Salem witchcraft in outline / by Caroline E. Upham.

SALEM WITCHCRAFT IN OUTLINE

UPHAM

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IN

OUTLINE.

BY

CAROLINE E. UPHAM.

ILLUSTRATED.

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TO MY LITTLE SON

CHARLES WENTWORTH UPHAM

BOTH BECAUSE HE IS DEAR

AND BECAUSE OF THE NAME HE BEARS.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

Printed from the same plates used in Hon. C. W. Upham's work.

PREFACE.

Sixty years ago in February, two lectures on the Witchcraft Delusion were given before the Salem Lyceum by the late Charles W. Upham. These, afterwards printed in book form, are most brilliant essays on this dark subject; they were written when the author was in the vigor of early manhood, and attracted much attention at the time. Thirty-five years later, Mr. Upham, then in his ripe intellectual power, prepared his "History of Salem Witchcraft," which was given a high place among historical works, by reason of its faithful research, fair judgment and elegant diction. Both works are now out of print.

The author of the present volume claims to be neither a brilliant essayist nor an historian, but having been urged to prepare a sketch of the History, now offers it to the public as one would

the photograph of a notable scene, not a great original painting. And if, as it must be, the rich coloring and delicate effects are missing in the reproduction, it is hoped the drawing may be found true, and no important lines set in awry.

Having been desired by the heirs of the late Charles W. Upham to draw freely from the History, paragraphs from it have been woven into the sketch giving strength to the little story, and serving the reader better than a feminine pen could do.

As "Salem Witchcraft in Outline" has come into being in the same room where the History was born, the writer hopes there may be one point of resemblance between them, a staying quality. That, whereas, her father-in-law earned for his creation a strong foothold in standard literature, the result of her work may be to have fixed certain facts firmly in the minds of those who read them.

INTRODUCTION.

Next to the hard lessons taught by experience, no knowledge remains so firmly fixed as do the lessons learned in outline.

The Primary Geography, with its strongly-marked principal cities and largest rivers, will be stamped on the mind with lasting impression, while the High School Geography, because of its multitude of claims on the memory, fades away gently and evenly.

It is through our Child's History of England that we remember the notable dates and events of the Mother Country, and not from the more ponderous volumes we studied later, where the great crisis and its crowd of details being learned together are in time forgotten together.

If it were not for this fact, courage might not be found wherewith to give in brief outline the

History of the Witchcraft Delusion. Yet, remembering the power of our Primary Geography, where the outline of the earth is given with entire success, there is no reason for hesitating to present a short story of one of the great mistakes made in one part of the earth.

In order to get our outline of Salem Witchcraft, let us ask and seek replies to the following questions.

I. When did it occur?

II. How long did it last?

III. How many suffered?

IV. Why did they suffer at all?

The persecution of persons for witchcraft in Salem was in 1692.

It lasted from the latter part of February, when the first singular actions of the supposed bewitched young girls were noticed, until Sept. 22, when the last executions took place. The storm was then over, though the air was not clear of threatened danger until May of 1693, when all prisoners were set free.

Nineteen supposed witches were hung, fourteen of them being women, and Giles Corey who would not answer to the Court and plead either "guilty" or "not guilty" was pressed to death for his contumacy.

The answer to the fourth question, "Why did they suffer at all?" will take the remainder of the book to give, and then large volumes more could be given further in reply.

CHAPTER I.

THE WITCH — HER POSITION IN THE OLD AND NEW WORLD — MATTHEW HOPKINS, THE WITCH-FINDER-GENERAL.

SEARCH for the true causes which brought about this fierce and desolating delusion in New England has been and is, to the student of human nature, as fascinating as seeking for the source of the Nile to explorers. The Nile would never have been the Nile if it had depended on Nyanza alone for its volume, but other lakes aided its current and countless tributaries swelled its power till it became mighty. So the philosopher, as he follows up one phase after another of early New England life, finds many elements which helped to swell the dark tide of superstition, till

becoming resistless in its force, many innocent lives were swept away in the flood.

The veritable origin of the delusion was of course in the established belief of the day in Witchcraft, given an impetus by mischievous girls, augmented by the ignorance of the "chirurgeons" who knew less of hysteria and the infinite capacities of nerves than is known now, impelled by the ministers, who felt that in rooting out the evil they were subduing enemies of the Lord, and by their valor becoming available for heavenly promotion, while family feuds, private grudges, jealousies and bitterness,—all added to the terrible tumult.

It is a little singular to note how the word witch has improved in its significance with more enlightened times. We speak of a "little witch," meaning a child or young person of uncommon attractiveness, and are "bewitched" we say with anything we intensely admire, with never a thought of diabolical influence in either case; far otherwise did the world of 1692 interpret the word.

"A witch was regarded by our fathers, as a person who has made a deliberate and formal compact with Satan, by which compact it was agreed that she should become his faithful subject, and do what she could in promoting his cause, and in consideration of this allegiance and service, he on his part agreed to exercise his supernatural powers in her favor, and communicate to her a portion of those powers. Thus a witch was considered in the light of a person who had transferred allegiance and worship from God to the Devil."

Having seen how benighted our ancestors were on this subject, let us take a look across the Atlantic and see what they were doing in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Among other things, they were hanging and burning witches by the hundreds and thousands. For once, England, France and Germany were of one mind: they all believed in witchcraft or demonology, and implicitly obeyed the scriptural injunction "thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

Not alone the poor and ignorant in these countries, but the highest and wisest in the land, poets, bishops, judges, gave it authority. Why should any humbler people differ in opinion, excepting of course the unfortunates accused?

It may be something of a shock to realize that Richard Baxter whose "Saints' Rest" has soothed so many souls, the dauntless Luther, Kepler, who could read the laws governing planets, that discoverer in philosophy, Bacon, such a compendium of wisdom as Sir Thomas Browne, with others to whom we have always rendered deep intellectual homage, were all of this way of thinking.

In England, in the year 1645, Matthew Hopkins coming into the world a little late for the Crusades, desiring to be famous, assumed the title of "Witch-finder-general." He must have fancied that the promise "seek and ye shall find" applied specially to witches and salvation, for he most diligently sought for the first, pursuing his victims with barbarous methods for their detection.

As one of his tests was made use of in the Salem trials it may be given here. It was thought that if persons had made an agreement with the devil, he set his mark somewhere upon their bodies, and that it would be a dead or callous spot in the skin. So the flesh of the poor accused wretch was subjected to close scrutiny and pricked in order to find the callous spot. This was not difficult to find in the skin of an aged person.

His own original and favorite test, however, was to tie the thumb of the right hand to the great toe of the left foot, and thus secured, drag the victim through a river or pond; if the body floated, as it naturally would sustained by the rope, it was declared a sure proof that the poor creature must be a witch.

His wonderful success at witch-finding, particularly as he demanded of the authorities remuneration for his efforts, finally aroused the suspicions of good citizens, and capturing the witch-finder-general, they tied his thumb and toe

together as he had served others, and dragged him through the water, finding to their delight that neither did he sink. It is said that he procured in one county alone, the deaths of three times as many people as perished in Salem's whole persecution. There were a few sporadic cases of supposed witchcraft in other parts of the colonies.[1] William Penn presided at the trials of two Swedish women in Philadelphia for witchcraft, which was a capital offence by the laws of Pennsylvania and New York. Luckily for the City of Brotherly Love, the prisoners by some technicality, were acquitted; for the flint and tinder were there and the spark struck, but the spark went out and the conflagration prevented.

[1] Margaret Jones was executed for witchcraft in Boston, June 15, 1648. Mrs. Ann Hibbins executed in Boston for the same offence, June 19, 1656, also Goody Glover, an Irishwoman, executed in Boston in 1688. Mary Parsons of Springfield was tried, and convicted of witchcraft in 1651, but her execution is uncertain.

CHAPTER II.

COLONIAL BELIEF IN THE CLOVEN HOOF.

HAVING looked into the minds of the people on both sides of the Atlantic and found them furnished with the same material, let us consider for a moment the aspect of the new country which the colonists of eastern Massachusetts looked out upon, and see whether it was calculated to foster superstitious fears.

Can we, from our luxurious position in the nineteenth century, with its multitude of inventions for making life easy, picture the hard toil which made existence possible to the early settlers? Before a man could raise a roof for the shelter of his family, he must hew down trees to create space and timber. There could be n

fields or gardens till the stumps were burned and the interlacing roots destroyed.

Instead of open streets they had a primeval forest; noble indeed for the poet, but exceedingly inconvenient for the purposes of agriculture. No policemen to patrol the dark corners, no fire department to summon in distress; but, behold, on the contrary, to disturb the peace and set fire to their homes, a race of dreaded beings whose fierce wild looks were only equalled by their cruel acts. The Indian in his war paint and feathers, sending forth unearthly battle-cries, must have seemed to the homesick emigrants, as hideous a travesty on human kind, as the mythical dragon of older times was to the respectable animal world.

The pioneer of to-day, making his home on a western prairie, knows none of these terrors. His farm is ready cleared to his hand, even fertilized, for nature has been enriching the soil for hundreds of years; and, unless the pioneer has been audacious enough to plant himself and his

crops near the small and diminishing Indian reservation, he sees naught of red skins.

Here is a picture of the country and its inhabitants in 1692, painted by a sure hand.

"The persecutions our ancestors had undergone in their own country, and the privations altogether inconceivable to us they suffered during the early years of their residence here, acting upon their minds and characters, in coöperation with the influences of the political and ecclesiastical occurrences that marked the seventeenth century, had imparted a gloomy, solemn and romantic turn to their dispositions and associations which was transmitted without diminution to their children, strengthened and aggravated by their peculiar circumstances. It was the triumphant age of superstition. The imagination had been expanded by credulity, until it had reached a wild and monstrous growth. The Puritans were always prone to subject themselves to its influence; and New England, at the time to which we are referring, was a most fit and

congenial theatre upon which to display its power. Cultivation had made but a slight encroachment on the wilderness. Wide, dark, unexplored forests covered the hills, hung over the lonely roads, and frowned upon the scattered settlements. Persons whose lives have been passed where the surface has long been opened, and the land generally cleared, little know the power of a primitive wilderness upon the mind. There is nothing more impressive than its sombre shadows and gloomy recesses. The solitary wanderer is ever and anon startled by the strange, mysterious sounds that issue from its hidden depths. The distant fall of an ancient and decayed trunk, or the tread of animals as they prowl over the mouldering branches with which the ground is strewn ; the fluttering of unseen birds brushing through the foliage, or the moaning of the wind sweeping over the topmost boughs,—these all tend to excite the imagination and solemnize the mind. But the stillness of a forest is more startling and awe-inspiring than its sounds. Its si-

lence is so deep as itself to become audible to the inner soul. It is not surprising that wooded countries have been the fruitful fountains and nurseries of superstition.

> 'In such a place as this, at such an hour,
> If ancestry can be in aught believed,
> Descending spirits have conversed with man,
> And told the secrets of the world unknown.'

The forests which surrounded our ancestors were the abode of a mysterious race of men of strange demeanor and unascertained origin. The aspects they presented, the stories told of them, and everything connected with them, served to awaken fear, bewilder the imagination, and aggravate the tendencies of the general condition of things to fanatical enthusiasm. It was the common belief sanctioned not by the clergy alone, but by the most learned scholars of that and the preceding ages, that the American Indians were the subjects and worshippers of the Devil."

The surroundings of the colonists at this time

were not calculated to give them a very cheerful view of life certainly: pirates by sea, Indians by land, with taxes overhead and hard labor under their hand. What wonder, then, that such a people, with witchcraft taught them in their creed, when brought face to face with things they could not account for, should with horror believe that Satan had indeed come among them!

We have said it was the popular belief of the day. Probably with the most moderate and conservative of the citizens, it was like our own belief in the power of the lightning. We know there are dangerous thunderstorms and realize their deadly force; but we never anticipate that we shall be the victims of a flash, particularly if we live in a house protected by a lightning-rod. So with the majority of those early settlers. They believed in witchcraft, for their Bibles seemed to point to it; they read it there as plainly as that the sun stood still, and that Jonah passed three days comfortably in a whale. But they supposed,

until forced to the contrary belief, that they would be free from such a curse, sheltered under a Christian faith, and blameless life.

These made up the acquiescent portion of the community, for thus is society always made up. One part asserts, while the other finally assents to the ideas and opinions suggested.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEWITCHED CHILDREN.

AMONG the most active in the delusion, and in whose house the strange doings originated which began the persecution, was the Rev. Samuel Parris. In early life he had been a merchant in the West Indies, and, on changing his livelihood from commerce to the Gospel, showed a most thrifty not to say grasping nature in all agreements pertaining to salary. His parishioners, who at first welcomed him gladly, became disaffected on perceiving his mercantile spirit preponderate over his zeal for winning souls, and we all know that, when disaffection begins, antipathy is apt to follow. At all events, there were disagreements and dissensions in the parish at Salem Village.

What was then known as Salem Village is now the town of Danvers, adjoining what is the present city of Salem.

Mr. Parris brought with him from the West or Spanish Indies, three slaves, negro or Indian, probably of mixed blood ; two of them were concerned in the troubles that came later.

Superstition, as we know, grows apace even in northern climes, while in the warm countries whence the Indian woman Tituba came, it flourished with the luxuriance of its own tropical plants. Doubtless this servant Tituba had many weird tales of sorcery prevalent in her native tribe to tell the young people, which added to the superstition of the air they breathed, and the naughty imaginations in their own hearts bore most miserable fruit all too soon.

Let us look more closely at the "afflicted children," whose mischief broadened into the tragedy which is the saddest page of our American history.

Elizabeth Parris, aged nine, Abigail Williams

her cousin, aged eleven, Ann Putnam aged twelve daughter of Sergeant Thomas Putnam the parish clerk, Mary Walcott, Mercy Lewis and Elizabeth, Hubbard aged seventeen, with Elizabeth Booth Susannah Sheldon, Mary Warren and Sarah Churchill, two of whom, it should be noted, were servants in the families of those whom they accused. Mrs. Ann Putnam, mother of Ann, was much wrought upon as the affair became more serious, and saw visions and bore testimony with the others. Indeed, the whole of this branch of the Putnam family appears to have been singularly nervous and excitable.

These young persons, having no dancing class or skating rinks to enliven their time, had been whiling away the winter evenings of '91 and '92, by meeting at Mr. Parris' house and practising palmistry and other magic arts which even in this steady age are more calculated to disturb the mind than to strengthen it. It is not very surprising then, that such young brains, created in a period when supernatural beings were ac-

cepted by the wisest, should become excited into a state of frenzy by their own disordered wills.

We have heard much in our generation of the license and importance allowed to young America as he perambulates his own and foreign lands; but it must be owned, that young America, as he lay in his cradle, contrived to turn the world about him upside down in a way he would not presume to do now that he is half grown.

Therefore behold the three children first named, putting into practice the little tricks they had just learned. "They would creep into holes, and under chairs, put themselves into odd postures, make antic gestures, and utter loud outcries and ridiculous, incoherent and unintelligible expressions."

Soon the attention of the family was attracted. We can almost fancy them saying "What ails the children!" Having attracted notice, we can readily believe that their strange doings became more violent, particularly as the effect on the parental mind was not of an admonitory nature, but expressed bewilderment and dismay.

