afternoon, but scarce had twilight discolored the face of things, ere I fell to work, and, in half an hour, opened a sufficient breach. This done, I clambered over into the entry, and, in the next minute, gained the open street; but whether my fellow-prisoners were apprised of my attempt, I cannot determine.

Thus, after a series of years, and a multiplicity of inquietudes, did I find myself at full liberty to order my

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conduct, as suited the volitions of my own mind, a privilege unpossessed of a long time. Near the confines of the prison I made a halt, to recover respiration, and to consider of my better course. My hesitation was indeed momentary, for tickling desire soon turned my steps toward Lee and Greenland, to visit my primitive friends; but, above all, my old companion Nabby, who now engaged my concern, and who abode, as I presumed, in the Town last mentioned.

Thus I set forward musing as I went, upon the versatility of human affairs, and upon the strange alternation of events, which had checkered, so surprisingly, my late untoward fate. I now revolved in idea, how I had been abused and persecuted for the last six years; torn from social enjoyments, and sentenced to finish my destiny by a halter, but, at length, exempted from that penalty, by being doomed to eke out a wretched existence in the exilement of the Castle; and lastly, in what manner, by a sudden transition, as though fortune had been weary of her malignant exertions, I was now cast pennyless into the wide world, and left to shift, as I could, for my own support and well being.

It was near the close of the month of October and the night serenely cold, when I thus commenced my extraordinary journey toward Lee; my apparel was composed of hair and tow, extremely thin and much tattered. Thus poorly accommodated I began to feel, ere marching a mile, the stinging effects of the frigid air; but seeing no

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remedy for the evil put the best foot forward till I reached Haverhill ferry. Here I found it impossible to pass over without the ferryman's assistance; but, alas! for fear of detention I dared not awake him. Shivering with cold therefore, as an aspen leaf with the wind, I veered to the left, and traveled upstream two miles to Ox Ferry, where finding an old leaky canoe, I ventured to cross over in that flimsy vehicle. Still, I had other difficulties to surmount, for, by the time I had gained the opposite shore my limbs were quite torpid from the keenness of the nocturnal air. Not daring to enter the abode of man I set off in quest of some barn or other retreat where, to prevent perishing, I might roll up in some kennel of a litter of hay until morning. Luckily, within the limits of a mile I found a berth to my liking, so creeping into a hay mow my senses were quickly dispatched to the regions of forgetfulness, and I obtained in sleep a few hours of undisturbed, exhilarating repose.

Awaking late in the morning I sprang up and jogged onward, till feeling weak and faint for want of nutriment, I ventured into a mean looking house, and obtained of a poor woman a slender repast, being the utmost her penury could afford. This friendly bounty enabled me to reach Exeter, which I entered about dark, and procured supper at the house of an old and approved friend.

While here at my ease and dreaming of no harm to be sure, a report was circulated of my being in the town, and not only so, but a dozen or more people were col-

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lected to seize my person as a deserter from confinement. Their design was well meant and cunningly devised, yet I discovered it just in season to give them the slip by a speedy decampment. This flurry over, I pressed onward and made out to reach Lee the same evening though at a very late hour.

As I had too much pride to appear publicly in the garb of a tatterdemallion, as was my present condition, and besides, was very doubtful what kind of reception I should meet with among the wary inhabitants of the place, it seemed most prudent to keep close for a season. Accordingly I took private lodgings at my elder brother's house and there gained a particular account of the removal of my first wife and several of my children from Lee to Lemington,\* in the District of Maine, in which town my sons owned land and now lived in credible circumstances. This news surprised me greatly, being the first hint I had received of the affair. If such be the case, thought I, soon shall I bid adieu to Lee forever!

While in my present asylum many favors were shown me; my brother, in particular, gave me a fraternal welcome and contributed liberally in mitigation of my wants. I likewise saw and conversed with a number of my quondam friends who generously supplied me with some of the most necessary articles for my situation. By their help I was in trim to exhibit a more decent appearance

\* Limington is the present spelling. Maine, at this time a part of Massachusetts, became a separate State in 1820.—E.P.

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and in compliance with their kind invitations, visited each at his own house, where I was received as one risen from the dead.

For upwards of ten years, next preceding the present visit, I had been an alien from Lee without once seeing the place; consequently the manners of the people as well as the appearance of things had sustained great alterations. My old adversaries had pretty much forgotten our former bickerings and their own resentments. They now seemed inclinable to assist rather than insult me, thinking perhaps, I had paid the full price of my former transgressions.

Tarrying some time at Lee and finding that none were desirous to give me the smallest disturbance I repaired to Newmarket and was received with much philanthropy by the people of that town. On hearing my story they strongly advised my repairing to Lemington to see my children who had gone thither, and who, they said, were well settled and in such good circumstances that doubtless they would assist me after the sad vexations I had met with in life. I thought well of their augury but my mind was wavering, for my esteemed Nabby, like a powerful magnet, drew me toward herself with a potency I scarce knew how to resist. However, on sober reflection I thought to pursue the advice of my friends and stay at Lemington the approaching winter should my boys be inclined to show me a cordial welcome. Promotive of this resolution some alterations had taken place in respect

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of my dear companion, the long lost Abigail, which I shall here relate. To do this I must recur to the period of my confinement at the Castle for the sake of observing that she, as a faithful sharer in my ill as well as good fortune, had lingered in and about Boston and the neighboring towns for several years in hopes of my dismissal, or perhaps, escape. But at length growing weary of my long detention and hearing it said that not the least probability existed of my future enlargement, and being also in no condition to support herself and children any longer in Boston, she concluded to return to Greenland and throw herself and family (now four in number) upon the indulgence of her friends. This plan was carried into effect a few months prior to my unlooked-for release, and she continued with her relatives and friends in Greenland till visited by her own brother whose place of abode was at Rockingham in Vermont. At his pressing request she removed to his habitation where, at the time of my castle-deliverance, she still resided.

As I wished to have seen and conversed with her prior to my departure her absence was a subject of no small anxiety; but at last, having found an opportunity to send her a letter by way of the Post I adjusted all affairs and set out directly on my journey for Lemington.

It was about the beginning of December when I had the pleasure to set foot, for the first time, within the house of my son Simeon in that town. I found him, as also my son-in-law and their families, with my old wife

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Lydia, and our youngest child, all in good health. Our other children had been put out apprentices, and were all provided with suitable places of abode. To my entire satisfaction I now saw that though report was prone to exaggerate, yet, in the instance respecting my two sons, it had made no undue representation of their prosperity for each of them possessed a well managed farm and lived in rural affluency. They received me with cordiality and showed me the kindest attention. I felt both delight at the generous treatment I received and happiness at the prosperous establishment of my children; yet, even here fate had reserved for me conflicts of a trying nature; a struggle, however, bearing little affinity with any of anterior origin. It concerned my old wife Lydia and my young (reputed) wife Abigail: and the difficulty was, with whom of the two I should cohabit in future. This mental embarrassment was owing to my children residing at Lemington, who, since my return had been anxious, pressingly so, that I should forsake my mistress entirely and cleave thenceforth to the wife of my youth, my only lawful one, as they rightfully described her. I hesitated, but to carry their point they added to persuasion many alluring offers of assistance and, Heaven knows, I much needed at that time both succor and encouragement from some quarter or other.

Five disastrous years I had spent at the Castle without earning a penny for myself since all I could there rake and scrape had been scarce sufficient to bar a divorce of

soul from body. What measures then could I now adopt, exonerated as I was of all earthly advantages? After many reflections upon the advice of my two sons and weighing the pros and cons demurely in the balance of fair reasoning; in the course of which I calculated honestly on my present situation; that I had reached actually the decline of life, being in the fifty-second year of my age, with my corporeal vigor and mental powers perceptibly abated; that I felt poorly able to prosecute such fatiguing marches or to encounter such extreme hardships as had been those of former endurance; that no other means were visible of pushing my future fortune through the world except those I had heretofore practiced; meager penury in the meantime staring me full in the face; I say, after these and various other reflections, I even coincided with little self-satisfaction, to forego all future connection with my dear mistress should the step be compatible with my former promises. On the other hand it touched me to the quick to think of quitting the woman who had followed my fortunes hither and thither, through evil and good, and who had attended me so kindly in my greatest afflictions both of body and mind, cheerfully supplying my wants to the extent of her ability when I was deserted by every other person; not to mention that I had four children by her already and loved her unquestionably beyond all other women upon earth. Ah, me! what a stint was it to control my passions on the present occasion? Yet, having once concluded to listen to the re-

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monstrances of my wife, children and friends, and to effect, if it could be, a separation from the woman of my heart, I lost no time but wrote her a line fully expressive of my sincere love and regard and grateful acknowledgments for all kindnesses I had received; stating the reasons however, why I supposed our separation unavoidable and concluding with my best wishes for her perpetual happiness. This billet I found means to convey; and not long after received an answer in which she appeared not insensible of my ingratitude, but, nevertheless spoke of a separation as a point settled and unalterable.

