

for; but there appeared little self-possession, either in respect of temper or limb. Chilion played a while, and then relinquished his instrument. Zenas Joy seized Hash by the collar; Joseph Whiston tripped Obed, who, poor youth, was already nearly down with liquor; Abel Wilcox spurred Rufus Palmer to tread on Beulah Ann Orff's trail; Grace Joy taunted Nimrod with a false step Margaret had taken; Sibyl Radney rushed into the fray, pounced upon Zenas Joy, and sent him whirling about the room, as she would a spinning wheel. So one and another were engaged. Margaret, who had left the floor, was standing by the side of Chilion. She looked at the quarrellers, and then at her brother. He snapped his viol strings, and was silent.

"Sing, Margery," at length he said. He began a familiar tune, "Mary's Dream," — he played and she sang. This twofold melody, sweet and plaintive, seemed to touch the hearts of those excited people. They stopped to hear, they heard to be won. They moved towards the music; they were hushed if not subdued, they parted in peace if not in harmony. Thus ended their Thanksgiving, and we must end ours, and turn to other times and scenes.

CHAPTER XI.

A REVISED ACCOUNT OF NIMROD AND HIS DOINGS.

WE shall omit the wild-turkey hunt of a bright autumnal moon-light night in the woods, exciting and engaging though it was, and the race with Streaker, in which Margaret bore no part, while we proceed to enumerate some particulars of her eldest brother, that have a relation to herself. Nimrod evinced a volatile, roving, adventure-seeking habit from his boyhood. The severe waspish temper of his mother he could not abide, the coarse, dogged despotism of Hash he resented; Chilion was only a boy, and one not sufficiently social and free; with his father he had more in common. At the age of fourteen he became an indented apprentice to Mr. Hatch the blacksmith at No. 4. But of the different kind of blows of which he was capable, he relished those best that had the least to do with the anvil. He liked horses well enough, but preferred

their hides to their hoofs; and became more skilful with the fleam than the buttress. He left his master in a rage, himself in good humor. He next let himself at the Crown and Bowl in the village, where one might fancy he would find his element. He was hostler, bar-tender, wood-bringer, errand-boy, chore-doer, farrier, mistress'-man, waiting-maid's man and everybody's man by turn. He entertained travellers at the door, girls in the kitchen and boys in the stoop. He was quick but he always loitered, he was ingenious yet nothing was well done. It would not seem strange that he should prove a better auxiliary to every one's taste and fancy, than to Mr. Stillwater his employer's interest. He hung a flint stone on the barn-door to keep the devil from riding the horses in the night; but this did not prevent indications of their having been used at unlawful times and in unlawful ways, which their owner was disposed to charge upon Nimrod. He was dismissed. While he served others at the bar he must needs help himself, and he became at an early age an adept in what an old writer denominates the eighth liberal art. At the close of the revolutionary war, it became more difficult to fill vacancies in the army, than it had been originally to form companies. There were "Classes" in Livingston, as everywhere else, whose duty it was to furnish a certain number of soldiers, as exigency required. By one of these, Nimrod, not yet fifteen years of age, but of due physical proportion and compliance, was hired. He joined a detachment ordered on the defence of our northern frontier.

But even military discipline was insufficient to correct his propensities, or reform his habits. He deserted, and crossed the Canada lines. He connected himself with a band of smugglers that swarmed in those quarters, and during the spring of the year 1784, we find him in New York in a sloop from up river. The vessel was anchored in the stream not far from the Albany Basin. She had a deck-load of lumber, and wheat in her hold, the ordinary supply of the country at the time; her contraband goods were stowed in proper places. Government, both state and national, was pressed for means; the war, taxes, suspension of productive labor, had heightened necessity, and diminished resource. Duties were great, but legislation was irregular. The city held in its bosom many who had suffered during the late contest. The general amnesty while it retained the disaffected, failed in some cases to reconcile them. Hence smuggling, while it grew to be a most vexatious practice, was one of tolerably easy accomplish-

ment. Laws were severe, but there was wanting the force to execute; the police was more numerous than energetic. Still the business demanded skill, caution and prudence.

