

## CHAPTER VI.

WHY MARGARET WAS SORROWFUL.—DREAMS.—LIVINGSTON.—A GLIMPSE AT "THE WORLD."—ISABEL.—NIGHT AND OTHER SHADOWS.

AFTER dinner, hospitable as it was rude, of which the Master partook with sensible relish, Pluck proposed that Chilion should play.

"The rosin, Margery," said her brother.

"I have some rosin in my pocket," said the Master, at the same time producing a pint flask, which he set upon the table. "A bibilous accompaniment," he added, "I thought would not be out of place."

"Good enough for any of their High Mightinesses!" ejaculated Pluck, drinking, and returning the bottle to the Master.

"Nay, friend," replied the latter; "Femina et vinum maketh glad the heart of man. Let her ladyship gladden her own."

Mistress Hart also drank.

"Now, he who maketh speed to the spoil, Maharshalalhashbaz," said the Master.

"Not so good as pupelo," replied Hash.

"A rightly named youth," said Pluck, who receiving the bottle to return it to the Master, perceived its contents nearly exhausted.

"Mi discipula," said the Master, addressing himself to Margaret, "you must be primarum artium princeps."

"No thankee,—thank you, sir," replied she.

"Well done, well done!" exclaimed he.

"What! would you not have the child exhilarate and spruce up a little?" cried the father.

"You mistake me, friend," said the Master, "I approbated the girl, not that she did not receive this very genial beverage, but that she manifests such improvement in speech."

"Let her drink, and she will speak well enough," rejoined the father. "She won't touch it! She mopes, she nuzzles about in the grass and chips. She is certainly growing weakling. Only she sings round after dark, like a thrasher, and picks up spiders, pismires, beetles, like a frog."

"This is none of your snow-broth, Meggy," said the mother, "it's warming, it's as good as the Widow's bitter-bags."

"Don't you touch it," said Chilion, who had been screwing and snapping the strings of his violin.

"Yes, drink, Peggy," said Hash, thrusting his slavery lips close to her ear. "He'll bring some more, he likes ye. He wants you to."

Margaret started from him, "I can't," she said, "It won't let me."

"What won't let you, dear?" asked her father, drawing her between his knees, and patting her head.

"She's always a dreaming," said her mother, "she is a born bat, and flies off every night nobody knows where. And in the day time I can't get her to quilling, but she's up and away to the Widow's, or to the Pond, or on the Head, or somewheres. She gets all my threads to string up her poses; she's as bad as a hang-bird that steals my yarn on the grass."

"Did't I do all the spools?" enquired the child.

"Yes, you did," responded the father, "you are a nice gal. Hush! Let us hear our son Chilion; he speaks well."

Chilion played, and they were silent.

"Now it's your turn my daughter," said Pluck, "you will play if you won't drink."

Chilion held the instrument, while Margaret taking the bow executed some popular airs with considerable spirit and precision. "Now for the cat, child;" so she imitated the cat, then the song-sparrow, then Obed crying.

At this, and especially the last, there was a general shout. The Master seemed highly surprised and pleased. "A megalopsical child!" he exclaimed. Margaret, with blushes and tremors, glad to have succeeded, more glad to escape her tormentors, ran away and amused herself with Dick her squirrel, whom she was teaching to ride on Bull the dog's back. The flask having been drained, the keg was brought forward from the chimney wall.

"Here's to Miss Amy," said Pluck, ogling the Master.

"Mehercule!" exclaimed the latter, "you forget the propitiatory oblation. We must first propose his Majesty the King of Puppetdom, defender by the grace of God of England, France, and America; the most serene, serene, most puissant, puissant, high, illustrious, noble, honorable, venerable, wise, and prudent Princes, Burgomasters, Counsellors, Governors, Committees of the said realm, whether ecclesiastical

or secular; and the most celebrated Punch and Judy of our worthy town of Livingston, Parson Welles and Deacon Hadlock, to whom be all reverence."