Never since have I had the privilege of seeing her, but although cruel fate has decreed our separation I shall ever feel a tender affection for her person, and a lively sense of gratitude for the benefits she once had the goodness to render me. Those benefits are enhanced a thousandfold from the consideration that I received them when struggling with woes too weighty, in a manner, for the endurance of humanity.

I understand she has been wedded some few years to a respectable man and is now living in the interior of the country, where she enjoys the comforts of life but without its luxuries. Sincerely I pray that during life's remainder she may reap much more happiness with her present husband than possibly could have fallen to her share in my company or keeping.

Having adjusted in the manner above recited the foregoing troublesome affairs, I took quiet seizen, and, turf

and twig, possession of my primitive wife as of fee, and we resided together as baron and feme at Lemington, aforesaid. Our issue had been nine in number, most of whom were as yet living. We considered them as the pledges of our former love and notwithstanding the frequent desertions and numberless matrimonial infidelities of which I was chargeable, we contrived to dwell together in tolerable harmony. Indeed, my old wife was mistress of several convenient though rare qualities, one of which was she had a knack at dispensing with some of my irregularities which a more squeamish stomach had not digested so easily. To this might be added that she was a very notable and discreet housewife, so that never was her person in the least degree burdensome or expensive to me; but, on the reverse she had contributed to the support of the family more than I myself had, or in my embarrassed circumstances could ever have been able.

As it was my allotment to settle permanently in Lemington I purchased a piece of land and by the help of indulgent friends erected thereon a small but commodious dwelling-house. In this situation I led a peaceable and harmless life, my time being spent either in clearing land or in marching to and fro in quality of Indian Doctor. Meantime I had leisure and opportunity to ruminate upon the multiplicity of horrible ills and almost unparalleled sufferings that former misdeeds, especially the depredations I had made upon the property of others, had drawn on my devoted head. In brief, it now appeared

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on review that I had substantial reason to abominate theft to the latest hour of existence; wherefore I was led to resolve seriously that no temptations in future should induce a renewal of such shameful enormities. And really, in respect to theft itself, I have ever since observed most religiously the determination I adopted at that period; since, from the day I received sentence of death to the present moment of recording the fact I have never taken clandestinely from man, woman or child to the amount of a single pin.

As our little household consisted at present of only my old wife, myself and youngest child, I found that it transcended in no wise my honest endeavors to support it decently; this encouraged me to persevere in well-doing. In fact I derived no slender advantage from my constant exertions in the medical line, my travels were both east and west, and seldom did I return home unsupplied with necessaries. Besides, I frequently visited the Shakers, a society of Christians residing at Alfred, who, from the commencement of our acquaintance have been ever increasing in my veneration and esteem. With much gratitude I make mention of the charitable philanthropists in that place because, first and last, their bounty has been manifold and they have rendered me important services.

I had pursued the course of life above described perhaps a year when a certain gentleman (to call no names) having lost his horse, made a journey to Lemington and taxed me with the theft. I tried to convince him of his

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mistake but in vain, for admitting none of my excuses, he advised the attendant sheriff to seize and convey me to Dover jail. Conscious of innocency in this behalf, I remonstrated on the expense and loss of time attendant on the journey; still I was willing to accompany them on condition of reimbursement if found blameless. But no! they would make no such compromise, suggesting that if I would take horses I had also stolen undoubtedly the clothes I had on (for they saw me clad in a pretty decent suit). To obviate this calumny I asserted that to the bounty of the Shakers it was owing that I could call those clothes my own. This they heard with a sarcastic sneer and in hopes of detecting my fallacy hurried me off to Alfred, where, on entering the town, we happened to meet with a party of Shakers at work on the highway. To those honest citizens the question was propounded and answer immediately returned that my suit of clothes was a voluntary gift from their own fraternity. This point cleared, the Shakers in turn demanded with some spirit whither they might be carrying me, and were told, "To Dover Jail, for horse-stealing and being a rogue." The Shakers said they had no belief of my stealing a horse and, as to being a rogue, I certainly had the looks of the honestest man of the three; being an old friend whom they would not see dragged culprit like any farther, unless sanctioned by proper authority. This prohibition nettled my conductors who, being unable to produce a shadow of legality for their arbitrary proceedings, set me

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at liberty and suffered me to return home. A while after the lost horse was found, so that my innocence became clear as the noonday sun, yet I have repressed the man's name who treated me thus, in the sincere hope that he will one day repent and make amends for the trouble he thus occasioned me.

The next thing exigent of mention, and consequent on my return home from Alfred, is that I received the distressing intelligence of the decease of the illustrious General Washington, that truly magnanimous patriot who had been the political savior of his country and founder of the American empire; a man more worthy of being styled "the great" than any of the Alexanders, Pompeys or Charles who ever swayed a scepter. His death took place as the world knows, on the fourteenth of December, A.D. 1799, and was universally lamented through the land of his preservation by all ranks and orders of men. As a faint eulogy on his virtues, as a small tribute of praise to his sacred memory, for the matchless services he has rendered his country and the world, I here subjoin the following stanzas on that melancholy occasion, being a transcript of those ideas which are more legibly written on the table of my heart and which, I trust, no accident will ever efface.

What dismal sounds invade the ear!  
What gloom o'erspreads the sky;  
What solemn tidings do we hear!  
What piercing, heartfelt cry!

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Hark! 'tis the mournful trump of fate,  
"Great Washington's no more";  
Freed from this fleeting, mortal state,  
He seeks the heav'nly shore.

His glorious race on earth is run,  
Immortal lives his fame;  
Admiring worlds, O, Washington!  
Shall still exalt thy name.\*

\* No apology is made for omitting seven stanzas.—*E.P.*

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## Chapter VI

### PIOUS LADY PILGRIMS

*Ill habits cleave like birdlime to poor man,  
Stick, like contagion, shake them off who can;  
What vices we imbibe in youth, behold,  
Like shadows, will pursue us, when grown old.*

♦ ♦ ♦ **F**OR the space of twelve months subsequent to the mournful event just related I remained firm and steady at home in pursuing my ordinary business, which generally was dealing out medicine and cultivating a small farm. Between both I had full employment and provided for my small family in a decent and comfortable manner. My fame as an Indian doctor increased daily, and to my exertions were ascribed various extraordinary cures; of this commendation indeed I rather supposed myself not absolutely undeserving. Regular physicians will naturally smile at this seeming self-sufficiency, as some even of that description are extremely fond of having all medical science exclusively confined to their own fraternity. Let them enjoy comfortably their fancied superiority, I wish neither to detract from their merits nor to overrate my own.

Being now between fifty and sixty years of age I began to think, as doubtless will others, that it was high time

to have sown my wild oats and to have shaken off my old tricks and corrupt habits, at the same time setting about a very necessary piece of business, to wit, reformation. Indeed, at the time I treat of my thoughts dwelt with unusual elasticity on the subject of a future well-being; while, too, the image of past life presented itself to view in colors the most alarming, filling me with anguish and remorse. What salutary effects had been the result of those conscientious reflections if an adventure unfriendly to morals had not caught me by surprise and suspended for a time the operation of those friendly principles which were striving, I believe, to acquire some dominion over my vices, I pretend not to say. True it is, a man of my standing, in years at least, should have been better proof against temptation such as I allude to; and with remorse should confess his weakness in tamely yielding to the assault; yet, as I have hitherto related facts without disguise I must, for uniformity's sake, continue that practice however future comments may tend to my disadvantage. Without more apology I shall relate the adventure.

