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A Weekly Magazine containing Stories of the American Revolution.

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No. 429.

NEW YORK, MARCH 19, 1909.

Price 5 Cents.

THE LIBERTY BOYS SURROUNDED; OR, A DARING DASH FOR FREEDOM. *By HARRY MOORE.*



The gate opened and Dick and Bob sprang out. "Stop the rebels!" the redcoats cried. Dick struck the leader a stinging blow on the jaw. Bob ran at another coming from an opposite direction, and upset him.

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CHAPTER I.

A FORGERY.

It was after the battle of Long Island, and the patriots in New York were in a great state of unrest.

The British held Staten Island, occupied a strong position on Long Island, and might at any time send their war vessels up the North and East rivers and bombard the city.

Many patriot families had already left, and although there was a force of seven thousand troops on the island, this did not allay the fears of many who remained.

On a pleasant day in September, two handsome, well-built boys, in Continental uniforms, sat eating their dinner in Fraunce's tavern, on the southeast corner of Pearl and Broad streets.

Their faces, bronzed from exposure to the weather, showed rare intelligence, and one could see at a glance that they were not ordinary boys.

They were not, indeed, for already, although mere boys, they had taken an active part in the war for independence, and had seen hard service.

They were Dick Slater and Bob Estabrook, captain and first lieutenant, respectively, of the Liberty Boys, a band of one hundred sterling young patriots, fighting for freedom.

The troop was encamped just above the city, but the boys often came down and just now there were many of them in town.

As Dick and Bob were eating their dinner and conversing quietly, a man entered and sat near them, who at once attracted their attention.

He was dressed in black, with a white neckcloth, and lace ruffles at his wrists, and wore a big powdered wig, tied at the back with a black ribbon.

He had dark, deep-set, piercing eyes, and looked around the room furtively, as he entered.

Coming over to the corner where the boys were seated, he said, removing his black cocked hat:

"Captain Slater, of the Liberty Boys, I believe?"

Dick made no answer, but looked inquiringly at the stranger.

He had learned not to make a confidant of anyone whom he did not thoroughly know.

"I have a communication from General Israel Putnam, commanding the American troops now in New York."

Still Dick said nothing, looking inquiringly at the other.

"It is addressed to you on matters of importance."

No answer.

"Will you be pleased to look at it, Captain?"

Now Dick Slater had met messengers from General Putnam before.

They were all soldiers of some rank or another.

This stranger of singular appearance might come from the general or he might not.

With the enemy at their very door, there were no doubt many spies in the city.

"How do you know I am Dick Slater?" Dick asked.

"Oh, but you are, I am sure. Are you not?"

"Why did not the general send a soldier of some sort?"

The man did not look straight at Dick, as he replied:

"Oh, this is a special matter. Look at the note and you will understand."

He handed Dick a flat package, which the boy opened. It was addressed to him, and read as follows:

"The bearer is a confidential agent of the government, and can be implicitly trusted. You are to furnish him with such information as he may require, at all times.

"ISRAEL PUTNAM, Gen'l."

Dick folded the note, put it in his pocket, and said:

"I have no information to give you at present."

"But you will have?"

"I cannot tell."

"If you are not Dick Slater, you will not keep the note, of course."

"I am Dick Slater," quietly.

"You will give me a note, reciting that you have met me, and will do as the general requests?"

"He makes no mention of that," said Dick.

"An oversight, no doubt. I spoke of it."

"I can only follow instructions," said Dick.

The man said nothing, and went away.

"He is a queer chap," said Bob, with a laugh.

"I did not tell him so," said Dick, "but his note is a very clever forgery."

"A forgery, Dick?" in great astonishment.

"Yes," and Dick laid the paper before Bob.

"But, Dick, it looks to me exactly like the general's writing," said Bob.

"It is a good copy, Bob, but not an exact one."

"Where does it differ from the real writing, Dick?"

"Do you observe the lower half of the 'P'? It joins the 's,' does it not?"

"Yes."

"And the top of every 'a' is closed, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"And it is in a running hand, every letter joining the one behind and in front of it?"

"Yes, I have noticed that particularly in the general's hand."

"Well, it is not as much a running hand as it looks. The 's' is unconnected with the 'I,' although its tail crosses the latter. It does not touch the 'r' at all. Then the 'u,' the 't' and the 'n' do not touch each other, and the 'n' is made in two parts. Do you see those characteristics here?"

"No, the 'P' is a continuous loop, is it not?"

"Yes."

"In the general's signature, it is in two parts. In this, the top of nearly every 'a' is closed. In the general's hand every one of them is open."

"Jove, Dick, you are a careful observer. I see all these differences now, but at first I was sure it was the general's own hand."

"It looks so at first glance, Bob, and many would be deceived by it. It was written by an adroit penman, but not by a close observer."

"Did this man in black write it?"

"I do not know. Now I will show you the general's own signature."

Dick then took a short note from a memorandum book in his pocket, and put it alongside the one he had just received.

The differences he had spoken of could be seen at once.

"The general writes a remarkably free hand for one of his age," Dick added, "but it does not run as freely as this other."

"No, it does not. What do you think, Dick?"

"That the man is a spy, if not a clever forger as well. Of course I don't know how he got hold of the general's signature. I seldom carry such things, especially when in active service. One never knows into whose hands they may fall."

"Very true."

"Come, Bob, this is an important matter, and I must see the general at once."

"Jove! the fellow wanted your signature, Dick," said Bob.

"Yes, and did not get it."

The boys left the tavern and were walking up Broad street on the east side when Bob suddenly exclaimed:

"Jove! look there, Dick! The old man will be killed!"

CHAPTER II.

A PLUCKY RESCUE.

An old man, walking with a stout cane, was crossing Broad street from west to east.

He walked slowly and with evident feebleness, and seemed quite old.

There was another peculiarity which Dick Slater noted on the instant.

The old man held his cane in front of him, and kept up a constant tapping with it, as he went ahead.

He was blind, or nearly so, and thus felt his way with his stick, as he walked.

Coming down Broad street, at frantic speed, was a

horse, harnessed to a chaise, and driven by a man who was either reckless or had lost control of the animal.

The old man was in the direct path of the horse.

As Bob had said, it seemed as if he must certainly be killed.

Dick saw him and, even as Bob spoke, dashed into the middle of the street.

Crossing in front of the madly galloping horse, he picked up the old man as if he had been a child, and was out of harm's way in an instant.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "but you were in danger, and I had to act most promptly."

Then he set the old gentleman down on the walk.

"Bless my heart, young' sir, but this is most extraordinary. What has happened?"

"A runaway or a reckless driver. Did you not hear it?"

"Yes, but I am blind, or nearly so, and I thought they would pass me by."

"You were right in the way, and the man evidently could not or would not stop."

Bob now came up and said:

"They stopped the fellow, pretty nearly to the river. Perhaps he could not help himself."

"I don't know," said Dick. "I could not tell in the brief time that I saw him."

"The old gentleman is not hurt, Dick?"

"No," said the old man himself, "but I must confess that I was startled at finding myself picked up so unceremoniously."

"I had to do it, sir," said Dick.

"Of a truth you did, and I am not finding fault. I thank you very much."

"Where are you going, sir? We will see you home, or anywhere you wish."

"I was going to visit an old friend in Beaver street. I often go out alone, although my daughter thinks——"

At this moment a young and very pretty girl came walking rapidly up.

"You naughty father," she said, "don't you know that you should not go out alone? You don't know what might happen?"

"But, my dear, nothing has happened, thanks to this young gentleman."

"Then something might have happened? I knew it. You must not go out alone. I have told you so, often."

"Yes, my dear, but the talk of two old fellows like Jobkins and myself can be of no interest to you."

"I can go with you, and I can come after you when you are ready, and Mr. Jobkins can come oftener to our house. He is not nearly blind."

"Yes, my dear, I know, but Jobkins has better liquors than I. He doesn't like mine."

"Then let him bring his own. What was it that might have happened, you naughty old fellow?"

"The young gentlemen will tell you as we walk on."

Bob crossed the street with the old man, while Dick walked with the young girl.

The latter said her name was Ethel Hazellhurst, and that she was the youngest of several children, now all dead or gone from home.

"Father is blind and feeble," she said, "and I do not

like to have him go out alone. There are other reasons, but those are family affairs, and you would not be interested."

"You are quite right not to want him to go out alone," said Dick, who had already spoken of the danger to which Mr. Hazlehurst had been exposed.

"There are some who would be glad to have something happen to him, if I do say it," said Ethel.

Dick said nothing, and by this time they had reached a queer little old house in Beaver street, with a big, shiny brass knocker and funny little diamond shaped panes of glass on each side of the door.

Bob raised the knocker, and in a short time a little old man came to the door and said, heartily:

"Aha, come in, all of you, glad to see you, everyone of you."

"Not to-day, thank you, sir," Dick answered. "We merely came to escort the young lady."

"I thank you very much," said Ethel, "and trust I shall see you often."

"If the redcoats do not drive us out, we shall be glad to see you again, miss," said Dick, "but now we must make haste."

The boys then walked back to Broad street, up to Wall and so on to Broadway.

In front of Trinity Church they met two or three Liberty Boys.

One of these was a handsome, dashy boy, a little younger than Dick, who wore the uniform of a second lieutenant.

"Any news, Mark?" asked Dick.

"Nothing definite, Dick," returned Mark Morrison, one of the bravest of the Liberty Boys, a universal favorite and thoroughly trusted by Dick.

"Well, keep your eyes open, and if a sharp-eyed man, dressed in black, asks you any questions, don't answer them."

"Why, he's just been here," exclaimed Mark. "He said he was in Putnam's employ, showed us a letter from him, and asked us what we knew."

"What did you tell him?"

"Nothing," briefly.

"You had nothing to tell?"

"No, and then I am opposed to talking on important subjects before strangers."

"Very good," Mark. Tell the other boys to have nothing to say to this fellow. I believe him to be a spy."

"Well, I did not like him myself, but I could not say why."

The boys then separated, Dick and Bob going up Broadway, and Mark and the other two going down.

"It was strange that Dick should have spoken of the man whom we met not five minutes since," said Ben Spurlock, one of the liveliest of the boys.

"Yes, and very fortunate that we said nothing."

"Yes, but even if he did have a letter from General Putnam, we don't know where he got it," added Sam Sanderson, who was a fast friend of Ben's.

"Of course not," said Mark.

Dick found General Putnam at his quarters, and showed the note he had received.

"Where did you get this, Captain?" the general asked. "You did not write it?"

"No, decidedly not. Who gave it to you? There is no name mentioned. The thing is a forgery on the face of it."

"That is what I thought at once," answered Dick, and then he told the general how he had got the paper.

"You were wise not to give him any information," said the general, "but it is just the way I would have expected you to act under the circumstances."

"It is probable that the greater part of the Liberty Boys would do the same, General. They would know better than to talk to strangers."

"But they would not know this paper to be a forgery, and a very dangerous one."

"No. Lieutenant Estabrook was deceived by it. Still they would want something more, as they know that spies are about."

The two boys went down Broadway together, and near Trinity Church met two of the Liberty Boys, one a jolly looking Irishman, and the other a fat German, weighing two hundred pounds.

"Captain, dear," said the Irish boy, Patsy Brannigan by name, "did ye tell a felly all in black, wid lace ruffles and a wig, that he could ax us all the questions he loiked, an' that we wor to answer thim?"

"No, I did not."

"Well, he said ye did, an' Oi says to him: 'Thin the captain musht have gon' crazy, an' Oi'll have to see him forst, for he did be always tellin' us to have nothin' to do wid shtrangers.' That's what Oi towld him, but he said it wor all roight."

"Ya, und den he was asked me somedings already," added the German boy, whose name was Carl Gookenspieler.

"What did you tell him, Carl?"

"I toldt him dot off he didn't went away I would sit on him, und off dot didn't made him feel flat den I would put him one off dose grave stones mit der church under."

"I don't think he found either of you very satisfactory," laughed Dick.

"Well, all he got out of us he cud put in his eye an' see clear. Was it all roight, Captain?"

"Yes, the man is a spy of the enemy, I am sure."

"Sure Oi thought it wor a funny t'ing to spake to a bye in the street loike that, an' Oi sint him moighty quick about his business."

"Which was quite right," said Dick, and then he and Bob went on.

CHAPTER III.

FAMILY AFFAIRS.

"This fellow seems to have been pretty busy, Dick," said Bob.

"Yes, if he speaks to all the Liberty Boys he meets."

"But what can he expect to get out of us? We don't know any more than anyone else."

"No, but if he got our confidence, we might know something later which we could tell him."

"Very true, but he must know that it is very unusual to talk to strangers about such things."

"He told Patsy that I told him to tell the boys to give him information."

"Yes, but Patsy knew you better."

"To be sure, but if he had had any signature, he could have forged a paper similar to the one I have."

"In that case Patsy might have been deceived."

"And you were deceived by the other."

"Yes, but I would not tell him anything."

"No, but some would."

"I see, and the fellow is dangerous on that account."

They had been walking at a steady pace down Broadway, and they were now at the Bowling Green.

At that moment a man in a chaise drove up to the curb and alighted.

"Here, boy, hold my horse while I go into this tavern," he said to Dick in a lofty manner.

Dick looked at him and said:

"There are hitching posts here. Take one of them. By the way, did you want to run down the old man in Broad street, about half an hour ago?"

The man flushed, and answered, angrily:

"The horse ran away, and, anyhow, the old fellow should have looked out for himself. Who are you to tell me what I shall or shall not do?"

"I have simply asked you a question."

"And a very impertinent one," and the man hitched the horse and entered the tavern.

"Was that the fellow, Dick?" asked Bob.

"Yes, I saw him for a moment only, but it was long enough for me to remember him."

"Very true, for you have a remarkable memory for faces."

"There is another thing. Ethel said that there were those who would be glad to see her father out of the way."

"She did not say why?"

"Then another thing. This man bears a certain resemblance to Ethel."

"Jove! you are everything, Dick," exclaimed Bob, admiringly.

"Well, you see much at any rate."

"Then perhaps this man is one of those who want the old gentleman out of the way?"

"He's a cheerless fellow at any rate, and looks like one who would do just such a thing as that."

They had stopped under the trees, and now Dick said:

"There is our young lady now, under the trees on the bench yonder."

"Sure enough. Perhaps she is waiting to go after her father to take him home."

"Yes," and Dick walked over to the girl and raised his hat.

"Why, how do you do, Captain?" the girl said. "I am glad to see you again."

"Can you see a chaise in front of a tavern over yonder?" pointing.

"With a white horse? Why, that is brother Harry's chaise."

"Your brother?"

"Yes, he is one of the older ones."

"Does he live with you?"

"No, he has a house of his own. We live in a little house in Exchange street, where there is scarcely room enough to turn around."

"Do you see him often?"

"Often enough. I don't like him—oh, but that's a family affair, and it wouldn't interest you."

"It might," thought Dick.

"He calls himself Harry Hurry, because he is always doing things in a hurry. He thinks they have to be done so, but I think they are more mistakes made by doing things in a hurry than by taking time to them."

"Very true," smiling. "You are waiting to take your father home?"

"Yes, and it is pleasant out here under the trees, and with the view of the river and the bay."

"And the enemy's ships over yonder?"

"No, that is not pleasant. I should not want to get out if the city were full of redcoats."

"I am afraid it may be," Dick answered. "The enemy can send their ships up both rivers, and land many more troops than we can command."

"Brother Harry would be glad. He is a Tory, but father is not, nor am I."

"I should be very sorry if you were," said Bob, frankly. "It would be a great pity for such a pretty girl to be on the wrong side."