So the poor troubled parents, not knowing what distressed the children, did just what we do now, sent for the doctor, and Griggs was the name of the medical man who caused more woe than any since.

Now the whole trouble might be laid to the door of the physician who, not comprehending either maladies or human kind as well as the medical fraternity of the present day, solemnly and promptly ascribed the symptoms he did not understand, to causes no one else understood and yet believed in, namely, witchcraft. If children in our times should perform any strange capers not ascribable to either teething or measles, the family doctor called in would shake his head quite as gravely, but pronounce the trouble was the evident result of—indigestion.

Primitive people have always thought that what they did not comprehend must be explained by supernatural agents, the phenomena in the heavens, or any of nature's unrevealed secrets in the earth beneath. The savage tribes in the heart of Africa to-day, to whom the effects of

chemicals or our simplest modern inventions are shown, are greatly terrified, and may be brought to terms instantly, by the, to them, plain evidences of the power of wonder-working spirits.

To return to the young girls, whom Dr. Griggs has just pronounced bewitched. Doubtless, at first, their antics were the result of wanton mischief mingled with that morbid desire to create a sensation which has been the fatal flaw in so many female characters.

Mr. Parris and the Putnam parents, however, instead of feeling that the case demanded a rod, were deeply impressed by the serious situation, and tried to mend the matter by fasting and prayers. Neighboring ministers were called in and the girls performed before them, doubtless improving the quality of the acting at each rehearsal. Fervent prayers did not avail much here; the ministers were horror-stricken with what they saw, and agreed with the physician, that the unfortunates from this time called "afflicted children," must indeed be under the influence of the devil.

This being the awful case, who had been the means of bewitching them? The dark mystery must be unravelled, and the children were entreated and importuned to tell. They did not at first accuse any one; very likely they never thought of doing so until it was suggested to them, or may be they were looking about for some safely obscure person on whom to cast the blame. But being besought for name or names, they cried out "Good," "Osburn," "Tituba."

Just here the mischief ceased, and the misery began which deepened into a darkness neither two hundred nor two thousand years can lighten.

CHAPTER IV.

THREE ARRESTS.

IMAGINE the pitch of excitement and terror which prevailed in the community, at the realization that three witches were acknowledged to be among them! A menagerie let loose was as nothing compared to this danger; bolts and bars might serve as a defence from beasts of prey, but neither doors nor distance could protect one from the wiles of a witch.

On the 29th of February, warrants were duly issued against Sarah Good, Sarah Osburn, and the Indian woman Tituba. The complainants in these cases were Joseph Hutchinson, Edward Putnam, Thomas Putnam and Thomas Preston, all men of influence and of good character. "Joseph Hutchinson was a firm-minded man. of

strong common sense," Edward Putnam was "Deacon" Putnam, a title of weight in those days, Thomas Putnam was the father of Ann, and Thomas Preston was a son-in-law of Francis Nurse. Of the Nurses we shall hear more later.

It never occurred to any one apparently that the girls were playing a part, and under the comfortable disguise of bewitched persons they might commit any folly or wickedness that occurred to them. On one occasion, on the Lords' Day, March 20th, when the singing of the psalm previous to the sermon was concluded, before the person preaching — Mr. Lawson — could come forward, Abigail Williams cried out, "Now stand up and name your text." When he had read it, in a loud and insolent voice she exclaimed, "Its a long text." In the midst of the discourse, Mrs. Pope (an occasional performer) broke in, "Now there is enough of that." In the afternoon of the same day, while referring to the doctrine he had been expounding in the preceding service, Abigail Williams rudely ejacu-

lated "I know no doctrine you had. If you did name one, I have forgot it." An aged member of the church was present against whom a warrant on the charge of witchcraft had been procured the day before. Being apprised of the proceeding, Abigail Williams spoke aloud, during the service, calling by name the person about to be apprehended, "Look where she sits upon the beam sucking her yellow-bird betwixt her fingers!" Ann Putnam joined in exclaiming, "There is a yellow bird sitting on the minister's hat, as it hangs on the pin in the pulpit." Mr. Lawson remarks, with much simplicity, that these things, occurring "in the time of public worship, did something interrupt me in my first prayer, being so unusual." There is no intimation that Mr. Parris rebuked his niece for her disorderly behavior. The girls were supposed to be under an irresistible and supernatural impulse; and instead of being severely punished, were looked upon with mingled pity, terror and awe, and made objects of the greatest attention.

From this it may be seen that the girls had grown much bolder in their attempts to delude the public. It seems a long way from "creeping into holes" to interrupting the church services; from "uttering incoherent noises," to making declarations against innocent persons which led to arrest and prison. A study of the subject shows that there was a steady progression in three ways as the delusion increased in its deadly power.

First, in the capabilities of the girls for being tormented, as they soon added fits, faints and ravings, to their accomplishments.

Second, in the class of people whom they accused, beginning with a poor homeless wanderer whom no one cared for, and finally numbering among the victims saintly Christians and a Christian minister.

Third, in the things which they claimed the supposed witch had done: at first they declared they were pinched and teased; later on, as in the case of the unfortunate clergyman, there were

visions of horrible murders committed by him, blood and plenty of it would alone content them in their testimony against the accused.

How perfectly delighted these young females must have been with the result of their pranks. They started to make a bonfire, and lo ! the whole country was ablaze by their naughtiness, while they themselves were not even scorched.

It should be stated that, after the first commotion, the Parris child was removed from the scene, and taken to some quiet place of retirement.

Sarah Good, the first person accused in the delusion, was a forlorn specimen of womankind, a wife, though alienated from her husband, a mother, with no means to supply the wants of her children, she was reduced to begging from her more prosperous neighbors. No beggar is ever a popular citizen, and with or without reason, there was a decided prejudice against Sarah Good. Sarah Osburn was another poor creature whose life had been marred, and of whom gos-

sip, the oldest inhabitant of any place, had talked freely. Her second marriage was unhappy, which so depressed her that her mind, dwelling upon that and her changed fortunes, became unbalanced. She was also ill and had been bedridden.

Neither of these poor women had any hold upon popular esteem or sympathy. They were unlovely and unloved; and, were it possible for the fanaticism to break out afresh to-day, we could easily find among us certain distressed and unpopular old women on whom it would be equally safe for the shaft to fall.

In selecting Tituba as one of the causes of their trouble, the children were more than half right, for doubtless she had filled their heads with all sorts of superstitious notions, and though she believed in witches and charms, she did not at first take kindly to the idea that she was a witch herself.

CHAPTER V.

A 17TH CENTURY EXAMINATION.

THE arrests made, the examinations of the prisoners must follow, and March 1, the two principal magistrates of the day and neighborhood, with great pomp and display of official power, appeared on the scene; these were Jonathan Corwin and John Hathorne. A great crowd assembled in the meeting-house to witness the novel and dreadful proceedings, the minutes of which are found among the files.

The examination of Sarah Good before the worshipful Esqrs., John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin.

"Sarah Good, what evil spirit have you familiarity with?—None.

"Have you made no contracts with the Devil? —No.

"Why do you hurt these children?—I do not hurt them. I scorn it.

"Who do you employ then to do it?—I employ nobody.

"What creature do you employ then?—No creature; but I am falsely accused.

"Why do you go away muttering from Mr. Parris his house?—I did not mutter, but I thanked him for what he gave my child.

"Have you made no contract with the Devil? —No."

Hathorne desired the children, all of them to look upon her, and see if this were the person that hurt them; and so they all did look upon her, and said this was one of the persons that did torment them. Presently they were all tormented.

"Sarah Good, do you not see now what you have done? Why do you not tell us the truth? Why do you thus torment these poor children?— I do not torment them.

"Who do you employ then?—I employ nobody. I scorn it.

"How came they thus tormented?—What do I know? You bring others here, and now you charge me with it.

"Why, who was it?—I do not know but it was some you brought into the meeting-house with you.

"We brought you into the meeting-house.—But you brought in two more.

"Who was it then that tormented the children?—It was Osburn.

"What was it you say when you go muttering away from persons' houses?—If I must tell, I will tell.

"Do tell us then.—If I must tell, I will tell; it is the Commandments. I may say my Commandments, I hope.

"What commandment is it?—If I must tell you I will tell; it is a psalm.

"What Psalm?

"(After a long time she muttered over some part of a psalm.)

"Who do you serve?—I serve God.

"What God do you serve?—The God that made heaven and earth" (though she was not willing to mention the word "God"). Her answers were in a very wicked, spiteful manner, reflecting against the authority with base and abusive words; and many lies she was taken in. It was here said that her husband had said that he was afraid that she either was a witch or would be one very quickly. The worshipful Mr. Hathorne asked him his reason why he said so of her, whether he had ever seen anything by her. He answered "No, not in this nature," but it was her bad carriage to him; and indeed, said he, "I may say with tears, that she is an enemy to all good."

This was in the handwriting of Ezekiel Cheever. His translation of her answers is surprising to an average reader, who can find nothing in the examination but the badgering of a despondent woman, who however tries hard to keep to the truth. Her only flash of spirit is in the retort—"I may say my Commandments I hope"—roused for once out of her hopeless apathy. After having protested her innocence many times

and it seemed to avail her nothing, when the only way of escape appears to be to fasten the guilt on some one else, she takes the suggestion, offered her, and declares "Osburn" is the tormentor. She grasps the idea as a life-saving plank by which she may reach a place of safety, forgetful of the fact that by so doing she pushes another into the deep waters.

"It will be noticed that the examination was conducted in the form of questions but by the magistrate, Hathorne, based upon a foregone conclusion of the prisoner's guilt, and expressive of a conviction, all along on his part, that the evidence of "the afflicted" against her amounted to, and was, absolute demonstration. It will also be noticed, that, severe as was the opinion of her husband in reference to her general conduct, he could not be made to say that he had ever noticed anything in her of the nature of witchcraft. The torments the girls affected to experience, in looking at her, must have produced an overwhelming effect on the crowd, as they did on the

magistrate, and even on the poor amazed creature herself. She did not seem to doubt the reality of their sufferings. In this, and in all cases, it must be remembered that the account of the examination comes from those who were under the wildest excitement against the prisoners; that no counsel was allowed them;[1] that, if anything was suffered to be said in their defence by others, it failed to reach us; that the accused persons were wholly unaccustomed to such scenes and exposures, unsuspicious of the perils of a cross-examination, or of an inquisition conducted with a design to entrap and ensnare; and that what they did say was liable to be misunderstood, as well as misrepresented."

Sarah Osburn was then brought in. Frail in body and feeble in mind, she yet had strength enough to maintain her innocence of the charges

[1]This was by the laws of England in force at that time. Counsel were not allowed in capital cases, excepting on questions of law where the Court was in doubt. The Judge was supposed to be counsel for the prisoners.

made against her. The second examination was very like the first in the nature of the questions put to the prisoners, and marked by the same unfairness.

When the poor creature was told that Sarah Good had declared that it was she who had hurt the children, her only reply was, "I do not know that the Devil goes about in my likeness to do any hurt."

She was committed to prison and heavily chained. From March 7th to May 10th she languished in Boston jail, when death, more considerate than man, released her from her bonds.

The examination of Tituba, the Indian woman, is curiously enlivened by her imagination. With all her ignorance and superstition she is clever, and by confessing somewhat, and implicating others, she played into the hands of those who were only too glad to find witches trumps.

At first, she says she did not and would not hurt the children. Then perceiving it would be very pleasing to the popular feeling to have

witches discovered, she presently says there were four who did hurt the children. Soon she admits she had hurt the children but was sorry and would not do so any more. So she confesses; and facts giving out, she takes out her fancies and lets them loose. They are in the form of flying and creeping things as will be seen, and if the tales told the children nightly were filled with the same uncanny shapes, it would be singular if their pliable brains were not put out of shape somewhat.

"Tituba, what evil spirit have you familiarity with?—None.

"Why do you hurt these children?—I do not hurt them.

"Who is it then?—The Devil, for aught I know.

"Did you never see the Devil?—The Devil came to me and bid me serve him.

"Who have you seen?—Four women sometime hurt the children.

"Who were they?—Goody Osburn and Sarah Good, and I do not know who the others were.

Sarah Good and Osburn would have me hurt the children, but I would not.

"(She further saith there was a tall man of Boston that she did see.)

"When did you see them?—Last night at Boston.

"What did they say to you?—They said 'hurt the children.'

"And did you hurt them?—No, there is four women and one man, they hurt the children and then they lay all upon me; and they tell me, if I will not hurt the children, they will hurt me.

"But did you not hurt them?—Yes; but I will hurt them no more.

"Are you not sorry that you did hurt them?—Yes.

"And why, then, do you hurt them?—They say 'hurt children, or we will do worse to you.'

"What have you seen?—A man come to me and say, 'serve me.'

"What service?—Hurt the children; and last night there was an appearance that said 'kill the

children ;' and if I would not go on hurting the children, they would do worse to me.

"What is this appearance you see?—Sometimes it is like a hog, and sometimes like a great dog.

"(This appearance she saith she did see four times.)

"What did it say to you?—The black dog said 'serve me,' but I said, 'I am afraid.' He said if I did not, he would do worse to me.

"What did you say to it?—I will serve you no longer. Then he said he would hurt me; and then he looks like a man, and threatens to hurt me. (She said that this man had a yellow bird that kept with him.) And he told me he had more pretty things that he would give me if I would serve him.

"What were these pretty things?—He did not show me them.

"What else have you seen?—Two cats; a red cat and a black cat.

"What did they say to you?—They said, 'serve me.'

"When did you see them?—Last night; and they said, 'serve me,' but I said I would not.

"What service?—She said, hurt the children.

"Did you not pinch Elizabeth Hubbard this morning?—The man brought her to me and made pinch her.

"Why did you go to Thomas Putnam's last night and hurt his child?—They pull and haul me, and make go.

"And what would they have you do?—Kill her with a knife.

"(Lieutenant Fuller and others said at this time when the child saw these persons, and was tormented by them, that she did complain of a knife, that they would have her cut her head off with a knife.)

"How did you go?—We ride upon sticks and are there presently.

"Do you go through the trees or over them?—We see nothing, but are there presently.

"Why did you not tell your master?—I was

afraid; they said they would cut off my head if I told.

"Would you not have hurt others if you could?—They said they would hurt others, but they could not.

"What attendants hath Sarah Good?—A yellow-bird, and she would have given me one.

"What meat would she give it?—It did suck her between her fingers.

"Did you not hurt Mr. Curran's child?—Goody Good and Goody Osburn told that they did hurt Mr. Curran's child, and would have had me hurt him too; but I did not.

"What hath Sarah Osburn?—Yesterday, she had a thing like a woman, with two legs and wings.

"(Abigail Williams, that lives with her uncle, Mr. Parris, said that she did see the same creature, and it turned into the shape of Goodie Osburn.)

"What else have you seen with Osburn?—

Another thing, hairy; it goes upright like a man, it hath only two legs.

"Did you not see Sarah Good upon Elizabeth Hubbard last Saturday?—I did see her set a wolf upon her to afflict her.

"(The persons with this maid did say that she did complain of a wolf. She further said that she saw a cat with Good at another time.)

"What clothes did the man go in?—He goes in black clothes; a tall man with white hair, I think.

"How doth the woman go?—In a white hood and a black hood with a top-knot.

"Do you see who it is that torments these children now?—Yes, it is Goody Good; she hurts them in her own shape.