A certain young woman of religious deportment, I must conceal her name, called at my house one day in the absence of my family, to borrow my horse to ride a few miles to a newlight meeting and for the favor she engaged to pay half a dollar on her return. "The horse, young woman, said I, is at your service, only the money must be paid first, for you know it is ticklish trusting these hard times." She hesitated, since, horse or no horse,

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half a dollar, prompt pay, was more than she could advance. What then to do she knew not, for positively some horse she must have and none other could be obtained. Her perplexity was obvious, my inflexibility unshaken; she entreated, allured, flattered, but to little purpose; I was as prompt in refusal as she in importunity. At length to promote a compromise, I suggested that payment might be made easy, without the aid of a capital, since I was not absolutely disinclined to take personal services in lieu of all other requital. In fine, I named the conditions that should alone entitle her to the loan of the horse, though for modesty's sake I choose not to repeat them here. This was enough to excite those blushes which I then saw redden on her cheek; I, too, was preparing for the mortification of a rebuff, but the young religionist after a little hesitation and a few female negatives which often carry a far different meaning, gesticulated her assent. Articles of agreement having been fulfilled to a punctilio, she mounted her steed with agility and rode away with the air and gravity of a vestal of threescore. The above instance may be compared not inappositely to Ovid's *recontre* with Corinna, and is a pregnant proof that like him I had not mastered sufficiently my juvenile eccentricities. It may also evince the great difficulty of overcoming iniquity when long familiarized to the practice of it or of resisting temptation when she presents herself in alluring points of view.

Not many days transpired after the above ungracious

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behavior ere I equipped myself *cap a pie*, mounted my stout horse and set off on a medical excursion toward Nova Scotia. The whole of this extensive jaunt was crowned with brilliant success. I perceived as I passed along, that the face of the country had undergone great changes and had become much more populous than when I saw it last. Though, as many of the settlers were emigrants from New Hampshire and the northeasterly parts of old Massachusetts, where I had frequently rendezvoused, my looks were generally distinguished wherever I set foot. For that reason I dared not borrow such a strange diversity of antic shapes as Proteus like, I formerly did when strolling through these regions. Of a truth I was forced to relinquish both preaching and praying; and as for theft, I considered that as a reprobated resource which I had solemnly renounced forever. Hence the only surviving hobbyhorses within my circumscribed fee, were doctoring and fortune telling; but on either of those, alternately, I could traverse with eclat the highway of life without being pestered with the fears of want or the sighs of ambition. . . . [Tufts now hears of the death of his old friend, Richard Dennis, drowned while escaping from officers of the law.]

On my way homeward I visited the Shakers of Alfred, and that friendly people did not suffer me to leave them without fresh samples of their munificence. I have cause to esteem them, and shall, till life ceases to vibrate. How different has been their conduct toward me when de-

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pressed by poverty from that which some other religious professors have manifested when in much worse circumstances; professors who, under the mask and garb of sanctity are ever seeking to defraud their neighbors, and grind the face of the poor; hypocrites, impostors, and wholly unworthy the name they feloniously usurp.

Though disposed to declaim thus against zeal and sanctified hypocrisy I still retain a peculiar veneration for the sincerely pious, whom I esteem as the salt of the earth and the brightest ornaments of society. Godly piety is indeed a sublime qualification and the first, best source of human felicity.

Ah blest religion pure and undefil'd!  
Thy pleasing theme imparts serene delight,  
Transforms to hope the fears of misery's child,  
And to the poor dispenses heavenly light.

But to proceed. Leaving the Shakers I posted home but was there incommoded by means of sundry people who were searching for one of my castle comrades, who, forgetful of former calamities, had stolen a valuable horse. The aggressor had, indeed, been under my protection for upwards of four months and for his personal security while with me I stood sponsor; for which reason I was the more anxious to facilitate his flight. I succeeded in my trust and it being my friend's intention to abandon our quarter forever, by way of requital he gave me not only his stolen horse but several notes of hand against responsible persons residing at Waterborough. The horse I

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turned to good advantage and was so lucky as to collect the whole amount of the notes; so that I cleared, through the misfortunes of this man, to the tune, at least of three hundred dollars.

I was now enabled to discharge every debt I owed with honor and punctuality and to lay out for a more decent and advantageous mode of living than heretofore. Every undertaking seemed to be prospered under my hands; when suddenly a new disaster dispelled all hopeful prospects and gave me fresh proofs of the instability of human prosperity. Being one day on a small journey I received a desperate fall from an unruly horse by which I broke an arm and a rib and dislocated my wrist. Several months I was confined with this tremendous visitation ere returning health permitted a resumption of customary employments. At length, however, I got the better of all complaints and set my face toward the north, resolving, if health continued, to perform a tour of some considerable length. With this view I set off with my baggage, assuming, uniformly, the port and dignity of an old sage physician of long practice and experience. In the course of my rambles I went to the White Hills, sometimes called the "Lady Mountains," where, among other curiosities, I had a sight of the huge stone that rolled spontaneously down those hills in the year (if I mistake not) 1798. In size it was large as an ordinary meeting house; it took its departure from near the summit of one of those mountains and continued its progressive descent

## PIOUS LADY PILGRIMS

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as much as three-fourths of a mile, until a deep valley arrested its further progress. The path cleared in the journey of this stupendous rock appeared to be four rods in width and was swept quite clean of every standing tree, great and small. The inhabitants of the adjacent country for several leagues round heard the noise of the descending mass for nearly, as it seemed, a quarter of an hour, and conceived it the report of a great earthquake.

Leaving these mountains, I touched at many other places. Having, at last, indulged my desire for traveling I arrived at Lemington in perfect safety. The spring of 1802 had already advanced, so that my agricultural affairs requiring immediate attention I applied to them for a season with much diligence; but no sooner did circumstances permit than I set off again toward the east and after rambling some time, in another of her frolicsome moods dame Fortune conducted me to Old Wells. Here by mere accident I came across a brisk young widow, one whose person was faultless, her smiles bewitching, and her worldly goods far from inconsiderable. I perceived she had no knowledge of my person, so without demur I invoked the little mischievous deity and had the pleasure of a most gracious reception. Our courtship equalled in duration Jonah's continuance in the whale's belly, that is, three days and nights; the whole of which time passed so pleasantly that I never shall expect hereafter "to forget the widow." It should also be noted that our union in marriage was fully agreed on, three months after that be-

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ing mentioned for its real solemnization. Sooner she could not be ready as her wedding suit and many other preparative articles must first be provided. Thus I studied and practiced deception till my visit was eked out to a critical length, when I reluctantly quitted the fields of delight by bidding farewell to the enraptured widow.

Leaving Wells, I hied to Portland, then passed on to Alfred and other unimportant places; but lastly returned to Lemington, my thoughts still running incessantly upon the beautiful widow. The above stipulated term sped away; yet I neglected to return equipped for the matrimonial voyage as the pleasing dreams of my bride elect had fondly anticipated; wherefore, being in a nettle, she inquired out the place of my abode and dispatched a man and horse to know the cause of my absence. The messenger came to Lemington, where, hearing of my family connections he neglected the delivery of his message and posted back with the ugly intelligence that I was a married man already. How the poor widow digested the bitter pill I had little privilege of knowing; I knew, however, that very possibly this wild adventure might be productive of some perverse consequences, I therefore forsook home and journeyed a round pace toward Connecticut. In my travels this route I passed through Ipswich, where I saw a number of my old female friends, the sight of whom brought to my remembrance afresh the numerous benefactions conferred upon me in

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the worst of times by the ladies of that town. It recurred to mind in what manner they had petitioned for my release when suffering in prison under bonds and condemnation, and surrounded with all the terrors, all the machinery of death.

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## Chapter VII

### A YOUNG LADY OF MAINE

*When wanton women guide the helm,  
No wonder surges overwhelm  
The crazy bark, a shatter'd wreck,  
Its lading tost from hold and deck.*

FROM Ipswich I shaped my course northwardly and after a short residence in different places, returned home. I was soon after requested to visit in a medical capacity, a sick young woman, then in the eighteenth year of her age; but whose name, because of the recency of the transactions connected with this, I choose to repress.

She was the daughter of a neighboring farmer and had been, of a long time, in a weak and languishing condition; so much so that it was verily supposed her malady would terminate in a consumption and thus end her days. She had sought relief both far and near and had tried many prescriptions to no kind of purpose; for, in spite of remedies her disorder continued to gain ground and she proportionably to decline. In this state I found her almost emaciated to a skeleton. It was obvious to every one that her situation must be extremely precarious and her recovery to health altogether problematical, yet at the earnest

desire of her friends I undertook the unpromising task of prescribing for her cure.