"I am afraid you are a flatterer, Lieutenant," said Ethel, laughing and blushing at the same moment.

"Not at all," said Bob. "I am only telling the truth." At that moment Dick saw the man who had spoken to him come out of the tavern.

Instead of entering the chaise, he looked about and then came over in a great hurry to where they were all sitting.

"Do you know these fellows, Ethel?" he demanded brusquely. "Don't you know that it is very improper for a young girl to talk to strangers in public places?"

"But they are not strangers, brother Harry. I have met them before. This is Captain Slater, and this is Lieutenant Estabrook."

"H'm! young rebels, playing at being soldier, when they should be at school!" snorted the man.

"I don't believe they would play at being anything," Ethel replied. "Captain Slater saved father from being run down by a man driving recklessly down the street, not long ago."

"I think your brother knows the man," said Dick, quietly.

"Why, do you, brother Harry? Then I wish you would tell him——"

"Yes, I am the man myself," with a snort.

"You?"

"Yes, me. I was not driving recklessly. The horse ran away with me."

"Why, I never knew Whitey to run away. You always boasted that you could handle any horse."

"Well, he got beyond me this time, at any rate," snarling. "You had no business to let father go out alone, anyhow."

"But if you were in the chaise, why didn't you come back?" Ethel asked.

"I did," in a surly tone, "but you had gone."

"You had plenty of time to get back," put in Bob. "I saw the chaise stop. We stood on the curb for some minutes, but you went on, through one of the lower streets."

Mr. Harry Hurry glared blackly at Bob, and said nothing.

Then he turned to Ethel and said, sharply:

"We can't be forever having a foolish old man on our minds. Why don't he die and let his money be divided? It's of no use to him."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir!" said Dick, holly.

"You mind your business," snapped Harry. "These are family affairs, and no concern of yours."

"They are, if you talk of them in public. You ought to have decency enough not to speak thus before total strangers, no matter how you feel about the matter."

"I will speak as I please, and I forbid you to hold any converse with my sister in future. I am her guardian, so to speak, and——"

"Neglect your guardianship most shamefully," sputtered Bob. "You don't live at home, and I warrant you don't see her once a month."

Harry glared at Bob, but made no reply.

"Come, Ethel," he said. "I will take you home. Where have you left father?"

"With Mr. Jobkins. I am going after him later."

"Huh! that old sot! You ought not to let him go there."

"Why, I think Mr. Jobkins is a very pleasant old gentleman."

"You don't know what you are talking about!" with a snap. "Come with me!"

He took Ethel's arm roughly and almost dragged her upon her feet.

"Harry, don't you hurt me!" she cried. "I can go without being dragged. I don't want to go now, either. It is too early."

"You will do as I say!" angrily.

"She shall not," said Dick, taking hold of Hurry's arm and giving it such a grip that the man winced.

"Let go of my arm, you rebel!" he snarled, releasing Ethel and striking at Dick.

The latter parried the blow, released the man's arm, and said:

"You had better be careful how you call people rebels where there are so many patriots. Someone might resent it more emphatically than I have."

"There won't any of you dare show your heads in a few days," snarled Hurry, and then he went off in haste.

He jumped into the chaise and went rattling up Broadway in the most reckless fashion, soon disappearing.

"Brother Harry had no right to speak in that way," said Ethel. "Father has no great amount of money, not more than enough to take care of himself and—but these are family matters and cannot interest you."

"But they do," answered Dick, "and we will do anything we can to help you."

"So we will," said Bob, "so don't be afraid to speak."

"Well, maybe I will, when I need help," said Ethel, smiling.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME RENEWALS OF ACQUAINTANCE.

The boys left Ethel in a little while and walked down to Whitehall wharf, which formed the lower end of the city.

Here they could look over to Governor's Island and see any movements which might be taking place in the fleet.

There were a good many persons on the wharf, and all seemed to be looking eagerly toward Governor's Island.

The boys saw that they would have to crowd through to get to the end of the wharf.

They remained about halfway down, therefore, and watched the crowd.

There were all sorts of people gathered there.

"Soldiers jostled citizens, and the poor elbowed the sick, all seeming to be greatly absorbed.

The two boys attracted some attention on account of their uniforms and their handsome looks and fine military bearing.

They presently found themselves the centre of an admiring crowd, therefore, and turned to get out of it.

Then a rough looking fellow came along, pushing his way through the crowd.

As he reached Dick, he pushed against him and tried to thrust a hand inside the young patriot's coat.

Dick quickly caught it and threw it aside.

"Be careful what you are about," he said, sharply.

"I beg your pardon, my hand slipped while I was tryin' ter git through the crowd," the fellow growled.

Then he made his way off rapidly, and the boys went on out of the crowd.

"What was the trouble, Dick?" asked Bob when they were by themselves on the land end of the wharf.

"I think the fellow was trying to rob me, Bob."

"Of money, Dick?"

"No, of that forged document."

"Do you think so, Dick?"

"Yes, because there he is at this moment talking to the very man who gave it to me."

Bob turned and looked in the direction indicated by Dick.

He saw a rough looking fellow in coarse clothes engaged in earnest conversation with a man in black.

"Jove! there's the fellow, sure enough, Dick," he said.

"Yes, there are both of them. I saw the would-be thief long enough to recognize him again."

"But you did not keep the paper, did you, Dick?"

"No, I left it with the general, but the man in black does not know that."

"Why should he want it, Dick?"

"I think he has an idea that I suspect him, Bob, having treated the matter so lightly, and so is anxious to get the paper back again."

"Yes, I suppose he would."

The two men presently disappeared in the crowd, and Dick and Bob started off up the street.

They had nearly reached Trinity Church, taking the west side of the street, when Bob suddenly cried:

"Hello! there are the girls!"

Two very pretty young girls were just crossing Rector street, and the boys hurried forward to meet them.

The girls were Edith Slater and Alice Estabrook, the boys' sisters, and their sweethearts as well.

They lived in Westchester, a little more than twenty miles from New York, and were now visiting friends in the city.

As the boys started forward to meet them, Dick heard the rattle of wheels.

Then a chaise, drawn by a white horse, came dashing up the street, the driver making no effort to stop, although he must have seen the two girls.

Dick sprang swiftly forward, seized the bridle with a grip of iron, and forced the animal back upon his haunches.

"Cross over, girls," he said.

"What do you mean by stopping my horse?" snapped the driver.

"If you are going to make a practice of riding folks down in that reckless manner, Mr. Harry Hurry," said Dick, sharply, "you will find yourself in the bridewell, with plenty of leisure to repent the error of your ways."

"Let go of my horse, you fool!" cried Hurry, slashing at Dick with the whip.

Dick caught it, pulled it out of the fellow's hand, and said:

"Be careful that I do not use it on you, sir. Did the horse run away this time or were you simply reckless?"

A number of persons had come up by this time, and Dick said:

"Be careful how you drive in future, or someone besides myself may have something to say about it."

Then he put the whip in the socket, releasing the horse, and stepped back.

The man drove up Broadway, and a gentleman on the curb said to Dick:

"That's crazy Harry Hurry. He will break his own or his horse's neck some day, by his reckless driving."

"I do not regard him as crazy, at all," replied Dick.

"Oh, he is, everybody in the city knows him, and they all call him crazy Harry Hurry."

"They may do so, but I think he is more vicious than insane. He has no regard for anyone but himself."

"Do you know him, then?" in a tone of interest.

"I have seen him two or three times."

"And formed an estimate of his character in that time?" incredulously, and with a laugh.

"It does not need a lifetime to tell some men's character," shortly.

The gentleman looked at Dick scrutinizingly and answered, earnestly:

"No, I suppose it would not, in your case, but the man is generally regarded as thoroughly irresponsible, crazy, in fact."

"And I think he is as sane as most men, but thoroughly vicious and selfish."

"Well, I dare say you are right," smiling. "I never looked at it in that way, but took the general verdict."

"Which in many cases is not the true one."

Dick then went back to where Bob was waiting with the two girls.

"Where were you going?" he asked. "I am very glad we happened along when we did."

"Just for a walk, brother," said Edith. "It was such a lovely day that we thought we would take the air."

"I would not go too far, sister; nor you, either, Alice. There are many rough characters abroad, and careless ones, like this man in the chaise."

"I thought he would certainly stop, see us coming," said Alice. "Everyone else does."

"Any gentleman would," sputtered Bob, "but he is not a gentleman, he is a Tory."

"Can't a gentleman and a Tory exist in the same person, brother Bob?" laughed Edith, as they walked on.

"No, they can't, or at any rate, I never saw a case in point."

They had reached the church when Dick saw the man in black coming out of the churchyard.

As he caught sight of Dick he turned quickly and went in again.

"And I had left it with the general, who pronounced it a rank forgery," said Dick, in a loud tone.

"What are you talking about, Dick, and why do you shout so?" asked Alice, as they went on.

"I will tell you, my girl," with a laugh, "but I had an object in shouting."

"Yes, he wished another Tory rascal to hear," laughed Bob.

CHAPTER V.

WAYLAI'D:

The two boys walked up Broadway with the two girls, Dick telling the story of how they had met the man in black, and also Harry Hurry.

It was well along in the afternoon now, and when the boys reached the house, the girls' friends invited them to stay to tea.

They had met Mark at St. Paul's Church, and he, seeing them with the girls, would know where they were going.

"If anything important happens Mark will let us know," said Dick.

"Yes, and Mark is a trusty fellow to leave," added Bob.

The boys agreed to stay, therefore, and the girls were greatly delighted.

They remained till about an hour after dark, greatly enjoying the evening.

The girls' friends were good company, and a number of boys came in also, so that it was merry enough for anyone.

At last they left the house and started out for camp. A part of their way led through a dark, narrow street.

They had entered this when a man suddenly stepped out from behind a tree and said:

"I am out of work, young sirs, could you spare me a little money to buy bread for my wife and children?"

No one in distress even appealed to Dick Slater in vain.

"Yes, if you really need it," he said, putting his hand in his pocket.

All at once there was a sudden rush from behind.

Then the man who had spoken to Dick sprang upon and seized him.

"Run, Bob!" Dick cried, as he struck out vigorously.

Bob did not run, however, but tried to see and fight their antagonists.

He was suddenly knocked down, striking his head on a stone.

This stunned him for a moment.

Then he heard rapid footsteps going down the dark street.

He picked himself up and said:

"Hello, Dick, where are you?"

He received no answer, and the footsteps ceased.

He ran back the way he had come and reached a narrow lane, dark and silent, leading down to the river.

He listened, but heard no sound.

"Perhaps they have stunned him," he said.

Then he hastened back to the spot where they had met the strange man.

He had a tinder box and he quickly lighted a sulphur match.

He saw Dick's hat on the ground, but no sign of Dick himself.

"They have run away with him," he muttered. "Who can they have been?"

He hurried back to the lane and listened.

"Someone has followed us, and then lain in wait for us on our return. Well, I must find Dick, that is all."

He had heard footsteps going toward the lane, but none in it.

Here the road was not paved, and that would account for his hearing none.

He decided quickly that the men had gone down that way.

"If they had kept on the main thoroughfare I would have heard them," he said.

Then, with a pistol in his hand, he entered the lane, and walked slowly, listening for the slightest sound.

The men who had seized Dick had quickly gagged him.

Then they had picked him up and run with him.

There were four of them, and they made some noise.

Reaching the lane, two of them took Dick and hurried on, the other two waiting a few rods down.

Dick's captors went rapidly, but made little or no noise on the earth road.

They had held Dick between them, and hurried him on rapidly.

He presently refused to walk, and they were forced to carry him.

"Stubborn, are you?" growled one. "H'm! you'll get over that."

"Never mind, Wicks," said the other. "We can humor him now."

They went on at a rapid pace till they reached the river.

Here they put Dick on his feet, holding him firmly, however.

Then one sounded a peculiar whistle, like the cry of a bird.

In a few minutes the sound of oars was heard.

"All right?" said someone from the water.

"Aye, we've got him."

"Good!"

Dick presently made out a boat on the water, in which were two men.

It came up and one of the men said:

"We'll keep him on the schooner to-night, and take him down the river in the morning."

"That will be all right. No one will think of looking for him here."

"Bill and Jim 'll fix the other feller if he cuts up rough," muttered one of the men holding Dick.

"Why didn't you get him, too?" asked one of the men in the boat.

"Why, the captain was the only one we was told to get."

"Well, don't you see that this other one can make trouble?"

"How can he? Ain't Bill and Jim waitin' up there?"

"Well, mebby they'll have more sense 'n you, and bring him."

Dick was then lifted into the boat and held by the others, those already in it rowing out upon the river.

Presently a vessel loomed up in the darkness, and one of the men whistled.

A light was shown on deck, and the boat pulled toward it.

A little schooner, rising not much above the water, lay at anchor about a hundred yards out.

Dick was lifted on board and taken into a little cabin aft.

Here his pistols were taken from him, and one of the men said:

"You're going aboard one of his majesty's ships o' war in the mornin', my boy, as a honored guest. Won't that be fine?"

"You'll be treated high," the other said. "High as the yard arms, and then you'll make no trouble."

"Do you think to frighten me with such stories?" asked Dick. "Even the Hessians would not dare to do such a thing as that."

"You're a rebel, and all rebels are goin' to be hung, an' then the rebellion will be put down."

"It is not a rebellion, it is a revolution, and it will never be put down, nor end until the American people are a free nation."

"Here, here, you mustn't talk like that," said a heavily built man in a corner, smoking a pipe. "That's treason."

"It is not. It is common sense. I am a prisoner here, and you may take me aboard one of the enemy's ships, as you say, but that will not end the war."

"H'm! I suppose not, but it will end."

"Surely, with the triumph of the American people."

"Go on deck, you men," said the other. "Have a glass o' grog, boy?"

"No, I never drink it."

"Have a pipe?"

"No, I thank you."

"Wull, make yourself comfortable. I don't mind havin' something myself."

He went to a little cupboard on the wall and took down a black bottle and a thick glass.

There was no one in the cabin now but Dick and the captain of the schooner.

"Whose plan was it to get me on board?" Dick asked.

"Well, it was Cap'n Hurry's. I don't s'pose it makes any difference if you do know now."

"Harry Hurry?"

"Yes, Cap'n Hurry."

"What is he captain of?"

"I donno, but they allers call him cap'n."

"And so he had me brought here?"

"Yus, and he's going to give me twenty pounds for deliverin' of you to the British."

"Then you'll never get it," thought Dick.

CHAPTER VI.

BOB ON THE LOOKOUT.

As Bob entered the lane, pistol in hand, he looked attentively, making no sound himself, and keeping in the shadow.

If the ruffians had taken Dick down the lane, some of them might be lying in wait for him now.

He advanced a few steps and listened, standing still for a few moments.

He went on again a few steps and then heard someone say in a low tone:

"Hear anything, Bill?"

"No, not a sound."

"Maybe he can't find the way."

"Yus, or maybe he's went back to the camp to get help."

"H'h! maybe he has."

Bob stood still and waited.

At length one of the men said:

"What's the use o' waitin'. The other rebel is on board the boat by this time."

"Yus, I suspect he is."

"An' I don't believe his mate 'll come this way at all."

"Wull, we don't hear him, anyhow."

After a pause one of the men said:

"Come on, Jim, let's go down ter ther Widder's an' lick'er up."

"All right," and the two men walked down the lane.

After a short time Bob followed.

"They've got hold of Dick," he said, "but I don't know where, and I'll have to find out."

He made his way quietly down the lane till he saw a light in the window of a little stone house on one side.

Then he advanced more cautiously, hearing voices.

The door was shut, but one of the windows was open, and Bob could see a number of persons sitting at tables.

