

## PART III.

AH, weary Priest! — with pale hands pressed  
 On thy throbbing brow of pain,  
 Baffled in thy life-long quest,  
 Overworn with toiling vain,  
 How ill thy troubled musings fit  
 The holy quiet of a breast  
 With the Dove of Peace at rest,  
 Sweetly brooding over it!  
 Thoughts are thine which have no part  
 With the meek and pure of heart,  
 Undisturbed by outward things,  
 Resting in the heavenly shade,  
 By the overspreading wings  
 Of the Blessed Spirit made.  
 Thoughts of strife and hate and wrong  
 Sweep thy heated brain along —  
 Fading hopes, for whose success  
 It were sin to breathe a prayer; —  
 Schemes which heaven may never bless —  
 Fears which darken to despair.  
 Hoary priest! thy dream is done  
 Of a hundred red tribes won  
 To the pale of Holy Church;  
 And the heretic o'erthrown,  
 And his name no longer known,  
 And thy weary brethren turning,  
 Joyful from their years of mourning,  
 'Twixt the altar and the porch.

Hark! what sudden sound is heard  
 In the wood and in the sky,

Shriller than the scream of bird —  
 Than the trumpet's clang more high!  
 Every wolf-cave of the hills —  
 Forest arch and mountain gorge,  
 Rock and dell and river verge —  
 With an answering echo thrills.  
 Well does the Jesuit know that cry,  
 Which summons the Norridgewock to die,  
 And tells that the foe of his flock is nigh.  
 He listens, and hears the rangers come,  
 With loud hurrah, and jar of drum,  
 And hurrying feet (for the chase is hot),  
 And the short, sharp sound of rifle shot,  
 And taunt and menace — answered well  
 By the Indians' mocking cry and yell —  
 The bark of dogs — the squaw's mad scream —  
 The dash of paddles along the stream —  
 The whistle of shot as it cuts the leaves  
 Of the maples around the church's eaves —  
 And the gride of hatchets, fiercely thrown,  
 On wigwam-log and tree and stone.

Black with the grime of paint and dust,  
 Spotted and streaked with human gore,  
 A grim and naked head is thrust  
 Within the chapel-door.  
 "Ha — Bomazeen! — In God's name say,  
 What mean these sounds of bloody fray?"  
 Silent, the Indian points his hand  
 To where across the echoing glen  
 Sweep Harmon's dreaded ranger-band,  
 And Moulton with his men.  
 "Where are thy warriors, Bomazeen?"



Where are De Rouville\* and Castine,  
And where the braves of Sawga's queen?"

"Let my father find the winter snow  
Which the sun drank up long moons ago!  
Under the falls of Tacconock,  
The wolves are eating the Norridgewock;  
Castine with his wives lies closely hid  
Like a fox in the woods of Pemaquid!  
On Sawga's banks the man of war  
Sits in his wigwam like a squaw —  
Squando has fled, and Mogg Megone,  
Struck by the knife of Sagamore John,  
Lies stiff and stark and cold as a stone."

Fearfully over the Jesuit's face,  
Of a thousand thoughts, trace after trace,  
Like swift cloud-shadows, each other chase.  
One instant, his fingers grasp his knife,  
For a last vain struggle for cherished life —  
The next, he hurls the blade away,  
And kneels at his altar's foot to pray;  
Over his beads his fingers stray,  
And he kisses the cross, and calls aloud  
On the Virgin and her Son;  
For terrible thoughts his memory crowd  
Of evil seen and done —  
Of scalps brought home by his savage flock

\* Hertel de Rouville was an active and unsparing enemy of the English. He was the leader of the combined French and Indian forces which destroyed Deerfield, and massacred its inhabitants, in 1703. He was afterwards killed in the attack upon Haverhill. Tradition says that on examining his dead body, his head and face were found to be perfectly smooth, without the slightest appearance of hair or beard.

From Casco and Sawga and Sagadahock,  
In the Church's service won.