As my private opinion had been opposed ever to the ordinary use of apothecary's drugs and chemical medicines which, being the growth chiefly of foreign climates, different from and perhaps more unhealthy than our own, I considered less congenial to American constitutions than medicines, the production of our own soil; I therefore, confined my patient entirely to the use of the latter. My remedies were vegetable and simples, and I had the vanity to suppose that my long intercourse with the Indian doctors and frequent practice even since, had taught me to apply them with becoming dexterity. And as the complaints of my patient were similar to those from which the Indians had formerly relieved me, I chose to rely in her case upon the methods of cure prescribed by the Indian physicians in mine. Whether my judgment were correct or not it ill behoves me to say, yet true it is that my choice of means was surprisingly successful, even beyond my greatest expectations. After several visits the poor invalid began to show symptoms of amendment and in a few months more regained as complete a state of health as she had ever been known to enjoy.

During the progress of her cure I had paid the most diligent attendance upon her person, administering many of the medicines with my own hands, by which, and other assiduities, I ingratiated myself insensibly (though God knows undesignedly) into her good graces and made

no slight impression on her heart. This discovery, though unnoticed by the rest of the family, was by me most easily observed, as every word and gesture which escaped contributed to its confirmation. My surmises, however, were confined to my own breast, not even to her did I betray this knowledge for I wished on family accounts that the fatal flame which seemed to be kindling in her bosom might expire in embryo. To promote so laudable an end I relinquished the pleasure of visiting at her father's house and studiously avoided all possible occasions of personal intercourse. This was my expedient for a while, till one day, happening to be caught in her company, she made use of the opportunity to acquaint me in plain terms, with her sentiments and the situation of her mind. The subject was introduced by expressing her great satisfaction at the unexpected recovery of her health; she then proceeded to thank me in pathetic terms for the useful services I had rendered her. Under providence she ascribed it to my care and attention wholly, that she was yet in the land of the living and in a situation to express her gratitude for the amazing pains I had taken on her account, averring it impossible to reward me in a way adequate to her wishes or my deserts. I assured her that my recompense was already ample from the pleasure I took in having promoted her welfare; that therefore I must reject the idea of all further compensation. "Never, (rejoined she) can my greatest benefactor be repaid; the best, the only requital I can make you for saving my life

is to declare you welcome to the last little of my property; and greatly should I rejoice if the poor bequest were increased a hundredfold. Yes, Mr. Tufts, to speak ingenuously, in nothing could I receive so much satisfaction, such peculiar delight, as in devoting my all to your only service." "I thank you kindly, dearest miss, said I for this pleasing testimony of your gratitude, but permit me to repeat that I am thoroughly satisfied; that I wish no other requital than what I have already received: Yes, Madam! I feel myself richly rewarded for the too trivial pains I have taken and therefore entreat you that all further observations may be waved on the subject." Here our conversation paused for a moment but was quickly renewed by her wishing, though in faltering accents, that I might not be amazed at her singular discourse since she loved and esteemed me beyond all others on earth. I replied that her declaration would have been more particularly transporting but for the chilling reflection that I was already bound in the matrimonial chain, which she certainly knew, and therefore in no situation to enjoy the benefits of her partiality. Here repressing the rising sigh, she proceeded to observe that her happiness would be superlative were she permitted to abandon all and follow my fortune to some remote quarter where we might contribute to the lasting felicity of each other. This declaration demonstrated so great a degree of ardor that it instantly excited mine; indeed I had quite forgotten my former resolution to forsake the

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company of this bewitching girl, I therefore told her that in case she was sincere I would undertake to escort her far from the reach of those who might wish to annoy us, and would be careful to supply her with all the comforts, not elegancies, of life. She appeared to be mightily pleased with this declaration and promised with alacrity to be ready for removal at a moment's warning. I observed that the exact time of departure must be a matter of uncertainty, depending entirely upon contingencies, since much must necessarily be done previous to leaving the town and that with much privacy; but that I would immediately return home and with all diligence make the requisite arrangements and, when the fortunate moment arrived, would acquaint her with my whole scheme. I desired her by all means to be in momentary preparation as the least delay might possibly discomfit the whole important design. Assuring me most solemnly that there should be no kind of failure on her part I took reluctant leave of my lovely charmer for that time. I would beg permission to note in this place that, however singular it may seem for one of the fair sex to make the declarations and overtures above related to a man advanced, with my accustomed veracity I must declare that I have preserved not only the sense but the spirit of the original dialogue as nearly as my recollection would enable me.

I hasten to observe that my late extraordinary engagements were continually uppermost in my fancy, impatiently urging me to the possession of my new mistress,

who, though no beauty, was yet endued with those attractive qualities which rendered her peculiarly an object of desire. The better to provide for traveling expenses therefore, I immediately converted into money such of my effects as might be disposed of with secrecy. I then settled my other business and feeling much anxiety to elope, notified my little mistress in what place to meet me. She was punctual; we both gained the angle of taction without exciting the least suspicion among the people of the neighborhood. As it fell out I was provided with a horse, able-bodied and an excellent traveler, we therefore mounted conjunctly, took the road to Kennebec and without regret bade adieu to Lemington, though we wist not but forever.

The first thirty-six hours were spent in traveling, both night and day, with the greatest expedition. Sometimes I marched on foot, sometimes proceeded on horseback, continually agitated, however, for fear of some disaster. Many times did we cast fearful glances behind lest we should behold a group of pursuers in the rear, but our alarms were groundless, the fact being that nobody had attempted as yet to trace out our footsteps.

By this time we were more than one hundred and twenty miles from the place of departure but so vastly fatigued that it was impossible to proceed an inch further for the present. We alighted at a house to gain some refreshment, when thinking ourselves quite out of danger

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we concluded to tarry the remainder of the day and the night ensuing.

The good folks of the house being informed that we were man and wife supplied us with a single bed only; this omission, however, gave us no umbrage in the least, on the contrary we took possession of our new lodging with the same regularity as though this habit had existed for years.

Over the transporting scene which naturally took place between me and my pleasing bedfellow during this first trial of our amorous skill I shall draw an impenetrable veil, and pass on to mention that the next day we prosecuted our journey, as we did the day following, without the slightest cross accident on the road, but on the afternoon of the third day we happened to be overtaken by a well looking traveler on horseback. At this moment I was walking with a view to ease my horse, so that my progression could be none of the swiftest, nevertheless the man unknown, as if fond of company, slackened his pace and vouchsafed for several miles together to amuse my companion and me with his facetious conversation. This brought us to a place called the six mile woods, just in the borders of which we met several people, one of whom was going to advise with a certain doctor upon the case of a man who lay ill at some distance. I halted to confer with the strangers, but my girl and our fellow-passenger moved moderately on.

The road through the woods, being straight, was per-

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fectly visible for a great way ahead, and while I was busied in discourse, my mistress and man had proceeded nearly a mile, appearing however to have then quickened their pace. I felt uneasy at this circumstance, so that, giving the travelers the best of my counsel for the sick man, I bid them God speed and hastened to overtake my company.

Inasmuch as my sweeting was now alone in the wood, with an utter stranger, it is not unreasonable to suppose that I placed the best foot forward, this in fact I did but after a deal of hurry, caught not a glimpse of the runaways till I had traversed nearly the whole extent of the forest. But when I had done this I again stretched my visual orbs ahead and happened to espy them aloof in the very suspicious act of remounting their horses.

Judge now, you husbands and lovers! for you alone will be able, what were my sensations and what my astonishment when I detected my beloved mistress in the strange attitude above mentioned! Her conduct, unless viewed in the worst light, appeared utterly insoluble! What honest inducement could she have had, reasoned I, for dismounting in this dreary forest with an absolute stranger! None decidedly! Vexed with those ideas I quickened my pace and at last overtook the fugitives near the outskirts of the wood just as they reached the tavern of one Stevens, in the town of Sebesticot.