*Pluck.* "Amen. I stroke my beard, and crook my hamstrings as low as any one."

*The Master.* "Your promising daughter, Mistress Hart."

*Mistress Hart.* "Long life to you, and many visits from you."

*Hash.* "I say yes to that; and here's for Peggy to Obed."

*The Master.* "Miss Sibyl Radney."

"How you color, Hash!" exclaimed his mother. "Hang your nose under your chin, and it would equal old Gobbler's wattles. Put you into the dyetub, and Meg won't have to get any more log-wood. There now, Meggy, must go down for some copperas this very afternoon."

"Odzbodkins! You won't spoil our sport," cried her husband. "Your crotchets are always coming in like a fox into a hen-roost."

"I have work in hand that must be done," replied his wife. "Panguts!" she exclaimed, raising her voice and her fist at the same time, "what do you do? lazying about here like a mud-turtle nine days after it's killed. You may whip the cat ten years, and you won't earn enough to stitch your own rags with.—I have to tie up your vines, or you would have been blown from the poles long since."

"Dearest Maria," began Pluck.

"Don't deary me with your dish-cloth tongue," said Brown Moll; "you had better go to trencher-scraping, and I'll take care of the family."

While Mistress Hart was entertaining her spouse in this manner, for it seemed to be entertainment to him, the Master called Margaret, and asked her to spell some words he named to her, which she did very correctly. "You must certainly have a new spelling-book," said he. "And now I want you to repeat the Laplander's Ode." She began as follows:

## I.

"Kulnasatz, my rein-deer,  
We have a long journey to go;  
The moors are vast,  
And we must haste;  
Our strength I fear,  
Will fail if we are slow;  
And so  
Our songs will do.

## II.

Kaigé, the watery moor,  
Is pleasant unto me,  
Though long it be;  
Since it doth to my mistress lead,  
Whom I adore:  
The Kilwa moor  
I ne'er again will tread."

"I think I must go," said the Master.

"And I will go with you," said Margaret.

"Here are the eggs," added her mother, "Deacon Penrose must give a shilling a dozen. One pound of copperas, six skeins of No. nine, half a pound of snuff, the rest in tobacco."

Margaret, wearing in addition to her usual dress, a pair of moccasins, which an Indian who came sometimes to the Pond gave her, called Bull and started off. Hash, in no unusual fit, ordered the dog back.

"Woman! woman!" cried Pluck, "the keg is out, it is all gone."

"Let the yarn go," said her mother, "and get it in rum."

"She will bring home some of the good book," said Pluck to Hash, "the real white-eye, you know. Let her take the dog."

Her brother yielded and she went on with Bull and the Master; the latter, having grown a little wavering and muddled by liquor, taking the child's hand.

There were two ways to the village, one around by No 4, the other directly across through the woods; the distance by the former course was nearly four miles, that by the latter, as we have said, about two; and at the present season of the year, the most eligible. This they took; they went through the Mowing, traversed a beautiful grove of walnuts, black-birches, and beeches, and came to the Bridge so called, a large tree lying across the small brook Margaret encountered on her way to the Widow's. This stream, having its rise among the hills on the north of the Pond, and descending to the village, at the present point, flowed through a deep fissure in the rocks. The branches of the tree rose perpendicularly, and a hand rail was fastened from one to another.

"Danger menaces us, my child," sighed the Master.

"Give me one of your hands," said Margaret, "hold on by the rail with the other, shut your eyes, that is the way Pa does."

"How it shakes!" exclaimed the Master. "It would be dreadful to fall here! How deep it is! My head swims, my brain giddies, I am getting old, Margaret. Tempora mutantur et nos—. When I was young as you I could go anywhere. Facilis descensus—."

"You can hold on by Bull, he'll keep you steady. Here Bull."

