From the door they watched him silently as he strode across the street and turned the corner. Then Mr. Judson turned. "That man will make his mark, William," he said; and added thoughtfully, "but whether for good or evil, I know not."

CHAPTER IV

ENTER A GREAT MAN, INCOGNITO

WHAT Cynthia may have thought or felt during Jethro's absence in Boston, and for some months thereafter, she kept to herself. Honest Moses Hatch pursued his courting untroubled, and never knew that he had a rival. Moses would as soon have questioned the seasons or the weather as Cynthia's changes of moods, — which were indeed the weather for him, and when storms came he sat with his back to them, waiting for the sunshine. He had long ceased proposing marriage, in the firm belief that Cynthia would set the day in her own good time. Thereby he was saved much suffering.

The summer flew on apace, for Coniston. Fragrant hay was cut on hillsides won from rock and forest, and Coniston Water sang a gentler melody — save when the clouds floated among the spruces on the mountain and the rain beat on the shingles. During the still days before the turn of the year, — days of bending fruit boughs, crab-apples glistening red in the soft sunlight, — rumor came from Brampton to wrinkle the forehead of Moses Hatch as he worked among his father's orchards.

The rumor was of a Mr. Isaac Dudley Worthington, a name destined to make much rumor before it was to be carved on the marble. Isaac D. Worthington, indeed, might by a stretch of the imagination be called the pioneer of all the genus to be known in the future as City Folks, who were, two generations later, to invade the country like a devouring army of locusts.

At that time a stranger in Brampton was enough to set the town agog. But a young man of three and twenty,

with an independent income of four hundred dollars a year! — or any income at all not derived from his own labor — was unheard of. It is said that when the stage from over Truro Gap arrived in Brampton Street a hundred eyes gazed at him unseen, from various ambushes, and followed him up the walk to Silas Wheelock's, where he was to board. In half an hour Brampton knew the essentials of Isaac Worthington's story, and Sam Price was on his way with it to Coniston for distribution at Jonah Winch's store.

Young Mr. Worthington was from Boston — no less; slim, pale, medium height, but with an alert look, and a high-bridged nose. But his clothes! Sam Price's vocabulary was insufficient here, they were cut in such a way, and Mr. Worthington was downright distinguished-looking under his gray beaver. Why had he come to Brampton? demanded Deacon Ira Perkins. Sam had saved this for the last. Young Mr. Worthington was threatened with consumption, and had been sent to live with his distant relative, Silas Wheelock.

The presence of a gentleman of leisure — although threatened with consumption — became an all-absorbing topic in two villages and three hamlets, and more than one swain, hitherto successful, felt the wind blow colder. But in a fortnight it was known that a petticoat did not make Isaac Worthington even turn his head. Curiosity centred on Silas Wheelock's barn, where Mr. Worthington had fitted up a shop, and presently various strange models of contrivances began to take shape there. What these were, Silas himself knew not; and the gentleman of leisure was, alas! close-mouthed. When he was not sawing and hammering and planing, he took long walks up and down Coniston Water, and was surprised deep in thought at several places.

Nathan Bass's story-and-a-half house, devoid of paint, faced the road, and behind it was the shed, or barn, that served as the tannery, and between the tannery and Coniston Water were the vats. The rain flew in silvery spray, and the drops shone like jewels on the coat of a

"Mr. Worthington was downright distinguished-looking under his gray beaver."

young man who stood looking in at the tannery door. Young Jake Wheeler, son of the village spendthrift, was driving a lean white horse round in a ring: to the horse was attached a beam, and on the beam a huge round stone rolled on a circular oak platform. Jethro Bass, who was engaged in pushing hemlock bark under the stone to be crushed, straightened. Of the three, the horse had seen the visitor first, and stopped in his tracks.

"Jethro!" whispered Jake, tingling with an excitement that was but natural. Jethro had begun to sweep the finer pieces of bark toward the centre. "It's the city man, walked up here from Brampton."

It was indeed Mr. Worthington, slightly more sunburned and less citified-looking than on his arrival, and he wore a woollen cap of Brampton make. Even then, despite his wavy hair and delicate appearance, Isaac Worthington had the hawklike look which became famous in later years, and at length he approached Jethro and fixed his eye upon him.

"Kind of slow work, isn't it?" remarked Mr. Worthington.

The white horse was the only one to break the silence that followed, by sneezing with all his might.

"How is the tannery business in these parts?" essayed Mr. Worthington again.

"Thinkin' of it?" said Jethro. "T-thinkin' of it, be you?"

"No," answered Mr. Worthington, hastily. "If I were," he added, "I'd put in new machinery. That horse and stone is primitive."