As the demon jealousy had taken hold of my imagination and fired it with indignant rage, I wished to de-

velop more fully the supposed treachery of my mistress in order to requite her accordingly. But the case requiring brevity I could think of nothing else in my agitation than to charge the culprits with the fact and then draw conclusions from the effects of the accusation upon their countenances at the moment of surprise. I had scarcely adopted this expedient but an opportunity offered to put it partially in practice, for the landlord, coming out, stepped up to my mistress' gallant, just as she was entering the doors and greeting him kindly, asked us both into the house. In an angry tone I assured the landlord I should never associate with a man who had injured me so basely as had the fellow before us, at the same time I made enquiry for a Magistrate to whom I might resort for some kind of recompense. As I uttered this I kept a watchful eye upon the supposed culprit and discerned in his aspect both guilt and fear depicted in colors too visible for misconception. His confusion was proof enough though extorted by surprise that my suspicions were well founded. Vexation and grief at the thoughts of my girl's perfidy as may be well supposed, diffused painful emotions through the inner recesses of my heart. The fellow believed her to be, ipso facto, my wife, so that dreading my displeasure, he declined entering the house, but, watching out motions, sneaked away unperceived, so that I never set eyes on him more. The dastardly conduct of this fellow led me to reflect upon the humiliating nature of guilt, how it disarms the hero, debases the

man, and inspires the wretch, its possessor, with the weakness of cowardice and evasion.

Tarrying an hour at the Tavern for the benefit of refreshment, our journey was renewed; but the moment myself and trull were clearly out of earshot, I began a grating lecture on the score of her perfidy, more especially to a man who had relinquished house and home for her sake. However, she set up a defense, just such a one, indeed, as might be expected from such a woman; it being a denial, in toto, of the facts. I assured her that evasions would be useless since her gallant had disclosed all, but that, still, I was willing to forgive her if she would acknowledge the fault and do so no more. This I told her was my ultimatum, for on no other footing could I ever restore her to favor. Our debate was long, and many were the tears that descended from her eyes, till finding my resolution firm to abandon her unless she made the concession required and, supposing too that her partner in guilt had betrayed all, she at length confessed her misconduct, yet sought to palliate it by saying she had opposed his desires to the bat's end, till overcome by force and pecuniary allurements. "But now, cried she, I am convinced of my error and suffer as you must need suppose, the severest compunction." I intend to be as good as my promise, interrupted I, and shall, for this once, overlook all, though if henceforth you give me the least room to scruple your fidelity, believe it a fact at that moment I renounce you forever.

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Such were my denunciations and such my real intentions, while in return the young minx promised the best fashions in future; thus terminated for the present our unpleasing altercation. My mind, however, was ill at ease, for, previous to this shock, I intended to have sought some commodious retreat in which to have spent with her the remainder of my days.

We now pursued the journey in apparent good friendship and our next port was Wiscasset. Here I visited several sick people, but, feeling anxious to pursue our flight, went on to Penobscot. In this place I continued dealing out medicines for perhaps a week, when news being carried to Doctor Thomas, the practicing physician in those parts, that I was busy among his customers, he became highly exasperated. I happened to meet him one day in company with several gentlemen when he rebuked me sharply for my meddlesome officiousness as he termed it; a smart altercation ensued principally upon medical subjects but its issue was very little to the Doctor's credit or advantage.

Quitting Penobscot, our next stage was to Sandy River, in Farmington. Here we took lodgings with my cousin Elder Tufts, a lay-preacher. This man of zeal, observing that a she animal formed part of my baggage, was suspicious of a little criminality in our connection; he, therefore, took it on himself to be very inquisitive about whom the girl was and whither we might be going. To ease his conscience I told him she was my wife's near relation,

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whom I was conducting to her friends in the east, with whom she proposed residing in future. This account was satisfactory but my kinsman's preciseness was so unaccommodating that we bade him God bless him early in the morning, passed over to Belfast and took lodgings at a house, the only inhabitants of which were an elderly man, a young woman, her child which was an idiot, and lastly an Irishman, a transient person and whose occupation was that of a teacher or pedagogue. During the Irishman's stay at this house, he and the young woman above mentioned, had performed for each other the more essential duties of husband and wife without the intervention of the priesthood. I tarried here a number of days and on calculation found that since leaving home I had more than cleared all traveling expenses by medical and other casual emoluments.

One day, while at Belfast, I had been on a visit to a sick person and did not return to my lodgings till near bedtime. On entering the door I was met and accosted by the hostess herself, almost out of breath, who informed me (in a fit of jealousy no doubt) that my wife, as she called her, was locked up in the next room with the Irish schoolmaster; adding that in her opinion she was no better than she should be. I requested some explanation of this and was told that my informant, through a crevice, had peeped into their room where she beheld them very lovingly folded together in bed and by other palpable indications, was positive that they were furnishing my

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brows with a pair of antlers, vulgarly called horns. Though my hostess did not express herself precisely in the terms above mentioned, yet such, in fact, were their plain import. I stood aghast for some minutes, stupid with surprise and without uttering a syllable. My feelings it would be difficult to describe, I shall therefore wave the attempt, and remark only that at last gaining utterance, my loud execrations so marred the sport of the loving couple that they abandoned their retirement in haste and sped to another apartment. I did not follow, but having now a recent instance of the infidelity of my mistress I was convinced beyond a doubt that lasciviousness was, indeed, her constitutional and incurable failing. For that reason I was resolved to place henceforth no manner of confidence in her delusive professions or fair speeches, repenting egregiously that I had been so unwise as to leave my own family and stroll about like a wandering Jew without a jacket, for her sake. I felt also a tincture of regret on reflecting that my fond expectations, my delightful dreams of happiness in her blithe society should be thus blown and dissipated forever. Though effusions of tenderness would sometimes arise I knew it behooved me to check them; for, however indelicate my own conduct, I could ill brook a partner whose person was at any man's disposal whom chance or design might fling in her way. In a word, I was vexed at the arrant folly I had shown in bringing upon my back this new load of dishonor, this unnecessary distress, by listening to the per-

suasions of a wanton, and longed for some casualty that should separate us, effectually, forever. But to forsake her in a strange land had been base and dishonorable; hence, my brain was puzzled in the choice of expedients; at last, however, I resolved to give up our settlement in the east, and to visit Coos or Canada.

This decree was communicated to my paragon of fidelity, but was far from obtaining her cordial acquiescence. I told her my resolutions were invincible; that I could not think of an established residence in this section of the country, though nothing but her own conduct could have altered my first purpose. "I was certainly disinclined, continued I, to be convinced of your libidinous propensity; but when I see "proof rife on proof, and still the last the strongest," I can no longer resist the evidence of my senses." As if touched with my reproaches, she seemed mightily overcome, burst into a flood of tears, and assumed all those airs of pretended contrition, which one class of women can command at pleasure. Though her efforts were assiduous to soothe me, my inquietude increased; I, therefore, hastened to defray my expenses at Belfast, and prosecuted our travels, till Canada received us into its rude yet friendly bosom.

In this new world we visited many parts and places, too tedious for enumeration. Growing weary, however, of Canada, as was natural to my removing disposition, we made a sudden roving to Tamworth, in New Hamp-

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shire, subsisting very sprucely, the whole way, upon my professional earnings.

From Tamworth we came to Meredith, thirty miles; here I was readily recognized and saluted by the appellation of Dr. Tufts. This urged my abrupt departure, and Hanover was the next place, which, attracting our notice, invited a temporary sojournment. This is a neat, flourishing village, being the seat of Dartmouth university, the only collegial institution in the state, and as highly reputable as any one on the continent.

We took lodgings at the house of Mrs. Greene, purposing to abide there, for, at least, a week. Upon retrospect of our adventures, we here found that we had been absent from Lemington between four and five months; had seen divers parts of the country, and had traveled to the tune of one thousand miles. But should the frequent mention of such elaborate journeys dispose any to scruple the veracity of my journal, I would obviate all objections by observing, that I was well acquainted with the country, and enured, for many years, to much travel, and to great expedition in my routes; today, for instance, I might be in Lee or Canterbury perhaps, and by tomorrow, fifty or an hundred miles distant; this being considered, the seeming inconsistency of my account will, at once, vanish.

But to pursue the thread of my relation, which is now, to the great joy of the reader, perhaps, drawing to a close; our station at Mrs. Greene's proved so easy and agreeable, that we thought best to postpone removal, till

the waste of strength and spirits expended in those late wearisome rambles, should, in some measure, be repaired. One hundred and twenty miles from Lemington, we had not the slightest idea of being discovered or overtaken, by any of our offended kinsmen, which rendered us quite easy on that head. But our imagined security was fallacious, for exceedingly early, one morning, while I and my sprightly companion were still in bed, several men, armed with clubs, forced open the doors, and rushed into our apartment; among whom, dismal to relate! I distinguished the hateful features of my girl's father. His abrupt appearance, in our present condition, was a doleful surprise, as must be supposed, and an unutterable astonishment and mortification to us both. I hastily caught my apparel, and attempted to dress, but in this was frustrated by the old Grecian himself, who spying his daughter in bed, under circumstances so monstrous, broke forth into a most vehement passion, swearing outrageously, he would instantly have my life. This I had reason to believe, for, without giving me a moment for defense, he struck my arm with his club, and seemed stubbornly bent on pushing his threats against my life, into instant execution. My arm was totally disabled by the blow; but the rest of the mob, fearing the consequences of his vengeful frenzy, interposed with effect, and thus prevented the effusion of blood. However, they officiously loaned a hand for securing both the young woman and myself, and having fitted themselves for the scene in con-

temptation by a cherishing glass, removed us both to a place of safe-keeping.