Late in the evening, the cabin of the sloop was visited by an elderly gentleman in buff coat and breeches, having an eagle holding an olive branch wrought on his left breast. He was addressed by the Captain as Mr. Girardeau. He complained bitterly of the times, the rise of taxes, financial depressions, the decline of real estate and sundry misfortunes. He said that his clerk, meaning thereby his daughter, had eloped, and that his old servant Simon was dead. He had evident connection with the private objects of the vessel, and under his supervision preparations were made for carrying the contraband articles to his own store in the city. These, consisting of silks, ribbons, laces, &c. were laid in coffin-shaped boxes, and Nimrod with another of the crew was detached as porters. They rowed, in a small boat, as far as the beach in Hudson Square, threaded a lane along the woods and hills of Grand Street, came down through the marshes and fields of Broadway, till they reached a small wooden house lying under a hill back of the City Hall, which was the residence of Mr. Girardeau whom they found waiting to receive them. They encountered several of the police stationed on the skirts of the city, one of whom they frightened by intimations of the small-pox; another they avoided by slinking into the shadows of trees; another they succeeded in stupifying by drafts of rum, a supply of which they carried in their pockets. Nimrod recounted his adroit passages to Mr. Girardeau, who seemed pleased with the success if not with the character of the youth; and, in fine, hearing him highly recommended by the Captain, he the next day engaged him, under the assumed name of Foxly, to fill the place recently held by his deceased servant Simon. Nimrod was nothing loth to exchange masters, and enter upon new scenes. Mr. Girardeau's quarters comprised both his store and dwelling-house. The building was one of the old style, having its gable to the street. In the rear of the shop-room was a kitchen, and above were sleeping apartments. In the first instance, Mr. Girardeau intimated to Nimrod the necessity of a change of apparel, and that he must wear one of a color like his own. He himself had been a resident in the city during the war, while the British had possession, and at that time wore a scarlet coat, with the arms of the king. At the peace, he changed his hue and badge. In the next place, he undertook to indoctrinate

his new servant in the secrets of his business, and to impress upon him a sense of the responsibility of his vocation. "I—I should say we,—'tis' all one concern, one interest," so his employer unfolded himself, "we are poor, we are embarrassed. You, Mr. Foxly, perhaps know how awful a thing poverty is. You can understand me. We are opposed, we are maltreated, we are vilified. Enemies beset us night and day; even now they may be listening to us through the walls."

Nimrod, who was not without a tincture of the superstition of his times, notwithstanding his ordinary display of fearlessness and daring, started. "They won't take us off in the night, will they?" exclaimed he.

"Yes, in the night," replied Mr. Girardeau.

"Then I may as well be a packing," said Nimrod. "I can't stay here. I thought you hadn't any of them in the city."

"Why the city is full of them," rejoined Mr. Girardeau, "hence we see the necessity of care, confederation and secrecy."

"But they come in anywhere," answered Nimrod. "They'll whisk you right out of your bed. Aunt Ravel had seven pins stuck into her in one night. Old uncle Kiah, that used to live at Snake Hill, was trundled down hill three nights agoing, and his skin all wore off, and he grew as lean as a gander's leg."

"Mr. Foxly!" interrupted Mr. Girardeau, "you misunderstand me,—I see you are from the country, a good place,—but you misunderstand me. It is men I mean, not spirits. We have no witches here, only hard-hearted, covetous, ignorant, griping, depraved, desperate men."

"Sho! its humans you are speaking of," replied Nimrod; "I an't no more afraid of them than a cat is of a wren. I like them, I could live among them as well as a fish in water."

"Mr. Foxly!" continued Mr. Girardeau, solemnly. "We have something to fear from men. Here likewise you mistake. I fear you are too rash, too head-strong."

"Anything, Sir," answered Nimrod, "I will do anything you wish," he added, more soberly. "I will serve you, as they did the troops in the war, work for nothing and find myself."

