

that I can dance — dance by myself — do it all — by myself — furnish the music and do the dancing.”

He began whistling “Sir Roger de Coverley,” and stood up, but sank down again and reached for the bottle.

“Peter,” he said with a soft smile, looking down at his gorgeous swan’s-down waistcoat and his well-shaped dove-coloured legs: “ain’t I a beauty?”

“Yes, you *are* a beauty!” said Peter.

Suddenly lifting one of his bare feet, he shot O’ Bannon as by the action of a catapult against the printing-press.

He lay there all night.

How fine a thing it would be if all the faculties of the mind could be trained for the battles of life as a modern nation makes every man a soldier. Some of these, as we know, are always engaged in active service; but there are times when they need to be strengthened by others, constituting a first reserve; and yet graver emergencies arise in the marchings of every man when the last defences of land and hearth should be ready to turn out: too often even then the entire disciplined strength of his forces would count as a mere handful to the great allied powers of the world and the devil.

But so few of our faculties are of a truly military turn, and these wax indolent and unwary from disuse like troops during long times of peace. We all come to recognize sooner or later, of course, the unfailing little band of them that form our stand-by, our battle-smoked campaigners, our Old Guard, that dies, never surrenders. Who of us also but knows his

faithful artillery, dragging along his big guns — and so liable to reach the scene after the fighting is over? Who when worsted has not fought many a battle through again merely to show how different the result would have been, if his artillery had only arrived in time! Boom! boom! boom! Where are the enemy now? And who does not take pride in his navy, sweeping the high seas of the imagination but too often departed for some foreign port when the coast defences need protecting?

Beyond this general dismemberment of our resources do we not all feel the presence within us of certain renegades? Does there not exist inside every man a certain big, ferocious-looking faculty who is his drum major — loving to strut at the head of a peaceful parade and twirl his bawble and roll his eyes at the children and scowl back at the quiet intrepid fellows behind as though they were his personal prisoners? Let but a skirmish threaten, and our dear, ferocious, fat major —! not even in the rear — not even on the field! Then there is a rattling little mannikin who sleeps in the barracks of the brain and is good for nothing but to beat the cerebral drum. There is a certain awkward

squad — too easily identified — who have been drafted again and again into service only to be in the way of every skilled manoeuvre, only to be mustered out as raw recruits at the very end of life. And, finally, there is a miscellaneous crowd of our faculties scattered far and near at their humdrum peaceful occupations; so that if a quick call for war be heard, these do but behave as a populace that rushes into a street to gaze at the national guard already marching past, some of the spectators not even grateful, not even cheering.

All that day John had to fight a battle for which he had never been trained; moreover he had been compelled to divide his forces: there was the far-off solemn battle going on in his private thoughts; and there was the usual siege of duties in the school. For once he would gladly have shirked the latter; but the single compensation he always tried to wrest from the disagreeable things of life was to do them in such a way that they would never fester in his conscience like thorns broken off in the flesh.

During the forenoon, therefore, by an effort which only those who have experienced it can understand, he ordered off all communication

with larger troubles and confined himself in that stifling prison-house of the mind where the perplexities and toils of childhood become enormous and everything else in the world grows small. Up under the joists there was the terrible struggle of a fly in a web, at first more and more violent, then ceasing in a strain so fine that the ear could scarce take it; a bee came in one window, went out another; a rat, sniffing greedily at its hole, crept toward a crumb under a bench, ran back, crept nearer, seized it and was gone; a toiling slate-pencil grated on its way as arduously as a wagon up a hill; he had to teach a beginner its letters. These were the great happenings. At noon the same child that had brought him a note on the day before came with another:

"Kitty is going to the ball with Horatio. I shall be alone. We can have our talk uninterrupted. How unreasonable you are! Why don't you understand things without wanting to have them explained? If you wish to go to the ball, you can do this afterwards. Don't come till Kitty has gone."

Duties in the school till near sunset, then letters. O'Bannon had told him that Mr. Brad-

ford's post-rider would leave at four o'clock next morning; if he had letters to send, they must be deposited in the box that night. Gray had letters of the utmost importance to write—to his lawyer regarding the late decision in his will case, and to the secretary of the Democratic Club in Philadelphia touching the revival of activity in the clubs throughout the country on account of the expected treaty with England.

After he had finished them, he strolled slowly about the dark town—past his school-house, thinking that his teaching days would soon be over—past Peter's blacksmith shop, thinking what a good fellow he always was—past Mr. Bradford's editorial room, with a light under the door and the curtain drawn across the window. Two or three times he lingered before show-windows of merchandise. He had some taste in snuff-boxes, being the inheritor of several from his Scotch and Irish ancestors; and there were a few in the new silversmith's window which he found little to his liking. As he passed a tavern, a group of Revolutionary officers, not yet gone to the ball, were having a time of it over their pipes and memories; and he paused to hear one finish a yarn of

strong fibre about the battle of King's Mountain. Couples went hurrying by him beautifully dressed. Once down a dark street he fancied that he distinguished Amy's laughter ringing faintly out on the still air; and once down another he clearly heard the long cry of a pet panther kept by a young backwoods hunter.

