

one and another. "Jacob wrestled all night in prayer with God. The Ark is now going by. Three have already closed with the offers of mercy in Dunwich tent."

"Don't cry so, Obed," said Margaret. "They shan't hurt you."

"The devil is in that child, take her away," said the Preacher.

Some one endeavored to pull her off. "Let me alone," she exclaimed, "I can't go, I won't go," and she adhered to the boy, whose arm had become closed about her neck as a man in a fit.

There was a jarring hubbub of voices; men and women reeking with excitement, and vieing one with another who should pray the most importunately.

"What the devil are ye doing here?" shouted a still louder voice over the heads of the crowd. It was Nimrod, who half-intoxicated thrust himself among them. "Bite um Bull, bite um," he rubbed the dog's ears and holding him between his legs, teased him into a piercing yelp and howl that startled the people.

"Bull! Bull!" shrieked Obed. "He's comin, he'll bite me." The lad sprang to his feet and stared wildly about.

"Satan has come in great wrath," cried the Preacher.

"Yes, and I guess you know as much about him as anybody, old cackletub!" rejoined Nimrod. "You set them all a going, and then snap them up like a hawk."

"Hoorah!" shouted another of the scoffers from the other side of the tent. "I hearn him comin down from a tree jest now; look out or he'll be in your hair, white-top."

"I've cotched him by the tail," said another of the fry, twitching the dog, who thereupon renewed his roar.

"Pray, brethren, pray!" said the Preacher, and the people began to pray more lustily. "As with the sound of rams' horns the walls of Jericho fell down, so shall these sinners tremble before God."

"Where's Sibyl Radney?" cried one of the opposers. "She's got the bellows pipe for ye, and will let ye have some of the broomstick too, if you want."

"Oh! oh!" screamed Margaret, "you hurt me. They are treading on my toes. Nimrod! Nimrod! I can't get out."

"Margaret, are you in there, like a mouse among cats?" hallooed her brother.

"Yes, and Obed is here too."

"Let Obed go to Ballyhack. Come along out."

"Cast him out of the synagogue," cried the Preacher.

"Back with ye," said a man making up to Nimrod. "The Lord is here."

"Guess you will find somebody else is here too. Take yourself back," replied Nimrod, at the same time rendering the man a blow that nearly levelled him with the ground.

"I can't stay here," said Mistress Palmer.

"Hope the Lord won't leave us yet," responded a woman at her side.

"I fear the spirit will be grieved to depart," said another of the company.

"How many souls will perish for this man's wickedness!" sighed the Preacher.

Sibyl Radney rushing forward, seized Margaret, whom she held like a pup, under one arm, and with the other cleaved her way through the people. The lights were smothered; there was a surging to and fro; the props of the tent broke asunder; some ran one way, some another; others were trodden under foot. Margaret found herself in the woods supported by Sibyl. Nimrod presently appearing, said they must go home. Sibyl helped him mount his horse, and Margaret contriving to keep her brother in equipoise, they returned to the Pond.

CHAPTER IX.

MARGARET SUCCESSFUL IN A NOVEL ADVENTURE.

A FEW days afterwards, there came to the Widow Wright's Mr. Palmer from the Ledge, the man who found Margaret in the woods and delivered her to his wife. He purchased of the Widow a prescription for his daughter Rhody, who he said was not in strong health, and then stated that his family had been troubled for want of water, and intimated a conjecture of his wife that Margaret was one in whom resided the faculty of discovering it, and asked the Widow if she would accompany him to Pluck's, and aid in procuring the

services of the child for the purpose indicated. They went to Margaret's house, where Mr. Palmer gained the consent of the family to his object, and especially that of Nimrod, who evinced a positive delight in the project, and even volunteered to be Margaret's gallant on the occasion. They all proceeded together, accompanied by the Widow, who suggested that her personal attention might be of some benefit to Rhody. The Ledge was six or seven miles from the Pond; it was properly speaking a marble-quarry, and belonged to Mr. Palmer, who with his sons, in addition to a large farm they cultivated, sometimes worked at gravestones and hearths.

Mr. Palmer was in popular phrase a forehanded man, his house and barns were large, and his grounds indicated thrift. He had three sons, Roderick, Alexander and Rufus, stout, vigorous boys; and one daughter Rhody about eighteen, who evinced a sickly temperament, but was otherwise a fair-looking, black-haired girl. This family were obliged to bring their water from a considerable distance, not having been able to find a spring near the house. Agreeably to the doctrines of rhabdomancy, formerly in vogue, and at the present moment not entirely discarded, a twig, usually of the witchhazle, borne over the surface of the ground, indicates the presence of water, by immediately moving in the hand. The number of persons would seem to be small in whom this power is lodged, or through whom the phenomenon exhibits itself. It appeared that the neighborhood had been canvassed for an operator, but none succeeded. It occurred to Mistress Palmer, at the Camp, that Margaret might be endowed with this rare gift, and the child was accordingly sent for. The family at the Ledge showed great joy on the arrival of the party from the Pond. Mistress Palmer took a pinch of snuff, and helped Margaret from the horse, and even received Nimrod kindly, although his pranks at the meeting might have operated to his prejudice. The large pewter tankard of cider was passed round, but Margaret refused to taste, saying she should prefer water. "Dear me! we han't got a drop of decent water in the house," exclaimed Mistress Palmer. "The gal shall have some milk, the best we have; Rhody get some of the morning's; pour it out cream and all." Of this Margaret drank freely. "Poor thing!" ejaculated the lady, "she don't know as she has got a soul, and our Rufus is nigh as bad, for he won't do nothing to save his."