"You may well say so," added Mr. Girardeau, Simon was faithful, he spared himself to provide for me. We are in

straits, we must live frugally. Persecution surrounds us. We have enemies who can do us a great injury. I can be made to injure you, and you to injure me. We need circumspection, we are, if I may so say, in one another's power. There are those who might take advantage of my necessities, to compel me to surrender you to the rigor of unjust laws, and you might end your days in a prison. My whole life has been one of exposure and want, labor and toil." Thus was Nimrod addressed. In the third place, added Mr. Girardeau, "I must admonish you, Mr. Foxly, and most rigidly enjoin, that on no account are you to have conference, or hold any relations with a certain young woman, that sometimes comes here, whom I will point out to you." Nimrod found upon the premises a little black-eyed boy eight or nine years of age, whom he took for the grandson of his employer. This boy was sent to school, and when at home played on the hill back of the house, and slept in a room separate from Nimrod's, with whom Mr. Girardeau did not seem anxious that he should have much intercourse. These three constituted the entire family. Nimrod became cook, washerman, porter, and performed with alacrity whatever duty was assigned him. How Nimrod relished his new service and new master *for a while*, we need not relate. He could not fail, however, to be sensible that his food was not quite as good as that to which he had been accustomed, and to find that his master did not prove exactly what he expected. He found Mr. Girardeau to be, to say the least, harsh, arbitrary, exacting; he began to suspect something worse than this; he believed he told him falsehoods; that he had money, and that in abundance. As he lay on the counter, where he usually slept at night, he was sure he heard the sound of coin in the room over head. Of the young woman, respecting whom he had been cautioned, he saw nothing, till one day, he heard voices in the chamber. He listened at the foot of the stairs, and distinguished a female's voice. There were sharp words, severe epithets. Presently a woman came hurriedly down, and passed into the street.

"Did you see that girl?" asked Mr. Girardeau, descending immediately afterwards.

"Yes, Sir," replied Nimrod.

"She is my daughter," added Mr. Girardeau. "Yes, my own flesh and blood. You know not the feelings of a father. She has been guilty of the greatest of crimes, she has disobeyed me, she has violated my will, she has endangered my

estate. She has married to her own shame, and my grief. I have borne with her, till forbearance becomes a sin. She would strip me of my possessions. The author of her degradation she would make the pander to her cruelty. I am doubly beset, they are in a conspiracy against me. Heed her not, listen not to her importunity, let her suffer. I have no feelings of a father; they have been wrenched and torn away; I cannot own a viper for a child."

Nimrod thrust his fists in his waistcoat pockets, where he clenched them angrily. He was silent. He listened as to an unanswerable argument; he believed not a word. In the mean time let us refer to some events wherein his own interest began to be awakened; and which we shall embody in a new chapter, with a new title.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF GOTTFRIED BRÜCKMANN AND JANE GIRARDEAU.

AMONG the Mercenaries, popularly known as Hessians, employed by England against America during the war of our Revolution, was Gottfried Brückmann. He was, properly speaking, a Waldecker, having been born in Pymont, an inconsiderable city of that principality. From what we know of his history, he seems to have shared largely in the passion for music, which distinguishes many of his countrymen. To this also he added a thirst for literary acquisition. But, being a peasant by caste, he encountered not a few obstacles in these higher pursuits. He became bellows-boy for the organ in the church of his native town, and availing himself of chance-opportunities, he attained some skill on that instrument. He played well on the harpsichord, flute and violin. In the French language, at that time so much in vogue among the Germans, he became a proficient. Nevertheless, he fretted under the governmental yoke that was laid so oppressively and haughtily upon the necks of that class of the people to which he belonged. His conduct exposing him to suspicion, he fled into the region of country described as the Hartz Mountains. Whatever of romance, literature, poetry,