The Poythress homestead was wrapped in silence as he stepped upon the porch; but the door was open, there was a light inside, and by means of this he discovered, lying asleep on the threshold, a lad who was apprentice to the new English silversmith of the town and a lodger at the minister's—the bond of acquaintanceship being the memory of John Wesley who had sprinkled the lad's father in England.

John laid a hand on his shoulder and tried to break his slumber. He opened his eyes at last and said, "Nobody at home," and went to sleep again. When thoroughly aroused, he sat up. Mr. and Mrs. Poythress had been called away to some sick person; they had asked him to sit up till they came back; he wished they'd come; he didn't see how he was ever to learn how to make watches if

he couldn't get any sleep; and he lay down again.

John aroused him again.

"Miss Falconer is here; will you tell her I wish to see her?"

The lad didn't open his eyes but said dreamily:

"She's not here; she's gone to the party."

John lifted him and set him on his feet. Then he put his hands on his shoulders and shook him:

"You are asleep! Wake up! Tell Miss Falconer I wish to see her."

The lad seized Gray by the arms and shook him with all his might.

"You wake up," he cried. "I tell you she's gone to the party. Do you hear? She's gone to the party! Now go away, will you? How am I ever to be a silversmith, if I can't get any sleep?" And stretching himself once more on the settee, he closed his eyes.

John turned straight to the Wilkinsons'. His gait was not hurried; whatever his face may have expressed was hidden by the darkness. The tense quietude of his mind was like that of a summer tree, not one of whose thousands

of leaves quivers along the edge, but toward which a tempest is rolling in the distance.

The house was set close to the street. The windows were open; long bars of light fell out; as he stepped forward to the threshold, the fiddlers struck up "Sir Roger de Coverley"; the company parted in lines to the right and left, leaving a vacant space down the middle of the room; and into this vacant space he saw Joseph lead Amy and the two begin to dance.

She wore a white muslin dress—a little skilful work had restored its freshness; a blue silk coat of the loveliest hue; a wide white lace tucker caught across her round bosom with a bunch of cinnamon roses; and straw-coloured kid gloves, reaching far up her snow-white arms. Her hair was coiled high on the crown of her head and airily overtopped by a great curiously carved silver-and-tortoise-shell comb; and under her dress played the white mice of her feet. The tints of her skin were pearl and rose; her red lips parted in smiles. She was radiant with excitement, happiness, youth. She culled admiration, visiting all eyes with hers as a bee all flowers. It was not the flowers she cared for.

He did not see her dress; he did not recog-

nize the garments that had hung on the wall of his room. What he did see and continued to see was the fact that she was there and dancing with Joseph.

If he had stepped on a rattlesnake, he could not have been more horribly, more miserably stung. He had the sense of being poisoned, as though actual venom were coursing through his blood. There was one swift backward movement of his mind over the chain of forerunning events.

"She is a venomous little serpent!" he groaned aloud. "And I have been crawling in the dust to her, to be stung like this!" He walked quietly into the house.

He sought his hostess first. He found her in the centre of a group of ladies, wearing the toilet of the past Revolutionary period in the capitals of the East. The vision dazzled him, bewildered him. But he swept his eye over them with one feeling of heart-sickness and asked his hostess one question: was Mrs. Falconer there? She was not.

In another room he found his host, and a group of Revolutionary officers and other tried historic men, surrounding the Governor.

They were discussing the letters that had passed between the President and his Excellency for the suppression of a revolution in Kentucky. During this spring of 1795 the news had reached Kentucky that Jay had at last concluded a treaty with England. The ratification of this was to be followed by the surrender of those terrible Northwestern posts that for twenty years had been the source of destruction and despair to the single-handed, maddened, or massacred Kentuckians. Behind these forts had rested the inexhaustible power of the Indian confederacies, of Canada, of England. Out of them, summer after summer, armies that knew no pity had swarmed down upon the doggedly advancing line of the Anglo-Saxon frontiersmen. Against them, sometimes unaided, sometimes with the aid of Virginia or of the National Government, the pioneers hurled their frantic retaliating armies: Clarke and Boone and Kenton often and often; Harmar followed by St. Clair; St. Clair followed by Wayne. It was for the old failure to give aid against these that Kentucky had hated Virginia and resolved to tear herself loose from the mother State and either perish or triumph alone.