Thus was I caught as a bird in a gin; but in order to account for the unexpected appearance, at this juncture, of the girl's father, it will be necessary to retrograde a little, for the sake of noticing that one of those people, who happened to see and know me as I passed through Meredith, had occasion to travel toward the east. This man commenced his journey, just as I left Meredith, and passing through Lemington, he there saw and acquainted the girl's parents with my having been at Meredith, in company with a young woman, who, of course, must be their daughter.

On this news the old man mounted his nag, in a mighty bluster, and coming to Meredith, obtained such correct information, that he easily traced our route to Hanover, where he succeeded in making us both prisoners in the manner above noticed.

Our surly dictator first took us before a civil magistrate, which, in his plan, was a preparatory step to my being sent to jail; but the cautious justice disinclining to intermeddle with such odd kind of business, the old blunderbuss, my prosecutor, was baulked of his intention, and forced to abandon it. For the sake of revenge, however, he took possession of my valuable horse and baggage, then ordering his female truant to pack up her alls, they prepared, instantly, for home. With this injunction, terrified at his menaces, she refused to comply, while he, with the

fury of a bedlamite, protested go she should, dead or alive. At last, by force and arms, he made out to place her on horseback, and in this manner, with girl, horse and baggage, they set off from Hanover.

Although I felt no subordinate degree of humiliation at being circumstanced thus, and bereft of my mistress, in so imperious and triumphant a manner, and by a man too, whose capacity and experience I held in the utmost contempt; yet, after all, the loss of my horse and other effects constituted, in my mind, the grosser mischief, and more material injury. In truth, the exceptionable conduct of my lost female, from nearly the beginning of our connection, had proved a pretty strong antidote against the danger of inordinate partiality towards her person; but, to be left destitute of all earthly subsistence, and one hundred and twenty miles from home, was a subject not of mental regret only, but real embarrassment. To return to Lemington during the present hurricane, I deemed unadvisable; I therefore, made up my account to wander from house to house, and from place to place, in order, to pick up a casual subsistence by such paltry arts, as heretofore I had practiced so successfully. Thus intending, I left Hanover, and took a circuit through the country, scarcely caring whither; yet was unable to flee from the upbraidings of conscience, or to console myself for the blunders I had so madly committed. Go where, or into what company I would, still did cutting reflections, on the bitterness of impending ills, lacerate my bosom and

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disturb its quiet. The image of an ill spent life, like the ghost of Banquo, haunted my imagination, incessantly, and tempted me to censure the malignity of destiny, when my employment had been far better in cultivating a belief, that I had merited those disgraces, in reconciling myself to the endurance of them, and in arming my mind against the future commission of crimes, such as had caused the present calamities.

HenryTufts.com

## Chapter VIII

### ADVICE TO THE YOUNG

*The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,  
Lies in new light thro' chinks that time has made  
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become,  
As they draw near to their eternal home.*

WALLER.

ROVING about till I thought the displeasure of my foes, and the rumor of my follies had a little subsided, I again ventured to show my head at Lemington, though much ashamed of my late scandalous elopement, and of the mode in which it had terminated. My chagrin was the more poignant, since I could not but know that my two sons, who were men of morals and account, and who possessed families of their own, would vastly disrelish my ill behavior, and withhold, perhaps, those necessary contributions, which, of a long time, I had been used to expect and receive at their hands. Thus inwardly teased, I approached with shame and distrust to that habitation, which I had abandoned so preposterously; and there found, within its walls, my old wife, who was assiduously engaged in domestic concernments, after her usual industrious manner. She was not a little astonished at my sudden appearance, nor was I, in a less degree, abashed

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and confounded at her presence. To set up a justification, or even to extenuate my irregularities (during the present temper of my helpmate) seemed hardly to invite the experiment, I therefore attempted neither. Reproaches and revilings for conjugal infidelities issued in volleys, from her mellifluous notes, and became the order of the day, till the tempest of her passions was wrought up to the sublimest pitch of frenzy. It was manifest there could be no immediate calm; wherefore, it imported me to put on the whole armor of resignation, or quit the field, entirely, to my enraged antagonist.

Of the venerable dame, my spouse, it could only be said, "she was once young"; for with pretty large strides, she had now advanced towards her grand climacteric, being my elder by a number of years. As one would have supposed, it was high time for the old lady to exhibit a small portion of indifference for the hymeneal banquet, and to the indulgence of others in its delicacies; far otherwise; her juvenile feelings were not so forgotten, but she could view the itinerary, my capers and those of my female adventurer in the same odious point of vision, as though madam herself had been yet on the threshold of twenty. Be this as it might, the multiplicity of curtain lectures, that were constantly chiming in my stunned ears, I had scarce thought pardonable in a newly wedded wanton of the age just mentioned. They reminded me of the old Welsh epigram, which, in a sense, may be appropos to our purpose;

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“Women, like men, will fade away,  
Their eyes grow dim, their teeth decay,  
But while they breathe the vital gale,  
’Tis strange their tongue should never fail.”

How long ere those grating peals, had their vehemence been permanent as spiteful, must have put me to flight, is now problematical, since, before I was driven to that extremity, the torrent of her eloquence subsided, and left me to recover, by slow degrees, my ordinary standing in the family. In other words, after a deal of declamation, my considerate spouse, as in days of yore, repeatedly, so now, to prevent mischief, restored her contrite yokefellow to customary favors; of which, condescension and goodness, I hope to retain such lasting remembrance, as may in future deter me from provocations of a like filthy nature.

Since that period I have carried my dish pretty uprightly; have been guilty of few or no misdemeanors, but have persevered heroically in regular habits and virtuous resolutions. At times, however, I still budge about, as a traveling physician, in the hope of acquiring, in an honest line, if possible, a few pennyworths of bread, a meager, but needful pittance, to aid me to the goal of life’s painful pilgrimage. By endeavoring to advance the benefit of my fellow creatures, and do all the good I can, I hope to make some little atonement, in the latter part of my life, for the many mischiefs and evils, which I brought upon myself, my family and others, in the earlier stages of it. . . .

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Should any of the rising generation, by a perusal of my story, learn to avoid those quicksands of vice, on which I have been so often wrecked, I shall feel myself amply compensated for the trouble I have taken in its compilation. "The wages of sin is death"; the wages of a vicious, dissolute life is punishment. That punishment, if not inflicted by the ministers of the law, is still our certain doom, by the invisible hand of inexorable justice. My iniquities have been regularly visited with pain, poverty and stripes; the examples, therefore, are full of moral, and teach, beyond a doubt, that our actions, to insure happiness, must be good; the contrary of which my own life most abundantly demonstrates. To hold up to view the monster sin, in his odious and abominable colors, must, and ever will, have a similar effect with, if not a more powerful one, than the picture of virtue arrayed in all her alluring and attractive charms. There is, therefore, a positive and negative example; each in its tendency having the same effect upon the lives and morals of society. That my history is of the negative kind I need not inform the curious reader; since, indeed, I have taught virtue, by the practice of vice only, throughout a troublesome life. The lines of the greatest of poets will here illustrate my ideas.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
That to be hated needs but to be seen."

Before concluding, I beg leave renewedly to acknowledge the numberless obligations I owe to diverse gentle-

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men and ladies, for their disinterested kindness to me, both while under condemnation of death, and while at the castle, as also in many other of my trials and exigencies, as well before as after those periods. That they may be rewarded for their beneficence, both in this world, and in that which is to come, will be an object of my earnest entreaties. In respect to such as have injured me I heartily forgive them, as I hope the supreme arbiter of events and judge of all things will vouchsafe to forgive me. I wish not to harbor resentment, and am determined to carry rancor against no one, in my bosom to the grave. I hope too that others will overlook the injuries they have sustained in the loss of property, or otherwise, through my means; inasmuch as I lament sincerely my injustice towards them, resolving, carefully, to shun similar aggressions for the future. Heaven grant I may do no more wickedly.