"What kind of machinery would you put in?" asked Jethro.

"Ah," answered Worthington, "that will interest you. All New Englanders are naturally progressive, I take it."

"W-what was it you took?"

"I was merely remarking on the enterprise of New Englanders," said Worthington, flushing. "On my journey up here, beside the Merrimac, I had the opportunity to inspect the new steam-boiler, the fulling-mill, the splitting-

machine, and other remarkable improvements. In fact, these suggested one or two little things to me, which might be of interest to you."

"Well," said Jethro, "they might, and then again they mightn't. Guess it depends."

"Depends!" exclaimed the man of leisure, "depends on what?"

"H-how much you know about it."

Young Mr. Worthington, instead of being justly indignant, laughed and settled himself comfortably on a pile of bark. He thought Jethro a character, and he was not mistaken. On the other hand, Mr. Worthington displayed a knowledge of the fulling-mill and splitting-machine and the process of tanneries in general that was surprising. Jethro, had Mr. Worthington but known it, was more interested in *animate* machines: more interested in Mr. Worthington than the fulling-mill or, indeed, the tannery business.

At length the visitor fell silent, his sense of superiority suddenly gone. Others had had this same feeling with Jethro, even the minister; but the man of leisure (who was nothing of the sort) merely felt a kind of bewilderment.

"Callatin' to live in Brampton—be you?" asked Jethro.

"I am living there now."

"C-callatin' to set up a mill some day?"

Mr. Worthington fairly leaped off the bark pile.

"What makes you say that?" he demanded.

"G-guesswork," said Jethro, starting to shovel again, "g-guesswork."

To take a walk in the wild, to come upon a bumpkin in cowhide boots crushing bark, to have him read within twenty minutes a cherished and well-hidden ambition which Brampton had not discovered in a month (and did not discover for many years) was sufficiently startling. Well might Mr. Worthington tremble for his other ambitions, and they were many.

Jethro stepped out, passing Mr. Worthington as though he had already forgotten that gentleman's existence, and

seized an armful of bark that lay under cover of a lean-to. Just then, heralded by a brightening of the western sky, a girl appeared down the road, her head bent a little as in thought, and if she saw the group by the tannery house she gave no sign. Two of them stared at her — Jake Wheeler and Mr. Worthington. Suddenly Jake, implike, turned and stared at Worthington.

"Cynthy Ware, the minister's daughter," he said.

"Haven't I seen her in Brampton?" inquired Mr. Worthington, little thinking of the consequences of the question.

"Guess you have," answered Jake. "Cynthy goes to the Social Library, to git books. She knows more'n the minister himself, a sight more."

"Where does the minister live?" asked Mr. Worthington.

Jake pulled him by the sleeve toward the road, and pointed to the low gable of the little parsonage under the elms on the hill beyond the meeting-house. The visitor gave a short glance at it, swung around and gave a longer glance at the figure disappearing in the other direction. He did not suspect that Jake was what is now called a news agency. Then Mr. Worthington turned to Jethro, who was stooping over the bark.

"If you come to Brampton, call and see me," he said. "You'll find me at Silas Wheelock's."

He got no answer, but apparently expected none, and he started off down the Brampton road in the direction Cynthia had taken.

"That makes another," said Jake, significantly, "and Speedy Bates says he never looks at wimmen. Godfrey, I wish I could see Moses now."

Mr. Worthington had not been quite ingenuous with Jake. To tell the truth, he had made the acquaintance of the Social Library and Miss Lucretia, and that lady had sung the praises of her favorite. Once out of sight of Jethro, Mr. Worthington quickened his steps, passed the store, where he was remarked by two of Jonah's customers, and his blood leaped when he saw the girl in front of

him, walking faster now. Yes, it is a fact that Isaac Worthington's blood once leaped. He kept on, but when near her had a spasm of fright to make his teeth fairly chatter, and than another spasm followed, for Cynthia had turned around.

"How do you do, Mr. Worthington?" she said, dropping him a little courtesy. Mr. Worthington stopped in his tracks, and it was some time before he remembered to take off his woollen cap and sweep the mud with it.

"You know my name!" he exclaimed.

"It is known from Tarleton Four Corners to Harwich," said Cynthia, "all that distance. To tell the truth," she added, "those are the boundaries of my world." And Mr. Worthington being still silent, "How do you like being a big frog in a little pond?"

"If it were your pond, Miss Cynthia," he responded gallantly, "I should be content to be a little frog."

"Would you?" she said; "I don't believe you."

This was not subtle flattery, but the truth — Mr. Worthington would never be content to be a little anything. So he had been judged twice in an afternoon, once by Jethro and again by Cynthia.

"Why don't you believe me?" he asked ecstatically.