descended into the mass of the population; whatever of legendary tale or cabalistic observance was cherished by the common heart; whatever of imaginative temper, ideal aspiration, or mystic enthusiasm has ever characterized any portion of his countrymen; Brückmann possessed; and in the vicinity where he now found himself, there was a supply of objects fitted to animate the strongest sentiments of his being, and scenes and associations that were congenial with his inclinations;—forests of oak and beech, fir and pine; every kind and conformation of rock; birds of all descriptions; cloud-piercing hills, unfathomable chasms; lakes embosomed in mountains; waterfalls; mines and smelting-houses, with the weird and tartarean look of the workmen and their operations; gorgeous sunsets; dense and fantastic fogs; perennial snows: points of local and traditionary interest; the Altar and Sorcerer's Chair, the seat of the festival of the old Saxon idol, Crotho; the grottoes Baumanshole and Bielshole; a cave reputed, at the time, to have no termination; wildness, irregularity, terror, grandeur, freedom and mystery, on every side. In addition, were little villages and clusters of houses in valleys embowered in forests, and overshadowed by mountains, into one of which Brückmann's wanderings led him, that of Rubillaud, through which runs the Bode. Here in the midst of almost inaccessible rocks and cold elevations, he found fruit-trees in blossom, fields green with corn, a small stone-church surmounted with a crucifix, a May-pole hung with garlands, around which the villagers were having their Whitsun dances. In this place he remained awhile, and was engaged as a school-teacher for children, the parents of whom were chiefly miners. Here, as we subsequently learn, he became warmly attached to one of his pupils, Margaret Bruneau, daughter of the Pastor of Rubillaud, who was a Lutheran. In her he found tastes and feelings like his own. With her he rambled among mountains, penetrated caves, sang from rocks; and had such an intercourse as tended to cement their affection, and prosecuted whatever plans were grateful to their natures. But in the midst of his repose, came that cruel and barbarous draft of the British Crown on the German States. Some of the inhabitants of Rubillaud, who were subjects of the King of Hanover, were enlisted in this foreign service. Requisition was made on several provinces then in alliance with England, Brunswick, Hesse Cassel, Hanau, Anhalt and Waldeck; and on Brückmann's native town, Pymont. The general league formed among these

princes against the peace and liberty of their people, would not suffer that Brückmann should escape. He was seized, as if he had been a felon, and forcibly taken to Rotterdam, the place of embarkation. The reluctance with which this body of levies contemplated the duty to which they were destined, will be understood when it is told, that they were obliged to be under guard on their march to the sea-coast; that many of them, bound hand and foot, were transported in wagons and carts; some succeeded in deserting; others making the attempt were shot. Brückmann, for some instance of insubordination, received a wound at the hand of his own Captain, from which he never entirely recovered. Swords ruled souls. Their avaricious and tyrannical lords let them out as slaves, and had them scourged to their tasks. Brückmann and Margaret parted in uttermost bitterness of spirit, and with the fondest expressions of love. They waived their adieus and prayers to each other across the bridge of the Bode, over which he was rudely snatched, to see her in this world no more forever.

We shall not follow him through the fortunes of the war; but hasten to its close, when he was stricken and overwhelmed by the news of Margaret's death. A strong bond, and perhaps the only one that attached him to his native country, was broken; and, in common with many of his countrymen, he chose to remain in America after the peace. These Germans, such as survived,—more than eleven thousand of their number having perished during the war,—scattered themselves; some joined the settlements of their brethren in Pennsylvania, some pushed beyond the Ohio, some were dispersed in the New England States. Brückmann took up his abode in New York. Those who returned to Germany he bade plant Margaret's grave with narcissus, rosemary and thyme, and visit it every Whitsun Festival with fresh flowers; while he would hallow her memory with prayers and tears in his own heart. He was disappointed in purpose, forsaken in spirit, broken in feeling. Contrary to the usual maxim, he loved those whom he had injured, and was willing that whatever of life or energy remained to him should be given to the Americans, while he remembered the land of his birth with sorrow, upbraids and despair.

Owing to our numerous and profitable relations with France at this time, the French language had arisen in the popular estimation, and was in great request. He would teach it, and so earn a livelihood, and serve the land of his adoption.