FINIS

THE SIX SILVER SPOONS

*A Note by the Editor*

HenryTufts.com

## THE SIX SILVER SPOONS

THE incident of the six spoons, which brought Tufts within the shadow of the rope, was naturally regarded by him as the climax of his career. And it may be that here alone it is possible to reconstruct one of his stories from authentic contemporary records, and to compare it with the version given in this book, thirteen years later, by his unknown biographer.

For once, at least, Tufts came before a Court of sufficient importance to leave records; and for once he was so much a public character as to merit a few lines in a newspaper. The press was chiefly concerned with the French Revolution, and decidedly contemptuous toward local news. At this time, and for many years after, newspaper editors either thought it undignified to record local events; or else they considered such news unnecessary to print, since every citizen heard all he wished by word of mouth.

The year of the adventure with the spoons is given throughout Tufts' book as 1793, and this error was not detected by Colonel Higginson; nor by me, when writing a chapter on Tufts in my *Queer Books*. The actual date was 1794, and some account of Henry Tufts' conflict with the law is preserved in the records of the Supreme Court in Boston; and in the Executive Records of the Council, in the Massachusetts State House.

Tufts is not usually reticent about his illegal acts, but for some reason he chose to represent his six months in Marblehead as a peaceful and idyllic period, in which he attended to his "appropriate functions" as a "pharmacopologist," and cleared what was, for that date, the very good sum of three dollars a day.

The picture of the benevolent physician from New Hampshire, equipped with his Indian lore, bringing joy and healing to the people of Massachusetts is a pleasing one. Unfortunately, he gave them cause for grave annoyance by his activity after dark. Like Charley Peace, and many another burglar, he had, or appeared to have, a respectable occupation for the day-time.

As early as January 9, 1794, (by the records of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court) Tufts, and one William Venson, passed on some unsuspecting persons in Boston "a certain piece of base metal commonly called a counter, made in imitation of coined money," which the said Tufts and Venson represented as a genuine gold coin of the United States.

At the February term of the Court, in Boston, the two adventurers were indicted on two counts, for this offense. Both pleaded not guilty, but Tufts later changed his plea to guilty. Venson was acquitted on one indictment, but convicted on the other. Each defendant received the same sentence: costs of the prosecution, one hour in the pillory, and fifteen strokes on the naked back.

After this, we are to suppose, Tufts returned to Marble-

head and took up the medical profession again, "visiting many patients . . . both . . . high and low."

In Massachusetts, the anniversary of Concord Fight, and of the "Battle" of Lexington, April 19th, is always observed with appropriate ceremonies. It is a pleasant spring holiday,—remembered by most of us as the opening of the baseball season. To our ancestors, in 1794, when the veterans of that glorious morning in 1775 were still living, it may have had a more sacred significance. Nevertheless, on the eve of that holiday, Dr. Tufts went to Ipswich, where, after night-fall, he broke into, entered, and stole from the shop of Isaac Lane, nine raccoon skins, of the value of fifty-four shillings, six hats of the value of sixty-seven shillings, and two cat-skins valued at two shillings.

Moreover, he committed burglary in two shoe-making shops, belonging to Benjamin Appleton at Hamilton, where he filched one shoe of the value of four shillings, and leather worth six shillings. Likewise, the same night, (he must have had a good horse) he went to the shop of John Dodge at Wenham, where he stole two pairs of boot-legs, two calf skins, and a piece of leather, of the total value of forty-two shillings.

At the June term of the Supreme Court, sitting in Ipswich, (the same session at which the case of the spoons was tried) Tufts was charged with all three of these offenses,—and to all of them he pleaded *guilty*.

There is no mention of this in the book, and from

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CRIMINAL

Tufts' account, one would have supposed that what he calls the false accusation about the spoons was the only cause for his appearance in the Court at Ipswich.

Here, however, in all the terrors of legal phraseology, is the accusation made against him, by the Grand Jurors, the matter of Mr. Jacobs' spoons:

At the Supreme Judicial Court begun and held at Ipswich within and for the County of Essex on the third Tuesday of June in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

The Jurors for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on their oath present that Henry Tufts of Marblehead in the County of Essex, yeoman, at Danvers in the said County of Essex with force and arms on the twenty-fourth day of April now last past, not having the fear of God before his eyes but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil, the dwelling house of Daniel Jacobs situate in Danvers aforesaid in the County aforesaid in the night time of the said twenty-fourth day of April feloniously and burglariously did break and enter with an intent to steal and seven silver spoons of the value of eighteen shillings one iron spoon of the value of one shilling one washed beer glass of the value of two shillings one beaver hat of the value of twelve shillings one walking staff of the value of five shillings two pairs of leather slippers of the value of eight shillings and one pair of shoes of the value of six shillings of the goods and chattels of the said Daniel Jacobs there found then and there feloniously did steal take & carry away against the peace and dignity of the said Commonwealth & the Law in such case made and provided.

A true bill:  
JAS. SULLIVAN, *Attorney General*

EPHRAIM KENDALL, *Foreman*

Tufts' narrative of his innocent bargain, with John Stewart, fades away, and we have, in its place, the more

## THE SIX SILVER SPOONS

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interesting picture of his departure from Danvers, with eight spoons (one of iron) to say nothing of the beaver hat, the walking staff, the slippers and the "washed beer glass."

On this charge, Tufts maintained his guiltlessness, and chose to stand trial. Here again, is the brief official record:

And now in this present term before the Court here comes the said Henry Tufts under the custody of the Sheriff of the County of Essex and being set to the bar here in his proper person and forth-with being demanded of and concerning the premises in the Indictment above specified, and charged upon him how he will acquit himself thereof he says that thereof he is not guilty and thereof for trial puts himself upon God and the Country.

Nathan Dane and Samuel Sewall Esqrs, having been assigned by the Court as Counsel for the prisoner. A jury is immediately impanelled viz: John Huse, foreman and fellows namely, Aaron Smith, Joseph Osgood, Richard Woodman, Benjamin Townes, Jacob Treadwell, John Thurston, Aaron Nelson, Enoch Hoyt, Ebenezer Farrington Junr, Jonathan Kimball & David Wood, who being sworn to speak the truth of and concerning the premises in the said Indictment upon their oath say that the said Henry Tufts is guilty.

And now a motion is made by the Attorney General in behalf of the Commonwealth that sentence of death may be passed against the said Henry Tufts the prisoner at the bar, whereupon it is demanded of him the said Henry Tufts if he has or knows ought to say, wherefore the Justices here ought not upon the premises and verdict aforesaid to proceed to pass judgment against him who nothing further says unless as he before had said.

IT IS THEREFORE CONSIDERED BY THE COURT here that the said Henry Tufts be taken to the Gaol from whence he

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CRIMINAL

came and from thence to the place of execution and there be hanged by the neck until he be dead.

This clears up a few points. He had asked, says Tufts, for Theophilus Parsons as counsel. Mr. Parsons was the leader of the Essex bar, and the prisoner was demanding the best talent. Instead, he was assigned Nathan Dane and Samuel Sewall, Esqrs. Colonel Higginson thought that Tufts, who described them as "Messrs. Sewall and *Dana*" referred to James Sewall of Marblehead, afterwards Member of Congress, and Francis Dana, "afterwards Chief Justice."

As a matter of fact, Francis Dana *was* Chief Justice at this time. Samuel Sewall (1757-1814) was in Congress from 1797-1800, and was later a judge of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Nathan Dane (1752-1835) lives in memory as the founder of the Dane professorship of law at Harvard. Henry Tufts' interests were in able hands.

Justice Paine, mentioned by Tufts, was Robert Treat Paine (1731-1814) the Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

As for the trial itself, the Tufts account is naturally the more interesting. His statement that the Attorney General (James Sullivan, 1744-1808; Attorney General of Massachusetts, 1790-1807) treated him with "tenderness" and that the Judge warned the jury to be cautious about convicting, is probably true.

Aside from the fact that a convict is more apt to charge

with harshness the Court which has convicted him, than to admit that they gave him fair treatment, there is another reason for believing Tufts' account of the long hesitation of the jury. (It is also referred to in the joint petition of Tufts and Abigail. This petition, plainly, was written by a responsible person.)