"A woman's instinct, Mr. Worthington, has very little reason in it."

"I hear, Miss Cynthia," he said gallantly, "that your instinct is fortified by learning, since Miss Penniman tells me that you are quite capable of taking a school in Boston."

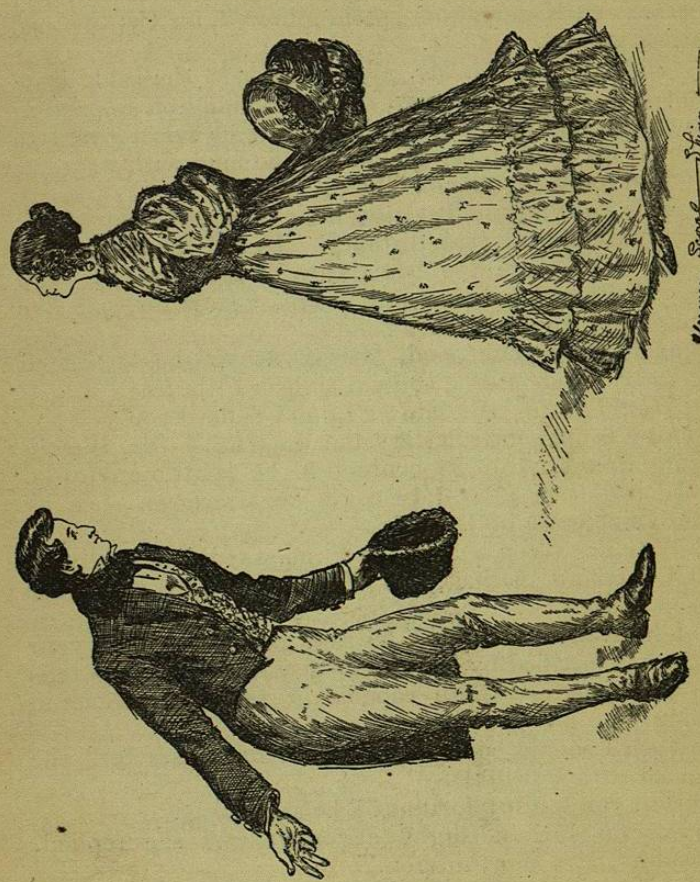
"Then I should be doubly sure of your character," she retorted with a twinkle.

"Will you tell my fortune?" he said gayly.

"Not on such a slight acquaintance," she replied. "Good-by, Mr. Worthington."

"I shall see you in Brampton," he cried, "I — I have seen you in Brampton."

She did not answer this confession, but left him, and presently disappeared beyond the triangle of the green, while Mr. Worthington pursued his way to Brampton by



"'All that distance.'"

the road,—his thoughts that evening not on waterfalls or machinery. As for Cynthia's conduct, I do not defend or explain it, for I have found out that the best and wisest of women can at times be coquettish.

It was that meeting which shook the serenity of poor Moses, and he learned of it when he went to Jonah Winch's store an hour later. An hour later, indeed, Coniston was discussing the man of leisure in a new light. It was possible that Cynthia might take him, and Deacon Ira Perkins made a note the next time he went to Brampton to question Silas Wheelock on Mr. Worthington's origin, habits, and orthodoxy.

Cynthia troubled herself very little about any of these. Scarcely any purpose in the world is single, but she had had a purpose in talking to Mr. Worthington, besides the pleasure it gave her. And the next Saturday, when she rode off to Brampton, some one looked through the cracks in the tannery shed and saw that she wore her new bonnet.

There is scarcely a pleasanter place in the world than Brampton Street on a summer's day. Down the length of it runs a wide green, shaded by spreading trees, and on either side, tree-shaded, too, and each in its own little plot, gabled houses of that simple, graceful architecture of our forefathers. Some of these had fluted pilasters and cornices, the envy of many a modern architect, and fan-shaped windows in dormer and doorway. And there was the church, then new, that still stands to the glory of its builders; with terraced steeple and pillared porch and the widest of checker-paned sashes to let in the light on high-backed pews and gallery.

The celebrated Social Library, halfway up the street, occupied part of Miss Lucretia's little house; or, it might better be said, Miss Lucretia boarded with the Social Library. There Cynthia hitched her horse, gave greeting to Mr. Ezra Graves and others who paused, and, before she was fairly in the door, was clasped in Miss Lucretia's arms. There were new books to be discussed,

arrived by the stage the day before; but scarce half an hour had passed before Cynthia started guiltily at a timid knock, and Miss Lucretia rose briskly.