Music too, the musical spirit of Margaret and of his native country, that which survives in the soul when everything else is prostrate, came over him. He would live again in song. He would recall the scenes of the past. Margaret would reappear in the tones of their love and their youth; her spirit would echo to the voice of his flute; in song, like night, they would meet again; by an invisible pathway of melody they would glide on to the grave. Poor Brückmann! Poor America! What with his deficiency in our tongue, and his former services against our liberties, he obtained but few scholars. Superior and more agreeable Frenchmen were his rivals. Music! How could we pay for music, when we could not pay our debts? The crescendo and diminuendo were other than of sound our people had to learn. He grew sicker at heart, his hopes had all fled, and his spiritual visions seemed to grow dimmer and dimmer. He sat by the narrow window of the small unlighted room he rented, in the night, and played on his flute to the darkness, the air, the groups of idle passers by, to memory and to the remote future whither his visions were flying, and the fair spirit of his reveries had betaken herself. Yet he had one and not an unconcerned listener, and perhaps another. These were Jane Girardeau and her father. Mr. Girardeau had discovered the sound of the music proceeding from the hill behind his house, and his daughter listening to it. He called her in; she would go up to the chamber window, and repeat her curiosity. He ordered her to bed; she would creep from her room, and sly into the street that she might hear it. He detected her, rebuffed her, and locked her into her room. "Can you indulge such extravagance?" was the language of Mr. Girardeau to his daughter. "Can you yield to such weakness? Will you waste your time in this way? Shall I suffer in you a repetition of all your mother occasioned me? Will you hazard your reputation? Why will you so often break my commands, and thwart my wishes? Shall I be compelled to resort to harsh measures? Are you growing so perverse that moderation is of no avail? I will have none of this. You are impudent, beastly."

His daughter ill brooked all this. To the mind of her father, she was rash, reckless, turbulent, obstinate, wasteful, inordinate, selfish, lavish, insensible. She was lavish, but only of her heart's best affections; she was rash, not in head, so much as in impulse; she was insensible, but only to the demands of lucre; she was troubled, not turbulent; she was

inordinate, for no want of her heart had ever been supplied; she was selfish in the sense of obeying her nature, while she disregarded the behests of stupidity and meanness.

Jane had rebelled under the iron jurisdiction of her father. Like the hidden fires of the earth she broke out wherever she could find vent. She was held down, not subdued. She was too elastic to flatten, too spiritual to stagnate. She rebounded with a wild recoil. Her fits of anger, or sallies of spirit, whatever they might be called, were frequent and energetic. As she grew older, she became more sensible of her degradation and wrongs, as well as more capable of redressing them.

She was the only child of an ill-assorted marriage. She became of some service to her father. Her personal beauty was an attraction to customers, and he valued her aid as shop-girl. She presided over the department of the store devoted to the sale of fancy goods, which, obtained in various ways, afforded enormous profits, and became an item of trade, that, notwithstanding her father's extensive and multifarious business, he could not well forego. She was also a good accountant and book-keeper. Brückmann was straitened for means. His quarterly rent was due. He would make one effort more; and that perhaps the most dangerous for a poor man; he would borrow money. He knew of the broker near by, he knew his reputation for great wealth. He had no friend, no backer. He obtained a certificate from the parents of one of his scholars, to the effect that he was believed to be an honest man. He presented himself at the store of Mr. Girardeau. Jane was there; she recognized in him the flute-player, whom she had sometimes seen in the streets, or at his window. Brückmann was a Saxon throughout; his eyes were full blue, his complexion was light and fair, his hair was of a sandy brown, thick and bushy. Dejection and disappointment were evidently doing their work upon him. His face had grown thin, his eyes were sunk, and his look was that of a sick man. He addressed Mr. Girardeau in broken English. "Speak in your own language," said the latter gentleman, "I can understand you." He stated briefly his object. Mr. Girardeau looked at the note, and replied in German, "Hard times, Sir, hard times; securities scarce, liabilities uncertain, business dull, great losses abroad, foreigners do not appreciate our condition." He then proceeded to interrogate Brückmann on his business, circumstances, prospects. There were two listeners to the answer, father and daughter, both intent, but in a different manner. The old gentleman ordered Jane away