The well trained dog came forward, and the Master leaning on this tri-fold support, the child's arm, the rail, and the animal's head, accomplished the pass. They descended abruptly into a broad ravine, and came up on the higher banks of the stream. Their course was downward, yet with alternate pitches and elevations, now by a sheep's track, now across a rocky ledge, now through the unbroken forest. The fumes of the liquor subsiding, and the path becoming more smooth and easy, the Master spake to Margaret of her dreams.

*Master.* "Dreams come of a multitude of business, says Solomon."

*Margaret.* "What, Solomon Smith? He says that great folks come of dreams, that children will die, and some be rich; and people lose their cows, and have new gowns, and such things. I dream about a great many things, sometimes about a pretty woman."

*Mas.* "A pretty woman! Whom does she look like?"

*Mar.* "I don't know, I can't tell him."

*Mas.* "You; always say you to me. The juveniles and youngers in the town say him. How does she seem to you?"

*Mar.* "She looks somehow as I feel when Ma is good to me, and she looks pale and sorry as Bull does when Hash strikes him."

*Mas.* "Where do you see her?"

*Mar.* "Sometimes among the clouds, and sometimes at the foot of the rainbow."

*Mas.* "That is where money grows."

*Mar.* "Not money, it is flowers, buttercups, yellow columbine, liverleaf, devil's ears, and such as I never saw before."

*Mas.* "Arum, the Arum! Your covetous friend Obed won't like it if you get those flowers."

*Mar.* "His mother wants to know what the woman does; if she makes plasters out of the flowers, and if they will cure warts."

*Mas.* "Caustics of aures diaboli! The Devil is no vermifuge, tell the widow. Ha! ha!"

*Mar.* "But she don't speak to me; she stands in the flowers, and breaks them off, and they fly away like little birds; she pricks them into the rainbow, and they grow on it."

*Mas.* "Are you not afraid of her?"

*Mar.* "She tells me not to be."

*Mas.* "You said she did not speak to you."

*Mar.* "She don't speak, but she tells me things, just as Bull does. He don't speak, but he tells me when he is hungry, and when there is anything coming in the woods. Sometimes she kisses me, but I don't feel her. She goes up on the rainbow, and I follow her. I see things like people's faces in the sky, but they look like shadows, and there is music like what you hear in the pines, but there are no trees, or violins. She steps off into the clouds. I try to go too, and there comes along what you call the egret of a thistle, that I get on to, and it floats with me right into my bed, and I wake up." So they discoursed until they issued from the woods, in what was known as "Deacon Hadlock's Pasture," an extensive enclosure reaching to the village, which it overlooked.

The village of Livingston lay at the junction of four streets, or what had originally been the intersection of two roads, which widening at the centre, and having their angles trimmed off, formed an extensive common known as the Green. In some points of view, the place had an aspect of freshness and nature; extensive forests meeting the eye in every direction; farm-houses partially hidden in orchards of apple trees; the roads rough, ungraded, and divided by parallel lines of green grass. Yet to one who should be carried back from the present time, many objects would wear an old, antiquated and obsolete appearance; the high-pitched roofs of some of the houses, and jutting upper stories; others with a long sloping back roof; chimneys like castles, large, arched, corniced. Here and there was a house in the then new style, three-storied, with gambrel roof, and dormer windows. The Meeting-house was not old, but would now appear so, in its slim tall spire, open belfry, and swarm of windows. There were Lombardy poplars on the Green, now so unfashionable, waving like martial plumes; and interspersed as they were among the spreading willow-like elms, they formed, on the whole, not a disagreeable picture. South of the Green was the "Mill," on Mill Brook, a stream before adverted to; this was a small distinct cluster of houses. Beyond the village on the east you could see the River, and