The reason for believing this part of Tufts' story lies in a reference to another similar trial, held probably in the neighboring town of Salem, and in the same year. It is recorded in the *Diary of William Bentley, D. D.*, under date of November 10, 1794. The State's attorney was James Sullivan, Esq., as in Tufts' case, and again Messrs. Sewall and Dane appeared for the two prisoners, who also were charged with burglary. The jury were out all night, but although the evidence was clear that the offense was committed in the hours of darkness, and therefore came under the law against *burglary*, they could not be persuaded to find the men guilty of that crime, as it called for the death penalty,—“so firm,” writes Dr. Bentley, “are the people against sanguinary laws.”

Therefore, they brought in the prisoners guilty of the lesser offense of theft.

In Tufts' case, because of the capital sentence imposed for the burglary in Danvers, he was not called for sentence in the three other cases in which he pleaded guilty. And the sentence in the Danvers case may be explained by the fact that his record persuaded the judges that he was a confirmed and dangerous criminal.

We must try to see him as they did,—not as a rather amusing person, going long distances at night, and breaking into buildings to steal nine raccoon skins and a beaver hat. Our ancestors had not yet become jaded and accustomed to crime on a grand scale. We hardly remember it over night if we read in a newspaper of a robbery in broad daylight of tens of thousands of dollars, accompanied by the casual murder of guards or policemen, and an incidental spraying with bullets of all the bystanders,—women and children included. The only effect such an occurrence has on us, in the event of a trial of some of the robbers, is to make us insist that the bandits have a staff of psychiatrists to show that they really were not to blame for what they did.

Incidentally, the record of the Tufts trial shows that not two witnesses alone appeared against him, but about a dozen, including several members of the family of Daniel Jacobs. A police official of today, would, I think, conclude that the only reason Tufts risked trial in the Jacobs case was that he thought that it was the only one he could “beat.”

Next came the appeals to the Governor for clemency. The petitions of the students of Cambridge and of the ladies of Ipswich do not appear to be on file at present, but the petition of Tufts himself, (see page 268) the joint appeal of himself and his wife, “dear Nabby,” and two petitions of Mr. John Thurston, the juror, are all in existence. In Tufts’ own appeal we seem to have an auto-

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rights of neutrality: That insurrection has begun in Poland against the usurpations of Russia and Prussia: And that (happily for the American commerce) the war between the Portuguese and Algierines is renewed.

*CIRCUIT COURT of the U. S.*

On Monday, last week, came on the trial of COLLINS, POLESKI, and FASTIDI, in Boston, for murder and piracy, as mentioned in former papers, when the Jury brought in their verdict—Guilty. Their execution is ordered for Wednesday the 30th day of July next.

At the Supreme Judicial Court, held at Ipswich, last week, HENRY TUFTS, late a resident in Marblehead, convicted of burglary on the house of Mr. Daniel Jacobs, in Danvers, received sentence of Death.

Two men were also convicted of passing counterfeit dollars, and received sentence.— They were from Kennebeck.

On Wednesday last, arrived at Gloucester the schooner Freedom, Edmund Pearson, master, from Guadeloupe; in which came passengers six French Officers, viz. Charles Baujean, Moses Baujean, Arman Beaujean, John Capedeville, Philip Redaud, John B Laveau—who were compelled to embark for America, and obliged to leave their wives and children with the enemy, the English, or, what if possible is worse, with the aristocrats of the Island. They were received by the patriotic inhabitants of Gloucester with that sympathetic affection which we hope will ever distinguish them; and on Friday invited to a civic feast, at which were present the principal persons of the place; when festive toasts were drank, among which were the following:—The Republic of France. [*three cheers.*]—The memory of those heroes who have fallen, whether in France or America, in the defence of the rights of men. [*After this toast, the French Gentlemen sang the Marseillois Hymn.*]—May America ever be found a happy and safe asylum to every unfortunate French Republican.—Mr. JAY, the Plenipotentiary to the court of Britain—may his embassy be crowned with success.—The Fishery of Massachusetts.—Speedy relief to our unfortunate brethren in slavery in Algiers.—Mankind—May we live to see universal Liberty and philanthropy pervade the mighty family.

DIED]—In England, the Rt. Hon. Charles Pratt (Lord Camden) aged 63. In Flanders, Capt. Carlton, son of Lord Dorchester: in the action of the 17th of April, a cannon ball cut his arm in two, another

the Governor, at his  
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ternoon the Quebec  
came up and moored  
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- Olive Branch,
- Patty,
- Ship Wm. & Henry,
- Bark Essex,
- Brig Francis,
- Katy,
- Polly,
- Lion,
- Success,
- Sch. Seaflower,
- Nancy,
- Molly,
- Betsy,
- John,
- John & Mary,
- Patty,
- Betsy,
- Three Friends,
- Polly,

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From *The Salem Gazette*, June 24th, 1794, announcing the sentence on Henry Tufts

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graph document signed by the man himself, and a sample of his literary style at this period of his life. As well as I can decipher it, this is his letter to the old Revolutionary patriot, then Governor of Massachusetts:

To most oneribel gouener of Boston this comes from a pore condamd man and i am not the contriver of the Burglay for John Simson went him self and did the Crime he bored my shoos and said he wanted to goe a litle way and he wold bee back next morning and soo he did come to me in marblhead and said he have got som things as good to you as the money and you must sall me your cote and thes things is as god as money to you and i sold him one cote and too pare of Stockings as Shore as i am alive this is true and the Sheriff [?] that i sent after my evidence was my Inimy and said he wold doe me hurt if he cold unles i Bege the power [?] your oner So doe all you can for me now and the Counsler to do for me pray do for me if you wold as god you never wold consent for me to die i am pore and distut [destitute] of friends and nobody but god for me to help me now as [I am?] in the hands of god I hop that god will sufer me to live a litle longer to repent of my sins and trangrasons that i have comit in the Body may god in liten your oners of my afairs now at this time and let me live a little longer for repentence.

HENRY TUFTS.

It is endorsed, on the outside,

To The most onerible gouvner of Boston with Cear [care] and Spead.

There is in this, it will be observed, no mention of the sinister John Stewart, seller of the six abhorred silver spoons. In his place, appears a new character: "John

Simson," whose transactions with Tufts do involve a coat and two pair of stockings, but are otherwise somewhat different from those printed in his story, and a little less suggestive of complete innocence.

As for the intolerable suspense of the afternoon of August 14th; the inhuman silence of Governor Samuel Adams; the dreadful wait of more than a month longer; and the news of the commutation, coming at last on the 18th of September—all of them described in the book—the records show that on June 27th the Governor was advised by the Council to issue a warrant for the execution on August 14th, and that on that day he did so issue it (See page 280) The *Salem Gazette*, of July 1st, announced the day set for the hanging.

On *July 17th*, however, the Governor issued a reprieve, until September 25th. Plainly, Governor and Council were investigating the question of a commutation, and on September 2nd they commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. (Tufts actually served four years,—the longest term of imprisonment in his life.)

What becomes of the sexton, going on August 14th, at 8 A. M., to dig the grave? And the coffin that put the school-mistress in a tremor? And the sympathetic deputy sheriffs? And the three thousand persons of Ipswich, and roundabout, who came to see a hanging, and had to go home in bitter disappointment?

Are we to think that Governor Adams—who was over seventy years old, and should have been past such pranks

## THE SIX SILVER SPOONS

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—was playing a joke on all these people, by failing to let the Sheriff of Essex know that *four weeks earlier* he had postponed the ceremony until late the next month, and had almost determined to forbid it altogether?

I detest the iconoclast, the shatterer of myths, the pedant who takes joy in exploding harmless and enjoyable legends. There is a large percentage of truth in the narrative of Henry Tufts,—how large we do not know. But it is possible that he so respected the truth that he looked upon it in awe: as something to be dealt out with caution, and not unless both diluted and adorned.

After some study of his career, at various times for more than a year past, I have been impressed with the difficulty of discovering him at all, outside the brown leather covers of his old book. Often, he has appeared to me as a wraith, a person everyone talks about—like the Devil—but never actually sees.

At last, one day, after a dozen failures, I opened the pages of the *Salem Gazette*, and found the record of his conviction,—probably the first time that Henry Tufts ever got his name in the papers. And when, on the same page, only five lines below, I read that the schooner *Freedom*, Edmund Pearson, master, had arrived at Gloucester, I took it for an omen. If I doubted the existence of one of these, why should I not doubt the existence of both?

E. P.