Who is it hurts them now?—I am blind now; I cannot see."

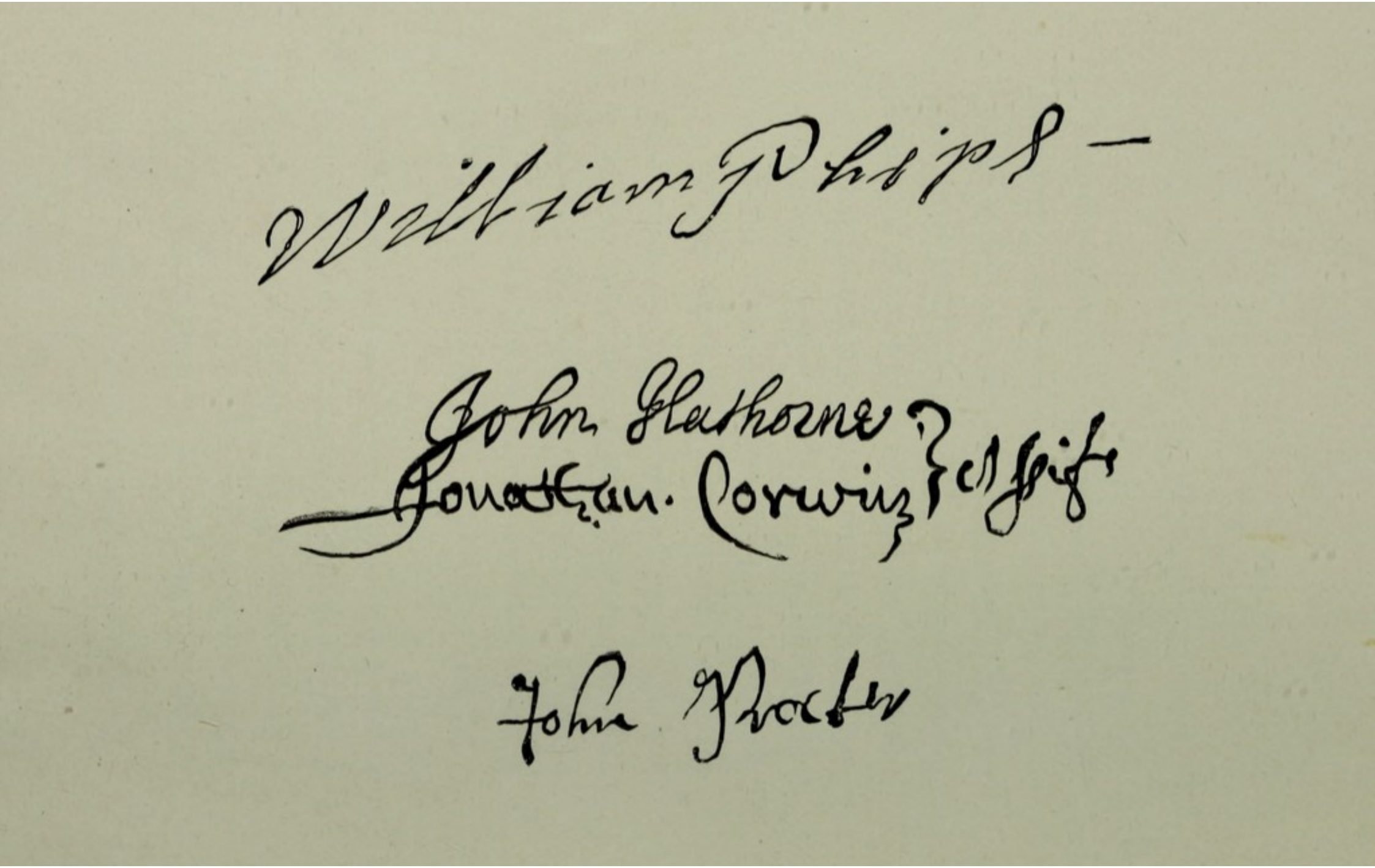
CHAPTER VI.

THE COLONY BEWITCHED.

THE story of the witchcraft grows so awful, that soon, our sense of pity fairly pities itself, that it must see such misery for the innocent.

But just here, comes a wondering compassion for these grave magistrates and reverend ministers!

To see them listening with respectful attention to the nonsense of Tituba, drinking in with wonderment all her wild statements of broomsticks and hairy things, somehow gives one a disturbed feeling as to his ancestors; we have felt hitherto that each "great" appended to a grandparent was a guarantee of wisdom and deserved honor, but this picture of the ignorant but wily woman


William Phips —

John Hathorne
Jonathan. Corwin Esqrs

John Hawkes

gulling the sober fathers as easily as she had the children, is a sorrowful one.

The unlearned slave feigns blindness when she does not wish to answer, but her judges and superiors are totally blind, and yet unconscious of it.

Robert Calef was a merchant of Boston, and in nowise personally interested in the trials. "His attention was called to the proceedings which originated in Salem Village ; and his strong faculties and moral courage enabled him to become the most efficient opponent, in his day, of the system of false reasoning upon which the prosecutions rested." The only further information we have of Tituba is from this same Calef, who says, "The account she since gives of it is, that her master did beat her, and otherwise abuse her, to make her confess and accuse (such as he called) her sister-witches ; and that whatsoever she said by way of confessing or accusing others was the effect of such usage."

One word of justice for Sarah Good. It ap-

peared in the minutes of her examination, that she accused Sarah Osburn of witchcraft; but as no such accusation is found in the final records, it is probable that the statement was an exaggeration of some bewildered words of hers, on perceiving the torments of the children. "Then it must be Osburn for I know I am innocent of this thing" was doubtless wrung from her involuntarily.

Let us understand fully what it was thought the witch of 1692 could do, and how she would do it.

As the excitement grew more intense and victims accumulated, the scheme of the nature and dominion of the devil's agent broadened infinitely. Indeed, looking back from this distance, it would seem as if her capabilities were extended so absurdly in order that none might escape.

It was believed that after having made her evil compact, the witch set about tormenting others, either for the purpose of destroying their souls and handing them over to Satan, or of simply hurting their bodies for her own diversion.

If she did not go in her own personality on a tormenting hunt, she had imps at her disposal to do naughty work. These took the form of cats, dogs, spiders even, or indeed, any animal at hand where unusual occurrences took place would be thought the imp of an absent witch. She could cause her victims to pine away and die, or to go into convulsions and delirium—there were no limits to her power.

If it were not convenient for her to go in person nor to send an imp, all she had to do, when she intended harm, was to make up a puppet representing the individual she would hurt, and do whatsoever she would have done to the far off original, to this bundle of rags; it was just as efficacious.

No alibi therefore could save a person accused, nor circumstantial evidence protect from an ensnaring net which covered the ground wherever he would step.

With such a revelation open to the people, and its facts verified before their eyes by the

afflictions of the afflicted children, what wonder that nothing else was thought of, that industry lay idle, while horror and dread stalked over the land day and night!

If all pestilence comes from microbes, surely the microbes of superstition were then abroad, tainting in its most malignant form, the pure country air of Salem Village.

The meeting-house, hitherto as sacred to the New Englander as the tabernacle to the early Jew, became the theatre of the most extraordinary scenes ever enacted upon any stage.

"As soon as the wretched prisoner was brought before her accusers, the girls uttered loud screams and fell down upon the floor. If in her terror and despair she happened to clasp her hands, they would shriek out that she was pinching them. When she pressed in agony her withered lip, they exclaimed that she was biting them, and would show the marks of her teeth upon their flesh. If the dreadful excitement of the scene, added to the feebleness of age, exhausted and

overcome her, and she happened to lean for support against the side of the pew or the aisle, they would cry out that their bodies were crushed; and if she changed her position, or took a single step, they would declare that their feet were in pain. In this manner they artfully produced a strong conviction in the minds of the deluded magistrates and excited by-standers."

The accusing girls would complain that pins were pricked into their flesh, and in proof of the witch's malice, the pins were produced in Court. Those identical pins may be seen to day in the Court House. They are kept in a small bottle protected by the County seal, for they diminished mysteriously when guarded by the cork alone. They are somewhat rusty, as what witness would not be after such a lapse of time; made as they were in those days, with heads formed of twisted wire,—the most famous pins in all history.

The house, still standing, known popularly as the "Witch" house, at the corner of Essex and North streets, was two hundred years ago the

residence of Jonathan Corwin, the magistrate, and it is supposed that some of the examinations took place there. It was altered a hundred years ago, so that the thousands of visitors, who come annually to gaze with awe upon its front, do not see its face as the poor prisoners saw it when they were hurried within, though the woodwork and beams are unchanged. Rather grim it looks brooding over the past, with the witchcraft of the nineteenth century, electric cars and electric lights flaunting before it. Its old age is a harmless one, for nothing more impish goes from there now than Witch Hazel, which the apothecary will sell you from one part of the ancient building.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MINISTERS.

THIS supposed attack of the evil one upon the Lord's sheep gave the valiant young shepherds much to do ; for as the trouble came from the spiritual world, by the spiritual pastors and masters it must be met. They felt they must battle fearlessly against this new sin, no matter where it was seen springing up. It must be rooted out and destroyed even if fair gardens were brought to ruin.

The earnestness of the majority concerned in the trials and examinations arose, doubtless, from a sincere conviction that they were at war with the enemies of the Almighty, and that they were emulating King David by putting them to rout.

We have always felt that the Psalmist partially

gratified his own feelings while avenging the cause of the Lord, and this human element of finding wrong where we believe it to be was not lacking in the breasts of some of the deluded ministers.

None were so untiring in the pursuit of witchcraft as the Rev. Mr. Parris. He felt it was his duty to labor day and night in the cause, and he did so. Had he been a broader man, with benevolence as prominent a trait as conscientiousness, he would not have unconsciously played the part of a persecutor. For one thing we must thank him, and it redounds to his credit as a sincere though mistaken man, that he transcribed so literally the examinations of many of the accused. We can realize how faithfully he did his work because we see innocence in the replies of the accused; and had he been less truthful in his record, or conscious that he was in the wrong, he would have twisted and prevaricated his account.

The Rev. Nicholas Noyes of the First Church, Salem, was another active participant in the pro-

ceedings. Had he lived later, he might have been a successful revivalist; or earlier, a popish inquisitor; for he had certain intense qualities which would make either. His venerable colleague, the Rev. John Higginson, was much more moderate in his course. Not because he did not believe in witchcraft, for then, the power of darkness was as evident to the mind as the reality of sunlight, but because of his strong faith in personal worth, and the testimony of a blameless

Such also was the attitude of the Rev. Samuel Willard of the Old South Church, Boston, who was fair-minded enough to critically examine the witnesses of a similar case brought to his notice. That any one should presume to take a critical view of the proceedings was displeasing to the afflicted children; and, as the story will show, any person, bold enough to find fault with the course things were taking, was marked for misfortune.

This same Mr. Willard was one of the most

learned and best beloved of his generation in the ministry. One of the accusing girls, not comprehending how universally he was held in reverence, but perceiving that he held aloof from the popular delirium, presently "cried out" upon him. This was a rash venture, as the mark was too high for the shaft to reach and it fell harmless; the girl was taken out of court "and it was told about that she was mistaken in the person."

The Rev. John Hale of Beverly gave neighborly help in the matter, though not so violent an advocate in the delusion as some; it will be seen later, how and why he was the first to awake from the frenzied nightmare.

The name of Cotton Mather must always be associated with this melancholy period of our history. He did his best to incite and provoke an excitement in Boston similar to the one in Salem, and failing in this he never lost an opportunity to fan the flame already raging so near his own city. He was ambitious, and would be leading sword in hand to annihilate some one or some

thing. In the name of God he would conquer, and make Cotton Mather famous. Most men hope to become angels, but nothing, if we may judge from his own words, would have contented him but to be an Archangel.

In his virulence against all accused persons, he seems an embodiment of the prophecy "Yea, the time cometh when whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service."

And were there none then who saw clearly through the deadly mist, no men wiser than their time? The names of three clear-eyed souls can be given, who, seeing things as they were, boldly protested against the imposture: Martha Corey, John Procter and Joseph Putnam, and of the three it is significant that two were executed.

It will be remembered that Tituba had said there were four women who did afflict the children, and it was necessary to find the other two. By this time the accusers were brazen and malicious, so intoxicated by the evil they were steeping themselves in, as to be lost to all sense of

feeling for others: it would be vastly more comfortable for the reader to believe them stark mad and in no way responsible for the crimes they were begetting. Yet this is impossible as we detect the cunning and the heartless cruelty of their acts and words. They were now masters of the situation; savage autocrats, who when their own ingenuity failed, would take hints from advising spite and prejudice as to the next victim.

CHAPTER VIII.

GILES COREY'S INFATUATION—MARTHA COREY.

AMONG unpopular men in Salem Village was Giles Corey, now over fourscore years of age. According to the belief of his neighbors, they had not been godly years, but whether he was as dangerous as they claimed for him, or whether he was one of those who have a faculty for always putting themselves in the worst possible light can never be exactly known. We incline, however, to the feeling that his faults were much exaggerated. Whatever his early life had been Giles Corey, in spite of his brusque ways, had evidently meant to mend his reputation and conduct, and had joined the church shortly before this period. He became greatly interested

in the witchcraft proceedings, and attended all the meetings. His mind was one of those on which the dark deeds of sin would have a more powerful influence than the passive radiance of virtue.

Not so, his wife Martha. She had no patience with the fanatical doings, and no hesitancy in expressing her views. Her intellect was clear and vigorous, her living pure and devout. Giles annoyed her much by his diligent attendance upon the meetings, and on one occasion it was said that she hid her husband's saddle to prevent him from going. This difference of opinion made a breach between husband and wife, and in his anger at her scoffing at matters so absorbing to him, he made statements which became the weapons of her destruction.

But when his eyes were opened, we shall see with what superhuman courage he expiated the wrong done to her. So, while he went to the meetings, and on the way to and fro saw all things distorted by supernatural agents, she re-

mained at home to pray for the deluded people. Soon it was rumored about that a person professing great piety would be exposed as one of these deadly sinners, and on the 19th of March, Martha Corey was arrested.

Even to-day, the criminal who has masked in godliness is considered the most despicable, and the horror of the community at finding a professing Christian could be in league with the devil was intense.

The examination of Martha Corey, in the handwriting of Mr. Parris, is of considerable length, but a few extracts will be given from it which may illustrate her character.

"If you be guilty of this fact, do you think you can hide it?—The Lord knows.

"Well, tell us what you know of this matter.—Why, I am a gospel woman, and do you think I can have to do with witchcraft too?

"(Children: There is a man whispering in her ear.)

"Hathorne continued: What did he say to

you?—We must not believe all that these distracted children say.

"Cannot you tell what that man whispered?—I saw nobody.

"But did you hear?—No.

"(Here was extreme agony of the afflicted.)

"If you expect mercy of God, you must look for it in God's way, by confession. Do you think to find mercy by aggravating your sins?—A true thing.

"Look for it, then, in God's way.—So I do.

"Give glory to God and confess then.—But I cannot confess.

"Do you not see how these afflicted charge you?—We must not believe distracted persons.

"Here are more than two that accuse you for witchcraft. What do you say?—I am innocent.

"(Then Mr. Hathorne read further of Crosby's evidence.)

"What did you mean by that? the Devil could not stand before you?—(She denied it. Three or four sober witnesses confirmed it.)