its grassy meadows. Livingston was the shire town of the county of Stafford. The Court-house was a square yellow edifice, with a small bell in an open frame set on the top of the roof; the Jail was a wooden building constructed of hewn timber. The Green contained in addition, a pair of Stocks, a Pillory, and a Whipping Post; also one store, a school-house, one tavern, known as the "Crown and Bowl," one joiner's, blacksmith's, shoemaker's, and barber's shop. The four streets diverging from the centre were commonly called the North, East, South, and West Streets. A new one had been opened on the west side of the Green, and received the name of Grove Street. Let us observe the situation of the principal buildings. The Meeting-house stood at the north-west corner of the Green; in the rear of this were the Horse-sheds, a long and conspicuous row of black, ricketty stalls, having the initials of the owner's name painted in a circle over each apartment; at the east end of the sheds was the School-house; and behind them terminated an old forest that extended indefinitely to the north. The Tavern stood at the corner formed by the junction of the West street with the Green, a few rods from the church. Below the tavern, flanking the west side of the Green, in succession, were the Court-house, Jail, and Jail-house, the jail-fence being close upon the highway. The Pillory with its companions stood under the trees in the open common fronting the Court-house; the store was on the east side of the Green. The West street, that into which Margaret and the Master entered from the "Pasture," ascending in a straight line about one hundred rods, curved to the north, thereby avoiding the hills on which the Pond lay, and became the main-road to Dunwich, a neighboring town.

Master Elliman lodged with the Widow Small, who lived on the South Street. Across this street, and not far from the widow's ran the small brook, over which lay the Tree-bridge above-mentioned. To this stream, we may add, the Master, from some fancy of his own, gave the name of Kedron; and the path by which they came through the woods he called Via Dolorosa.

Children were playing on the Green, the boys dressed in "tongs," a name for pantaloons or over-alls that had come into use, and round-a-bouts; some in skirt coats and breeches; some of them six or eight years of age were still in petticoats. The girls wore checked linen frocks, with short sleeves, and pinafores. All were bare-footed, and most of them bare-

headed. "He's coming!" "The Master!" was a cry that echoed from one to another. They dropped their sports, and drew up in lines on either side as the object of their attention passed; the boys folding their arms and making short quick bows; the girls dove-tailing their fingers and squatting in low courtesies. Margaret, with Bull at her heels, came on at a respectful distance behind. "Moll Hart," exclaimed one of the boys. "A Pond Gal." "An Injin, an Injin." "Where did ye git so much hat?" "Did your daddy make them are clogs?" So she was saluted by one and another; but the dog, whose qualities were obvious in his face, if they had not been rendered familiar in any other way, saved her from all but verbal insolence.

The Master's was a ground room in an old house. It was large, with small windows; the walls were wainscotted, the ceiling boarded, and darkened by age into a reddish mahogany hue. The chairs were high-top, fan-back, heavy mahogany. A bureau-desk occupied one side, with its slanting leaf, pigeon-holes, and escutcheons bearing the head of King George. On the walls hung pictures in small black frames, comprising all the kings and queens of England, from William the Conqueror to the present time. Margaret's attention was drawn to his books, which consisted of editions of the Latin and Greek classics, and such school books as from time to time he had occasion to use; and miscellanies, made up of works on Free-Masonry, a craft of which he was a devoted member; books of secular and profane music, a science to which he was much attached; various histories and travels; the works of Bolingbroke, Swift and Sterne; the Spectator and Rambler; Milton, Spenser, Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, Darwin, Pope, and other poets; Wolstoncraft's Rights of Women, Paine's Age of Reason, Lord Monboddos works; Tooke's Pantheon; Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy; the Echo, by the Hartford Wits, the American Museum, and the Massachusetts Magazine; Trumbull's McFingal, The Devil on Two Sticks, Peregrine Pickle; Quincy's Dispensatory; Nurse Freeloove's New Year's Gift, the Puzzling Cap, the "World turned upside down." He gave Margaret, as he had promised, "The New Universal Spelling Book," by Daniel Fenning, late School-master of the Bures in Suffolk, in England.