Then he saw a woman cross the room with a trayful of pewters in her hand.

The place was a sort of tavern, patronized by the river men.

"I don't see Dick," thought Bob, "and the place does not seem very big. Perhaps they have put him down the cellar."

He advanced rapidly, but with caution, and stood under the open window.

"The captain 'll take care of the young rebel all right," he heard someone say.

"Yes, but yer ought've ketched the other one," growled someone else.

"He could do nothing. How's he goin' ter get out ter ther other schooner?"

"An' to-morrer she'll be goin' down ther river with ther tide, and ther rebel 'll put erboard the British ships down ter Gov'nor's Island."

"So, that's where he is, eh?" muttered Bob.

Then he walked down to the water's edge.

Looking out over the river, he presently saw a light, evidently in the cabin of some vessel.

"How am I going to get out there?" he said to himself.

He walked along and shortly came upon a boat on the little beach.

"Well, here's a way to get out there, but the next thing is to get hold of Dick."

He got into the boat, cast off the warp, picked up the oars, and began to row with a slow stroke out upon the river.

He heard the men in the little stone tavern laughing and talking, and knew that they would not leave for some time.

"That is all right," he said to himself, "but it is going to be some trouble, I guess, to get on the vessel and see Dick."

Turning his head now and then, he rowed steadily and increased his speed as he got farther out from shore.

As he neared the vessel, however, he grew more cautious.

There might be someone on deck, and if they heard him he would be known to be a stranger if he answered.

He rowed more cautious, therefore, and made his way toward the stern.

Meanwhile Dick was in the little cabin of the schooner with the captain.

His arms were bound behind him, and his pistols had been taken away.

"If yer'll promise not to cut up rusty, I'll untie yer," the captain said.

"No, I won't," answered Dick. "Why should I? It is not likely that I want to remain a prisoner, is it?"

"Mebby et ain't," with a laugh, "but I don't see how yer'e ergoin' ter help yerself."

"My companion got away. There are one hundred Liberty Boys not far off. Don't you suppose he will bring help?"

The captain seemed somewhat disturbed, but presently answered:

"Yus, if he knew where yer was, but he don't."

"You can trust to him to find out. He won't rest until he does."

The captain moved uneasily in his chair, and said:

"Wull, it won't be sech a long time before ther tide

turns, an' I need'n'ter wait till mornin' afore droppin' down ther river."

"You don't know that he isn't coming now."

"No, I don't, but I don't tink he is, all ther same."

The little porthole in the cabin was open, as the night was warm.

Just now the hoarse cry of a gull was heard.

Gulls often came up the river, and it was not uncommon to hear their cries.

Dick knew what this cry meant.

It was a signal from Bob.

The Liberty Boys were in the habit of communicating with each other by using certain natural sounds, and this was one of Bob's signals.

"I can tell you, though," said Dick in a louder tone, "that he will be here and not so very long from now, either."

"H'm! don't yer s'pose ther men on deck 'll hear him when he comes out."

"Perhaps."

The cry of the gull was repeated in a little different manner.

"Yer don't mind my takin' a glass o' grog, I suppose?" said the captain.

"Not at all. Help yourself."

The captain poured himself out a generous quantity of spirits, put in some water, and raised the glass to his lips.

Then someone suddenly glided in from the after door of the cabin.

In a moment a pistol was thrust under the captain's nose by Bob.

"Finish your drink," he said, "but if you make a sound, I'll crack you on the head with this."

The captain drank his grog, set down the glass, and muttered:

"How in time did yer get aboard without bein' dis-kivered?"

"Over the taffrail. The men are all forward."

"H'm! where they'd orter be, o' course. How'd yer know erbout sech things?"

"Oh, I know a lot of things," with a laugh.

Then Bob backed away, still keeping the captain covered with his pistol.

Taking out his knife, he cut the rope about Dick's arms.

Then handing Dick his own pistols, he advanced to the captain and said:

"Put your arms behind you, Captain, if you please."

"Thunderin' polite, ain't yer?" growled the man, obeying.

"Oh, there is nothing lost by being polite," chuckled Bob, securing the man's arms.

"You'll excuse my taking a few more necessary precautions," he said, putting a gag in the captain's mouth.

Then he and Dick quickly left the cabin, leaving the captain a prisoner in his own vessel.

Bob had fastened the warp of the boat to a cleat on the taffrail.

Dick now got over the stern into the boat, and then Bob let go the warp and followed him.

They pushed off, picked up the oars and rowed away without arousing the men forward.

"It takes more than a lot of clumsy Tories to keep you a prisoner, Dick," Bob chuckled.

"Quite right, Bob," with a laugh, "and I told the captain as much, but he would not believe me."

The boys knew which way to go, although it was dark along shore.

They could not see the light in the little tavern, but they knew where it was.

They were nearing shore when they suddenly heard someone say:

"Now where's that confounded boat?"

"We'll drop downstream, Bob," said Dick.

CHAPTER VII.

MORE FAMILY MATTERS.

Bob ceased to row for a few minutes, Dick guiding the boat so that it drifted down with the current.

"Hello, Bill, what'd ye do with the boat?"

"Hain't touched yer old boat," growled someone.

"Where'd yer put it, Tom?"

"Tied et to er stun on ther bank."

"Then it must've drifted away, yer careless feller."

The boys drifted down and were not seen.

The men ran up and down trying to discover some trace of the boat, but they could not.

Then someone shouted from the anchored schooner.

"Hello! look out for rebels! They've got away."

"The mischief! How'd he do it?"

"Had another rebel to help him. What sort o' watch did yer keep on shore?"

"H'm! as good as you did, I guess," with a snarl.

"Well, look out for 'em, yer fools!"

"H'm! fools yerself! Come here an' keep watch yerself."

Then the men made their way back to the little stone tavern.

The boys got ashore and made their way into the lane above the little tavern.

The boat was allowed to go adrift, as they had no further use for it.

The Liberty Boys thought they were a little late in returning, and Mark, who was a bit of a tease, said:

"You fellows must have been in good company to stay so late."

"Some of it was, and some of it was not," returned Bob.

"Hello! I guess something must have happened," cried Mark.

"Yes, several things."

"Tell me all about it," eagerly.

"Very well. You might have been called on to help Dick escape but, fortunately, I managed it alone."

"Yes, but what was the adventure?" asked Mark, excitedly.

Dick and Bob told the story, Mark being greatly interested.

In the morning Dick and Bob went into the city. Near Trinity Church they came upon Harry Hurry, walking rapidly.

He saw them, seemed greatly astonished, and turned and walked down the street.

"He seemed to be greatly surprised, Dick," said Bob.

"Yes, he did, and I think I know the reason," quietly. "You do?"

"Yes, Mr. Harry Hurry thought that I was on one of the enemy's vessels by this time."

"You think he had something to do with our being waylaid last night?"

"Yes."

"It seems reasonable enough, for a fellow like that would want to get rid of us."

"Yes, and I am certain that he had something to do with it."

A little farther on they met Ethel, who seemed very glad to see them.

"Did you meet Harry just now?" she asked.

"Yes, we did."

"So did I, and he was muttering something about the rebels having got away from him, but that he meant to catch them yet."

"It is just as you thought, Dick," laughed Bob.

"Has he tried to do you any harm, then?"

"Yes, but we escaped."

"Harry says that the redcoats are coming here soon, and that all the patriots will be driven out."

"That is what we fear, but does he know for certain?"

"I don't know. He says so, but he may not know."

"If I thought he did, I would arrest him and make him tell what he knew."

"He will get into trouble if he goes around calling people rebels, before he knows it," sputtered Bob.

"How is your father?" asked Dick.

"He seems to be pretty well to-day. He had a good rest."

"You must take good care of him."

"Yes, I will, but sometimes he gets away from the house, and then I am worried."

"Where is he now?"

"With Mr. Jobkins. He will not let father go out alone."

"That's quite right. He should not go out unless with someone to watch him."

Later, the boys happened to be passing through Beaver street.

They had just reached a queer little old house, stuck away in a corner, when two old men came out.

One was Ethel's father, the other his friend, Mr. Jobkins.

The boys spoke to the old gentleman, and Jobkins said:

"So you are the boys who helped my friend, are you? I am pleased to see you."

"Thank you," said Dick. "We are always ready to help those who need it."

"That's right. We were going over to Mr. Hazelhurst's. You'll come, I suppose?"

"Yes, do, young gentlemen," urged Ethel's father.

Dick saw that Mr. Jobkins wished to say something to

him, and he beckoned to Bob to go ahead with the old gentleman.

He and Jobkins walked together and presently the latter said:

"The old fellow needs to be watched."

"Yes," said Dick.

"I don't mean so much on account of his feebleness. Do you know that crazy son of his?"

"Harry Hurry, do you mean?"

"Yes, the scoundrel!"

"I do not think he is as crazy as he would like to be thought," said Dick, quietly.

"H'm! I know he is not. But if he should do anything to the old man he would say he was crazy and escape responsibility."

"Why should he do anything?" Dick asked.

Jobkins looked around him and then answered:

"For money. Harry Hurry can't get it as long as his father lives."

"But Ethel says that they have nothing."

"She doesn't know. The old man has got something quite a good deal, but he wants it to go to Ethel."

"I see."

"He keeps up an appearance of poverty, and lives in a funny little old house, funnier and more out of the way than mine even, on Exchange street. He has money, but no one knows where it is."

"He could make a will, and leave the bulk of it to Ethel."

"So he has. I am his lawyer. He won't state how much it is. Simply says, 'All the residue and remainder of my estate to go to my beloved daughter, Ethel, to have and to hold,' and so forth."

"And does not state how much or where it is?"

"No, that's to shut Harry Hurry out. He would try to get hold of it."

"But he might tell you."

"Yes, but he won't. He says he will some day. Harry Hurry has tried to find out from me how much the old man has."

"Without success, I should judge," dryly.

"H'm! he couldn't find out from me, if he paid me a thousand pounds."

"Has he money himself?"

"No, he never could keep it. He has borrowed all he could from friends, and wants more."

"Then you are satisfied that Mr. Hazelhurst has money?"

"Yes, and we want to look out that that scoundrel does not kill him to get it."

"We will do our best," said Dick.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT THE STONE TAVERN.

Reaching the house where Mr. Hazelhurst lived, the two boys saw the old men enter, and then made their way to Broadway.

Here they met the man in black who had glared at them so the day before, but paid no attention to him.

"I don't like that fellow," said Bob. "He looks as if he were trying to find out all you knew."

"Well, he won't," laughed Dick. "So you need not be afraid."

Walking to the river, they saw that the ships of the enemy had changed their positions somewhat.

None of them had left, but it looked as if they might at any time.

They saw Harry Hurry again, but he kept out of their way, and shortly disappeared.

"I believe the fellow has some connection with the ships," said Dick, "and if I knew just what it was, I would arrest him."

"Yes, but he knows that we suspect him now, and will be on his guard."

After looking about for a time and learning nothing definite, the boys concluded to call on the girls.

Arriving at the house, they were met by the girls' friends, who said:

"Why, the girls have gone over to the camp."

"Then we will go over there and meet them," said Dick.

When they reached the camp, however, there were no girls.

"Have the young ladies been here, Patsy?" asked Dick.

"No, sor, they have not."

"You would have seen them, I suppose?"

"Yis, sor, Oi've been roight around all the toime."

However, Dick made enquiries of Ben Spurlock, Sam Sanderson, Mark and a number of others to make sure. Nothing had been seen of the girls.

They would not say they were coming here and then go somewhere else," said Bob.

"No, they would not, or, if they did, they would send word here or to the house first."

"Then where have they gone?"

"I don't know, but I think our Tory friends may know," quietly.

"Harry Hurry, you mean?"

"Yes, and the captain. Hurry saw the girls yesterday, and followed us, so that he could put his men to kidnap us."

"Yes, there is no doubt he did."

"That little plan having failed, he probably set to work to run away with the girls."

"But we saw him on the wharf, Dick."

"Yes, and he quickly disappeared. He knew we were in the city and so he hurried away to carry out his plans."

"It sounds reasonable, Dick. What are you going to do?"

"Look for them."

Dick then saddled his horse, a magnificent coal black Arabian, whom he called Major.

Bob saddled his own horse, a fine bay, and the two boys set off.

Dick led the way toward the lane down which the Tories had taken him the night before.

Here he found a number of confused footprints.

"You see we did not come this way, but took a short cut, being anxious to meet the girls," he said.

"Exactly."

"They have come this way, and have been surprised."

"Yes, there are the girls' footprints, fast enough."

The boys went down the lane, the footprints being plain for some little distance.

Then they suddenly disappeared, while those of the men became more distinct.

"They picked the girls up at this point and carried them," said Dick.

The boys rode down the lane as far as the stone tavern and dismounted.

They could see the river from that point, and Dick noticed that the schooner was still anchored a little way out from shore.

"I guess the captain did not go down the river this morning," he said.

"That is the same one, is it, Dick?" Bob said.

"Yes."

"The footprints go on to the water, Dick."

"Yes, but there is someone in the tavern."

"I don't see anyone."

"Neither do I, now, but I saw their shadows on the wall."

Just then a tall, bony woman came to the door, and said:

"Won't you come in, young sirs, and have some refreshment?"

"Why, to be sure, ma'am," and Dick started forward.

Then he gave a peculiar look to Bob, which the latter readily understood.

Dick pushed the woman in and suddenly drew his pistols.

"Now then, come on!" he said.

Bob was right alongside, pistol in hand.

There was no one in sight, but Dick said:

"Now then, come out of that closet, or I'll put a hole through the door!"

At once the door flew open and two very frightened men came out.

"You were waiting for the lady's signal to rush out upon us, weren't you?" Dick asked.

The men looked greatly shamefaced.

"Weren't there any more?" asked Dick. "Down cellar, perhaps," standing on a trap door.

"As I live, I had no intentions against you, young sirs," the woman protested. "I thought that you might like same——"

"Excuse me for contradicting a lady," interrupted Dick, "but you did not think anything of the kind. You thought that you would trap us."

The woman gasped, and Dick asked:

"Did you two men have anything to do with taking two young ladies out to the schooner yonder?"

The men flushed, and one of them said, gruffly:

"O' course not. We're married men, an' our women would scold if we had anything to do with other gals."

"To be sure they would," said the other. "Guess it must ha' been Bill and Jim."

"Are they down cellar?" asked Dick.

The men flushed, and Dick knew that he had guessed right.

"Lift the trap, Bob," he said, stepping off it.

In a moment, however, it flew up, and two very red-faced men came out.

"It wasn't Jim and Bill at all," said one, "and you are got a cheek to lock us down suller when we on'y wanted ter tap er cask."

"Then the young ladies were taken off to the vessel, were they?" asked Dick.

"Yus, they was, an' we hadn't nothin' ter do with it, an' if them fellers says we did——"

"You had as much ter do with et as we did," snarled one of the others. "You helped ketch 'em."

"Well, yer didn't need ter tell onto us, if we did."

"You'd better go down cellar again," said Dick. "All of you."

The men protested, but Dick sent them all down.

Then he fastened the trap, and said to Bob:

"You stay here and keep the lady from doing any mischief, Bob, while I go out to the schooner. There's a boat on the beach."

"Do you think you can manage it alone, Dick?"

"I guess so," and Dick went out.

"Sit down, ma'am," said Bob. "You are not likely to have any patrons at this time."

"You're a saucy rebel," the woman snapped, "and——"

"Yes, I have heard that before," chuckled Bob. "It is a favorite epithet with the British and Tories."

"They're coming up the river, and then, I guess——"

There was a pounding on the under side of the trap, and the woman suddenly ceased speaking.