It was for the failure to give aid against these that Kentucky hated Washington, hated the East, hated the National Government, and plotted to wrest Kentucky away from the Union, and either make her an independent power or ally her with France or Spain.

But over the sea now France — France that had come to the rescue of the colonies in their struggle for independence — this same beautiful, passionate France was fighting all Europe unaided and victorious. The spectacle had amazed the world. In no other spot had sympathy been more fiercely kindled than along that Western border where life was always tense with martial passion. It had passed from station to station, like a torch blazing in the darkness and with a two-forked fire — gratitude to France, hatred of England — hatred rankling in a people who had come out of the very heart of the English stock as you would hew the heart out of a tree. So that when, two years before this, Citizen Genet, the ambassador of the French republic, had landed at Charleston, been driven through the country to New York amid the acclamations of French sympathizers, and disregarding the President's

proclamation of neutrality, had begun to equip privateers and enlist crews to act against the commerce of England and Spain, it was to the backwoodsmen of Kentucky that he sent four agents, to enlist an army, appoint a generalissimo, and descend upon the Spanish settlements at the mouth of the Mississippi—those same hated settlements that had refused to the Kentuckians the right of navigation for their commerce, thus shutting them off from the world by water, as the mountains shut them off from the world by land.

Hence the Jacobin clubs that were formed in Kentucky: one at Lexington, a second at Georgetown, a third at Paris. Hence the liberty poles in the streets of the towns; the tri-coloured cockades on the hats of the men; the hot blood between the anti-federal and the federalist parties of the State.

The actions of Citizen Genet had indeed been disavowed by his republic. But the sympathy for France, the hatred of England and of Spain, had but grown meantime; and when therefore in this spring of 1795 the news reached the frontier that Jay had concluded a treaty with England—the very treaty that would

bring to the Kentuckians the end of all their troubles with the posts of the Northwest—the flame of revolution blazed out with greater brilliancy.

During the hour that John Gray spent in that assemblage of men that night, the talk led always to the same front of offence: the base truckling to England, an old enemy; the baser desertion of France, a friend. He listened to one man of commanding eloquence, while he traced the treaty to the attachment of Washington for aristocratic institutions; to another who referred it to the jealousy felt by the Eastern congressmen regarding the growth of the new power beyond the Alleghanies; to a third who foretold that like all foregoing pledges it would leave Kentucky still exposed to the fury of the Northern Indians; to a fourth who declared that let the treaty be once ratified with Lord Granville, and in the same old faithless way, nothing more would be done to extort from Spain for Kentucky the open passage of the Mississippi.

At any other time he would have borne his part in these discussions. Now he scarcely heard them. All the forces of his mind were

away on another battle-field and he longed to be absent with them, a field strewn with the sorrowful carnage of ideal and hope and plan, home, happiness, love. He was hardly aware that his own actions must seem unusual, until one of the older men took him affectionately by the hand and said :

"Marshall tells me that you teach school till sunset and read law till sunrise; and tonight you come here with your eyes blazing and your skin as pallid and dry as a monk's. Take off the leeches of the law for a good month, John! They abstract too much blood. If the Senate ratifies in June the treachery of Jay and Lord Granville, there will be more work than ever for the Democratic Societies in this country, and nowhere more than in Kentucky. We shall need you then more than the law needs you now, or than you need it. Save yourself for the cause of your tricolour. You shall have a chance to rub the velvet off your antlers."

"We shall soon put him beyond the reach of his law," said a member of the Transylvania Library Committee. "As soon as his school is out, we are going to send him to ask sub-

scriptions from the President, the Vice-President, and others, and then on to Philadelphia to buy the books."

A shadow fell upon the face of another officer, and in a lowered tone he said, with cold emphasis :

"I am sorry that the citizens of this town should stoop to ask anything from such a man as George Washington."

The schoolmaster scarcely realized what he had done when he consented to act as a secret emissary of the Jacobin Club of Lexington to the club in Philadelphia during the summer.

The political talk ended at last, the gentlemen returned to the ladies. He found himself standing in a doorway beside an elderly man of the most polished bearing and graceful manners, who was watching a minuet.

"Ah!" he said, waving his hand with delight toward the scene. "This is Virginia and Maryland brought into the West! It reminds me of the days when I danced with Martha Custis and Dolly Madison. Some day, with a beginning like this, Kentucky will be celebrated for



its beautiful women. The daughters and the granddaughters and the great-granddaughters of such mothers as these —”

“And of fathers like these!” interposed one of the town trustees who came up at that moment. “But for the sake of these ladies isn’t it time we were passing a law against the keeping of pet panthers? I heard the cry of one as I came here to-night. What can we do with these young backwoods hunters? Will civilization ever make pets of *them* — ever tame them?”