The Store, to which Margaret next directed her steps, was a long old two-story building, bearing some vestiges of having once been painted red. The large window-shutters and door

constituted advertising boards for the merchant himself, and the public generally. Intermixed with articles of trade, were notices of calves found, hogs astray, sales on execution; bees-wax, flax, skins, bristles and old pewter, you were informed would be taken in exchange for goods, and that "cash and the highest price would be given for the Hon. Robert Morris's notes." One paper read as follows: "You Josiah Penrose, of &c., are hereby permitted to sell 400 gallons W. I. Rum, do. Brandy, 140 Gin, and 260 pounds of brown Sugar, on all of which the excise has been duly paid, pursuant to an Act of the Legislature.

(Signed) } Collector of excise for the  
WILLIAM KINGSLAND, } County of Stafford."

There was also on the door a staring programme of a lottery scheme. Lotteries, at this period common in all New England, had become a favorite resort for raising money to support government, carry on wars, build churches, construct roads, endow colleges, &c. There was one other sign, that of the Post-office. Entering the store you beheld a motley array of dry and fancy goods, crockery, hardware, and groceries, drugs and medicines. On the right were rolls of kerseymeres, callimancoes, thicksets, durants, fustians, shaloons, antiloons, ratteens, duffils and serges of all colors; Manchester checks, purple and blue calicoes; silks, ribbons, oznaburgs, ticklenbergs, buckram. On the left were cuttoes, Barlow knives, iron candlesticks, jewsharps, blackball, bladders of snuff; in the left corner was the apothecary's apartment, and on boxes and bottles were written in fading gilt letters, "Arg. Viv." "Rad. Sup. Virg." "Ens Veneris," "Oculi Cancrorum," "Aqua æris fixi," "Lapis Infernalis," "Ext. Saturn." "Pulvis Regal." "Sal Martis," &c. On naked beams above were suspended weavers' skans, wheel-heads, &c., and on a high shelf running quite around the walls was cotton warp of all numbers. The back portion of the building was devoted to a traffic more fashionable and universal in New England than it ever will be again; and a row of pipes, hogsheads and barrels, indicated an article the nature of which could not be mistaken. Above these hung proof-glasses, tap-borers, a measuring rod, a decanting pump; and interspersed on the walls, were bunches of chalk-scores in perpendicular and transverse lines. Near by was a small counter covered with tumblers and toddy sticks; and when Margaret entered, one or two ragged will-gill looking men

stood there mixing and bolting down liquors. Had she looked into the counting-room, she would have seen a large fire-place in one corner, a high desk, round-back arm-chairs and several hampers of wine.

Margaret sat waiting for two young ladies, who appeared to have some business with the clerk. These were Bethia Weeks, the daughter of one of the village squires, and Martha Madeline Gisborne, the daughter of the joiner. The clerk's name was Abel Wilcox.

"For my part," said Miss Bethia, "I don't believe a word of it."

"He has kept steady company with her every time he has been in town," responded Miss Martha Madeline.

"As if every upstart of a lawyer was to Captain Grand it over all the girls here," added the clerk.

"I don't think the Judge's folk are better than some other people's folk," said Martha Madeline.

"Susan is a nice girl," rejoined Bethia.

"I should not be surprised if they were cried next Sabbath," said Martha Madeline.

"I guess there will be more than one to cry then," added Bethia.

"Now don't; you are really too bad," rejoined Abel.

This conversation continuing some time, was unintelligible to Margaret, as we presume it is to our readers, and it were idle to report it.

"How much shall I measure you of this tiffany, Matty?" at length asked Abel.

"Oh dear me suz! I don't know," she replied. "Perhaps I shall not take any now. You give three shillings for cotton cloth, and this is nine and six a yard, I declare for't I shall have to put to; and I must get some warp at any rate. We have been waiting for some we sent up to Brown Moll's to be colored, and I don't think it will ever be done."

"There's young Moll now," said Abel, pointing to Margaret, who was seated behind the ladies.

"Has your Marm got that done?" asked Martha Madeline.

"No, she has not," replied Margaret.

"A book, a book!" exclaimed Martha Madeline, "The Ingin has got a book. She will be as wise as the Parson."