"I tell you what it is, Marm," rejoined Rufus, her youngest son, about twelve or fourteen years of age; "I an't a going

to have that old preacher whining and poking about me. I believe I can get to heaven without his help; if I can't, then I am willing to stay away."

"Well, well, child," replied the mother, "I shall not care how, if you get there at all, only I want you to be a good boy." She took a large pinch of snuff. These preliminaries being settled, and Margaret having received her instructions to hold the stick firmly and tell when it moved, proceeded on her duty. She made sundry gyrations, she traversed the grounds about the house, she tried the garden, but effected nothing. "It is too wet," said one; "it is too cold," said a second; "it is too dry," said a third; "it is too warm," said a fourth. Mistress Palmer took a pinch of snuff. Another trial was proposed. The child went farther from the house, she perambulated the orchard. All looked on with a breathless interest; she moved about slowly and carefully, the stick held horizontally forward in her two fists—a little diviner, in a green rush hat and Indian moccasins; the wind shook her brown curls, her blue checked pinafore streamed off like a pennon. Did they do wrong to use a little creature so? Yet is not God useful? Is not Utility the sister of Beauty? At last she cried out that it moved. Mr. Palmer hastened forward and struck his spade into the spot; Margaret ran off. The boys came up with hoes, crows and shovels, and began to dig. Presently there were signs of water, then it bubbled up, then it gushed forth a clear limpid stream. Mr. Palmer praised God. The boys hooaed. Mistress Palmer took a pinch of snuff.

"Taste on't, Alek," said Rufus.

"No," replied the father. "It belongs to the finder to be the first taster. The gal, where is she?"

Rufus was despatched for Margaret. He found her at the quarry trying to get a hare-bell that grew far above her head. The boy crouched under her, and she stepping on his shoulders succeeded in reaching the flower. When she would have descended Rufus fastened his arms about her, and bore her off on his back, papoose-like. Approaching the spot where the water was found, she leaped down and scudded around the house, Rufus pursued, she laughed, he laughed, and full of frolic, he brought her to the spring. She said she was not dry and would not drink, and would have run away again; when Nimrod prevailed with her to the end desired. Then they all drank, and pronounced it excellent water. Mistress Palmer said it was soft and would wash well; Mistress

Wright declared it was nice to boil mint in; Alexander didn't care if he hadn't to lug any more from the brook. All were satisfied, and Margaret became a wonder.

A sumptuous home-made dinner, with a suet Indian-pudding and molasses for dessert, was served on bright pewter plates with stag-horn knives and forks. After this, Rufus brought Margaret a marble flower-pot he had made, also a kitten very well executed, which he had cut from the same material. Rhody gave her a root of the Guelder rose. Mr. Palmer paid the Widow handsomely for her visit to his daughter, whose case she elaborately investigated. He offered money to Nimrod, who refused it. Mistress Palmer made Margaret a present of linen cloth of her own weaving, enough for two or three entire under dresses.

"Thank Miss Palmer," said Nimrod to his sister.

"Oh no!" exclaimed the lady. "Take it and welcome, and anything we have got. But do, my young friend," she added as he was mounting his horse, "do think on your ways, strive, strive, who knows but you may find the good thing at last. And the little gal — she is a good child as ever was. It was very kind of her to come all the way up here, and do us a service. She is worth her weight in gold. I hope she will have a new heart soon. Here," she continued, "let me help you on." Margaret scarcely touching the woman's hand sprang to the pillion. "Why, how she jumps! She is as spry as a cricket. How pretty she does look up there behind you; I must have a kiss out of her, — there, — remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth — and don't you forget, my young friend — good day."

"I want Rhody to kiss me," said Margaret.

"Run Rhody," said her mother. So Rhody went forward and kissed Margaret.

"Did Rhody kiss you?" asked Nimrod, when they had rode on awhile without saying anything.

"Yes," was the reply.

CHAPTER X.

THANKSGIVING, OR NEW ENGLAND'S HOLIDAY. — MARGARET HAS HER DIVERSION.

It is a noticeable fact, that we of the present age have fewer holidays than our puritanical ancestors. "The King's Birth Day," was formerly celebrated with great pomp; in addition there were enjoyed "Coronation Days," the "Birth of a Prince," Accessions and Burials of Governors, Victories in War, Masonic Festivals, to say nothing of Military Reviews, Election Days, Ordination of Ministers, Executions for Murder; and at a still later period Washington's Birth Day, now almost forgotten, The Fourth of July, at present diverted to a Sunday-school or Temperance Festival. But of Thanksgiving; a day devoted to mirth, gratefulness, hospitality, family love, eating, drinking; a day sometimes externally snowy, rainy, benumbing, drenching; internally so elastic, smiling, lark-like, verdant, blithe; it is not sanctified or squandered like Merry Christmas in the Old World; it has no gooding, candles, clog, carol, box, or hobby-horse; it has no poetry or song; it does not come in the calendar, only by the Governor's proclamation; New Englanders can sing with Old Englanders, *mutatis mutandis*:

"Now thrice welcome Christmas,
Which brings us good cheer,
Minced pies, plum porridge,
Good ale and strong beer,
With pig, goose and capon,
The best that may be," —

they cannot add,

"With holly and ivy
So green and so gay,
We deck up our houses
As fresh as the day,
With bays and rosemary
And laurel compleat."

Our houses and churches are brown and sear as the gardens and orchards about them. The cedar may be green in the