"What can I do? Many rise up against me.

"Do you believe these children are bewitched? —They may, for aught I know: I have no hand in it.

"You say you are no witch. May be you mean you never covenanted with the Devil. Did you never deal with any familiar?—No, never.

"What bird was that the children spoke of? "(Then witnesses spoke: What bird was it?)— I know no bird.

"It may be you have engaged you will not confess: but God knows.—So He doth.

"Do you believe you will go unpunished?— I have nothing to do with witchcraft.

"Why was you not willing your husband should come to the former session here?—But he came, for all.

"Did you not take the saddle off?—I did not know what it was for.

"Did you not know what it was for?—I did not know it would be to any benefit.

"(Somebody said that she would not have them help to find witches.)

"Did you not say you would open our eyes? Why do you not?—I never thought of a witch.

"Is it a laughing matter to see these afflicted persons?

"(She denied it. Several prove it.)

"Ye are all against me, and I cannot help it.

"I find you will own nothing without several witnesses, and yet you will deny for all.

"(It was noted, when she bit her lip, several of the afflicted were bitten. When she was urged upon it that she had bitten her lip, saith she, What harm is there in it?)

"(Mr. Noyes: I believe it is apparent she practiseth witchcraft in the congregation; there is no need of images.)

"What do you say to all these things that are apparent?—If you will all go hang me, how can I help it?"

Her answers indicate an alert but temperate mind, with firm faith in God. Frequently during the course of the examination she asked permission to go and pray, and asseverated many times, "I am an innocent person." "I am a

gospel woman." This desire of hers to pray evidently disconcerted the court at first, but the devotions were accounted for after a time as being addressed to the devil.

In some respects, her attitude differs from any other as she stands before this deluded multitude. Her piety was just as true as that of later victims, but she *does not believe in witchcraft.* Her tongue is as well trained by her keen intellect as that of clever prisoners who followed, but she never once rails at her tormentors as did the caustic Susannah Martin, though it must have been a great temptation from her enlightened standpoint. The moderation and calmness of Martha Corey are the successful tests of her faith.

Yet how great was her provocation. As if it were not enough to have the world against her, her husband and her two sons-in-law were on the enemies' side. Poor old Giles ! his tardy religion, meeting the new excitement, made a combination too strong for the domestic peace, and his talk on the subject, doubtless poured forth with

the impetuosity characteristic of the man, was put into a deposition found among the documents.

"The evidence of Giles Corey testifieth and saith, that last Saturday, in the evening, sitting by the fire, my wife asked me to go to bed. I told her I would go to prayer; and when I went to prayer, I could not utter my desires with any sense, nor open my mouth to speak.

"My wife did perceive it, and came towards me, and said she was coming to me.

"After this, in a little space, I did, according to my measure, attend the duty.

"Sometime last week, I fetched an ox, well, out of the wood about noon; and he laying down in the yard, I went to raise him to yoke him; but he could not rise, but dragged his hinder parts, as if he had been hip-shot. But after did rise.

"I had a cat sometimes last week strangely taken on the sudden, and did make me think she would have died presently. My wife did bid me knock her in the head, but I did not; and since, she is well.

"Another time, going to duties, I was interrupted for a space; but afterward I was helped according to my poor measure. My wife hath been wont to sit up after I went to bed; and I have perceived her to kneel down on the hearth, as if she were at prayer, but heard nothing.

"At the examination of Sarah Good and others, March 24th, 1692, my wife was willing"

This is all. The trivial events of every day life, with the lurid light of the hour thrown upon them, were distorted into impish acts. This light burned out, we can see nothing, but the ordinary doings of a New England farmhouse as it stands in the broad light of day.

That an old man could not say his prayers even seemed diabolical.

Martha Corey was committed to prison; was tried and received sentence of death Sept. 9, she being one of the eight executed on the 22nd of September.

Of her death Calef informs us that she "protesting her innocency concluded her life with an eminent prayer upon the ladder."

CHAPTER IX.

GILES COREY'S EXPIATION.

WHETHER the deposition of Corey was abruptly broken off because he feared it might incriminate his wife, or whether it was thought by the prosecution that the testimony did not incriminate her sufficiently cannot be known.

Even an obtuse observer may have remarked by this time, that the whole court and all the spectators appeared to be on the side of the prosecution.

"Giles Corey incurred hostility, perhaps, because his deposition relating to his wife did not come up to the mark required. It is also highly probable, that though incensed at her conduct at the time, reflection had brought him to

his senses; and that the circumstances of her examination and commitment to prison produced a reaction on his mind. If so, he would have been apt to express himself very freely. He, too, was arrested and his examination took place April 19, in nature very like those which preceded.

"Three days before the execution of his wife, the life of Giles Corey had been taken by the officers of the law in a manner so extraordinary, and marked by features so shocking, that they find no parallel in the annals of America, and will continue to arrest forever the notice of mankind. The only papers relating to him, on file as having been sworn to before the Grand Jury, are a few brief depositions. If he had been put on trial, we might have had more. There is reason to believe, that while in prison, he experienced great distress of mind. Although he had been a rough character in earlier life, and given occasion to much scandal by his disregard of public opinion, he always exhibited symptoms

of a generous and sensitive nature. His foolish conduct in becoming so passionately engaged in the witchcraft proceedings at their earliest stage, as to be incensed against his wife because she did not approve of or believe in them, and which led him to utter sentiments and expressions that had been used against her; and so far yielding to the accusers as to allow them to get from him the deposition, which, while it failed to satisfy their demands, it was shameful for him to have been persuaded to give,—all these things, which after his own apprehension and imprisonment he had leisure to ponder over, preyed on his mind. He saw the awful character of the delusion to which he had lent himself; that it had brought his prayerful and excellent wife to the sentence of death, which had been already executed upon many devout and worthy persons. He knew that he was innocent of the crime of witchcraft, and was now satisfied that all others were.

Besides his own unfriendly course towards his

wife, two of his four sons-in-law had turned against her. One (Crosby) had testified and another (Parker) had allowed his name to be used, as an adverse witness.

In view of all this, Corey made up his mind, determined on his course, and stood to that determination. He resolved to expiate his own folly by a fate that would satisfy the demands of the sternest criticism upon his conduct, proclaim his abhorrence of the prosecutions, and attest the strength of his feelings towards those of his children who had been false, and those who had been true, to his wife."

He therefore had a will made, or more properly a deed, by which he gave all his property to his "beloved sons-in-law William Cleeves of Beverly and John Moulton of Salem;" it was a strong, clear document, duly signed and witnessed.

His whole property being thus securely conveyed to his faithful sons-in-law, and placed beyond the reach of his own weakness or change of purpose, Corey resolved on a course that would

surely try to the utmost the power of human endurance. He knew, that if brought to trial his death was certain. He did not know but that conviction and execution, through the attainder connected with it, might invalidate all attempts of his to convey his property. But it was certain, that if he should not be brought to trial and conviction, his deed would stand, and nothing could break it or defeat its effect. He accordingly made up his mind not to be tried. When called into Court to answer to the indictment found by the Grand Jury, he did not plead "Guilty" or "Not Guilty," but stood mute. How often he was called forth, we are not informed; but nothing could shake him. No power on earth could unseal his lips.

He knew that the gates of justice were closed, and that truth had fled from the scene. He would have no part nor lot in the matter; refused to recognize the court, made no response to its questions, and was dumb in its presence. He stands alone in the resolute defiance of his atti-

tude. He knew the penalty of suffering and agony he would have to pay; but he freely and fearlessly encountered it. All that was needed to carry his point was an unconquerable firmness, and he had it. He rendered it impossible to bring him to trial; and thereby, in spite of the power and wrath of the whole country and its authorities, retained his right to dispose of his property, and bore his testimony against the folly and wickedness of the hour, in tones that reached the whole world, and will resound through all ages."

Such an unusual move on the part of a prisoner must have filled the Court with consternation. To deprive the magistrates and clergy of their rightful occupation, to furnish no horrors for the excited spectators, and to leave the afflicted children unafflicted, was more exasperating than anything Giles Corey had done in the course of his long and contentious life.

Yet there he stood, with feeble limbs and broken spirit, a Colossus of strength.

We know how the Court dealt with its contumacious prisoner, although none of the particulars have been handed down.

The old English law applying to such cases was as follows: The prisoner was called three times to plead, and if he remained obstinate was sent to a low dark prison cell. He was there to be laid on the bare floor nearly naked, and for a covering, a heavy iron weight placed upon his body, not enough to crush his life out, but to press out his courage. A little of the worst bread one day, and a few sips of miserable water the next, was to be the alternate fare of the poor wretch until he either died, or succumbed to the torture and made reply. But no reply came from Giles Corey. At his sufferings, before the weight and weakness released his brave spirit, we can only guess with a sickening wonder.

Can we think of any character in fiction to equal this old man in grandeur? We have shed tears for King Lear, whose hoary locks are driven by the storm, but for this aged hero, the product

of our own soil, the heart stands still with silent awe.

Tradition has it that his death took place in the open field near the jail, somewhere between Howard-street burial ground and Brown street. Like Rebecca Nurse, Giles Corey was excommunicated from the Church, Mr. Noyes hastening to pronounce doom upon the prisoner when it was found he would not yield to torture.

CHAPTER X.

REBECCA NURSE.

IT was now time to produce the fourth woman whom Tituba had seen afflict the children.

The amazement felt by the neighbors of Rebecca Nurse at finding her numbered among the accused, survives as a marvel for us to-day.

Her years were threescore and ten, and they had been passed in exemplary living: in her home, the honored mother of a large family reared in careful piety, and in the community occupying a position of dignity as befitting a venerable matron. Moreover her health was failing and the infirmities of age settling upon her.

The only clew to the mystery seems to be in the prosperous condition of the Nurse family and because of the home they were then occupying. This farm known then as the Townsend-Bishop

farm adjoined the farms of several other prominent people. Boundary lines were then sources of much dispute, the grants of land never having been properly surveyed in the first place. The three hundred acres belonging to the Townsend-Bishop farm, would be found to overlap the three hundred acres of other grants, and these other farms, measuring from their starting points, would be found to intersect the Townsend-Bishop land. Dissensions arose naturally from these unsettled boundaries, and the most pugnacious man on the edge of his domain would be for the time victorious.

These troubles had been of long standing, and without going more deeply into the controversy, the significant fact must be noted, that the family occupying the central position in the debatable land, was one of those for whom misfortune was meted out.

Rebecca Nurse, the wife of Francis Nurse, and her sister Mary Easty suffered death; while another sister, Sarah Cloyse, was accused and committed for trial.

Her gentle and lovely disposition is illustrated by the following paper:

"We whose names are underwritten, being desired to go to Goodman Nurse his house, to speak with his wife, and to tell her that several of the afflicted persons mentioned her; and accordingly we went, and we found her in a weak and low condition in body as she told us, and had been sick almost a week. And we asked how it was otherwise with her; and she said she blessed God for it, she had more of his presence in this sickness than sometime she have had, but not so much as she desired; but she would with the apostle, press forward to the mark; and many other places of Scripture to the like purpose. And then, of her own accord, she began to speak of the affliction that was amongst them, and in particular of Mr. Parris his family, and how she was grieved for them, though she had not been to see them, by reason of fits that she formerly used to have; for people said it was awful to behold; but she pitied them with all her heart, and went to God for them. But she said she heard that there was persons spoke of that were as innocent as she was, she believed; and, after much to this purpose, we told her we heard that she was spoken of also. 'Well,' she said, 'if it be so, the will of the Lord be done;' she sat still awhile, being as it were amazed; and then she said, 'Well, as to this thing, I am as innocent as the

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child unborn; but surely,' she said, 'What sin hath God found out in me unrepented of, that he should lay such an affliction upon me in my old age?' And, according to our best observation we could not discern that she knew what we came for before we told her.

ISRAEL PORTER,
ELIZABETH PORTER.

"To the substance of what is above, we, if called thereto are ready to testify on oath.

DANIEL ANDREW,
PETER CLOYSE."

To prepare a friend for bad news is always a painful errand; to warn a venerable saint that she must expect martyrdom, must have indeed been a hard task. Her unconsciousness of coming evil, the beautiful and unrepining way in which she received the dreadful tidings, is one of the most touching scenes in the long tragedy.

She bore the examination with steadfast dignity and heavenly patience. The questions put to her were but a repetition of those in previous cases, while the proceedings were interrupted as usual by fits and ravings. One woman, so wrought upon by the excitement as to be tem-

porarily insane, threw her muff at the prisoner, and missing the mark, took off her shoe, and with this hit the poor old lady in the head.

Firmly and repeatedly she protested her innocence against the extravagant charges brought against her.

Finally Hathorne put this question:

"Do you think these suffer against their wills?"

She answered, "I do not think these suffer against their wills."

"To this point she was not afraid or unwilling to go, in giving an opinion of the conduct of the accusing girls. Infirm, half deaf, cross-questioned, circumvented, surrounded with folly, uproar and outrage, as she was, they could not intimidate her to say less, or entrap her to say more."

Then another line of incriminating questions was started by the magistrate: "Why did you never visit the afflicted persons?—Because I was afraid I should have fits too."

On every motion of her body, "fits followed upon the complainants, abundantly and very frequently."

Finding neither justice nor mercy could be seen, she exclaimed, "I have got nobody to look to but God."

At the time of her trial, a paper signed by thirty-nine persons of the highest respectability, testifying as to the blameless character of Rebecca Nurse was offered in testimony.[1] The jury,

[1] We whose names are hereunto subscribed, being desired by Goodman Nurse to declare what we know concerning his wife's conversation for time past, we can testify to all whom it may concern that we have known her for many years; and according to our observation, her life and conversation were according to her profession, and we never had any grounds or cause to suspect her of any such thing as she is now accused of.

Israel Porter, Elizabeth Porter, Edward Bishop, Sr., Hannah Bishop, Joshua Rea, Sarah Rea, Sarah Leach, John Putnam, Rebecca Putnam, Joseph Hutchinson, Sr., Lydia Hutchinson William Osburn, Hannah Osburn, Joseph Holton, Sr., Sarah Holton, Benjamin Putnam, Sarah Putnam, Job Swinnerton, Esther Swinnerton, Joseph Herrick, Sr., Samuel Abbey, Hepzibah Rea, Daniel Andrew, Sarah Andrew, Daniel Rea, Sarah Putnam, Jonathan Putnam, Lydia Putnam, Walter Phillips, Sr., Nathaniel Felton, Sr., Margaret Phillips, Tabitha Phillips, Joseph Houtton, Jr., Samuel Endicott, Elizabeth Buxton, Samuel Aborn, Sr., Isaac Cook, Elizabeth Cook, Joseph Putnam.

impressed by her conduct and conversation, in spite of the prevailing excitement against any accused person, brought in a verdict of "Not Guilty."

This did not please the clamorous mob, any more than the judgment of Pilate satisfied those who wished to crucify Christ.

The demented people, trampling reason under foot in their fury, so intimidated the judges that the favorable verdict was withdrawn, and Rebecca Nurse condemned to die by the grossest perversion of justice in the annals of our country.

Nor was a violent death the only sentence ordered against this innocent woman. Not content with destroying her body, her persecutors took it upon themselves to settle her eternal doom, and she was therefore excommunicated from the church.