"Can you say your letters?" asked Bethia.

"Yes," replied Margaret.

"Who is teaching you?"

"The Master."

"Pshaw!" ejaculated Martha Madeline, "I never was at school in my life. Now all the gals is going; such as can't tell treadles from treacle have got books. And here the Master goes up to that low, vile, dirty place, the Pond, to larn the brats."

Margaret came forward and stated her errand to the clerk.

"Yes, I dare say, she wants rum," added Martha Madeline. "Daddy says there is no sense in it; they will all come to ruin; he says Pluck and his boys drink five or six times a day, and that nobody should think of drinking more than three times. Parson Welles says it's a *sin* for any family to have more than a gallon a week. There's Hopestill Cutts, he has been kept out of the church this ten months, because he won't come down to half a pint a day."

"Never mind," interposed the clerk, "I guess they will find their allowance *cut* short this time, ha! ha! Here ain't eggs enough, gal."

"Marm says you must give a shilling a dozen," replied Margaret.

"Perhaps your Marm will say that again before we do," rejoined the clerk. "Eggs don't go for but nine-pence in Livingston or anywhere else."

Margaret was in a dilemma;—the rum must be had, the other articles were equally necessary.

"Pa will pay you," she bethought herself.

"No he won't," answered the clerk.

"Chilion will bring you down skins, axe-helves, and whip-stocks."

"I tell you, we can't and won't trust you. Your drunken dad has run up a long chalk already. Look there, I guess you know enough to count twelve, twelve gallons he owes now. You are all a haggling, gulching, good-for-nothing crew."

"I will bring you some chesnuts and thistle down in the fall," replied Margaret.

"Can't trust any of you. What will you take for your book?"

"I can't sell it; the Master gave it to me."

"If he would teach you to pay your debts he would do well."

A little girl came in about the age of Margaret, and stood looking attentively at her a moment, as one stranger child is wont to do with another, then lifting Margaret's hat as it were inspecting her face, said; "she is not an Injin; they said she

was; her face is white as mine." This little girl was Isabel Weeks, sister of Bethia.

"Ha, Belle!" said the latter, "what are you here for?"

"I came to see the Injin. Have you got a book too?" she said, addressing herself to Margaret. "Can you say your letters?"

"Yes," replied Margaret, "but they want it for rum."

"That's wicked; I know it is. Ma wouldn't let me give my spelling-book for rum. I have threepence in my pocket—you may have them."

"Save a thief from hanging and he will cut your throat," said Martha Madeline.

"Can't bore an auger hole with a gimlet," interjected Abel; "two threepences won't be enough, Miss Belle."

"Judah has got tenpence, I'll go and get them," answered Isabel.

The dog at this moment seeing the trouble of his mistress began to growl, and the young ladies to scream.

"Out with your dog, young wench, and go home," cried the clerk.

"Lie down, Bull!" said Margaret. "Here, sir, you may have the book."

The bargain being completed, Margaret, taking her articles, left the store; and Isabel followed her.

"The lower classes are very troublesome," said Abel, "we have to take odds and ends, and everything from them. If we didn't favor them a little, I believe they would take the store by storm. Deacon Penrose says it is a mercy to ourselves and the town that we have liquors to sell. The other day when I had been drawing a keg for Parson Welles, Ike Tapley, because I wouldn't let him have the lick of the tap, was as mad as a March hare. Precious little profit do we get out of these folks."

Isabel walked on with Margaret across the Green in silence. She said nothing, but with her pinafore wiped the tears from Margaret's eyes. She was too young, perhaps, to tell all she felt, and could only alleviate the grief she beheld by endeavoring to efface its effects.

Margaret, happy, unhappy, fagged up the hill; she had lost her book, she had got the rum; herself was miserable, she knew her family would be pleased, yet she was wholly sad when she thought of the Master and then of her book. She left the highway and crossed the Pasture. The sun had gone down when she reached the woods, she feared not; her