No shrift the gloomy savage brooks,  
As scowling on the priest he looks:  
"Cowesass — cowesass — tawhich wessaseen?\*"  
Let my father look upon Bomazeen —  
My father's heart is the heart of a squaw,  
But mine is so hard that it does not thaw:  
Let my father ask his God to make  
A dance and a feast for a great sagamore,  
When he paddles across the western lake  
With his dogs and his squaws to the spirit's  
shore.  
Cowesass — cowesass — tawhich wessaseen?  
Let my father die like Bomazeen!"

Through the chapel's narrow doors,  
And through each window in the walls,  
Round the priest and warrior pours  
The deadly shower of English balls.  
Low on his cross the Jesuit falls;  
While at his side the Norridgewock,  
With failing breath, essays to mock  
And menace yet the hated foe —  
Shakes his scalp-trophies to and fro  
Exultingly before their eyes —  
Till, cleft and torn by shot and blow,  
Defiant still, he dies.

"So fare all eaters of the frog!  
Death to the Babylonish dog!

\* *Cowesass* ? — *tawhich wessaseen* ? Are you afraid? — why fear you?



Down with the beast of Rome!"  
 With shouts like these, around the dead,  
 Unconscious on his bloody bed,  
 The rangers crowding come.  
 Brave men! the dead priest cannot hear  
 The unfeeling taunt — the brutal jeer; —  
 Spurn — for he sees ye not — in wrath,  
 The symbol of your Saviour's death; —  
 Tear from his death-grasp, in your zeal,  
 And trample, as a thing accursed,  
 The cross he cherished in the dust:  
 The dead man cannot feel!

Brutal alike in deed and word,  
 With callous heart and hand of strife,  
 How like a fiend may man be made,  
 Plying the foul and monstrous trade  
 Whose harvest-field is human life,  
 Whose sickle is the reeking sword!  
 Quenching, with reckless hand, in blood,  
 Sparks kindled by the breath of God;  
 Urging the deathless soul, unshriven  
 Of open guilt or secret sin,  
 Before the bar of that pure Heaven  
 The holy only enter in!  
 Oh! by the widow's sore distress,  
 The orphan's wailing wretchedness,  
 By Virtue struggling in the accursed  
 Embraces of polluting Lust,  
 By the fell discord of the Pit,  
 And the pained souls that people it,  
 And by the blessed peace which fills  
 The Paradise of God forever,  
 Resting on all its holy hills,

And flowing with its crystal river —  
 Let Christian hands no longer bear  
 In triumph on his crimson car  
 The foul and idol god of war;  
 No more the purple wreaths prepare  
 To bind amid his snaky hair;  
 Nor Christian bards his glories tell,  
 Nor Christian tongues his praises swell.

Through the gun-smoke wreathing white,  
 Glimpses on the soldiers' sight  
 A thing of human shape I ween,  
 For a moment only seen,  
 With its loose hair backward streaming,  
 And its eyeballs madly gleaming,  
 Shrieking, like a soul in pain,  
 From the world of light and breath,  
 Hurrying to its place again,  
 Spectre-like it vanisheth!

Wretched girl! one eye alone  
 Notes the way which thou hast gone.  
 That great Eye, which slumbers never,  
 Watching o'er a lost world ever,  
 Tracks thee over vale and mountain,  
 By the gushing forest-fountain,  
 Plucking from the vine its fruit,  
 Searching for the ground-nut's root,  
 Peering in the she wolf's den,  
 Wading through the marshy fen,  
 Where the sluggish water-snake  
 Basks beside the sunny brake,  
 Coiling in his slimy bed,  
 Smooth and cold against thy tread —



Purposeless, thy mazy way  
 Threading through the lingering day,  
 And at night securely sleeping  
 Where the dogwood's dewes are weeping!  
 Still, though earth and man discard thee,  
 Doth thy heavenly Father guard thee —  
 He who spared the guilty Cain,  
     Even when a brother's blood,  
     Crying in the ear of God,  
 Gave the earth its primal stain —  
 He whose mercy ever liveth,  
 Who repenting guilt forgiveth,  
 And the broken heart receiveth; —  
 Wanderer of the wilderness,  
     Haunted, guilty, crazed and wild,  
 He regardeth thy distress,  
     And careth for his sinful child!