Hutchinson thus comments on the episode. "Mr. Noyes, the minister of Salem, a zealous prosecutor, excommunicated the poor old woman, and delivered her to Satan, to whom he supposed she

had given herself formally many years before ; but her life and conversation had been such, that the remembrance thereof, in a short time after, wiped off all the reproach occasioned by the civil or ecclesiastical sentence against her."

Twenty years after, the notice of the excommunication of Rebecca Nurse was erased from the church record at the request of her children.

The bodies of executed witches were not allowed to receive Christian burial, and were huddled into holes among the rocks of Gallows Hill.

But family tradition among her descendants, has always maintained that the body of Rebecca Nurse was recovered by her devoted husband and sons, and tenderly buried near her old home.

From this historic house, kept in perfect repair by the family now in possession, can be seen a pine grove where it is supposed she sleeps ; while, watching the spot, a granite monument now stands, testifying in her behalf forever.

CHAPTER XI.

A VERY YOUNG WITCH—INTREPID JOSEPH PUTNAM—JOHN AND ELIZABETH PROCTER.

NOTHING could more perfectly show the disorder of men's minds at this time, than the appearance of the next person brought before the Court on the charge of witchcraft. Behold a wee girl of between four and five years old, said to be "hale and well as other children," little Dorcas Good, the child of Sarah Good, already committed to prison. As she sits before this company of witch-finders, we wonder no one of the ministers were reminded of the little child whom Christ set in the midst of his disciples, as signifying who were ready for the kingdom of heaven. They did not find this baby guilty, however, though she was imprisoned for months.

Animals were also thought to be possessed of Satan. There is record of the execution of a dog for witchcraft.

Among other fancies regarding a witch, it was believed that he or she could not shed tears. It is a fact, that age dries up these natural fountains of grief; but facts counted for nothing in that tribunal, neither would a horror that turns an innocent person to stony despair be recognized as anything but proof of guilt, even though its agony was deeper than floods of weeping.

The expression an "evil eye" dates from this period. It was thought that when a witch looked upon her victim, an invisible fluid or evil spell passed from her to the brain of the accuser causing the dreadful fits and convulsions which thereupon took place. If the witch were ordered to touch the distressed person, this fluid or current would pass back again whence it came, and the afflicted were instantly relieved.

This, all could see for themselves.

There was a book pertaining to the devil which

figures largely in the testimony. Sometimes he brings it himself to be signed by the servants he would secure, but quite as often it is presented by his sub-agents who importune with dire threats if the contract be not accepted. This diabolical volume is generally described as black, though on one occasion, at least, a more intense sensation being desired, it was called "red as blood."

As we have previously observed, the stories of witnesses grew more awful as the trials increased; fantastic and monstrous scenes were detailed to the Court where the devil and his witches held converse together sealing the sacrament of their hellish bond by drinking the blood of their victims.

Let us refresh our minds for a moment by looking at one superb picture in this gallery; one though hanging side by side with those of tragic fate, has no sorrowful experience in its history.

Joseph Putnam was one of the three citizens of Salem village, who protested from the first against the witchcraft proceedings although his

two brothers, Thomas and Deacon John Putnam, were actively concerned in the affair. Yet Joseph knew better, and instead of keeping his superior knowledge to himself lost no occasion of proclaiming the whole thing a fraud and a delusion. He absented himself from meeting, which in those days was a much more significant fact for the head of a family to do than it is now, and when it was time for his young child to be baptized carried the infant to Salem for the purpose.

Imagine this youth of twenty-two defying public opinion, when opinion dictated life and death, differing from his brothers and uncles regardless of the cost. Well, too, he realized the danger he was in, for while he scorned fear, he displayed that better part of valor, lest the worst come. He kept himself and family armed, and it is said one of his horses stood saddled day and night in case apprehension should be at hand and flight necessary.

He was never arrested.

Whether family affection protected him, or whether the prosecutors were really afraid to apprehend such a doughty rebel, one is not sure. Certainly it was much easier to bring feeble old women to court, than a Joseph Putnam, for there must have been fire in his eye as well as in his spirit.

He was the father of a large family of children who honored the name; one of the youngest was Israel, afterwards our general of the Revolution.

The third person of enlightened mind as to the delusion, was John Procter. His strong characteristic is found in men at different periods, all the world over. He is the man who speaks his mind to the disadvantage of self-interest, and always with vehemence. We find him to-day in politics, on school boards, in the church, but rarely asserting himself in such a worthy cause as did John Procter. Such a man as this, impulsive and fearless, is generally unpopular, and public dislike in this case became an executioner. Elizabeth

Procter, his wife, was first accused, for the Procters had also absented themselves from meeting since the disturbances began, while that Mary Warren one of the accusing girls had been a servant in the family, must be mentioned as an important link in the chain of circumstances which dragged them down.

Very touching is the scene where Elizabeth Procter is examined. Her husband, bold and manly, stands by his wife at this trying time, and it was doubtless his indignant and earnest protestations in her behalf that turned the malice of the accusers upon himself, for presently they "cried out" upon Goodman Procter.

Her character and bearing may be clearly seen from one sentence directed towards her furious tormenters.

In her utter amazement at the accusations and demeanor of the young girls, there is to her but one solution—they are crazed—and her tender womanly heart moved with pity for their condition has no room in it for resentment; she says

sweetly to Abigail Williams — "Dear child it is not so. There is another judgement dear child."

She might as well have addressed the wind with gentle words.

John Procter made an effort to gain justice by an appeal to Boston in the following letter—

"SALEM PRISON, July 23, 1692.

Mr. Mather, Mr. Allen, Mr. Moody, Mr. Willard and Mr. Bailey.

Reverend Gentlemen. The innocency of our case, with the enmity of our accusers and our judges and jury, whom nothing but our innocent blood will serve, having condemned us already before our trials, being so much incensed and enraged against us by the Devil, make us bold to beg and implore your favorable assistance of this our humble petition to His Excellency, that if it be possible, our innocent blood may be spared, which undoubtedly otherwise will be shed, if the Lord doth not mercifully step in; the magistrates, ministers, juries, and all the people in general, being so much enraged and incensed against us by the delusion of the Devil, which we can term no other, by reason we know, in our own consciences we are innocent persons.

Here are five persons who have lately confessed themselves to be witches, and do accuse some of us of being along with them at a sacrament, since we were committed into close prison, which we know to be lies. Two of the five are (Carrier's sons) young men, who would not confess anything till they tied them neck and heels, till the blood was ready to come out of their noses; and it is credibly believed and reported this was the occasion of making them confess what they never did, by reason they said one had been a witch a month, and another five weeks, and that their mother made them so, who has been confined here this nine weeks. My son William Procter, when he was examined, because he would not confess that he was guilty when he was innocent, they tied him neck and heels till the blood gushed out at his nose, and would have kept him so twenty-four hours, if one, more merciful than the rest, had not taken pity on him, and caused him to be unbound. These actions are very like the Popish cruelties. They have already undone us in our estates, and that will not serve their turns without our innocent blood. If it cannot be granted that we can have our trials in Boston, we humbly beg that you would endeavor to have these magistrates changed, and others in their room; begging also and beseeching you, that you would be pleased to be here, if not all, some of

you, at our trials, hoping thereby you may be the means of saving the shedding of our innocent blood. Desiring your prayers to the Lord, in our behalf, we rest, your poor afflicted servants,

JOHN PROCTER (and others)."

Even after a three months' imprisonment, John Procter's spirit is not crushed, though there is a ring of imploring despair in the letter, as if the writer could already see the shadow of the gallows. Thirteen days after the date of his letter, his trial took place in Salem, followed by execution August 19.

He was a native of Ipswich, and two petitions from friends and neighbors of the family were offered to the Court, signed by many and valued names, testifying to the worth and Christian characters of "*John Procter and his Wife, now in Trouble and under Suspicion of Witchcraft.*"

In addition to this testimony as to the good repute of the prisoners, there was evidence against the witnesses brought to light at the trial. One of the girls took back previous testimony,

saying that she must have been "out of her head" at the time she gave it; while another declared that what she had said before was "for sport."

But nothing could stem the fury of the current at this point.

Two weeks after John Procter was put to death, a baby was born to Elizabeth Procter in prison, adding one more to a large family of fatherless children. But it was this youngest child that saved the mother's life.

CHAPTER XII.

BRIDGET BISHOP.

IN some particulars, Bridget Bishop is one of the most notable characters immortalized by the Salem Witchcraft Delusion. Although by no means the first to be accused, she was the first person tried, and the first of the nineteen who were executed. The Court met the first week in June, and June 10th she came to her death. The warrant for her execution for witchcraft is the only document of its kind known to be in existence.

As an individual, she differed greatly from the women we have previously studied. While they have most of them been eminent for piety and domestic habits, she appears to have been a positive and original character, working out her

own eccentricities whether her neighbors were scandalized or not.

In the first place, although living with her third husband, she had but one child, the daughter of her second husband, Thomas Oliver. Life was so simple then, that with but one child, domestic matters could hardly have absorbed the entire attention of such an active woman. She kept a house of refreshment, near the line between Salem and Beverly, and not only refreshed the bodies of her guests, but provided a shovel-board for their entertainment. Amusements were few among these austere ancestors, and the shovel-board was almost the only game countenanced at all, and that looked upon with disfavor by many.

But however her neighbors looked upon it, Bridget Bishop did not regard pleasure and sin as synonymous terms any more than does the righteous matron of to-day. No proof of any failing in morality can be found against her, but her shovel-board, her fondness for dress, her powerful tongue and brisk manner of defending

herself when assailed,—all made her the subject of much comment among neighbors whose failings were different.

When she attired her person in "a black cap and a black hat, and a red paragon bodice, bordered and looped with different colors," she gave great offence to women who were clad in sober hues and the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." They felt there must have been something wrong about a woman so different from those about her, particularly when she was also of such a belligerent disposition. Some five years before the delusion began, there had been an accusation made against her as to her being a witch; but Mr. Hale, her minister, not being then carried away from his moorings to reason, saw in the matter only the ravings of a half crazy woman and dismissed the charge, though he afterwards brought it to bear upon her in the trial.

We like to fancy her stepping briskly about and serving cider to travellers who gave her the latest news in exchange, and have an idea she

was a better man than Edward Bishop, her husband, of whom we hear but little. She did not object to gossip about her manners and dress; she was doubtless of stout person and philosophic mind, and knew that if scandal was not busy with her affairs it would be with the peculiarities of some other woman less able to bear it than she was; perhaps she may have even liked to make these staid, solemn people open their eyes and exercise their tongues.

When it came to asserting she was a witch, however, that was a very different thing and she resented it strongly and literally. On one occasion a man and boy presented themselves at her door to accuse her of bewitching a child. Discovering their errand, the supposed witch received them in very unwitchlike fashion. Instead of brewing anything for their punishment in a kettle, or even muttering incantation at them, she seized a spade that was at hand, and chased them with the vigor of a virago from the porch. Neither did she vainly beat the air, as

the plight of the discomfited twain testified on their return home.

Enemies she had in abundance, who rose up and aired their idle spite when opportunity came.

A dyer named Shattuck, who lived in the house still standing on Essex street opposite the western gate of the North Church, gave the most damaging evidence.

Bridget Bishop brought her ribbons and laces to him for dyeing, and he thought them too fantastic to be worn for any honest purpose, and there was much chattering in consequence among his neighbors as she came up the street. Worse than the gayness of the finery, was the evil which Shattuck declared his customer had worked upon his little boy. Up to a certain time he had been a healthy child; then Bridget Bishop had cast her eye upon him and he began to be sickly and to have fits; of how dangerous a nature his ailments were, was illustrated by his being unable to get off a board or door-step when called.

For what he was called, does not appear.

This locality of the dyer's seems to have been a central point of attack upon Bridget Bishop and there was much whispering over the fence as a matter of course. Next to Shattuck on the east, on the very spot which the kitchen of the present writer's house now occupies, was a little old house where lived one John Cook. Cook's son told marvellous tales also; he saw Goody Bishop in the window of his room grinning at him, and then disappear from view in a crevice. Furthermore, apples flew unaccountably from his hand.

Adjoining the Cooks, fronting on Summer street, lived the Blys, who added their contribution to the malicious testimony, having once had a difficulty with the Bishops about the payment of a hog. Other stories quite as desperate were offered by people who saw and knew the prisoner. Once the harness of a man's horse fell to pieces as Bridget Bishop came in sight; and when she was driving once herself, the wheel sunk deep into the mud; and afterwards when they looked for the hole, it could not be found.

John and William Bly, father and son, who had been employed to remove the cellar wall of the house occupied by the Bishops, testified that they found "puppets" made up of rags and hogs' bristles with headless pins in them with the pins outward.

Of such strands was twisted the rope that hung Bridget Bishop.

She seems to have behaved with calmness during her examination and trial, volunteering no disrespect to the court, nor vituperation at the accusers. But it seems to be in keeping with her character that when asked if she was not troubled to see the afflicted persons tormented, she replied "No," indicating further that she could not tell what to think of them, and did not concern herself about them at all.

This vigorous, practical person, indifferent to public opinion, does not seem to have been planned by nature for a martyr; but circumstances made her so, and her crown may be just as bright as those worn by her gentler sisters.

CHAPTER XIII.

MARY EASTY THE SELF-FORGETFUL.

A SAINTLY person was Mary Easty, sister of Rebecca Nurse. She was twelve years younger than the latter, and up to the time of her arrest, with a family of seven children, was notable for her qualities as wife and mother; devoted in her faithfulness, faithful in her devotion.

After her death sentence, she is distinguished for an unconsciousness of self that is sublime. Although she was called to die by neither guilt, nor disease, bound to earth by many of the tenderest bonds, her serenity in facing the inevitable, the loftiness of her spirit above personal bitterness is more divine than human.

Her case differs also from others in one pitiful incident. She was committed to prison after

examination in April; by some means she was set free the eighteenth of May, and allowed to return home to her family. Judging the family by the mother, that must have been a blissful reunion. But a short one. Her freedom was not due to the afflicted children it appears; for, on the loosing of Mary Easty's chains, such distressing fits and convulsions came upon Mercy Lewis, that all the neighbors came to gaze upon her in dismay and horror. Her young companions, called upon to see who it was that thus tortured Mercy, all declared that it was Goodwife Easty, and so effective was Mercy's acting, that the rearrest was made and Mrs. Easty returned to prison, where she remained until September brought her execution.

On her way to the Gallows, she met her family and friends, and of this meeting and parting, Calef says that her words of farewell were said to have been "as serious, religious, distinct and affectionate as could well be expressed, drawing tears from the eyes of almost all present."

She made one effort to secure justice, sending to the court one of the most noble and affecting letters ever written.

The Humble Petition of Mary Easty unto his Excellency Sir William Phips, and to the Honored Judge and Bench now sitting in Judicature in Salem, and the Reverend Ministers, humbly sheweth, that, whereas your poor and humble petitioner, being condemned to die, do humbly beg of you to take it in your judicious and pious consideration, that your poor and humble petitioner, knowing my own innocency, blessed be the Lord for it! and seeing plainly the wiles and subtilty of my accusers by myself, cannot but judge charitably of others that are going the same way of myself if the Lord steps not mightily in. I was confined a whole month upon the same account, that I am condemned now for, and then cleared by the afflicted persons, as some of Your Honors know.