"Oh, are they? Do you happen to know when they are going to come up?"

"Donno nothing about it," snarled the woman. "I said if they did come up, I guessed you'd run."

"Oh, I see," with a chuckle.

"Let us out'n here, an' we'll go away," said one of the men below.

"Couldn't think of it," laughed Bob.

CHAPTER IX.

ALARM IN THE CITY.

Dick had seen a boat on the beach and, getting in and picking up the oars, he rowed out to the little schooner.

The tide was running out now, but it did not bother him.

Nearing the schooner, he shouted:

"Hello! on board the schooner!"

"Boat ahoy!" cried a man from deck.

"Where's the captain?"

"Gone ashore."

"Where's the mate?"

"Asleep."

"Where's the second mate?"

"Ain't none."

"Well, I'm coming on board."

"What fur?"

"Oh, just to look around."

Then Dick suddenly rowed to the stern and heard the skipper say:

"Well, you can tell him that I had nothing to do with your being brought here, an' that I was goin' ter send ye ashore soon as I could get the boat fixed."

"Why didn't you do it before?" Dick heard Alice ask. "We told you we had been carried off forcibly."

"'Twasn't my boat, an' so I couldn't."

Dick rowed close to the schooner, stood up, looked in at the little window, and said:

"Never mind, my girl, I have come to take you off."

"Why, it's brother!" cried Edith.

"Hello, Cap'n, come to take the young ladies ashore, have ye?" asked the captain. "This wasn't none o' my doin's, I tell yer that."

"Perhaps not," said Dick, and then he pushed off, got over the taffrail, made the warp fast, and went in.

The girls were very glad to see him, the captain making no resistance.

"We won't tie you up this time, Captain," laughed Dick.

"Wull, this is another matter. I'd've took you down, but I haven't any use for ther gals, an' I told them fellers so."

"Well, then, we'll believe you. Come, sister; come, Alice."

"How'd ye know they was out here, anyhow?" asked the captain.

"Oh, I just guessed it," with a laugh. "You didn't go down the river this morning, did you?"

"No, I thought I wouldn't."

Dick then helped the two girls into the boat, got in himself and pushed off.

"Come again some time, Cap'n," said the skipper. "Ye don't harbor no malice, I s'pose?"

"No, none at all, only don't associate with those Tories on shore, or you may get into trouble."

"All right, Cap'n, I won't, ef you say so."

"Did he tell the man who rowed you out there that he didn't want you?" asked Dick, as he rowed.

"Yes."

"But he took you aboard, just the same?"

"Yes, but I did not believe him. He said he would send us ashore, but I did not believe it."

"He did not treat you badly?"

"No, and we were not locked in anywhere or treated roughly by him," said Alice.

"I don't believe the fellow myself," said Dick, "but I could not prove anything against him, and so I thought the best thing to do was to get you two girls away as soon as I could."

Reaching shore, Dick tied up the boat and walked up the lane.

"Hello, Bob!" he called.

Bob came out and the two boys put the girls on the horses and walked beside them up the lane.

They saw nothing of the men while they were in the lane, and supposed that the latter were keeping out of the way until it was safe to come out.

They went to the camp and here Mark and all the boys

were glad to see the girls, suspecting that something had happened.

"Sure ye'll have to shtay to dinner, young leddys, to give the byes a chance to luck at ye," said Patsy, with a grin.

"Ya, dot was righd," added Carl. "Dose boys don'd was saw you fery often, I bet me."

The two girls stayed to dinner, and the story got around, the boys being all indignant at the Tories for having tried to kidnap them.

"It would not do for Harry Hurry or any of the others to be seen around our camp," said Mark.

"I guess it would not," added Ben. "If they were not arrested, they would get a fine drubbing."

Dick and Bob saw the girls home after dinner, and then went to the river.

Here they saw two or three war vessels making their way upstream.

"Hello!" said Bob. "They've started, Dick."

"So they have, but we do not know how far they are going."

"No, but it looks bad to see them go up the river at all."

"So it does, but there are forts farther on, and they may not run the risk of going that far."

"Very true, Dick, and I only wish the Liberty Boys could give those fellows a peppering."

"Yes, Bob, it would be some satisfaction, I must admit."

The boys watched the vessels for some little time, seeing no more come up, however.

The ships lay to at length, but it was not likely that any troops would be landed, as the people were now aroused and would oppose any such move most bitterly.

Dick and Bob hurried back to camp to get their horses, stopping on the way at the house of the girls' friends.

"You had best go home as soon as you can," said Dick. "We don't know how soon the enemy may land troops."

"Do you think they will, brother?" asked Edith.

"I think there is every danger of it, and the sooner you get away the better."

The father of the girls' friends said he would close his house and send his family away at once.

Arrangements were made without delay, and Dick and Bob said good-by to the girls.

"We must stay and do our duty," Dick said. "There will be fighting; no doubt, and we shall have to take a part in it."

Having bidden adieu to the girls, Dick and Bob hurried on, procured their horses and rode into the city.

Some war vessels had gone up the East river, and it was likely that troops had already been moved to points on Long Island opposite the island of New York, so that they might be landed as soon as an opportunity presented itself.

There was great excitement in the city, for it was not known how soon the enemy would try to make a landing.

The boys remained in the city till dark, and then rode back to camp.

They saw nothing of Ethel and her father, nor of

Hurry, but they knew that in case of the city being threatened, Mr. Jobkins would look out for his friends.

The Liberty Boys were all eager to hear the news, and there was great excitement in the camp.

Dick, of course, could not tell them very much, for there was as much conjecture as truth, and things were very uncertain.

Dick and Bob and a number of the boys rode into the city again, but there was nothing more to tell, and there had been no further alarms.

The boys returned at length, and Dick said to them all:

"There is no telling what will be done, at this moment, and it may be days before anything happens.

"All we can do is to wait and be patient, ready to do our duty as soon as we are called upon.

"There seems to be no immediate danger, and yet I cannot tell, as I have told you.

"All there is to be done is to wait, and when the time comes for us to act, I know that we will all be ready."

The boys cheered Dick, and then settled down for the night, and no one approaching the camp would have guessed that it had so lately been the scene of so much excitement.

CHAPTER X.

TWO SLIPPERY FELLOWS.

In the morning Dick and Bob went into the city to learn the news.

Mark was left to look after the camp, being thoroughly trustworthy.

There had been no alarm during the night, and matters were about as they had been the previous evening.

No more vessels had gone up either river, and none had approached the city.

A number of vessels had gone up as far as Kip's Bay, on the east side, but no demonstration had as yet been made.

General Putnam, in command in the city, had received no orders as yet, and the city was still considered safe.

The boys were walking down Broadway, and had nearly reached Trinity Church when Dick whispered:

"There are our mysterious man in black and Mr. Harry Hurry."

"Two of our country's enemies, I'll be bound," muttered Bob.

"Quick," said Dick, "we will catch at least one of the rascals."

The two men walking together had just entered the gates as Dick espied them.

He and Bob at once hurried after them.

Hurry and the man in black went into the churchyard along the south side.

The two boys followed, and Hurry, turning, saw them.

He whispered something to his companion, and then each shot off in a different direction.

"Never mind the man in black, Bob," said Dick. "Catch the other fellow."

Hurry had evidently thought that the boys would separate.

Instead of doing so, they both put after him.

Seeing himself pursued, he ran at full speed, shot off to the north after reaching the nave, and made toward a wall overlooking the rear courts of the houses on Thames street.

Dick was after him in a moment.

Then, when almost to the wall, he shot off to the west, and was up the wall like a cat in an instant.

Dick followed so quickly that he caught Hurry's hat as the man dropped into the street.

In another moment Dick went sliding down the wall into the street below, Bob following quickly.

The man made a dash for a narrow alley next to a sugar house.

Down he went, Dick after him, and Bob close behind.

The chase was hot, but Hurry seemed to thoroughly know the region he was in, and darted into a side alley, scrambled over a high wall, and darted across a paved court and into a house used as a low tavern.

Dick was well ahead of Bob by this time, but close upon Hurry.

He dashed into the house, when suddenly a door a little ahead of him was slammed in his face.

He pushed it open and entered the taproom of the tavern.

There were a dozen men sitting about, and they regarded Dick with angry looks.

He caught sight of Hurry, through one window, making for the opposite window, and followed.

"Here, stay an' pay yer footin', young sir," cried a red-faced man, seizing Dick by the arm.

"You'd better find your own," said Dick, as he sent the man on his back by a clever turn of the wrist.

Then he shot out of the door and after the Tory.

In the street, however, he saw no sign of the fellow.

He went down the street on the run, however, and just caught sight of Hurry turning the corner of another street, at the next cross street.

"There is a perfect tangle of alleys, courts and passages in there," he said, "and the fellow may go down one while I am looking in another."

Then he returned to the church entrance, where he found Bob waiting for him.

"The fellow is like an eel," said Bob, "and I couldn't get within sight of him."

"I had nearly as hard a time myself," answered Dick, "and finally gave it up as a bad job."

"There's one thing about it, Dick, he'll keep out of our way after this, and so will the man in black."

"The two are working together and are spies. I might find out where Hurry lives from Jobkins, but the other man is a mystery."

"Yes, for he is wonderfully quick for such a seemingly old man."

"I don't think he is as old as he looks, Bob. I think he is in disguise for some reason."

"Very likely, Dick."

"He may be more dangerous than Hurry, but we do not know it, and we do know that Hurry is an avowed enemy."

"Well, we may catch him yet, as well as this fellow who goes about with forged letters in his possession."

"It is clear enough that the man knows I suspect him now," rejoined Dick, "as he fled at sight of us."

"Yes, and he's as slippery as Hurry, no doubt."

The boys went about the city, making inquiries, watching, listening and observing.

They saw who were patriots and who were not, and learned enough to show them that men who were quiet at this time would be most loud spoken the moment the enemy effected a landing.

They were nearing the corner on Pearl street, where stood Fraunce's tavern, when they suddenly saw the mysterious man in black approaching.

Upon seeing them he turned and hurried along Pearl street, past the tavern.

The boys shot after him, when he suddenly darted across the street and into a crooked alley leading into Broad street.

The boys were after him in a moment.

Reaching the alley, they shot into it, but saw no sign of the man.

"Run through to the end, Bob," said Dick.

Bob ran ahead, while Dick walked on more slowly, examining every little nook in the wall to see if perchance the man had hidden in one of them.

He saw nothing of him, however, but passed a door set in a wall, through which the man might have passed.

The door was now locked and bolted, and there was no evidence that there was anyone in the house to which it gave entrance.

Bob presently returned, and said:

"I didn't see a sign of him, Dick, either in the alley or on Broad street. The man must fly, to get away so soon."

"He is very quick in his motions, Bob, but I think he has friends and slipped through a door in the alley. He could not get over the wall, as it is too high."

"Well, he is as slippery a fellow as Hurry, and probably as big a scoundrel, if not worse," declared Bob, "and I hope some day we'll catch them, for our own satisfaction."

"I have no use to catch either of them, except to put a stop to their mischief," said Dick.

At length the boys returned to camp, the situation being apparently no worse than on the previous day.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ESCAPE OF THE LIBERTY BOYS.

On the following morning as Dick was preparing to go to the city, the sound of heavy bombarding was heard from the neighborhood of Kip's Bay.

Under cover of the fire from the ships the enemy had landed a large force from Long Island.

At the same time the ships on the other side sent in a heavy fire.

Washington sent two divisions of troops to oppose the landing of the enemy, and at the same time dispatched a

messenger to Putnam bidding him withdraw his forces. The Liberty Boys, hearing the firing, at once broke camp, mounted their horses, and moved north.

Then they received orders to make all haste to the upper end of the island.

They hurried on, and got past Kip's bay in safety.

Meanwhile the enemy sent troops toward the upper end and moved toward the interior.

Advancing rapidly, Dick found his way blocked above and then heard from scouts that the enemy was coming up behind.

They were surrounded, in fact, and must make a bold dash for freedom.

Dick was well acquainted with New York island, and knew all the roads.

He also knew the interior of the island, which, with its woods and swamps, was a closed book to many.

The main roads were closed against him, but there were passes known to him, of which the enemy knew nothing.

Colonel Aaron Burr guided Putnam through some of these, while Dick prepared to lead the Liberty Boys through another.

The day was hot and sultry, and the troops suffered greatly while hurrying along the dusty roads.

Dick found a pass which was cool and shady, and through this the brave boys made their way with as little noise as possible.

When well into this, Dick said to Bob:

"Follow this road, Bob. You can't miss it. I will go ahead and reconnoiter."

Dick pushed on rapidly, therefore, Bob following with the Liberty Boys.

Reaching a point well up on the island, where it was more open, Dick advanced cautiously.

From a bit of rising ground, he saw a considerable body of the enemy some distance on the right.

One wing of this force extended nearly to the upper part of the pass the boys were on.

In case they were discovered, this wing could be thrown rapidly forward to stop them.

"With caution we can pass them without their being any the wiser," Dick said to himself.

He had not been discovered, being hidden by trees.

Riding back to meet the Liberty Boys, he said:

"The enemy are ahead of us, but with a little circum-spection we can get by them without their knowing it."

"Let everyone make as little noise as possible," added Bob, "and we can fool the redcoats."

They went on at a good, but not rapid pace, and there was no unnecessary noise.

They heard firing from the direction of Bloomingdale, and it was evident that the ships on the Hudson were harassing the fugitives hurrying through that section.

The thunder of the guns aided the boys, however, and Dick put them at a gallop when passing the greatest point of danger.

Getting well by this point, they were discovered by the enemy.

The latter now made a dash to extend their line and cut off the daring young fellows.

It was too late, however, and the plucky fellows went on with a rush and a cheer.

"Make all the noise you like now, boys," laughed Bob. "They can't catch us."

The boys cheered and waved their hats, and then went galloping on toward Harlem Plains.

Here they halted for a time, proceeding to Harlem Heights, where, later, various bodies of troops came up, many greatly fatigued by their rapid march.

"Well, if they did surround us, we managed to slip through," said Bob.

"Yes, and I thought we could with proper care," answered Dick. "The advantage was on our side, with our better knowledge of the island."

The enemy, having effected a landing, now proceeded to draw a line right across the island.

The patriots were strongly entrenched on the heights, the plains being the debatable ground separating the two camps.

The Liberty Boys were detailed to act as a scouting party to watch the enemy, being able to move rapidly, and being possessed of great daring and spirit.

Early the next morning, being out upon a reconnoit-ering tour, they discovered a large force of the enemy making their way through a pass at the southern ex-tremity of the plains.

Dick immediately gave the signal for an attack.

The gallant lads at once rushed upon the enemy, fir-ing a rattling volley.

This aroused the patriots, and two divisions of troops were sent to aid the plucky young fellows.

With the enemy was a company of American Loyal-ists or Tories, commanded by Harry Hurry, in the uni-form of a captain.

"There's our friend, Hurry," said Dick to Bob.

"Well, we'll send him away in one," laughed Bob.

The Liberty Boys were particularly fierce in dealing with Tories, more so than toward the British, in fact.

These men were born Americans, and yet turned against their country, and the grave young patriots re-garded them with supreme contempt.

While the others attacked the redcoats, Dick Slater led his gallant lads against Hurry and his Tories.

"Pitch into them, Liberty Boys," he cried, "Give it to the renegades."

"Liberty forever, down with the Tories!" shouted the boys, as they rushed forward, following Dick.

Then they hurled themselves upon the Tories with the greatest impetuosity, firing a ringing volley.

Rushing on, discharging their pistols, they caused the enemy's line to waver, and at last to break in disorder.