while he transacted a little private business. She retreated to the back part of the store where she persistingly stood; and it was obvious, although the stranger spoke in his own tongue, she comprehended what he said. From one thing to another Brückmann was led to recite his entire history; his birth, his retreat to Rubillaud, his interest in Margaret, his enlistment, his service in the war, Margaret's death, his present method of support. Mr. Girardeau replied, in brief, that it was not in his power to accommodate him. The agitation of Brückmann was evidently intense at this repulse; and there seemed to be aroused a corresponding sympathy of distress in the heart of Jane. The story of the stranger interested her, it took strong possession of her imagination. As he left, her thoughts followed him with that most agonizing sense of powerless compassion. Could she but see him, could she but speak with him, she would bestow upon him her condolences, if she could offer him no more substantial aid.

Jane studied day and night how she might encounter the unhappy stranger, the enchanting musician. To perfect her for his purposes, her father allowed her to do a little business in her own name. These earnings, ordinarily devoted to some species of amusement or literary end, she now as sedulously hoarded as increased. She discovered where Brückmann had some pupils in a private family. Thither, taking her private purse, she went; sought her way to his room, and seated herself among the scholars. She heard the recitation, and the remarks that accompanied it. She discerned the originality of Brückmann's mind, as she had formerly been interested in the character of his sensibilities. He spoke in a feeble tone, but with a suggestive emphasis. She knew well the causes of his depression. He sang also to his pupils one of his native hymns, she admired its beauty and force, and perhaps more the voice of the singer. She stayed behind when the scholars left. He spoke to her. She replied, to his surprise, in his own language, or something akin to it. She told him who she was, that she had heard his story, that she compassionated his wants, that her father was abundantly rich, and that from her own earnings she had saved him some money. She pressed upon him her purse, which neither delicacy demanded, nor would necessity allow that he should refuse. She told him how much she had been interested in his history; she desired him to repeat it. "Tell me," said she, "more about Margaret Bruneau." He related as much as the time would permit.

She was reproached, she was maledicted by her father, on her return, although he knew not where she had been. An Idea had seized her, and for that she was willing to sacrifice everything. It had neither shape, nor color, nor definition, nor end. She thought of it when she went to bed, she dreamed of it, she awoke with it. She would see the stranger. She went again to his school-room. She walked with him on the Parade. "Tell me," she would say, "more about Margaret. How old was she? How did she look? How did you love her? Why did you love her?" He would repeat all he had said before and discover new particulars each time.

"Were her parents rich or poor?" asked Jane.

"Poor," replied Brückmann.

"Happy, happy Margaret! O if my father were poor as the sheerest mendicant I should be happy."

"You may be able to do much good with your money, sometime or another."

"I see nothing before me but darkness and gloom," replied Jane. "My father,—you know what he is. My dear, dear mother, too fond of her child, too opposed to her husband, too indulgent, too kind,—she has gone from my love and my approach forever. I may be in the midst of affluence, I am cursed, blighted by a destitution such as you know nothing of. Gold may be my inheritance, my prospects are all worthless, fearful, sombre. You say you will meet Margaret in heaven!"

"Speak freely with me," said Brückmann, "I love to hear, if I cannot answer. Margaret and I often talked of what we could not comprehend. We strove to lift each other up, even if we made no advance. She had a deep soul, an unbounded aspiration. We sang of heaven, and then we began to feel it. We were more Sphinxes than *Cedipuses*. Yet she became Heaven to me, when there was none in the skies. She was a transparent, articulate revelation of God."

"How I should love Margaret!" said Jane to him one day.

"What was the color of her hair? like yours?"

"No," replied Brückmann; "as I have told you, she was not of German origin. Her ancestors came from Languedoc in the Religious Wars. She was more tropical in her features, and perhaps in her heart, than I. She had black hair and eyes, she resembled you, Miss Girardeau, I think."

"How I wish I could see her!" replied Jane. "You say she does come to you sometimes?"

"Yes," said Brückmann, "and since I have known you she