And in two day's time I was cried out upon them, and have been confined, and now am condemned to die. The Lord above knows my innocency then, and likewise does now, as at the great day will be known to men and angels. I petition to Your Honors not for my own life, for I know I must die, and my appointed time is set; but the Lord he knows it is that, if it be possible, no more innocent

blood may be shed, which undoubtedly cannot be avoided in the way and course you go in. I question not but Your Honors do to the utmost of your powers in the discovery and detecting of witchcraft and witches, and would not be guilty of innocent blood for the world.

But, by my own innocency, I know you are in the wrong way. The Lord in his infinite mercy direct you in this great work, if it be his blessed will that no more innocent blood be shed! I would humbly beg of you that Your Honors would be pleased to examine these afflicted persons strictly, and keep them apart some time, and likewise to try some of these confessing witches; I being confident there is several of them that has belied themselves and others, as will appear, if not in this world, I am sure in the world to come, whither I am now agoing. I question not but you will see an alteration of these things. They say myself and others having made a league with the Devil, we cannot confess. I know, and the Lord knows, as will appear, they belie me, and so I question not but they do others. The Lord above, who is the searcher of all hearts, knows, as I shall answer it at the tribunal seat, that I know not the least thing of witchcraft; therefore I cannot, I dare not, belie my own soul. I beg Your Honors not to deny this my humble petition from a poor, dying, innocent person. And I question not but the Lord will give a blessing to your endeavors."

That a condemned person should in such perilous condition offer no plea for self, but for others lest they suffer, fills one with awed amazement.

Her suggestion to the Court that the accusers be "kept apart" for a time, displays more sagacity than we see in the judges and jury combined. And yet, though by her clearer understanding she sees plainly these men are in the wrong, and that by their blundering she is to lose her life, she shows not the slightest resentment towards anyone ; the only distress is for others, and her cry for mercy is for those who direct her execution.

The lofty tone of this message to the Court recalls the perfect spirit of the Prisoner at Calvary, who entreats "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE JACOBS FAMILY.

BETWEEN Salem and Danversport, there stands back from the road on a rising in the field, an old gray house still known as the "Jacobs' house, where two hundred years ago, as cruel a rending of heart and family took place as any hearth-stone in Salem Village knew.

There lived George Jacobs, his only son George, jr., with his wife, their daughter Margaret, aged fifteen, and several younger children. The old man was of striking figure, unusually tall, and walking with two canes; his hair was white and worn in flowing locks.

Much depends on the mother of the house, particularly where the home is isolated, as was this. Rebecca Jacobs must have been an object

of tender solicitude in her household, for she had been for years partially deranged, and therefore the young shoulders of Margaret must have early received burdens too heavy for her years and frame.

May 10th, George Jacobs and Margaret were arrested, and four days later warrants were issued against George Jacobs, jr., and his half demented wife.

He made his escape from the country while she, though not brought to trial until January, 1693, was kept chained in prison ; quite enough to have made a maniac of this broken-minded woman. Her mother, a Rebecca Fox of Cambridge, wrote a most touching petition in her behalf to the Governor, but it was in vain.

The little gray house is left stripped and desolate ; the grandfather and granddaughter taken, the father having to seek refuge like a hunted criminal in a foreign land, while the mother, who had probably instinct enough left in her troubled brain to care for her children, was torn from her little ones and one of them an infant.

But the sheriff has naught to do with helpless childhood; he takes his forlorn prisoner into the spring air off across the fields, leaving in the open door the crying children whose frightened voices waken the unweaned baby in its cradle within.

Though aged, George Jacobs was vigorous in mind, and courageously met the accusations and the accusers with—"Well, let us hear who are they and what are they."

He laughed at Abigail Williams' performances, and said—"Because I am falsely accused, your worships all of you, do you think this is true?"

Later in the examination, he exclaimed "You tax me for a wizard; you may as well tax me for a buzzard. I have done no harm."

Sarah Churchill who had been a servant in the family testified "Last night I was afflicted at Deacon Ingersoll's, and Mary Walcot said it was a man with two staves; it was my master." He was challenged to say the Lord's Prayer and, according to Mr. Parris, "He missed in several parts of it, and could not repeat it right after many trials." The magistrates then suggestively asked

"Were you not frighted Sarah Churchill, when the representation of your master came to you?" —"Yes."

Jacobs exclaimed, "Well, burn me or hang me, I will stand in the truth of Christ, I know nothing of it."

A disturbed conscience was such an almost unprecedented thing among the afflicted girls, that the following, found among the loose papers on file in the clerk's office, should be inserted.

The Deposition of Sarah Ingersoll, aged about thirty years.—Saith, that, seeing Sarah Churchill, after her examination, she came to me crying and wringing her hands, seemingly to be much troubled in spirit. I asked her what she ailed. She answered, she had undone herself and others in saying she had set her hand to the Devil's book, whereas, she said, she never did. I told her I believed she had set her hand to the book. She answered, crying, and said, "No, no, no; I never, I never did! I asked her then what made her

say she did. She answered because they threatened her, and told her they would put her into the dungeon, and put her along with Mr. Burroughs; and thus several times she followed me up and down, telling me that she had undone herself, in belying herself and others. I asked her why she did not deny she wrote it. She told me, because she had stood out so long in it, that now, she durst not. She said also, that, if she told Mr. Noyes but once she had set her hand to the book, he would believe her; but if she told the truth, and said she had not set her hand to the book a hundred times, he would not believe her.

"SARAH INGERSOLL."

George Jacobs was committed to prison; his trial, such as it was, took place early in August, and his execution August 19.

"George Jacobs, sr., is the only one, among the victims of the witchcraft prosecutions, the precise spot of whose burial is absolutely ascertained.

The tradition has descended through the family, that the body, after having been obtained at the place of execution, was strapped by a young grandson on the back of a horse, brought home to the farm, and buried beneath the shade of his own trees. Two sunken and weather-worn stones marked the spot. There the remains rested until 1864, when they were exhumed. They were enclosed again and reverently re-deposited in the same place.

The skull was in a state of considerable preservation. An examination of the jawbones showed that he was a very old man at the time of his death, and had previously lost all his teeth. The length of some parts of the skeleton showed that he was a very tall man. These circumstances corresponded with the evidence, which was that he was tall of stature; so infirm as to walk with two staffs. It is an observable fact, that he rests in his own ground, still. He had lived for a great length of time on that spot, and it remains in

his family and in his name to this day, having come down by direct descent."

Margaret Jacobs, while her grandfather was under trial and condemnation, had gone through a terrible experience.

Worked upon by influences without and by weariness and weakness within, in some distressed state of mind she was brought to make confession of witchcraft and in so doing implicated her grandfather. Before turning from Margaret in horror, let us remember her youth and the trials she had been through. For years she had had her mother's sad condition before her eyes, while the sudden blasting of their home and scattering of the family, to say nothing of the public uproar, and her individual imprisonment and chains, would have disturbed a woman's faith and courage; hers faltered for a time but as will be seen, was strengthened again, and would have remained strong even unto death.

Neither does it seem fair to state that it was

because of Margaret's testimony that her grandfather lost his life; for if it had not been her testimony, anything else would have answered for a pretext of guilt, for we have seen that prejudice, not justice, ruled the Court; that malice, and not law, summed up the evidence.

The reaction from Margaret's moment of weakness, produced the most sorrowful repentance under which she wrote a letter to the Court taking back her confession. This she read aloud before the assembled people.

The Humble Declaration of Margaret Jacobs unto the Honored Court now sitting at Salem sheweth, that whereas your poor and humble declarant, being closely confined here in Salem jail for the crime of witchcraft, — which crime, thanks be to the Lord! I am altogether ignorant of, as will appear at the great day of judgement,—may it please the honored Court, I was cried out upon by some of the possessed persons as afflicting them: whereupon I was brought to my examination; which persons at the sight of me fell down, which did very much startle and affright me. The Lord above knows I knew nothing in the least measure how or who afflicted them.

They told me, without doubt I did, or else they would not fall down at me; they told me, if I would not confess, I should be put down into the dungeon, and would be hanged, but if I would confess, I should have my life; the which did so affright me, with my own vile, wicked heart, to save my life, made me make the like confession I did, which confession, may it please the honored Court, is altogether false and untrue. The very first night after I had made confession, I was in such horror of conscience that I could not sleep, for fear the Devil should carry me away for telling such horrid lies. I was, may it please the honored Court, sworn to my confession, as I understand since, but then, at that time was ignorant of it, not knowing what an oath did mean.

The Lord, I hope, in whom I trust, out of the abundance of his mercy will forgive me my false forswearing myself. What I said was altogether false against my grandfather and Mr. Burroughs, which I did to save my life, and to have my liberty; but the Lord, charging it to my conscience, made me in so much horror, that I could not contain myself before I had denied my confession, which I did, though I saw nothing but death before me; choosing rather death with a quiet conscience, than to live in such horror, which I could not suffer. Whereupon my denying my confession, I was committed to close

prison, where I have enjoyed more felicity in spirit, a thousand times, than I did before in my enlargement.

And now, may it please Your Honors, your declarant having in part given Your Honors a description of my condition, do leave it to Your Honor's pious and judicious discretions to take pity and compassion on my young and tender years, to act and to do with me as the Lord above and Your Honors shall see good, having no friend but the Lord to plead my cause for me; not being guilty, in the least measure, of the crime of witchcraft, nor any other sin that deserves death from man.

And your poor and humble declarant shall for ever pray, as she is bound in duty, for Your Honor's happiness in this life and eternal felicity in the world to come.

So prays Your Honor's declarant,

MARGARET JACOBS."

How many girls of the same age in 1892, in spite of the progress in so many directions, would be capable of the spiritual grace and moral courage as shown by Margaret Jacobs in this paper?

It is gratifying to know that she did not die at that time, being prevented by a temporary illness

from appearing at the time appointed for her trial, and when the Court met next, the power of the delusion was over and her life spared for future usefulness.

In 1699 she married John Foster. It is a positive delight to leave one of our principal characters at the altar, rather than upon the scaffold.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TROUBLE IN ANDOVER—PHILIP AND MARY ENGLISH—MARTHA CARRIER.

MANY of the persons executed were residents of Andover it may be noted. How the trouble came to break forth so far from its starting point is as easy of explanation as the carrying of contagious disease.

"The wife of an honest and worthy man in Andover was sick of a fever. After all the usual means had failed to check the symptoms of her disease, the idea became prevalent that she was suffering under an "evil hand." The husband, pursuant of the advice of friends, posted down to Salem Village to ascertain from the afflicted girls who was bewitching his wife. Two of them returned to Andover.

Never did a place receive such fatal visitors. The Grecian horse did not bring greater consternation to ancient Ilium. Immediately after their arrival, they succeeded in getting more than fifty of the inhabitants into prison, several of whom were hanged.

A perfect panic swept like a hurricane over the place. The idea seized all minds, as Hutchinson expresses it, that the only "way to prevent accusation, was to become an accuser."—"The number of the afflicted increased every day and the number of accused in proportion."

In this state of things, such a great accession being made to the ranks of the confessing witches, the power of the delusion became irresistibly strengthened.

Mr. Dudley Bradstreet, the magistrate of the place, after having committed about forty persons to jail, concluded he had done enough and declined to arrest any more. The consequence was, he and his wife were cried out upon and they had to fly for their lives.

Persons of great wealth and prominence were now assailed in Salem, notably Philip and Mrs. English, who owned houses, lands, a wharf and many sailing vessels; probably no family in this whole region lived so luxuriously, and this fact was doubtless what made them worthy of attack.

A warrant was first issued against Mary English, the wife. "Mrs. English was a lady of eminent character and culture. Traditions to this effect have come down with singular uniformity through all the old families of the place. She was the only child of Richard Hollingsworth, and inherited his large property. The Rev. William Bentley, D.D., in his "Description of Salem," and whose daily life made him conversant with all that relates to the locality of Mrs. English's residence, says that the officer came to apprehend her in the evening, after she had retired to rest. He was admitted by the servants, and read his warrant in her bed chamber. Guards were placed around the house.

To be accused by the afflicted children was

then regarded as certain death. "In the morning" says Bentley, "she attended the devotions of her family, kissed her children with great composure, proposed her plan for their education, took leave of them, and then told the officers she was ready to die."

These few lines, depicting a noble woman, with such telling strokes, answer the purpose of an exhaustive biography.

Mr. English was arrested a few days later. Among other things laid to his charge, was the testimony of one William Beals, who says that, riding through Lynn, "my nose gushed out bleeding in a most extraordinary manner, so that it bloodied a handkerchief of considerable bigness, and also ran down upon my clothes and upon my horse's mane."

Philip English and wife were confined in the Boston prison; some intelligent person aided them in escaping from Massachusetts, to which perilous region they did not return until the delusion had spent its force.

Philip English

Mary English.

Mercy Lewis

Nicholas Noyes

anne Putnam.

The case of Martha Carrier was a pitiful one, four of her children being taken with her into confinement, and their young minds terrified into a confession against her, and it was ostensibly on the words of her own flesh and blood that she was found guilty.

"It was asked Sarah Carrier by the magistrates, "How long hast thou been a witch?—Ever since I was six years old.

"How old are you now?—Near eight years old; brother Richard says I shall be eight years old in November next.

"Who made you a witch?—My mother; she made me set my hand to a book

"How did you set your hand to it?—I touched it with my fingers, and the book was red; the paper of it was white.

"She said she had never seen the black man; the place where she did it was in Andrew Foster's pasture, and Elizabeth Johnson, jr., was there. Being asked who was there besides, she answered, her Aunt Toothaker and her cousin. Being

asked when it was, she said, when she was baptized.

"What did they promise to give you?—A black dog.

"Did the dog ever come to you?—No.

"But you said you saw a cat once; what did that say to you?—It said it would tear me in pieces, if I would not set my hand to the book.

"She said her mother baptized her, and the Devil, or black man, was not there, as she saw; and her mother said, when she baptized her, Thou art mine for ever and ever, amen!

"How did you afflict folks?—I pinched them.

"And she said she had no puppets, but she went to them that she afflicted. Being asked whether she went in her body or her spirit, she said in her spirit. She said her mother carried her thither to afflict.

"How did your mother carry you when she was in prison?—She came like a black cat.

"How did you know it was your mother?—The cat told me so, that she was my mother.

She said she afflicted Phelps's child last Saturday, and Elizabeth Johnson joined with her to do it. She had a wooden spear about as long as her finger of Elizabeth Johnson; and she had it of the Devil. She would not own that she had ever been at the witch-meeting at the village. This is the substance. "SIMON WILLARD."

In alluding to her trial, Cotton Mather thus forcibly expresses his mind:

"This rampant hag (Martha Carrier) was the person of whom the confessions of the witches, and of her own children among the rest, agreed that the Devil had promised her that she should be Queen of Hell."

The explanation of Cotton Mather's strong language will be found in the examination of this most unhappy woman, where, driven to desperation by the use made of her children, she not only indignantly repelled the accusations, but boldly denounced the magistrates.

She was asked, "What black man is that?—I know none."

(The accusers declared the black man was present, and that they could see him; so again she was asked) "What black man did you see? —I saw no black man but your own presence."

(The girls kept falling down whenever she looked at them.)

"Can you look upon these and not knock them down? — They will dissemble if I look upon them."

"You see, you look upon them, and they fall down. — It is false; the Devil is a liar. I looked upon none since I came into the room but you."