Hurry himself, mounted on a white horse, was the first to retreat, and Bob shouted with a laugh:

"Look at Captain Hurry, trying his best to act up to his name!"

There was a roar from the daring boys, and the Tor-ies, dismayed by the sound, and having no leader, scat-tered in many directions.

The Liberty Boys did not pursue them, Dick being satisfied with having dispersed the company.

He now joined the other divisions, and the enemy were driven back, the patriots returning to the heights.

The Liberty Boys were greatly pleased with their success, and Bob said to Dick:

"The boys take more satisfaction in having routed Captain Hurry and his Tories than if they had beaten twice their number of redcoats."

"Yes, and I can well understand it," returned Dick.

"The fellow calls himself Hurry, and that's the way he went," said Ben Spurlock to Sam Sanderson.

"He made good time on that coach horse of his," Sam laughed in reply. "I'll wager that the animal never went so fast behind Hurry's chaise."

"Not even when riding down a poor blind man," said Ben, who had heard the story from Bob.

"No, nor when trying to run over the young ladies," Sam added.

The two camps were now well made, and the plains was considered to be the dividing line between them.

The appearance there of a body of men from either camp was considered as a signal for a skirmish, and these were frequent.

The enemy would probably not confine their operations to the island of New York, however, and, in a day or so Dick was despatched to the city to learn their intentions.

CHAPTER XII.

DICK OUTWITS THE MAN IN BLACK.

Dick, being privileged to take a number of the Liberty Boys with him, if he chose, picked out Bob Estabrook, Mark Morrison, Ben Spurlock and Sam Sanderson to accompany him.

The boys would go disguised, and not all together, so as not to excite suspicion.

The boys set out early in the forenoon, and made their way cautiously toward the enemy's lines.

As they neared the lines, Dick suddenly dashed out and the others fired, seemingly at him.

He dashed on, and some redcoats came out.

"The plained rebels never ketched me," he said, simply, but the bullets rattled like the ole scratch."

"Who were the rebels?" asked one of the redcoats.

"The Liberty Boys, an' yer better look out for 'em, else they'll be comin' right in on yer."

There was instant bustle and excitement in camp, and Dick slipped on without being observed.

Pretty well over toward the Harlem river, Ben and Sam found a man driving a flock of sheep which he meant to sell to the redcoats.

He was having considerable trouble with them, and the boys offered to help him.

The offer was accepted, and the boys got through the lines without trouble.

Then while the farmer was negotiating with the redcoats, they went on unnoticed.

Bob and Mark made their way over to the Bloomingdale road, on the west, where they saw a man driving a load of hay.

They concealed themselves in the hay and got well

beyond the lines, when they crawled out and took to their feet.

"That was a pretty warm berth," said Bob.

"Yes, but we would have had it warmer yet if the enemy had found us and guessed our identity," laughed Mark.

"True, but they did not, and now we're safe."

There was another line below the upper one, but the boys had no trouble in passing it.

Reaching the city, they went to a tavern not far from the Common, which had been settled upon as a meeting place before they started.

They found Dick already there, but Ben and Sam had not yet come in.

"Stay here, Mark, and wait for the boys," said Dick, "and Bob and I will go and see what we can learn."

"Very good," said Mark.

The boys made their way through Partition street to Nassau, and turned down.

Not far from John street there was a tavern, and they entered this to get something to eat, and see what they could learn.

There were several redcoats in the place, but they paid no attention to two boys of ordinary appearance.

They would have been greatly astonished had they known who the boys were.

They were talking of various matters, but of nothing of interest to Dick.

The latter was about to leave, having settled the score, when a newcomer appeared.

This was no less a person than the man in black who had presented the supposed note from General Putnam.

He cast a swift look at Dick, and then one at Bob, and whispered something to one of the redcoats near by.

"What, rebels?" cried the Briton, who was an officer. "Where? How dare rebels come and sit with us?"

"There!" said the other, pointing to the two boys.

The latter were making toward a rear door, the way to the front being barred.

"Here, you rebels, stop!" cried the officer. "Gentlemen, there is Dick Slater, the rebel spy, and one of his comrades."

The redcoats sprang to their feet, and Dick and Bob hurried to the door.

They ran out, passed along a hall, and so to a court in the rear.

"Rebels, rebels, stop the rebels!" cried the redcoats.

At one side of the court was a board fence with a gate in it, leading into John street.

Next to the fence was a house with an ornamental lantern over the door.

Dick and Bob ran to the fence, intending to scale it if the gate were locked.

"Rebels, rebels!" the redcoats again shouted.

People came running out of the house as well as from the tavern.

Fortunately the gate was not locked, and it opened outward.

Dick discovered this in an instant, and threw it open.

"Rebels, rebels, stop the rebels!" shouted the redcoats and citizens.

The redcoat who had first denounced Dick shouted the loudest.

The gate opened, and Dick and Bob sprang out.

"Stop the rebels!" the redcoats cried.

Dick struck the leader a stinging blow on the jaw.

Bob ran at another coming from an opposite direction and upset him.

The redcoat whom Dick had struck dropped his sword and sat down heavily on the curb.

Two or three others, coming out quickly, fell over him.

The man whom Bob upset fell on his back and yelled hoarsely.

Fortunately there was no one else coming from that direction at the moment.

While the redcoats were getting themselves out of the angle, Dick and Bob went on at a swift walk.

In the middle of the block there was an alleyway nine feet wide, leading to the entrance of the theatre in John street.

The boys quickly entered this.

It was the custom for the patrons of the theatre to send their servants in the afternoon to reserve places for them.

Already there was quite a crowd of persons of this sort waiting for the doors to open.

Dick and Bob quickly mixed in with the crowd, who said nothing.

It was nearly time for the door to open, and Dick cast an anxious look toward the farther end of the alley.

There was no sound of alarm, however, and just then the door opened and the crowd pressed forward.

"It was lucky I thought of this," whispered Dick.

"Yes, but could we have been seen entering?"

"I think not, but we will wait a little while and if there is no hue and cry, we will go out."

"And if there is?"

"Get out some way," shortly.

They did not present cards of admission, but let others pass them, and presently looked out into the alley.

A few late patrons came up the alley and passed into the theatre.

Two redcoats, coming from the direction of Broadway, passed the entrance of the alley and looked in carelessly.

There was no unusual sound, and the boys made their way out.

They quickly turned toward Broadway, hearing no alarm.

Reaching it, they turned down, crossed the street, and walked with a careless gait.

"That was a lucky escape," said Bob.

"Yes, and we must keep a watch on our man in black, for he will denounce us on sight."

"So he will, for the enemy hold the city now, and he can shout rebels at us with no danger to himself."

The boys turned into Liberty street, walking toward the East river.

Suddenly, as they neared Nassau street, they heard some sort of commotion.

Then Ben and Sam came flying around the corner.

"Hello!" cried Bob. "What's the trouble?"

"That fellow in black called us rebels, said we were Dick Slater and his chum, and set the crowd on us."

"Go in here," said Dick, pointing to a little draper's shop close at hand.

The boys obeyed, and Dick and Bob walked on, the crowd suddenly coming around the corner.

"Hello, did you see two boys running?" they asked.

"Yes, and they ran that way," pointing toward Broadway.

The crowd hurried on and quickly passed the shop the boys had entered.

Then the man in black came hurrying along, and at sight of Dick was ready to shout.

Then Dick stepped up to him quietly, and said:

"If you make a sound I'll shoot you. I have a pistol in my pocket."

CHAPTER XIII.

HURRY GIVES DICK AN IDEA.

The spy turned sallow and looked savagely at Dick.

"That will do you no good," the boy said.

"Not a bit," said Bob.

"Turn and go up Nassau street," Dick continued. "If you turn your head or make an outcry till you get to Partition street, I will fire. I can see a long distance."

"Ha! you are bold boys, but I will get——"

"Not a word!" said Dick. "Go or I will do it now and say it was an accident."

The man trembled, turned, and walked straight up the street, never once turning his head.

Dick did not wait for him to get to Maiden Lane, but quickly hurried to the draper's shop and signalled to the boys.

The crowd which had pursued them had disappeared by this time, and they were safe.

All four now made their way to Broadway and down to the Bowling Green, where they sat under the trees.

Redcoats and bluejackets went by, but paid no attention to them.

Presently Ethel came along, saw Dick, and said:

"Why, Cap——"

"How do you do?" said Dick, stepping forward quickly. "Sh! be careful. Someone might hear you."

"But I thought you had left the city," said Edith, in a low tone.

"So we did, but some of us are here again, seeing what we can learn."

"It is not dangerous?"

"Yes, but we are on the lookout for that. I was recognized not long ago by an enemy."

"Was it Harry?"

"No, but a friend of his, a man in black."

"A man who looks at you as if he would read your very thoughts?"

"Yes, but he did not read many of mine, and I gave him as fierce a look as he gave me."

"I don't like him. I think he has evil intentions."

"Perhaps he has, but, at any rate, he is no friend of ours."

"He has been with my brother Harry a good deal of late, and I think they are up to some mischief."

"Very likely. Have you seen your brother lately?"

"I saw him yesterday."

"Then he must have left his company. We met them the day after the evacuation."

"His company? Did he have one?"

"Yes, made up of Tories. We routed them."

Ethel now sat down, and Dick presented Ben and Sam.

"You have not seen your brother to-day, then?" he asked.

"No, not to-day," the girl answered. "He may have gone back to his company."

"If he can find it," laughed Bob. "We gave them such a scattering that I doubt if he could get them together in a week."

"You must not let him see you," the girl answered. "If he recognizes you, he would cause your immediate arrest."

"Or try to," said Bob, "but it is not likely that we would stand still and let him do it."

"Well, I trust that you will not meet him," said Ethel. "He would do you all an injury if he could."

"Get up, boys," said Dick, "not too quickly. Walk toward the river or up Broadway. Hurry is coming."

The boys arose, one at a time, and walked away.

Bob went toward the river, while Ben and Sam walked up Broadway.

Dick brushed his hair over his forehead, assumed a simple look, and sat on another bench.

"Don't look at me at all," he said to Ethel.

The girl looked in quite another direction, and presently Harry Hurry came up.

"What are you doing, Ethel, in a public place like this?" he demanded. "It is very improper. You might be insulted."

"There hasn't a single redcoat spoken to me," Ethel answered. "I do not see anything improper in being here."

"Where is father? With that rascally old rebel lawyer, I suppose? Old Jobkins ought to be driven out of the city."

"He is not a rascal, he is a very kind and respectable old gentleman."

"H'm! he'd better keep quiet then, or he'll get in trouble. We don't want rebels in the city."

"Why don't you drive father out, then? He is one."

"H'm! he is of no account, except to keep on living, squandering the money that belongs by right to me," with a snarl.

"Don't you regard me at all?" said Ethel. "I am an heir, as well as you."

"Oh, I will look after you, of course. The will settles that. I am your guardian."

"I did not know that the will said that," said the girl, in surprise.

"Well, it does. Everything is left to me, but I am sure that you are taken care of."

Dick smiled, for what Jobkins had told him was very much unlike this.

"I wonder if the fellow has had another will forged," he said to himself. "Jove! the man in black! He would be just the man to do it."

"I never heard of any such will," said Ethel. "Father has very little to leave, anyhow, and I should think you were well able to look out for yourself without that."

"A gentleman needs a good income these days," said Hurry, loftily. "I have a position to keep up."

He looked over at Dick once or twice, failed to recognize him, and said with a snarl:

"Haven't you any more decency than to sit there and listen to a private conversation, you fool?"

Dick turned a vacant stare upon the man and drawled: "You talkin' to me, huh?"

"Yes, I am," sharply. "Go away from here."

"I guess I was here fust, wa'n't I, huh? Ef you don't want me to listen, why don't you go away yourself, huh? I'm goin' ter stay just where I be."

"I think you had better go," said the girl, who was afraid that Dick would be recognized. "Won't you go away, please?"

"Why, suttin'ly, but I wouldn't do et fur him, not if he went on his knees."

Then Dick got up slowly and walked away in a loose, jointed style which was most unlike his usual manner.

He joined the boys on Broadway near the church and said:

"The fellow did not know me, and I am glad I remained. He has some sort of scheme on hand to get hold of his father's money, and I think that forged will plays some part in it."

"Ha! I'll warrant it does, when Hurry and that rascally old scamp in black are associated," muttered Bob.

"Just what I thought when I heard Hurry talking about a will," said Dick.

"But old Jobkins has the matter in charge, has he not?"

"Yes, and he drew up the will, probably the only one that Mr. Hazelhurst ever made."

"Then Hurry must know that Jobkins would oppose any effort to probate any other."

"He should know it, of course, but—scatter, boys—here comes that old rascal now."

Dick had caught sight of the man in black coming down Broadway, some little distance off.

Bob turned down a side street close at hand, Ben and Sam crossed Broadway, and Dick went down.

They all met again near the new church, and then went to the tavern, where they found Mark waiting for them.

"Well, we have had some exciting times," said Dick, but there were still more exciting events to come on the morrow.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRE IN THE CITY.

The five Liberty Boys had their supper in the tavern and did not go out again that evening.

They had a large room with three beds in it on the second floor, and spent the evening in pleasant conversation.

The people of the tavern were all good patriots, and the boys were therefore perfectly safe.

Dick had a small bed to himself, there being two larger ones, occupied by Bob and Mark and Ben and Sam, respectively.

They went to bed soon after nine o'clock and were sound asleep when, soon after midnight, they were awakened by hearing a great ringing of church bells and the booming of cannon.

Dick was the first to arouse himself.

Hurrying on some of his clothes, he went to the window, having already noticed that it was quite light in the room.

Raising the blinds, he saw a bright light in the lower part of the city.

"What's the matter, Dick?" asked Bob, getting out of bed.

"There's a big fire in the lower part of the city, Bob."

"H'm! they will say that the rebels started it, I suppose," sputtered Bob.

"Very likely, but no one can tell how it started at this time, I don't suppose."

The other boys were soon looking out of the windows, and there were many conjectures as to how the fire started.

"It is a conflagration," said Dick. "I am afraid it will be of great extent. We had better dress and go out."

"Do you think it will spread as far as this, Dick?" asked Mark.

"I cannot tell, but I hope not, Mark."

"Do you think it will be safe to go out, Dick? We may be recognized."

"I think not, Bob. We may be of service, and we ought to think of that."

"Yes, I suppose so."

The boys dressed themselves and went out on Broadway and as far as Trinity Church.

At this time the fire was below Beaver street, raging most furiously between Broad and Whitehall streets.

All the houses in that section were destroyed, and the chances seemed to be that the fire would extend in a northerly direction right through the city.

When the flames reached Beaver street the wind changed.

All the houses on Beaver street, from Broad to the Bowling Green, were consumed, and part of those on the east side.

The fire then leaped across Broadway and went up nearly as far as Partition street, now Fulton.

Soldiers, sailors and citizens worked vigorously, trying to put out the fire, and Dick and the others worked with them.

Fortunately no one recognized them, but, as the fire extended, they hurried back to the tavern.

This was beyond the reach of the fire, fortunately, although at one time a part of the new church was in danger, the fire creeping along Mortkile, now Barclay street.

All the houses between Broadway and the river, from

Morris street to Partition, were burned or damaged, and in all some five hundred dwellings were consumed.

Trinity Church was burned with the rest, its tall wooden spire being a pyramid of flame, and presented a most weird sight.

The march of the flames was at length arrested, and the boys went to their quarters, blackened with smoke and well tired out.

"It didn't touch either Mr. Jobkins' house or Mr. Hazlehurst's, did it, Dick?" asked Bob, as they were going to bed.