John felt some one touch his arm; it was Kitty with Horatio. Her cheeks were like poppies; her good kind eyes welcomed him sincerely.

“You here! I’m so glad. Haven’t you seen Amy? She is in the other room with Joseph. Have they explained everything? But we will lose our places —” she cried, and with a sweet smile of adieu to him, and of warning to her partner, she glided away.

“We are entered for this horse race,” remarked Mr. Turpin, lingering a moment longer. “Weight for age, agreeable to the rules of New Market. Each subscriber to pay one guinea, etc.,

etc., etc.” He was known as the rising young turfman of the town, having first run his horses down Main Street, and then down Water Street; but future member of the first Jockey Club; so that in the full blossom of his power he could name all the horses of his day with the pedigree of each: beginning with Tiger by Tiger, and on through Sea Serpent by Shylock, and Diamond by Brilliant, and Black Snake by Sky Lark: a type of man whom long association with the refined and noble nature of the horse only vulgarizes and disennobles.

Once afterward Gray’s glance fell on Amy and Joseph across the room. They were looking at him and laughing at his expense and the sight burnt his eyes as though hot needles had been run into them. They beckoned gaily, but he gave no sign; and in a moment they were lost behind the shifting figures of the company. While he was dancing, however, Joseph came up.

“As soon as you get away, Amy wants to see you.”

Half an hour later he came a second time and drew Gray aside from a group of gentlemen, speaking more seriously:

"Amy wants to explain how all this happened. Come at once."

"There is nothing to explain," said John, with indifference.

Joseph answered reproachfully:

"This is foolish, John! When you know what has passed, you will not censure her. And I could not have done otherwise." Despite his wish to be serious, he could not help laughing for he was very happy himself.

But to John Gray these reasonable words went for the very thing that they did not mean. His mind had been forced to a false point of view; and from a false point of view the truth itself always looks false. Moreover it was intolerable that Joseph should be defending to him the very woman whom a few hours before he had hoped to marry.

"There is no explanation needed from her," he replied, with the same indifference. "I think I understand. What I do not understand I should rather take for granted. But *you*, Joseph, *you* owe me an explanation. This is not the place to give it." His face twitched, and he knotted the fingers of his large hands together like bands of iron. "But by God I'll have it;

and if it is not a good one, you shall answer." His oath sounded like an invocation to the Divine Justice — not profanity.

Joseph fixed his quiet fearless eyes on Gray's. "I'll answer for myself — and for her" — he replied and turned away.

Still later Gray met her while dancing — the faint rose of her cheeks a shade deeper, the dazzling whiteness of her skin more pearl-like with warmth, her gaiety and happiness still mounting, her eyes still wandering among the men, culling their admiration.

"You haven't asked me to dance to-night. You haven't even let me tell you why I had to come with Joseph, when I wanted to come with you." She gave a little pout of annoyance and let her eyes rest on his with the old fondness. "Don't you want to know why I broke my engagement with you?" And she danced on, smiling back at him provokingly.

He did not show that he heard; and although they did not meet again, he was made aware that a change had at last come over her. She was angry now. He could hear her laughter oftener — laughter that was meant for his ear — and she was dancing oftener with Joseph. He

looked at her repeatedly, but she avoided his eyes.

"I am playing a poor part by staying here!" he said with shame, and left the house.

After wandering aimlessly about the town for some two hours, he went resolutely back again and stood out in the darkness, looking in at her through the windows. There she was, unwearied, happy, not feigning; and no more affected by what had taken place between them than a candle is affected by a scorched insect. So it seemed to him.

This was the first time he had ever seen her at a ball. He had never realized what powers she possessed in a field like this: what play, what resources, what changes, what stratagems, what victories. He mournfully missed for the first time certain things in himself that should have corresponded with all those light and graceful things in her.

Perhaps what hurt him most were her eyes, always abroad searching for admiration, forever filling the forever emptied honey-comb of self-love.

With him love was a sacred, a grim, an inviolate selection. He would no more have wished

the woman he had chosen to seek indiscriminate admiration with her eyes than with her lips or her waist. It implied the same fatal flaw in her refinement, her modesty, her faithfulness, her high breeding.

A light wind stirred the leaves of the trees overhead. A few drops of rain fell on his hat. He drew his hand heavily across his eyes and turned away. Reaching his room, he dropped down into a chair before his open window and sat gazing absently into the black east.

Within he faced a yet blacker void—the ruined hopes on which the sun would never rise again.

It was the end of everything between him and Amy: that was his one thought. It did not occur to him even to reflect whether he had been right or wrong, rude or gentle: it was the end: nothing else appeared worth considering.

Life to him meant a simple straightforward game played with a few well-known principles. It must be as open as a chess-board: each player should see every move of the other: and all who chose could look on.

He was still very young.