"It must be Ezra Graves come for the Gibbon," she said. "He's early." And she went to the door. Cynthia thought it was not Ezra. Then came Miss Lucretia's voice from the entry: —

"Why, Mr. Worthington! Have you read the 'Last of the Mohicans' already?"

There he stood, indeed, the man of leisure, and to-day he wore his beaver hat. No; he had not yet read the 'Last of the Mohicans.' There were things in it that Mr. Worthington would like to discuss with Miss Penniman. Was it not a social library? At this juncture there came a giggle from within that made him turn scarlet, and he scarcely heard Miss Lucretia offering to discuss the whole range of letters. Enter Mr. Worthington, bows profoundly to Miss Lucretia's guest, his beaver in his hand, and the discussion begins, Cynthia taking no part in it. Strangely enough, Mr. Worthington's remarks on American Indians are not only intelligent, but interesting. The clock strikes four, Miss Lucretia starts up, suddenly remembering that she has promised to read to an invalid, and with many regrets from Mr. Worthington, she departs. Then he sits down again, twirling his beaver, while Cynthia looks at him in quiet amusement.

"I shall walk to Coniston again, next week," he announced.

"What an energetic man!" said Cynthia.

"I want to have my fortune told."

"I hear that you walk a great deal," she remarked, "up and down Coniston Water. I shall begin to think you romantic, Mr. Worthington — perhaps a poet."

"I don't walk up and down Coniston Water for that reason," he answered earnestly.

"Might I be so bold as to ask the reason?" she ventured.

Great men have their weaknesses. And many, close-mouthed with their own sex, will tell their cherished

hopes to a woman, if their interests are engaged. With a bas-relief of Isaac Worthington in the town library to-day (his own library), and a full-length portrait of him in the capitol of the state, who shall deny this title to greatness?

He leaned a little toward her, his face illumined by his subject, which was himself.

"I will confide in you," he said, "that some day I shall build here in Brampton a woollen mill which will be the best of its kind. If I gain money, it will not be to hoard it or to waste it. I shall try to make the town better for it, and the state, and I shall try to elevate my neighbors."

Cynthia could not deny that these were laudable ambitions.

"Something tells me," he continued, "that I shall succeed. And that is why I walk on Coniston Water — to choose the best site for a dam."

"I am honored by your secret, but I feel that the responsibility you repose in me is too great," she said.

"I can think of none in whom I would rather confide," said he.

"And am I the only one in all Brampton, Harwich, and Coniston who knows this?" she asked.

Mr. Worthington laughed.

"The only one of importance," he answered. "This week, when I went to Coniston, I had a strange experience. I left the brook at a tannery, and a most singular fellow was in the shed shovelling bark. I tried to get him to talk, and told him about some new tanning machinery I had seen. Suddenly he turned on me and asked me if I was 'callatin' to set up a mill.' He gave me a queer feeling. Do you have many such odd characters in Coniston, Miss Cynthia? You're not going?"

Cynthia had risen, and all of the laughter was gone from her eyes. What had happened to make her grow suddenly grave, Isaac Worthington never knew.

"I have to get my father's supper," she said.

He, too, rose, puzzled and disconcerted at this change in her.

"And may I not come to Coniston?" he asked.

"My father and I should be glad to see you, Mr. Worthington," she answered.

He untied her horse and essayed one more topic.

"You are taking a very big book," he said. "May I look at the title?"

She showed it to him in silence. It was the "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte."

CHAPTER V

THE KING IS DEAD! LONG LIVE THE KING!

ISAAC WORTHINGTON came to Coniston not once, but many times, before the snow fell; and afterward, too, in Silas Wheelock's yellow sleigh through the great drifts under the pines, the chestnut Morgan trotting to one side in the tracks. On one of these excursions he fell in with that singular character of a bumpkin who had interested him on his first visit, in coonskin cap and overcoat and mittens. Jethro Bass was plodding in the same direction, and Isaac Worthington, out of the goodness of his heart, invited him into the sleigh. He was scarcely prepared for the bumpkin's curt refusal, but put it down to native boorishness, and thought no more about it — then.

What troubled Mr. Worthington infinitely more was the progress of his suit; for it had become a suit, though progress is a wrong word to use in connection with it. So far had he got, — not a great distance, — and then came to what he at length discovered was a wall, and apparently impenetrable. He was not even allowed to look over it. Cynthia was kind, engaging, even mirthful, at times, save when he approached it; and he became convinced that a certain sorrow lay in the forbidden ground. The nearest he had come to it was when he mentioned again, by accident, that life of Napoleon.

That Cynthia would accept him, nobody doubted for an instant. It would be madness not to. He was orthodox, so Deacon Ira had discovered, of good habits, and there was the princely four hundred a year — almost a minister's salary! Little people guessed that there was