"No, Mr. Jobkins lived in the other part of Beaver street, and the part of Exchange place where Ethel lived was not touched."

"That was very fortunate for them. You don't know where Harry Hurry lived?"

"No, I do not."

"We don't care very much, although if he has lost his house it is a misfortune."

"I doubt if he owned one. He never keeps anything, Ethel says."

"Then probably he did not own one."

The boys went to bed and slept till well into the forenoon, being thoroughly tired out.

The tavern was not injured, and there were plenty of men to work on the ruins without them.

It was dangerous as well, and Dick thought it best to let the boys sleep.

He awoke before the others, and roused Bob without awaking the rest.

The two boys went down to their breakfast and then, altering their disguises somewhat, set off down Broadway.

There were smoking ruins all around, and it was saddening to look upon what were once stately buildings and now only blackened wrecks.

The origin of the fire was accidental, but there were many who were ready to blame it upon the patriots.

Dick and Bob both knew that it would be most dangerous to be recognized at such a time, and they were both cautious.

They did not address each other by their names, and, much of the time, did not walk together.

Near the ruins of Trinity Church they met Jobkins.

There was a large crowd gathered and Dick, drawing Jobkins aside, asked:

"How are our friends? They were not burned out, I understand?"

"No, they were not, but they are in trouble, or at least the poor girl is."

Then the old man led Dick well away from the crowd, Bob following.

"The fire did not reach their house," Jobkins continued, "but the excitement was too much for the old man."

"Yes, I suppose it would be," quietly.

"He died, early this morning, and the poor girl is left without a friend except myself."

"You must count us in, sir," said Dick.

"Yes, but it is extremely perilous for you to be in the city, and what you do will have to be done quietly."

"I can offer a home at my mother's during these first sad days," said Dick.

"That is very kind of you, but I think she had better stay here. My housekeeper's daughter will be with her much of the time."

"When will the funeral take place?"

"To-morrow or the day after. That scoundrel Harry Hurry has already shown his hand."

"In what way?" asked Dick, although he knew what the old lawyer would say.

"He has made a claim to the property, and presents a will dated subsequently to the one I drew up."

"Which is a forgery!" decidedly.

"So I believe. The old man did not employ anyone but myself. How are we going to prove this instrument to be a forgery, however?"

"I could do so if I saw the genuine and this other together."

"But Harry Hurry has it, and he knows you."

"I will take the risk of that," and Dick related what he had heard Hurry say to Ethel, and his previous knowledge of the man in black.

"H'p! I know this fellow. His name is Steeleton, and no one knows just where he lives. He is a secret agent of the British."

"Is he a lawyer?"

"I don't know. He may be. All lawyers are not honest," dryly. "He might be."

"And this supposed will?"

"Hurry has it."

"He has not offered it for probate?"

"No. I think he wants us to compromise."

"Then you did not admit the genuineness of his instrument?"

"On the contrary, I declared it to be a forgery at once."

"Where is the will you drew up?"

"In my strong box."

"Where is Hurry?"

"I don't know. He was at my house this morning. Like a vulture. The man shows no sense of decency."

"He has none," shortly.

"There come two men in black," said Bob. "Hurry has put on the trappings of woe, even if he feels none."

"Get them to your house," said Dick. "We will join you shortly."

Then he and Bob slipped away before they were observed.

CHAPTER XV.

THE READING OF THE WILL.

From a deep doorway, Dick saw Mr. Jobkins speak to Hurry and his companion.

Then the three turned into Wall street and walked toward the river.

The boys followed, at a safe distance, and saw them enter the little old house in Beaver street.

There were many redcoats about, and Dick noticed a

number of evil looking men who took care not to get near to the soldiers.

He was not recognized, and in the crowd, little or no attention was paid to him.

The three men had been in the house a few minutes when Dick raised the big brass knocker and knocked twice.

In a short time the door was opened and the boys were admitted by the housekeeper.

She closed, locked, bolted and barred the door, and led the way to a little study in the rear.

Here the boys found the three men sitting at a long table.

Hurry glanced sharply at Dick and Bob and snapped "Who are these persons?"

"Witnesses," answered Jobkins, shortly.

"Who are they?" snappishly.

"Tell him, Mr. Jobkins," said Dick, "and get paper and ink to take my deposition."

"This is Captain Slater, of the Liberty Boys, and this is Lieutenant Estabrook."

"Rebels, proscribed rebels," said Hurry. "They will be arrested the moment they leave the house."

"That is irrelevant," said Dick, seating himself. "Have you the original will, sir, and also letters signed by the deceased Mr. Hazlehurst?"

"I have," and Jobkins laid the will and three or four letters before Dick.

The latter looked them over carefully and said:

"Will you write what I say, sir? 'Captain Richard Slater, being sworn, deposes that——' You will take my oath now?"

"Yes," and Dick was sworn.

Jobkins wrote rapidly, and Dick continued, at moderate speed.

"I find certain characteristics in the handwriting of the deceased which show an individuality most strongly marked."

Then Dick pointed out certain peculiarities which were most noticeable, and then those which were not apparent at the first glance but which, later, would impress themselves on the mind.

The signature of the will showed all these characteristics, and there could be no doubt that the same person signed the will and the letters.

"All this is unnecessary," said Steeleton. "No one denies that Mr. Hazlehurst signed that will, but we have a later one."

"Let me see it," said Jobkins.

Harry Hurry held it in his hand, spreading it out so that all could see it.

Dick looked at the signature, that being the only part which interested him.

He examined it carefully, and saw many marked differences in the two signatures, although to an ordinary observer they were identical.

Hurry, seeing Dick's scrutinizing look, was about to draw the paper away when the boy put his hand on it heavily.

"Wait a minute," he said. "This instrument purports to be the last will and testament of Mr. Hazlehurst. I

prove to you that the deceased never signed it. Are you taking me down, Mr. Jobkins?"

"We will take the letters which form these two signatures, seriatim, and observe the differences."

Dick then pointed these out, noting loops, cross strokes and other peculiarities.

Mr. Jobkins wrote it down, and Bob looked carefully at both signatures as Dick spoke.

He saw the differences as they were pointed out which he had not seen before, and saw that while the signatures admitted to be Mr. Hazlehurst's showed certain slight differences, they were essentially the same.

The signatures of the two wills, however, showed radical variations.

On their face they seemed the same, but when subjected to critical scrutiny, they were very unlike in their leading characteristics.

"One thing more," continued Dick. "The person who claims to have drawn up this will presented to me a letter purporting to have been written by General Putnam, in which——"

"That has nothing to do with the case in point," snapped Steeleton.

"That letter was pronounced a forgery by General Putnam. Now observe this signature and the body of the will. They were written by the same hand."

Hurry tried to pull away the parchment, but could not.

Then Dick pointed out similarities in the signature and the body, showing that both had been written by the same person.

He took off his hand and Hurry snatched away the will, darting an angry glance at the man in black.

The latter's face was livid, but he said nothing.

"I will get experts myself," said Hurry, "and they will swear that the signatures were all written by my father. I am not going to listen to any more such rubbish."

Then he arose, and Dick darted a swift glance at Jobkins.

"The business is over, gentlemen," he said. "I shall propose the probating of your instrument with all my might. There is nothing further to be done here."

Hurry and Steeleton left the room, and Jobkins closed the door and locked it.

Then he opened another and said:

"Make haste. Someone will let you out."

The boys went down a back stairway, were met by a young woman and were led across a small paved court to a door in a wall.

They passed through this into another court, then into an alley, and so to Pearl street, well east of Broad.

"That was a wise precaution of the old man's," said Bob, as they walked toward Wall street.

"Yes, for Hurry no doubt has redcoats watching the house at this very moment."

"Will they enter it?"

"Not without a search warrant, and it will take some time to get one. We are only 'rebels,' you see, and not criminals."

"Where are you going now, Dick?"

"Back to the tavern, by a roundabout way."

They went to the river, walked up to John street, then through John street, up Nassau and so to the tavern.

Here they found the others eating breakfast, and eager to hear where they had been and all about it.

"It will be more dangerous than ever for us to go out now," said Mark.

"We will have to be more cautious, at any rate," answered Bob, "but, as far as the danger goes, we do not mind that."

"We have not learned any of the intentions of the enemy yet," observed Dick, "and that was our primary object in coming down here."

"This fire has upset everyone's plans, I guess," said Ben, "but we'll have to get to work and find out something."

They all set out in a short time, Dick and Bob procuring different disguises so as to run no risk of being recognized by Hurry and the man in black if they were met.

All the boys wore clothes different from those they had worn the day before, and did not look at all as they had when they reached the city.

Dick now went alone, and Bob and Ben, and Mark and Sam together.

Dick now looked like an attorney's clerk, very prim and precise, and as if aping the manners of his elders.

He wore his hair brushed down on his forehead, and tied with a ribbon at the back, he had silver shoe and knee buckles, and was very smart in his appearance.

Walking at a brisk pace down the street, as if having very little time to spare, he suddenly encountered Hurry and the man in black near Liberty street, but neither of the two recognized him.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANOTHER MEETING WITH THE PLOTTERS.

The two worthies were talking earnestly together, and possibly that accounted for their not noticing Dick.

"Break into the house and get the money," Hurry was saying. "It must be there."

Dick went on, turned into Liberty street, and then, altering his manner, turned and walked up Broadway.

"The scoundrels are bound to get the money by hook or by crook," he said to himself. "I would like to hear more if I can, safely."

As he reached the two plotters he heard Hurry say:

"Suppose it is? They won't know that we did it, will they?"

"No, and possession is nine points of the law, but are you sure there is any money there?"

"There must be. The old man was not a pauper. He must have money hidden in the house."

"Perhaps the old lawyer has it hidden in his own."

"Then we can break in there."

"Ha! not so easy a matter! I'd like to know where he spirited those young rebels to. I could not have gotten away quicker myself."

"I don't care anything about that, I want the money. I need it, and I must——"

The two men suddenly stopped as two or three redcoats came up.

Dick stopped, took a paper from his pocket and began to look at it.

"Hello, Hurry!" said one of the redcoats. "You are wanted. There is an expedition up to Throck's Neck going out. We want to get behind the rebels, and then attack them in front as well."

Dick was greatly interested in this.

"Well, but I can't go now. My father died only this morning, and——"

"You can go in a day or two, can't you? You must. You're a captain, and you can't get out of it."

"But I am on a furlough, and——"

"Then you don't want to meet these rebels, eh? It's an important move. Lower Westchester is full of Loyalists, and they will rally to our side the instant——"

"I tell you I've got to think of my father," said Hurry, and then turning he saw Dick.

"Hello, what are you doing here?" the Tory asked.

Steeleton also looked sharply at Dick, who said:

"Eh, what's that? H'm! I'm looking over this black list. I'm afraid I'll never collect a penny from any of them."

"Never mind the attorney's clerk, Hurry," said the redcoat. "You can't get out of going——"

"Harry Hurry, supposed to be an alias," said Dick.

"One thousand pounds. H'm, and another thousand to—are you any kin to this person?"

Hurry flushed deeply and snorted:

"No, I am not. Excuse me, Beauchamp. I must go and make arrangements for——" and then he shot off, without completing his sentence.

"This fellow is a coward," said one of the redcoats.

"See how he ran the other day before those young rebels, the Liberty Boys."

"Yes, and his men ran in as many directions as themselves. Is that the sort of people in lower Westchester?"

Steeleton went on, and Dick turned and followed the British officer.

If there was an expedition going out, he wanted to learn all that he could about it.

The redcoats got to talking about something else, however, and presently turned down Wall street.

"I have learned something, at any rate," said Dick to himself.

Then he made his way to the house in Beaver street. There was no one watching it, and Dick went up and raised the knocker.

"Is your master in?" he said to the housekeeper, who did not know him.

"What is your business?"

"The matter of the will of the late Hazlehurst, deceased; also of one Hurry, so called, held in contempt, by everyone, likewise——"

"My word, how you do talk!" cried the woman. "Step in and I will see if he will attend to you."

"I think he will, Mrs. Blossom," laughed Dick. "My disguise must be a good one if neither you nor Hurry nor that rascally old lawyer can penetrate it."

"My sakes, Captain, can it be you?" the woman cried. "I never would have guessed it."

Jobkins came out of his den at that moment and said:

"Why, my young chameleon, you have as many changes in a day as there are days in the week. What brings you here now, when you are looked for on every hand?"

"Matters of importance," said Dick.

They went into the little study, and Dick told what he had learned.

"Breaking and entering, eh?" said the advocate. "What is like them both. However, there is very little money in the house, so that their errand would not pay for the trouble they took."

"Did Mr. Hazlehurst leave very much?" asked Dick.

"No, not very much, enough for the girl to live on."

"But not enough for Hurry?"

"He would spend it all in a year, or even less."

"He was given something, I suppose?"

"Yes, and he'll run through it in a month."

"The house is Ethel's?"

"Yes, and may prove valuable in time. She could not sell it, now that so many persons have been burned out, and I think she will."

"Do you think that they will try to have the forgery will probated?"

"No, the evidence is too strong against them. They had no idea that there would be any such opposition."

"Would you have suspected that the will was forged?"

"I know that the old man never made a later one to my knowledge, but I could not have proved that it was forgery."

"I had had experience with this man before, and guessed at once that he had forged the will for Hurry."

"With the expectation of getting a slice of the estate," with a grunt. "Now he won't get anything."

"Has Hurry anything?"

"Nothing except debts, and you can't live on that very well."

"No, said Dick, smiling.

"You must be careful, though, for these two scoundrels will be looking for revenge, and would betray you to their enemy if they had the slightest chance."

"Yes, I know, but they have seen me in this very disguise, and did not know me."

"I must say that it is a very good one. I would not have known you myself."

Dick now took his departure, first seeing that the coast was clear, and that there were no redcoats or Tories prowling about.

He went over to see Ethel, and renewed his offer to take her to his mother's, if she would go with him.

"I thank you very much, Captain," Ethel said, "but I think I had better stay here."

"Your brother talks of breaking into the house to get the money your father left."

"But there is very little here. Jobkins has everything, and he is a good man, and will take good care of it."

"So I believe, but be careful of that brother of yours. He would rob you of all you have without the slightest compunction."

"If he needs money, I will let him have it," said the

"He wants it, but he is well able to earn it. Don't him have a penny."

"Yes, he never keeps anything he has. He has had more now than any of the rest."

"He has had more now than he deserved. Let him go to work. He is well able. Trust to Mr. Jobkins, and don't do anything without his advice."

"No, I won't, for I know that he is honest."

Dick was about to take his leave when there came a knock at the door, and the maid let in Harry Hurry.

He glared at Dick, and said:

"Get out of my house. You are employed by that old scoundrel, Jobkins. Get out, I say, or I'll kick you out."

Dick gave Ethel a warning look, and said:

"Your house? Then you can pay this little claim."

"Have you come to see father, Harry?" asked Ethel, softly.

"No, I haven't," with a snarl. "I have come for money, and I'm going to have it before I leave."

"But I have none to give you, Harry."

"And I say you have, and I'm going to have it."

The man seized his sister by the arm, causing her to scream.

In a moment Dick seized his arm, gave it a wrench and caused him to let go, and then kicked him down the stairs.

CHAPTER XVII.

LEAVING THE CITY.

Hurry was greatly astonished by being so roughly handled by a boy, and for a few moments he sat on the pavement looking at Dick in a dazed sort of way.

"H'm! I know you now," he snarled. "You're young scoundrel. You won't get away so easily as you think. Hello, reb——"

Dick was at the man's side in a moment.

"If you say a word," he hissed, "I'll clap you in jail within an hour on a charge of forgery and intent to break and enter. Now get up and take yourself off."