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'Tis spring time on the eastern hills!  
 Like torrents gush the summer rills;  
 Through winter's moss and dry dead leaves  
 The bladed grass revives and lives,  
 Pushes the mouldering waste away,  
 And glimpses to the April day.  
 In kindly shower and sunshine bud  
 The branches of the dull gray wood;  
 Out from its sunned and sheltered nooks  
 The blue eye of the violet looks;  
     The south-west wind is warmly blowing,  
 And odors from the springing grass,  
 The pine-tree and the sassafras,  
     Are with it on its errands going.

A band is marching through the wood  
 Where rolls the Kennebec his flood —  
 The warriors of the wilderness,  
 Painted, and in their battle dress;  
 And with them one whose bearded cheek,  
 And white and wrinkled brow, bespeak  
     A wanderer from the shores of France.  
 A few long locks of scattering snow  
 Beneath a battered morion flow,  
 And from the rivets of the vest  
 Which girds in steel his ample breast,  
     The slanted sunbeams glance.  
 In the harsh outlines of his face  
 Passion and sin have left their trace;  
 Yet, save worn brow and thin gray hair,  
 No signs of weary age are there.  
     His step is firm, his eye is keen,  
 Nor years in broil and battle spent,  
 Nor toil, nor wounds, nor pain have bent  
     The lordly frame of old Castine.

No purpose now of strife and blood  
     Urges the hoary veteran on:  
 The fire of conquest, and the mood  
     Of chivalry have gone.  
 A mournful task is his — to lay  
     Within the earth the bones of those  
 Who perished in that fearful day,  
 When Norridgewock became the prey  
     Of all unsparing foes.  
 Sadly and still, dark thoughts between,  
 Of coming vengeance mused Castine,  
 Of the fallen chieftain Bomazeen,  
 Who bade for him the Norridgewocks



Dig up their buried tomahawks  
 For firm defiance or swift attack;  
 And him whose friendship formed the tie  
 Which held the stern self-exile back  
 From lapsing into savagery;  
 Whose garb and tone and kindly glance  
 Recalled a younger, happier day,  
 And prompted memory's fond essay,  
 To bridge the mighty waste which lay  
 Between his wild home and that gray,  
 Tall château of his native France,  
 Whose chapel bell, with far-heard din  
 Ushered his birth hour gayly in,  
 And counted with its solemn toll,  
 The masses for his father's soul.

Hark! from the foremost of the band  
 Suddenly bursts the Indian yell;  
 For now on the very spot they stand  
 Where the Norridgewocks fighting fell.  
 No wigwam smoke is curling there;  
 The very earth is scorched and bare:  
 And they pause and listen to catch a sound  
 Of breathing life — but there comes not one,  
 Save the fox's bark and the rabbit's bound;  
 But here and there, on the blackened ground,  
 White bones are glistening in the sun.  
 And where the house of prayer arose,  
 And the holy hymn, at daylight's close,  
 And the aged priest stood up to bless  
 The children of the wilderness,  
 There is naught save ashes sodden and dank;  
 And the birchen boats of the Norridgewock,  
 Tethered to tree and stump and rock,  
 Rotting along the river bank!

Blessed Mary! — who is she  
 Leaning against that maple tree?  
 The sun upon her face burns hot,  
 But the fixed eyelid moveth not;  
 The squirrel's chirp is shrill and clear  
 From the dry bough above her ear;  
 Dashing from rock and root its spray,  
 Close at her feet the river rushes;  
 The black-bird's wing against her brushes,  
 And sweetly through the hazel bushes  
 The robin's mellow music gushes; —  
 God save her! will she sleep away?

Castine hath bent him over the sleeper:  
 "Wake, daughter — wake!" — but she stirs no  
 limb:  
 The eye that looks on him is fixed and dim;  
 And the sleep she is sleeping shall be no deeper,  
 Until the angel's oath is said,  
 And the final blast of the trump goes forth  
 To the graves of the sea and the graves of earth.  
 RUTH BONYTHON IS DEAD!

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