Susanna Sheldon in a trance cries out "I wonder what you murder thirteen persons for." At this outrageous statement, injured innocence can bear no more, and in the majesty of righteous wrath she flings this at the magistrates—"It is a shameful thing that you should mind these folks that are out of their wits;" and, turning to the accusers—"You lie; I am wronged."

Confusion fell upon the multitude, and it is not surprising that the record of the scene closes with these words:

"The tortures of the afflicted were so great, that there was no enduring of it, so that she was ordered away, and to be bound hand and foot with all expedition; the afflicted, in the mean time almost killed, to the great trouble of all spectators, magistrates, and others."

"NOTE.—As soon as she was well bound, they all had strange and sudden ease. Mary Walcott told the magistrate that this woman told her she had been a witch this forty years."

There is nothing to lighten the gloom of this dark scene. A woman can bear, as the world knows, persecution for her faith, and bear it with heroic patience, but Martha Carrier's fate was torture in addition to the finest instincts of her sex. To be wrongfully accused, she might have borne with calm scorn, or quiet fortitude; but to take her little ones and sharpen them into instruments for her destruction, was an outrage no mother could bear. The love implanted by God for her offspring is changed into furious resentment at her wrongs, and surely that God saw and blamed her not.

To smooth her passage towards the other world there was no raining of childish kisses on her face, no loving little arms about her in clinging embrace, for the cruelty of blind men had devised that those little arms should tighten the rope about their mother's neck.

CHAPTER XVI.

ELIZABETH HOW—REV. GEORGE BURROUGHS—"ANGELS OF LIGHT."

OUR ancestors at this time were so serious-minded in their thought and conversation, their occupations so practical, that there seemed to be no time for the cultivation of any of the graces of life, excepting the Christian graces, inculcated to them from the preacher's stern lips.

Austerity towards childhood seems to have been the rule; children were loved of course, as they have been ever since little Cain and Abel played outside of the garden of Eden, but it was expressed in a manner the little people of the nineteenth century would think very forbidding. Slight account seems to have been made of the craving for frolic and play inherent in the young,

and there was little or nothing done for their amusement by their elders, whom stern realities occupied effectually.

Elizabeth How of Topsfield, among other sweet qualities, had a gift for endearing herself to children in a degree quite remarkable for the times. So great was her faculty for entertaining her small friends, that a troop of children would be always about her. Monstrous as it would seem, this lovely trait of her character was used as a proof of her guilt, when later it suited some family grudge in the neighborhood that she should be apprehended for witchcraft.

What would add to her womanly attraction to-day, the power of drawing little ones to her, was construed, from its being so uncommon, to be a power through evil.

Elizabeth How is one of whom there is abundant proof as to her piety and excellence ; friends and neighbors drew up depositions as to her character, and one who had known her for twenty-four years testifies that she had "found her

a neighborly woman, conscientious in her dealing, faithful to her promises, and Christianlike in her conversation."

But neither good character in the present, nor upright living in the past, had weight in that court; fits and convulsions were the important testimony.

It is a temptation to dwell longer with this gentle, lovable woman, who not only forgave her enemies, which is the part of a saint, but could charm young hearts, a rare earthly gift. She was arrested May 28th, and among those executed July 19th.

There is one point where this last case reminds us of the trial of the Rev. Geo. Burroughs. He had remarkable athletic power which, in a slight frame, amazed his generation; as they could not understand how he performed certain feats of strength, it was concluded after his arrest for witchcraft, that he derived his unusual strength from the same unlawful source from which Elizabeth How gained her power of pleasing children. Muscle, which now recommends

a man, was an aid in the destruction of this unfortunate clergyman.

If we have any right to apply the term unfortunate to a man, suggesting as it does the predestination of fate and not the fair division of providential care, it could be used with propriety in describing the Rev. Mr. Burroughs.

He had been a former pastor over the church at Salem Village, and this parish it would seem was never a flowery field to pasture in. While tending this flock, his salary was not all paid him, and when his wife died he was obliged to run into debt for her funeral expenses, and his being in this sad plight seemed to scandalize the villagers more than that his lawful pay was in arrears, and the debt therefore a necessity.

From Salem he went to Casco Bay, and in Maine his stay was more comfortable, though the settlement was younger and liable to attacks from Indians. Doubtless he preferred the untutored savage to the inhumanity of civilized man.

When the stage managers controlling the

witchcraft tragedy felt the need of a more powerful situation, they turned their eyes toward Mr. Burroughs as being the very character for their purpose. To prove the reality of Satan's presence in New England, and his desperate behavior on the soil, nothing would be more overwhelming than to show his hold upon one of the preachers of the Lord.

The minister then was on such a pinnacle, to see his fall would be a thrilling sight.

Our present realization is, that the wearer of gown and bands has human failings with the rest of us, but few were allowed the clergymen of our ancestors, save those of bigotry and intolerance.

Therefore, to drag a minister down to the depths of this most despicable sin, from which he would be raised to the scaffold would be a telling stroke; moreover the man had no powerful friends to insist that the accusers had "made a mistake in the person."

How Mr. Burroughs, laboring quietly a hun-

dred miles away, could become a prisoner before the Salem Court would be a puzzle, if one did not see the cunning of these wicked girls, and the infatuated attention bestowed on everything they did and said.

Abigail Hobbs, who took a short but painful part in the proceedings, had lived a few years before in Casco Bay. On hearing the name of Mr. Burroughs mentioned by the afflicted children she took this for her opportunity, using all the old scandal she had heard in Maine to add to the inventions of the Salem girls. She declared that he had tortured her into becoming a witch, and that she had been present at a witch-meeting where he presided, while Mary Warren testified that "Mr. Burroughs had a trumpet which he blew to summon the witches to their feasts."

Abigail Williams saw visions and said that Mr. Burroughs "had killed three wives, two for himself, and one for Mr. Lawson."

But the statement made by Ann Putnam is so

extraordinary and awful, when we reflect that it was made by a girl twelve years old, that it should be inserted as a specimen of what the mind can become when fed on poison.

"The Deposition of Ann Putnam, who testifieth and saith, that, on the 8th day of May, at evening, I saw the apparition of Mr. George Burroughs, who grievously tortured me, and urged me to write in his book, which I refused. He then told me that his two first wives would appear to me presently, and tell me a great many lies, but I should not believe them.

Then immediately appeared to me the forms of two women in winding sheets, and napkins about their heads, at which I was greatly affrighted; and they turned their faces towards Mr. Burroughs, and looked very red and angry, and told him that he had been a cruel man to them, and that their blood did cry for vengeance against him; and also told him that they should be clothed with white robes in heaven, when he should be cast into hell; and immediately he

vanished away. And, as soon as he was gone, the two women turned their heads toward me, and looked as pale as a white wall; and told me that they were Mr. Burroughs' two first wives, and that he had murdered them. And one of them told me that she was his first wife, and he stabbed her under the left arm and put a piece of sealing-wax on the wound. And she pulled aside the winding-sheet and showed me the place; and also told me that she was in the house where Mr. Parris now lives, when it was done.

And the other told me that Mr. Burroughs and that wife which he hath now, killed her in the vessel, as she was coming to see her friends, because they would have one another. And they both charged me that I should tell these things to the magistrates before Mr. Burroughs' face; and, if he did not own them, they did not know but they should appear there. This morning, also, Mrs. Lawson and her daughter Ann appeared to me, whom I knew, and told me Mr.

Burroughs murdered them. This morning also appeared to me another woman in a winding-sheet, and told me that she was Goodman Fuller's first wife, and Mr. Burroughs killed her because there was some difference between her husband and him."

A warrant had been procured from Boston April 30th, for the arrest of George Burroughs, "he being suspected of a confederacy with the Devil."

As the marshal returned to Salem May 4th with the prisoner, it will be seen there was no time lost. It is said he was at his own supper table with his family, when he was seized and roughly hurried away, being given no time to either provide for those he must leave behind, or to prepare himself for the journey.

On finding what were the accusations made against him, his words befitted his profession as a follower of Christ—"It is an humbling Providence of God."

On the 9th day of May a special session of

the Magistracy was held, William Stoughton coming from Dorchester and Samuel Sewall from Boston, to sit with Hathorne and Corwin, and give greater solemnity to the proceedings.

Stoughton presided; he was in close sympathy with Cotton Mather.

It should be borne in mind by those who have taunted Salem with "hanging the witches," that there was no death-dealing sentence ordered there, until the Court had been reinforced by Boston dignitaries; Stoughton was deputy-governor, and represented the Governor, Sir William Phips, who, not arriving in the colonies until the 14th of May, had enough else to do in becoming acquainted with a new office and country.

When the session began the first week in June, a special court was appointed for the witchcraft trials. Stoughton was commissioned as chief-justice; Nathaniel Saltonstall of Haverhill, Major John Richards of Boston, Major Bartholomew Gedney of Salem, Mr. Wait Winthrop, Captain Samuel Sewall and Mr. Peter Sargent, all three of

Boston, were made associate judges. Saltonstall early withdrew from the service; and Jonathan Corwin, of Salem, succeeded to his place on the bench of the special court. A majority of the judges were citizens of Boston.

The court met again August 5, trying and condemning among others this gentle preacher of the gospel, who was hung on the 19th of the same month.

He was a man in whom there was no guile; he could not in the least comprehend the machinery of sinful falsehood he saw in working order. Amazed he was, but not indignant at the accusers, of whom he perceived not their malignity, only that they were instruments for bringing about the inscrutable will of the Almighty.

Calef gives the following account of his execution:

"Mr. Burroughs was carried in the cart with the others, through the streets of Salem, to execution. When he was upon the ladder, he made a speech for the clearing of his innocency, with

such solemn and serious expressions as were to the admiration of all present. His prayer (which he concluded by repeating the Lord's prayer) was so well worded, and uttered with such (at least seeming) fervency of spirit as was very affecting, and drew tears from many, so that it seemed to some that the spectators would hinder the execution. The accusers said the black man stood and dictated to him. As soon as he was turned off, Mr. Cotton Mather, being mounted upon a horse, addressed himself to the people, partly to declare that he (Mr. Burroughs) was no ordained minister, and partly to possess the people of his guilt, saying that the Devil had often been transformed into an angel of light; and this somewhat appeased the people, and the executions went on."

CHAPTER XVII.

REV. DEODAT LAWSON AND OTHER NAMES—SUSANNAH MARTIN—NINETEEN PERSONS "OF WHOM THE WORLD WAS NOT WORTHY."

REV. Deodat Lawson was another former pastor of the church at Salem Village, established at this time over a parish in Scituate. When the trouble began in Salem he returned to his old home, not as did the wretched Mr. Burroughs in the character of a witch, but as an emissary of Divine wrath to rebuke the sin of witchcraft, and on the last Sunday of March, preached a famous sermon for which he is chiefly remembered, as it was as well calculated to soothe the public mind, as Antony's address to the Romans.

His text was Zechariah iii, 2: "And the Lord

said unto Satan the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

Being a man of great intellectual ability, this text handled with skill and vigor spread out boundlessly over the field actual and possible, and created a great excitement.

Doubtless he felt himself to be like one of the prophets of old, commissioned from above, and under the necessity of crying woe! to those of his generation.

It is impossible in one small volume to give full accounts of all persons connected with the proceedings of this remarkable court, and sketches of some of the most prominent must suffice.

There are also other names, of whom we could not tell more if we would, as there is almost nothing of peculiar interest preserved about them; their stories can only be told in black head lines; we find but the facts of their arrest, trial, and execution.

Among them, Ann Pudeator, Margaret Scott, Wilmot Reed and Mary Parker; and yet they lost their lives on Gallows Hill.

Of Alice Parker, little is known but that she was the wife of a mariner who, when he was on land, like many another sailor, loved to frequent the tavern. This did not please Alice the wife and she followed him to Westgate's tavern; and, not a whit abashed at the company, vigorously denounced her recreant spouse. Westgate remonstrated with her for railing at her husband, whereupon she turned her volley of abuse upon the keeper of the ale-house. Westgate remembered the berating she gave him, and at her trial gave dreadful descriptions of animals that he encountered on his way home late one night, and of how he hurt himself tumbling down from fright.

The court, being composed of wise men, agreed with him that Alice Parker was responsible, and no one was impolite enough to suggest that he had been drinking.

Parris says that "Mr. Noyes, at the time of her examination, affirmed to her face, that, he being with her at the time of sickness, discoursing with her about witchcraft, whether she were not guilty, she answered, 'if she was as free from other sins as from witchcraft, she would not ask of the Lord mercy.' "

We should consider this a strong asseveration of innocence, but the divines thought differently.

Sarah Wildes, one of the nineteen, is little more than a name to us, though we have the knowledge that she held to her innocence with firmness and met her death bravely.

Captain John Alden, son of the John Alden of Plymouth, was "cried out" upon and vilely slandered by the girls. He was in a bad plight; it was no use for John to speak for himself here, and the brave soldier in fight beat a stealthy retreat from the scene, and so won the battle for his life.

There is a touching account given by Jonathan

Cary of his wife's arrest and trial, but their names happily are not on the fatal list.

John Willard, one of the four men who were executed, had sympathized with the sorrows of the prisoners and expressed his disapproval of the whole thing. It did not occur to him that there was no such thing as witchcraft, but rather that its malign influence was over all, accusers, judges and people.

Said he, "Hang them; they are all witches." His imprudence of speech was costly; for, incurring the displeasure of the accusers, they in their visions saw him as a murderer and swore to many horrid and fantastic details. All we know of his death is from Brattle, who describes the demeanor of the victims who perished in August, as being indicative of their conscious innocence and Christian character; especially of "Procter and Willard, whose whole management of themselves, from the jail to the gallows, was very affecting, and melting to the hearts of some considerable spectators whom I could mention to

you; but they are executed, and so I leave them."

One piquant figure demands attention, and no account of the witchcraft would be complete without Susannah Martin of Amesbury, in a central position and good light. She was a widow, standing by herself, but quite capable of doing so.

In person she was short and buxom, and one of those to whom neatness was as imperative as the law of gravitation. Indeed, this desire for cleanliness, instead of being understood as an approach to godliness was brought up against her as proving an intimacy with the evil one. It was positively given as evidence against her that she made her way to a neighbor's house in dirty weather and arrived neat and dry. Upon her hostess expressing surprise at finding such a clean guest, she replied that "she scorned to have a drabbled tail."

As to her turn of mind, she suggests Bridget Bishop in her fearless speech, and like her she

had once before been gossipped about as a possible witch, before the time was yet ripe for the scandal to become action.

Parts of her examination must be given to show her keen wit and readiness for repartee.

As the witnesses went into fits as the accused appeared, the magistrate asked:

"Hath this woman hurt you?"

(Abigail Williams declared that she had hurt her often. 'Ann Putnam threw her glove at her in a fit,' and the rest were struck dumb at her presence.)

"What! Do you laugh at it?" said the magistrate.—"Well I may at such folly."

"Is this folly to see these so hurt?—I never hurt man, woman or child."

(Mercy Lewis cried out, "She hath hurt me a great many times, and plucks me down." Then Martin laughed again. Several others cried out upon her, and the magistrate again addressed her.)

"What do you say to this?—I have no hand in witchcraft.

"What did you do? did you consent these should be hurt?—No, never in my life.

"What ails these people?—I do not know.