Hurry flushed, got up, glared at Dick, and started toward Broadway.

"If you look around or make a sound you'll catch it worse than you did at Harlem Plains," said Dick.

The man went on, and Dick ran lightly toward Broadway street, Ethel closing the door with a bang.

If the man turned, he did not see Dick, the latter being quickly at Broadway street, and hurrying uptown.

Keeping on up Nassau street to Beekman, Dick crossed to Common and went to the house of the girls' friends.

They were very much surprised to see him, supposing him to be up at the other end of the island.

They did not know him until he spoke, and they gave him a most cordial invitation to remain with them while he was in the city.

"I don't think we will stay very much longer," said

Dick. "I have managed to pick up some information, and I had better leave as soon as I can, with safety."

"I have secured a pass for three persons," said the girls' father, "and if it is of any use to you, I will give it to you."

"Some of us can use it, sir," replied Dick, "and it will not come amiss."

He took the pass, and, after a very pleasant hour spent with his friends, returned to the tavern.

Here he found Bob and Ben, the others not having come in.

"There is some sort of an expedition to be sent out, Dick," Bob said, "but I could not learn just where."

"I think I can inform you on that subject, Bob. Harry Hurry was invited to go with it, but I think he will decline."

"Perhaps he is afraid of getting thrashed, as he was the other day," laughed Ben.

"I think he is. In fact, I heard one of the redcoats call him a coward."

"There is nothing strange about that," said Bob, dryly. Mark and Sam came in later, and Mark said:

"We saw Hurry and the man in black in a tavern, exchanging compliments, but not blows. The old fellow called Hurry a cheat, and Hurry said that a forger was no better."

"When rogues fall out, honest men get their dues," laughed Bob.

"Then the lawyer told Hurry that he'd put him in jail if he did not pay up, and Hurry dared him to do it," Mark went on.

"They did not recognize you?" Dick asked.

"No, they were too busy with their quarrel. Finally some redcoats came in, and one told Hurry that if he did not go on the expedition, he'd be drummed out."

"What did he say?"

"That he never intended to shirk his duty, and would go."

"He must have changed his mind since you saw him, Dick," laughed Bob.

"Yes, but that little affair at his father's, and perhaps the redcoat's threat had an effect on him."

"I tried to find out when the expedition goes," concluded Mark, "but all that I could learn was that it was bound to Throck's Neck."

"So I learned," said Dick, "and I think we had better leave soon, so as to be back in camp and help meet the redcoats."

The boys were ready to go at any time, and Dick gave the pass to Mark, Ben, and Sam.

"You had better leave at once, boys," he said. "Bob and I will manage somehow."

The three boys left as soon as they had had something to eat, Dick deciding to wait till dark.

"Shortly before dark, however, a messenger came to the inn from Mr. Jobkins.

Dick had told the lawyer where he could be found in case he wished to send any word to the boys.

The messenger said that Mr. Jobkins would provide horses for them if they wished, the same to be left at Harlem Heights to be called for.

"We will want two horses only," said Dick, "as the rest of the boys have gone."

"Very good," the man said. "I will have them around in a short time."

He was as good as his word, and the boys mounted and set off.

Just as they reached the Common, intending to go up by the Bowery Lane, they saw a number of redcoats, and among them Harry Hurry.

"Stop the rebels!" the man shouted. "There goes Dick Slater, the rebel spy!"

The redcoats at once started after the two boys.

"We'll have to make a run for it, Bob," said Dick.

Then away dashed the boys, the redcoats in full cry after them.

The horses the boys rode were fresh, and were fine animals, and they at once began to gain on the redcoats.

"We can't go dashing through the lines like this," said Dick, at length. "We must try and throw these fellows off the scent."

As it began to grow dark this would be an easy matter.

A little above the Common Dick shot off to the left, being plainly seen by the redcoats.

A bend in the road and a grove of trees presently hid the boys from their pursuers, however.

"We must double, Bob," said Dick, dismounting.

Bob did the same, and the boys led their horses into the grove, taking a course which would bring them back to the main road something above where they had left it.

In a short time they heard the redcoats go clattering by, and hurried on.

They reached the other road, mounted and rode on, seeing nothing of the redcoats.

"By the time they find that we have not taken that road," said Dick, "we will be well on our way."

They rode on at a good pace, passed the lower line without difficulty, and kept on.

About half a mile from the upper lines, they saw a tavern and halted for a rest.

In the tavern was a big man with an air of importance, who was smoking a pipe and drinking punch.

He looked at the boys, and said:

"You young gentlemen are not rebels, I trust?"

"No, we are not," said Dick, who did not consider himself a rebel at all.

He was a patriot, and did not recognize the other word.

"That is all right then," the big man said. "I'm on the watch for rebels, and there's none of them going to get by me."

"You won't stop us just the same," thought Dick.

"Are you a constable?" asked Dick, with a simple look. "What's a rebel, anyhow?"

"Me, a constable?" indignantly. "H'm! I guess not! I'm on the watch for all rebels though, and they don't get by me, I can tell you that."

Then he pulled out a big handkerchief from his pocket and blew his nose with a trumpet-ilke sound.

A paper fluttered to the floor unnoticed by him, and Dick took out his own handkerchief and dropped it.

When he picked it up he took the paper with it.

"A man will have to be pretty smart to escape you guess," said Dick.

"Well, now you are talking sense. Will you have a mug of punch?"

"No, I don't drink it."

"Quite right, too, but you're a sensible boy, I see that."

"Oh, I know a few things," said Dick, modestly.

Then, winking to Bob, he went on and examined the paper he had picked up.

It was a pass, permitting the bearer and a friend to go through the lines.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FIGHTING THE REDCOATS.

"This will serve us very well," said Dick. "There are no names on it, and it will do for anyone."

"And our boasting acquaintance will find that he is not as clever as he thinks," laughed Bob.

The boys mounted and rode on at a good speed.

"I would not use another person's pass as a general thing," said Dick, "but this is good for anyone, and this man's boasting was a challenge to get the best of him."

"Serves him right," laughed Bob. "Next time he will know enough to keep quiet."

Reaching the lines, the boys were permitted to go when presenting the pass.

"You want to be careful not to let a rebel get hold of that pass," said the officer of the guard.

"Oh, I'll see that no improper person gets hold of it," said Dick.

"That's right, although I would know if they did, I can tell a rebel at sight."

"Another boaster," thought Bob.

"The king ought to hear of you," said Dick. "I'm sure that he would be pleased at your vigilance."

The officer seemed to think that Dick had said only what was right, and the boys went on.

Dick quickly made himself known when reaching the American lines, and then he and Bob went to their own camp.

Seeing Patsy on guard, Dick said:

"Wait a moment, Bob, till I have some fun with Patsy."

Going ahead alone, Dick was riding in when Patsy called out, sharply:

"Howld on there, me bowld young felly. Sure, do ye know ye can't go on widout the password?"

"Waal, then, give it to me," drawled Dick. "I want to see ther capt'ing."

"Sure Oi'll not. Ye have a roight to know what it is yerself."

"Dot was one off dose lawyer vellers," said Carl, who was with Patsy.

"Yis, an' they're all a pack of rogues."

"What he was want by dot camp already?"

"Sure Oi donno. Maybe he wants to serve a paper on the captain."

"Don't want to serve nothin', I just want to see him, I'm ergoin' ter."

"Deed an' yer not till ye give me the password."

"Ya, you was got to said 'Washington und victory' pe- you could gone on."

"Howld yer whisht, Cookyspiller," cried Patsy. "Sure do be givin' him the worrud."

Just then Bob rode up and said:

"Don't you two funny fellows know the captain when you see him?"

"Sure Oi do, Liftinant, but this do be a lawyer's clerk, an' thim are all rogues."

"Not all of them, Patsy," laughed Dick. "However, I am glad to see you so vigilant."

"Oh my, oh my, sure it's the captain himself, an' Oi called him a rogue," cried Patsy.

The Liberty Boys, hearing that Dick was in camp, came trooping forward to meet him.

Mark and his party had arrived some time before, and had greatly interested the boys with the account of their adventures.

Dick went at once to the general's quarters and told what he had learned of the expedition.

"This is important news, Captain," said the general. "We will meet these fellows. You would like to have a hand in beating them back, no doubt?"

"Yes, I should like it very much, General."

"Very good. I will give you your instructions later."

Dick then went back to the camp and told Bob and Mark that the Liberty Boys were to go to Throck's Neck to meet the redcoats.

"Then perhaps we will run across our Tory friend, Captain Hurry," Bob laughed.

"If he does not run away," said Mark, dryly.

During the next day Dick was ordered to go to Throck's Neck with Colonel Hand and his riflemen, and keep a watch on the enemy.

General Howe came up the river in ninety flatboats, passed safely through the dangerous Hellgate channel, and landed upon Throck's Neck.

There was a causeway leading from the peninsula to the main, and at one point of this there was a bridge, the land being low, and at high tide the causeway was partly under water.

The approaches to Kingsbridge were strangely guarded, and as soon as Howe had landed, Dick went with the Liberty Boys to watch the bridge.

When it got dark Dick set the boys to work with axes cut away the bridge.

The redcoats, hearing the noise, came rushing up.

Dick posted the boys at advantageous points, and directed them to fire upon the enemy.

The bridge was a narrow one, and not many could cross upon it at a time.

When the British tried to cross, the daring boys opened fire upon them.

A captain, mounted on a fiery horse, endeavored to pass at the head of his company.

Ben Spurlock fired a shot that carried off his hat. The horse, startled, stopped suddenly.

The redcoat was thrown over his head into the water. He quickly swam to land and urged his men forward. They were exposed to a terrific crossfire, and were obliged to fall back.

They made another attempt, but other Liberty Boys came up and poured in a hot fire upon them.

Meanwhile the boys were plying their axes most vigorously.

Some of the redcoats tried to get shots at the boys with the axes.

The other Liberty Boys picked them off instead, and they fell back.

Hand's riflemen, hearing the firing, came up in strong force.

They opened fire upon the redcoats and kept the bridge clear.

The axes fairly flew, and at length the bridge began to totter.

The boys kept up the work till the last moment.

Then, at a warning shout from Dick, they sprang back.

The bridge fell into the water, and the Liberty Boys set up a shout.

"The general will be on an island to-night," laughed Bob.

The boys kept a watch on the causeway to prevent the enemy from crossing, but no attempt was made.

The next day Howe crossed over to Pell's Point and marched toward New Rochelle.

The Liberty Boys were on the march as soon as Howe's new move was observed.

Joining Glover's brigade, they awaited the coming of the enemy.

On came the redcoats, confident of driving back the patriots.

"Now then, boys, stand firm," said Dick, "and do your best to hold the redcoats in check."

From the look of determination on the face of every boy in the troop, Dick knew that they would do their duty.

On came the redcoats with a rush, the boys reserving their fire till Dick should give the word.

The redcoats thought that they were without ammunition, and came on with a rush.

Then, when they were within less than a hundred feet, Dick gave the word:

Fire!"

CHAPTER XIX.

HURRY GETS HIS DESERTS.

Echoing the command came a tremendous volley.

Crash—roar!

The ranks of the plucky fellows fairly blazed as the report rang out.

The fire was unexpected, and many a redcoat staggered under it.

Gaps were seen in their ranks all along the line, and the effect of the tremendous volley was felt.

Then the plucky boys began emptying their pistols, and there was a continuous cracking and sputtering.

The advance of the enemy was checked, and now Glover's men joined in the fight.

A lot of skirmishing followed, and the British realized that it was not such an easy matter to drive back the "rebels."

The Liberty Boys quickly reloaded, and pressed forward to the aid of their allies.

Charging a weak point in the enemy's line, Dick broke it and caused great consternation.

Then he saw Harry Hurry and his Tories charging up to drive them back.

Hurry was actually forced forward by redcoats behind him, and it was easily seen that he would rather have been in any other place.

"Forward, Liberty Boys!" shouted Dick. "Down with the redcoats, scatter the Tories."

"Liberty forever!" roared the gallant boys.

Then they charged pell-mell upon the enemy.

Hurry and a score of his men fell into the hands of the brave boys.

The others fled in such hot haste as to throw the redcoats into confusion.

Then Howe retreated and encamped upon the hilly ground between Hutchinson's river and New Rochelle.

Harry Hurry looked most lugubrious when he was brought before Dick after the fight.

"You won't hang me, will you, Captain?" he asked.

"Hardly," said Dick.

"If you will let me go I will give up my claim against the estate," with a whine.

"You have no claim," said Dick, "and you could not bribe us if you had."

"If you let me go I'll tell you all about Steeleton and how he forged——"

"I know all about the old rascal, and I know enough about you to send you to jail. You may be thankful that you are a prisoner of war."

Hurry tried to offer another bribe, but Dick silenced him, and he was taken away.

He and the others were turned over to Colonel Glover, and Dick did not see them again.

There was a strong force at White Plains, ready to oppose the advance of Howe, and Dick joined them and went into camp.

When they were settled, Patsy said to Carl:

"Come on, Cookyspiller, and help me get something for the byes to ate."

"What you was got?" the German boy asked.

"Annything we can get, av coorse, pitaties, apples, cabbages, annything at all."

"I was told you where one cabbagehead was."

"Sure ivery little thing helps. Where is it, me bye?"

"On your shoulders, already," laughed Carl.

"Go on wid yer funnin' and come along," said Patsy.

Off they started with a rather shaky cart which Patsy had picked up, and to which he had harnessed a rawboned horse.

"It's plenty we'll want, Cookyspiller," Patsy said, "and so we'll take the cart."

"Off dose wagons don'd was fell to pieces before was got pack, dot was lucky," said Carl.

"Go on wid ye, sure it's a foine cart entoiely."

Patsy sat on the seat and drove, while Carl sat in bottom of the cart.

They had a pretty good hill to go up, and Patsy cracked his whip in lively fashion to make the horse go.

The animal went ahead with a jump.

One of the wheels struck a stone, and Patsy was nearly bounced out of his seat.

Then the entire body of the wagon slid off the axle and was left behind, Carl yelling most vociferously.

Patsy suddenly found himself sitting on the front axle, the horse going up hill at a lively rate.

"Howld on, yer baste, ye haven't got all yer load," roared.

The horse halted at the top of the hill.

Patsy got off his ticklish seat and said:

"Sure, av Oi'd knowed that, Oi'd have walked."

"What I was toldt you, Batsy?" asked Carl. "The wagon don'd was some good, ain't it?"

"Go on wid ye, me bye. The wagon wor all roight."

"For why it was den went to pieces?"

"Sure annywan moight know that no cart could shude the weight av yerself on it," said Patsy. "Ye'd better down annything, so ye would."

"Humbug!" Carl sputtered. "Dot wagon don'd was good for somedings by der first blaces."

However, they picked up a good cart and went back to camp with a full load of all sorts of good things for the boys.

The Liberty Boys took part in the battle of White Plains, which was fought not long afterward, and they behaved themselves most gallantly.

Harry Hurry, who had given his parole, and had been released, had violated it, and worked as a spy and, being captured by some of Hand's riflemen, was hanged.

There was never any claim made against Mr. Hurry's estate, and Steeleton disappeared and was never seen in New York again.

Ethel had enough to live upon comfortably, but a year or so after the end of the war, she married one of the Liberty Boys, and lived happily the rest of her life.

After the battle of White Plains the Liberty Boys remained with Washington, and in the severe campaign which followed, did most noble work in a noble cause.

THE END.

Read "THE LIBERTY BOYS' LOG TOWER; OR, THE BOMBARDING THE STOCKADE FORT," which will be the next number (430) of "The Liberty Boys of '76."

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FROM EVERYWHERE.

The French submarine boats have recently succeeded in staying for several hours in Toulon Harbor, without once being detected by the torpedo boats ordered to watch them.

A cat which has adopted the plant of the Sandusky Foundry and Machine Company as her home undertook to jump through the flywheel on the engine. The cat got caught in the spokes, was whirled around 400 or 500 times and then fell through a window. With eight lives still to her credit, she cut her tail and started on a swift run to find another.

A traveler, writing of Central American customs, says: "The queerest mode of travel I saw in all Mexico was that adopted by a woman who was on her way to the doctor, seated gracefully in a chair borne upon the back of a man. Some Mexican women are afraid even of the mule cars, while they look upon the rapidly spinning trolley with such trembling knees they cannot be persuaded to put foot upon it. Unable to pay coach hire, they employ the human carrier for a few cents for each trip."

A correspondent writes: "In Quetta, India, some years ago, on an occasion to go early one morning into a miscellaneous shop kept by a Parsi, who also kept a liquor bar. As I entered the shop I noticed a mouse reeling across the floor, and I inquired to the shopkeeper that the mouse seemed to be drunk, but his reply astonished me. He said that that mouse and several others that infested his shop were confirmed drunkards. During the night they regularly drank all the beer which remained in the glasses which the soldiers had left in the evenings for their drinks."

The village of Mapleton, near Hornsea, England, furnishes a curiosity in the shape of a peculiar shed. The front of the building, which is in the occupation of T. Ake, joiner, is decorated with the figureheads and nameboards of vessels which have been picked up from time to time on the coast in the immediate neighborhood, and the arrangement is so ingenious that the shed is a constant source of attraction. The *Alcott*, for instance, was wrecked at Aldborough, a few miles farther along the coast, but before the lifeboat could be lowered the crew had perished. The church is close to the shore. It was restored in 1855-56, when a spire was added to the tower. The stone employed for building this was the cargo of a vessel wrecked near.

Just as some professional singers with magnificent voices never learn to sing in perfect tune, so do the trainers of really fine swimmers often find it impossible that men with every quality for racing otherwise can be made or taught to swim even in an approximately straight line. Many a splendid swimmer is beaten on this account, for his inveterate habit of getting off his course naturally gives him a roundabout journey. But the remarkable fact remains that blind swimmers—of whom there are in this country a considerable number in connection with various institutions for persons so afflicted—universally and without exception swim with marvelous directness; indeed, in as perfectly straight a line as is humanly possible, even when the distance covered is very considerable. So much is this the case that Dr. Campbell, of the College for the Blind at Upper Norwood, who particularly interests himself in the physical education of the blind and has noticed this curious fact, recommends that swimmers who persistently foul each other on any course should practice experimentally when blindfolded. Blind swimmers can, it appears, on hearing a noise in any given direction, not only swim absolutely straight to the point whence the noise proceeds, but when left to themselves their steering is just as accurate.

HAPPY MOMENTS.

A certain Sunday-school class in Philadelphia consists for the most part of youngsters who live in the poorer districts of the city. One Sunday the teacher told the class about Cain and Abel, and the following week she turned to Jimmie, a diminutive lad, who, however, had not been present the previous session. "Jimmie," she said, "I want you to tell me who killed Abel." "Ain't no use askin' me, teacher," replied Jimmie; "I didn't even know he was dead."

The old lady who was in the habit of looking under the bed for burglars every night, after many years actually found one, armed to the teeth, with dark lantern, jimmy, and all the burglar's stock in trade. The old lady, after a careful scrutiny of the armed villain, addressed him with a bright, rather pleased voice as follows: "Oh, there you are, are you? Why, I have been looking for you for years!" The desperado made no response; astonishment disarmed him more effectually than any weapon could have done. He crawled from under the bed, slunk out of the room, down the stairs, and out of the house; and the old lady, quite happy, got into her bed and went to sleep.

General Matos, who led the last unsuccessful revolution against President Castro of Venezuela, is a great dandy. Even when in the field with his army it is said that he invariably wears white gloves. Once, previous to starting his revolution, he was arrested on suspicion by Castro and lodged in the Caracas jail. At a gathering in the city a number of tender-hearted ladies were deploring the hardships which Matos, accustomed to refinement and luxury, must undoubtedly be enduring. "Think of it!" remarked one, "I have been told that they make him sleep on a hard wooden bench." "And they say," put in another, "that he is made to wear handcuffs." "And chains around his ankles!" wailed a third. "And listen," whispered another, "I have been told that he has to—eat with his fingers!" There was a horrified pause. "Think of all the gloves he must spoil!" remarked an irreverent anti-Matos individual.

LOST IN A MINE.

By ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG.

"All set?"

"All set, sir."

We dropped fifteen hundred feet, and stood breathless on the hot underground station, blinking at the lights by which the miners worked; but only for a moment, for we were going down to the two thousand-foot level, below which the mine had been drained twenty-five feet. So we clambered into the "giraffe," the clumsy contrivance which carried rock and miners up and down the incline shaft. The incline had been run down to the two-thousand-four-hundred-foot level, but now nearly four hundred feet was flooded. The foreman gave a long, slow, steady pull on the signal rope, and the engineer on the surface lowered us to the two-thousand-foot station.

"We go along this lateral drift some distance," said the foreman, "before we strike the east cross-cut you want to examine. It will be hard traveling, as the water has left a slippery sediment on the floor of all the passages, and timbers have fallen across the drills and cross-cuts in many places. Follow me close, because this level was honey-combed with prospect drifts in every direction when it was first opened, and it's an easy and a bad level, to get lost on."

I needed no caution to keep close to my guide, for I was already nervous, I freely admit. The sights about the incline level were calculated to impress, or perhaps I should say, depress, any one. The level had long been submerged, and the water had left the great timbers swollen and distorted into fantastic shapes. The nearly naked miners were battling hard to keep the headway made on the hot flood, which the jarring, ponderous pump was lifting day and night in an unending stream to the surface.

The water stood in the incline about twenty-five feet below the station. A gang of miners, leaving the cooling-room on the station, would go carefully down the incline to the water's edge, and work for a few minutes, while the gang they relieved would come up, dripping with perspiration, and rush to the cooling-room for a reviving breath of fresh air forced down from the surface. The gang which went down traveled carefully, I say, for the night before one unfortunate man missed his footing, and fell into the water. He was taken out in a moment, scalded to death.

As near the water as they could work the men extended the fresh air and water pipes, and the compressed air pipe; laid the track on which the giraffe was to run, repaired the incline timbers, and cleared the incline of rubbish and sediment. They worked for a few minutes, and then came back to the cooling-room, to be replaced by a fresh gang. Such is the character of work in the depths of the Comstock flooded mines, where the solid rock offers the least resistance to the search for gold, when compared to such obstacles as hot, stifling air and hotter floods.

I followed my guide along the drift, in which progress was made slow by pools of water, misplaced timbers and mud. We traveled on in silence, I keeping as close to him as I could, until one of the big brogans I wore was held so fast in the mud that I left it imbedded there in lifting my foot.

"Hold on till I fix my shoe," I said, and sticking my dirk-like candlestick in a timber, I fished out the shoe, and fastened it on my foot after some time and trouble.

"This wouldn't make good barefoot traveling," I said, and took my candlestick in my hand again.

I received no reply.

"Hello, foreman!" I said, in a louder voice. I was conscious of an uneasy feeling as I peered into the blackness of the drift,

both ways, and saw no light. I was uneasy, because I realized that I did not know which way we had come, or what way we had been going. In stooping down to fasten my shoe I had become turned around some way, and unfortunately I had drawn my candlestick from the side timber before my certainty of mind had occurred.

"Hello! Hello!" I cried; but the only answer was the continual dripping of the water in the darkness, and a sound as though the uneasy spirit of a host of gnomes were crying in torture and anguish at their dreadful confinement. Although my heart beat fast at the awful sound, I knew the noises made by the mysterious force that swells the ground, and crushes and splinters mighty timbers in all the deep Comstock mines. "Hello! Hello! Hello!" I called again, but no human sound answered my cry. "Well," I thought, "I will travel along, and must find the foreman when I return to the station." So, holding my candle far in advance I started along.

I was not surprised that I could not see the lights of the station we had left, for I knew the drift I was in had a sharp curve toward the east, although its general direction was north and south. The curve had been necessary in order to effect a connection it was intended to make with a drift on the same level of another mine. The foreman had either gone far enough along the drift to be carried out of sight by the curve, or had turned to the east cross-cut, where he would certainly wait as soon as he discovered my absence. I groped my way slowly along, for my candle was burning low and low—ominously low, it suddenly flashed upon me, and recalled a well-known miner's warning, "Where a candle won't burn, a miner can't live."

I knew the explanation well enough to be the usual small proportion of oxygen in the atmosphere, and I knew too, that my flickering and blue-burning candle was the warning I would have, as asphyxiation under the circumstances would be painless. Startled, then, by this sudden and dreadful thought, I turned hurriedly to the right, where I felt an opening, which I supposed must be the drift I was looking for. I made one quick step, but on to nothing! Instinctively I threw out both hands and grasped a rope that came in contact with. There was a whirl, a rattling of loosened rocks, and I felt myself plunge down into stifling darkness. Clinging desperately with arms and legs to the rope, I felt myself stopped with a sudden jerk, and slowly round and round as the long unused rope twisted and wound under the strain of my weight. I realized my position; I knew I had stepped into the mouth of a whirl shaft sunk from an underground level—had caught hold of the windlass rope, which had been only partly wound up and was suspended over the hot water below. "Would the water-soaked rope bear me? Would my strength last me, in the vitiated air? Even if it did, could I climb to the top, so near to an awful death; knowing, if the rope held, that my only chance for life was by the most judicious use of my strength, the tremendous necessity of the occasion forced my mind into perfect calmness.

Twisting the rope around my arms and one leg, I carefully felt with one foot, and found that the winze was not more than four feet in diameter and untimbered. Fastening my hands into the very fibres of the swollen rope, I braced my feet against the sides of the winze, and lifted myself slowly upward, carefully raising my hands, one at a time, for a better hold. Again I braced my feet, and again exerted my entire strength for another advance toward life and from the horrid death in the hot, black water below.

A treacherous loose rock, on which my right foot rested, gave way just as I had released one hand to extend it upward. I fell with a jar that wrenched every bone in my body, but

lose my desperate grip on the rope. The big brogans I were jolted from my feet, and for the first time I shuddered, for I knew by the sound as they splashed below that I was not over five feet from the water, and so had twenty feet to climb. Again I braced my feet against the winze. The ropes were rough and hot, and cut and burned my feet; but that I cared not, as I found that without shoes I could find a better foothold, and make better progress.

Slowly, seemingly an age between each advance, feeling my limbs swell, and knowing that each second my grasp was less sure, I worked myself up; but at last I felt that the lifeless and the terrible physical strain had so exhausted me that for life, that seemed so dear then, and which might be won by one more effort, I could not make it. My arms and legs ached, as must those of the victim on the rack; in the black darkness I seemed to see blinding flashes of fire, and my blood was surging through my head with a hateful roar. For a moment I had no idea that I could ever make another step, yet I did not let go the rope, but twined my limbs around it all the more tightly. Although absolutely hopeless, my mind revolted in ghastly horror from the thought of the approaching moment when my relaxing muscles should cease to support me, and alone, in the silent darkness, I should drop helplessly into the deep water of the black, deadly hole. Aimlessly, almost, I stretched out one arm, and my heart gave a great bound when I found that I could not reach the sides. I knew my head must be above the top of the winze! Cautiously, yet trembling with hope and excitement, I extended my arm around until I felt the wooden framework supporting the windlass. I drew myself, still clinging to the rope, toward the frame, wound one arm and the other around one of the upright supports, and carefully disentangled my legs from the rope, put all the last desperate strength revived hope had given me into one supreme effort, and fainted as I felt myself lying safe on the rocky ledge by the side of the mouth of the winze.

When I recovered my senses, I found the foreman and two men standing over me.

"You got out of this just in time," said the foreman, "for you saw the sound of that falling windlass that attracted our attention."

By the lights which they brought, I saw that in saving myself I had toppled down the windlass. It had crashed down the winze as I had fallen safe to one side.

PRISONERS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE.

A French writer, telling of the life of the lighthouse keepers along the coast of Brittany, thinks it strange that any of them escape insanity.

The system of relief that prevails in this country has no equivalent in the French service, and with short intervals, months apart, a French lighthouse keeper may spend forty years of his life tending the lamps in one station, with a single companion, and that station may be on a rock out in the channel of the Bay of Biscay, which boats can approach only in fine weather.

As a matter of fact, the men often do become insane, or at least develop monomania. Sometimes it takes the form of jealousy of each other.

In some cases, at Terennec, one of two men was found by a boat who came off from the shore in response to signals from the dead in his bed.

In another companion's story was that he had committed suicide after a long period of melancholia. There was no proof to

the contrary, but after examining the wound, the authorities doubted the truth of the story.

On another occasion, where father and son tended an isolated beacon together, the young man was seized with an attack of acute mania. When the time came to light up he planted himself in front of the stairway to the lantern and refused to allow his father to ascend.

The old man attacked his son, and finding he could subdue him in no other way, so that the lights on which so many lives depended might be kindled, strangled him to death. The next day he signaled to the shore for help, and gave himself up to the police, telling what he had done.

Sickness and death are no strangers in the lighthouses. There is, ninety-nine times out a hundred, no chance of medical aid, and the well man prescribes from the medicine chest for the sick one as best he can. He also does double duty until his partner recovers or relief comes.

There are not infrequent cases when the survivor has to sew up his dead comrade in a hammock and launch his weighted body from the rocks into the sea. Then come long nights of lonely watching.

In winter time the lamps must be tended and the clockwork kept going for fourteen to fifteen hours. The lantern is unheated except for the glow of the lamps up in its ceiling, and the government allows the watcher no chair lest he fall asleep.

It is no wonder that weird fancies come to the men. They hear voices calling from the sea and see drowned men and women looking up at them from the breakers. One of their horrors is of the birds that beat against the windows on the lantern at night, attracted by the glare.

Just as is the case with American lighthouses, the feathered armies that migrate at night beat against the walls and balconies of the beacons with their wings and dash against the panes of the lantern, sometimes breaking the glass with their beaks. As their eyes shine in the glare they seem to express anger or bloodthirstiness to the men within.

One of the most pitiful stories of lighthouse life is told of the keeper at Four en Finisterre, who kept all alone a station on an isolated rock a couple of miles out from the shore, but so surf beaten that only once a month or so was a boat sent out to it with supplies.

The cabin in which the keeper made his home was on the shore opposite his lighthouse, and the recreation he most enjoyed was watching it through his telescope. He could see the people go in and out and the children playing in front of it.

One day he saw something fluttering from the doorjamb. He was puzzled. Then it flashed on him that it was crepe and that someone had died in the house.

Was it his mother, he wondered, or his wife, or one of his brothers? He counted the children later in the day, and they were all right.

The wind blew and the water raged. No boat could come near him, and he watched the crowd of sympathizing friends come and go. Then he saw the funeral.

As the mourners walked after it, he strained his eyes trying to identify each, and thus determine the missing one. But in vain; all walked with bowed head; the women's faces were buried in their handkerchiefs; the men held their hats before theirs. He could make out nothing characteristic.

The men who, eight days later, risked their lives to row out to him and break the news of his wife's death, found him a physical and mental wreck from sleepless anxiety. But he had kept the light burning faithfully all the time.

The French lighthouse keepers receive from 700 to 950 francs a year—\$140 to \$190. When they are worn out they retire on a pension of \$6.80 a month.

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