"But what do you think ails them?—I do not desire to spend my judgment upon it.

"Do you think they are bewitched?—No, I do not think they are.

"Well, tell us your thoughts about them.—My thoughts are my own when they are in; but when they are out, they are another's.

"Who do you think is their master?—If they be dealing in the black art, you may know as well as I.

"What have you done towards the hurt of these?—I have done nothing.

"Why, it is you, or your appearance.—I cannot help it.

"How comes your appearance to hurt these?—How do I know?

"Are you not willing to tell the truth?—I cannot tell. He that appeared in Samuel's shape can appear in anyone's shape.

"Do you believe these afflicted persons do not say true?—They may lie, for aught I know.

"May not you lie?—I dare not tell a lie if it would save my life."

Her boldness infuriated the accusers, so that a great uproar was occasioned by the dreadful nature of the convulsions, but Susannah Martin was scornful and unmoved, and again the magistrate demands:

"What is the reason these cannot come near you?—I cannot tell, it may be the Devil bears me more malice than any other.

"Do you not see God discovering you?—No, not a bit for that.

"All the congregation besides, think so.—Let them think what they will.

"What is the reason these cannot come to you?—I do not know but they can if they will; or else, if you please, I will come to them."

When the Shakespeare of the future seeks for characters to people his tragedy from these materials, he could not put into the mouth of Martin more clever speeches than she utters for herself in these records. Her dauntless, spicy replies delight the reader who, in his enjoyment at her ready wit, forgets that this substantial woman who suggests earth more than heaven, came to her end on the scaffold a little more than two months after this, July 19.

We would prefer to think of her as castigating the magistrates with her sharp tongue for an indefinite period.

The names of those executed, and the order in which they perished, are as follows:

Bridget Bishop on June 10th; Sarah Good, Sarah Wildes, Elizabeth How, Rebecca Nurse and Susanna Martin executed July 19.

George Burroughs, John Procter, George Jacobs, John Willard, Martha Carrier executed Aug. 19.

Martha Corey, Mary Easty, Alice Parker,

Ann Pudeator, Margaret Scott, Wilmot Reed, Samuel Wardwell and Mary Parker were executed Sept. 22.

Giles Corey was pressed to death, Sept. 19.

Superintending the executions, there would be generally some one like Cotton Mather or Mr. Noyes, to attend to the sympathie of the public mind. When natural human impulses would rise in the hearts of the spectators, and their reason be likewise impressed by the fortitude and Christlike patience of the executed, the moment of their possible revulsion of feeling would be seized to inflame afresh the deluded populace against those in the throes of death.

After the eight unfortunate women had been hung on the 22nd of Sept., Mr. Noyes pointing to their bodies exclaimed: "What a sad sight it is to see eight firebrands of hell hanging there."

But no more did he see the sight, although the sadness of it he would have gladly borne.

Gallows Hill was never again so disgraced and, looking steadfastly over the city of Salem upon the everlasting sea, prays that the rains and snows of two hundred years may have washed away the stain.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE AWAKENING.

"BUT what finally broke the spell by which the minds of the whole colony had been held in bondage, was the accusation in October, of Mrs. Hale, the wife of the minister of the First Church in Beverly. Her genuine and distinguished virtues had won for her a reputation and secured in the hearts of the people a confidence, which superstition itself could not sully nor shake.

Mr. Hale had been active in all the previous proceedings; but he knew the innocence and piety of his wife, and he stood forth between her and the storm he had helped to raise; although he had driven it on while others were its victims, he turned and resisted it, when it burst upon his own dwelling. The whole community became

convinced that the accusers in crying out upon Mrs. Hale had perjured themselves, and from that moment their power was destroyed; the awful delusion was dispelled, and a close put to one of the most tremendous tragedies in the history of real life. The wildest storm, perhaps, that ever raged in the moral world became a calm; the tide that had threatened to overwhelm everything in its fury sank back to its peaceful bed. There are few, if any, other instances in history of a revolution of opinion and feeling so sudden, so rapid and so complete. The images and visions that had possessed the bewildered imaginations of the people flitted away, and left them standing in the sunshine of reason and their senses; and they could have exclaimed, as they witnessed them passing off, in the language of the great master of the drama and of human nature, but that their rigid Puritan principles would not, it is presumed, have permitted them, even in that moment of rescue and deliverance, to quote Shakespeare,—

'The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?
Into the air: and what seemed corporal, melted
As breath into the wind.' "

Not only had public sentiment demanded that a stop be put to the proceedings, but the Governor, Sir William Phips, stepped in between the law and the people, and ordered that the Special Court of Oyer and Terminer should try no more cases of witchcraft. Once convinced of the mistake of his age, he resolutely protected the people from further wrong; and in October, by ordaining that no more spectral testimony be received as evidence, it became impossible to compass further convictions. It was doubtless through the influence of his wife that the Governor looked into the matter with such discerning eyes, for she had deep sympathy for the accused. For expressing this pity, the Governor's lady was "cried out" upon; but no one heeded the cries of the afflicted children.

The prisons of Salem, Boston, Cambridge and

Ipswich were full, and had been for months. No exact knowledge of how many were imprisoned can be gained, but hundreds must have been committed, for when in May the prison doors were opened, one hundred and fifty went forth, though insult was added to injury by charging the prisoners for their own board and jailer's fees; yet the 19th century should not be supercilious in judging the 17th in this particular, as imprisonment for debt in this country has only been abandoned within a few decades.

Twenty came to death, and we know death came to two in prison, Ann Foster and Sarah Osburn, and probably many more by grief and hardship escaped the gallows.

There is nothing like having a thing brought home to us, to gain new perceptions of the subject. As long as Mr. Hale saw the accusations only of other people's wives, he found it easy to believe them; but when the tragedy came to brood over his own hearthstone, such a flood of light was poured upon it, he saw clearly what he

never could distinguish before at his neighbor's fireside.

As we think of the condemned, let this fact be emphasized in the memory, that "all who were condemned either maintained their innocence from the first, or, if persuaded or overcome into a confession, voluntarily took it back and disowned it before trial. If this be so, then the name of every person condemned ought to be held in lasting honor, as preferring to die rather than lie, or stand to a lie. It required great strength of mind to take back a confession; relinquish life and liberty; go down into a dungeon, loaded with irons; and thence to ascend the gallows. It relieves the mind to think that Abigail Hobbs, wicked and shocking as her conduct had been towards Mr. Burroughs and others, came to herself, and offered her life in atonement for her sin."

The people of Andover were quick to take an idea. Many of them, as soon as they were apprehended, resorted to confession of their guilt,

and so avoided either trial or examination. They may have reconciled the lie to their consciences, as we would humor the vagaries of a mad man in order to save our lives, believing that it was justifiable to accede to any monstrous statement the lunatic might make while brandishing a deadly weapon.

It was in Andover also, that when the awakening came, their citizens were broad awake, and instantly reversed the order of things, by bringing suits for slander against those who had so zealously been hunting up cases of witchcraft.

Reckoning in the ordinary way, the two hundred years between ourselves and the people who saw the witchcraft frenzy would be represented by eight generations. Our claim upon them is shrouded in such a mist of "great-greats," that none but an adept in genealogy can pierce the haze.

But here is a short cut into the past, by which each reader may look upon the streets of Salem, in 1692, through oral testimony, with but two in-

tervening generations. A gentleman whose distinguished figure and antiquarian tastes make him one of the notable citizens of the Salem of to-day, heard from his grandmother (who died in 1862, aged ninety-two) the story told by her grandmother, whose mother was an eye-witness of the scene she describes; she was living at the time on Essex street where the Perley block now stands, and related, that as the wagon bearing the body of Giles Corey passed her door, she saw a man push back with his cane the tongue of unfortunate Corey, which by the agonizing pressure had been forced from his mouth.

Let us take one more glimpse at a few of those concerned in the trials, before closing the covers of this little book.

Some of the characters, though aroused, were like sleepy children and could not quite realize the state of things about them for a long time; indeed, a few of them one might say never waked up at all. Such was Judge Stoughton.

He would never admit that he or any one else had been deluded, neither could he bear to hear

others regret the wrong unwittingly done to the innocent.

When he found that he would not be allowed to sentence any more witches, he was so exasperated that he left the bench in displeasure never returning. "In January 1692-3, word was brought in that a reprieve was sent to Salem, and had prevented the execution of seven of those that were condemned, which so moved the chief judge that he said to this effect: 'We were in a way to have cleared the land of them; who it is that obstructs the cause of justice I know not; the Lord be merciful to the Country!' and so went off the bench, and came no more into that Court."

In strong contrast, is the conduct of Judge Sewall. He saw the awful error, and had grace to tell the world of his enlightenment and penitence. He observed annually, for the rest of his life, a day of fasting and prayer in private; and in public, "On the day of the general fast, he rose in the place where he was accustomed to worship, the 'Old South' in Boston, and, in the presence of a large assembly, handed up to the

pulpit a written confession, acknowledging the error into which he had been led, praying for the forgiveness of God and his people, and concluding with a request to all the congregation to unite with him in devout supplication, that it might not bring down the displeasure of the Most High upon his country, his family, or himself. He remained standing during the public reading of the paper."

As for Ann Putnam, both parents died when she was nineteen, leaving her in charge of many younger brothers and sisters.

Her health was miserable the latter part of her short life; she died at thirty-six.

When she joined the church in 1706, she wrote a confession which was read aloud in her presence.

The Confession of Anne Putnam, when she was received to Communion in 1706.

"I desire to be humbled before God for that sad and humbling providence that befell my father's family in the year about '92; that I being

then in my childhood, should, by such providence of God be made an instrument for the accusing of several persons of a grievous crime, whereby their lives were taken away from them, whom now I have just grounds and good reason to believe they were innocent persons; and that it was a great delusion of Satan that deceived me in that sad time, whereby I justly fear I have been instrumental, with others, though ignorantly and unwittingly, to bring upon myself and this land the guilt of innocent blood; though what was said or done by me against any person I can truly and uprightly say, before God and man, I did it not out of any anger, malice or ill-will to any person, for I had no such thing against one of them; but what I did was ignorantly, being deluded by Satan. And particularly, as I was a chief instrument of accusing of Goodwife Nurse and her two sisters, I desire to lie in the dust, and to be humbled for it, in that I was a cause, with others, of so sad a calamity to them and their families; for which cause I desire to lie in the dust, and earnestly beg forgiveness of God, and from all

those unto whom I have given just cause of sorrow and offence, whose relations were taken away or accused."

This is not so humble as it might have been perhaps, considering what Ann Putnam had been responsible for, though like a true daughter of Eve she throws the blame upon the Devil for her naughtiness; while the tumult she brought about, is described as "that sad and humbling providence that befell my father's family in the year about '92." It was bad enough to shift the burden upon the Devil, without presuming to suggest there was a Providence connected with the matter.

Mr. Parris was another who failed to see what cruel folly he had been about, and this fact added to his previous unpopularity, made his parish and the whole community long to be rid of him.

But he did not wish to go. He was deaf and blind to hints, and when it came to direct efforts to compass his change of residence, he as deliberately prepared to resist all such unwelcome

suggestions. The ministers in Boston all urged him to go, even those who sympathized with him, but go he would not in spite of friend or foe until 1697, when really obliged to; his career after leaving Salem was not prosperous.

Mr. Noyes also was unable to reconcile himself to enforced abstinence from witch-persecution. His name is not found in any petition in behalf of sufferers of the delusion, nor is there evidence of any penitential attitude towards them on his part, after the delusion was over. As he so ardently pursued the supposed guilty, it must have been a great trial, that believing in all bitterness they were guilty still, he could no more bring them to punishment.

Cotton Mather and his subsequent position can best be shown by his own diary of the year 1724, where he unbosoms himself freely, revealing his disappointed ambitions, and that he recognizes his fallen position from public esteem.

1. "What has a gracious Lord helped me to do for the *seafaring tribe*, in prayers for them,

in sermons to them, in books bestowed upon them, and in various projections and endeavors to render the sailors a happy generation? And yet there is not a man in the world so reviled, so slandered, so cursed among sailors."

2. "What has a gracious Lord helped me to do for the instruction and salvation and comfort of the poor negroes? And yet some, on purpose to affront me, call their negroes by the name of COTTON MATHER, so that they may, with some shadow of truth, assert crimes as committed by one of that name, which the hearers take to be *me*.

3. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do for the profit and honor of the female sex, especially in publishing the virtuous and laudable characters of holy women? And yet where is the man whom the female sex have spit more of their venom at? I have cause to question whether there are twice ten in the town but what have, at some time or other, spoken *basely* of me.

4. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do,

that I may be a blessing to my relatives? I keep a catalogue of them, and not a week passes me without some good devized for some or other of them, till I have taken all of them under my cognizance. And yet where is the man who has been so tormented with such *monstrous* relatives? Job said '*I am a brother to dragons.*'

5. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do for the vindication and reputation of the Scottish nation? And yet no Englishman has been so vilified by the tongues and pens of Scots as I have been.

6. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do for the good of the country, in applications without number for it in all its interests, besides publications of things useful to it and for it? And yet there is no man whom the country so loads with disrespect and calumnies and manifold expressions of aversion.

8. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do that the COLLEGE may be owned for the bringing forth such as are somewhat known in the

world, and have read and wrote as much as many have done in their places? And yet the College forever puts marks of disesteem upon me. If I were the greatest blockhead that ever came from it, or the greatest blemish that ever came to it, they could not easily show me more contempt than they do.

10. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do in *good offices*, wherever I could find opportunities for the doing of them? I forever entertain them with alacrity. I have offered pecuniary recompenses to such as would advise me of them. And yet I see no man for whom all are so loth to do good offices. Indeed I find some cordial friends *but how few!* Often have I said, 'what would I give if there were any one man in the world to do for me what I am willing to do for every man in the world!'

11. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do in the writing of many books for the advancing of piety and the promoting of his kingdom? There are, I suppose, more than three hundred of them. And yet I have had more books written against

me, more pamphlets to traduce and reproach me and belie me, than any man I know in the world.

12. "What has a gracious Lord given me to do in a variety of *services?* For many lustres of years, not a day has passed me without some devices, even written devices, to be serviceable. And yet my sufferings! They seem to be (as in reason they should be) more than my services. Everybody points at me, and speaks of me as by far the most afflicted minister in all New England. And many look on me as the greatest sinner, because the greatest sufferer! and are pretty arbitrary in their conjectures upon my punished miscarriages."

Coming to the last page, the reader may doubt whether the question "Why did they suffer?" has yet been answered. Possibly not, but here are plenty of facts, and each reader can take them and make answer himself.

If the mind sickens at the horrors on which it has supped, grieving at the sin of some which caused the agony of others, let us look at the glo-

rious triumph of humanity over inhumanity, and rejoice in the heavenly qualities it has brought out. They were dearly bought, but they are for us and for all future generations. Pausing before the monument of Rebecca Nurse the other day, a singular sight was seen. The underbrush had been gathered up and was burning under the tall pine trees. The flames and smoke were wreathing and curling in the wind, at times obscuring the granite pile it encircled.

Irresistible and weird was the lesson. The smoke of superstition and the fire of fury had raged for a while, destroying what could be reached. But they were soon spent, and as they disappeared, the rock came into clear view which represents the faith which supported Rebecca Nurse, and reason, now firmly established for all time.

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