

***JANE  
G. AUSTIN***



***STANDISH  
OF STANDISH***

**Jane G. Austin**

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**A Story of the Pilgrims**

EAN 8596547309802

DigiCat, 2022

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# CHAPTER I.

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## THE BATTLE OF THE TUBS.

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It was Monday morning.

It was also the twenty-third day of November in the year of our Lord 1620; but this latter fact was either unknown or matter of profound indifference to the two-and-twenty women who stood ready to make the day memorable in the world's history, while the fact of Monday was to them one of paramount importance.

Do you ask why this was thus?

The answer is duplex: first, the two-and-twenty women were not aware of their own importance, nor could guess that History would ever concern herself with the date of their present undertaking; and second, for a reason whose roots are prehistoric, for they spring from the unfathomable depths of the feminine soul wherein abides inherently the love of purity, of order, and of tradition. Yes, in two hundred and seventy years the face of Nature, of empires, and of peoples has changed almost beyond recognition in this our New World; but the grand law at whose practical establishment in the New World we now assist, abides to-day:—

Monday is Washing Day.

Does some caviler here suggest that although the human female soul is embodied in the children of Ham, Shem, and Japhet, the mighty law referred to is binding only upon that

Anglo-British-Saxon-Norman division of Japhet's daughters domiciled in and emanating from the British Isles? Let us proudly reply that in considering the result of a process we consider the whole; and let us meekly add that to our mind the Anglo-British-Saxon-Norman woman, perfected under an American sky, is the woman of the world; and finally, let us point to the two-and-twenty heroines of that Monday as chief among American women, for they were the Pilgrim Mothers of the New World.

The Pilgrim Fathers were there also; and they, too, were exemplifying a law of nature, that is to say, a law of male nature in every clime and every age. They did not love Washing Day. They felt no joy in the possibility of its observance, they felt no need of its processes. And yet again *more humano*, they did not openly set themselves against it, they did not frankly express their unworthy content in their present estate, but they feebly suggested that as the observance had been some weeks omitted, with no sensible loss of comfort to themselves, it might well be farther postponed; that the facilities were by no means remarkable; that rain was very possible, and that they had to apply themselves without delay to unshipping the pinnacle from the hold of the Mayflower, and fitting her for the immediate service of exploration.

To these arguments the women meekly responded that in the nature of things they were better fitted to judge of the emergency than their lords, whose attention must be absorbed in matters of so much higher import; that they did not require the help of any man whose work upon the pinnacle would be at all important, and that the sandy

beach, the pool of fresh water, and the clumps of stunted shrubs fairly spread upon the shore in front of them were all the facilities they required. As for the weather, as Dame Hopkins piously remarked:—

"If Monday's weather be not fit for washing, there is no promise in Holy Writ of anything better in the rest of the week."

"Oh, if thou r't bent on washing, the shrewdest storm that ever swept the Zuyder Zee will never stop thee; so get thy rags together as soon as may be," growled her husband, a grizzled, hard-visaged veteran some twenty years older than this his second wife of whom he was very fond.

"Nay, then," interposed another voice, as a shrewd, kindly looking man, albeit with a certain whimsical cast to his thin features, approached the pair; "Mistress Hopkins will do no washing to-day; no, nor even go on shore to gather chill and weariness for my little friend Oceanus."

"'Will not,' shall not? Marry and who is to hinder, if you please, good Master Fuller?" asked the young woman in a somewhat shrewish voice.

"I, Samuel Fuller, Licentiate of Cambridge, late practitioner of Bartlemy's Hospital, London, and your medical adviser, madam," replied the doctor with a dry smile and mocking bow. "Recall, if you please, that Oceanus is not yet a fortnight old, and that both mother and child are still my responsibility. Would you ruin my reputation, madam, not to mention risking your own life and the boy's?"

"Have a care, Doctor, or some fine day you'll trip in your own quips, and break your neck," replied Mistress Hopkins half sullenly, while her husband cried,—



"He's right there, Bess. Thou'rt in no case for such rough sport as this is like to prove, and thou'lt stay aboard whoever goes ashore."

"Yes, stay thou aboard and mind thy babe, and I'll take thy clothes along with my own, so thou'lt let Constance come to help me," suggested the somewhat coarse voice of a woman standing by.

"Thank you kindly, goodwife Billington," replied Elizabeth Hopkins coldly. "But Alice Rigdale hath already promised to do what is needed, and Constance must stay with me to mind Damaris and Oceanus."

"Oh, if goodwife Rigdale has taken it in hand, I will step back," replied Mistress Billington sharply; and as she descended the companion-way, Hopkins muttered in his wife's ear,—

"Now thou showest some sense, wench. The least thou hast to do with the Billington brood the better I'll be pleased."

"That's worth working for, surely," retorted his wife, tossing her head pettishly.

"I tell you there's no boat to be spared, and no man to row it, and I'll have naught to say to it," exclaimed a surly voice from the companion-way, and Captain Thomas Jones, master of the Mayflower, but not of the Pilgrims, appeared on deck.

Captain Jones was not an amiable man, his training as buccaneer and slaver having possibly blunted his finer feelings, and his consciousness of present treachery probably increasing the irritability often succeeding to a murdered conscience.

Such as he was, however, this man was the Inventor of Plymouth Rock, since by his collusion with the Dutch who wished to keep the profits of their Manhattan Colony to themselves, the Mayflower had found it impossible to make her way southward around Cape Cod, and after nearly going to wreck upon the shoals off Malabar, or Tucker's Terror had been driven within the embrace of the curving arm thrown out by the New World to welcome and shelter the homeless children of the Old. There she lay now, the weather-beaten, clumsy, strained, and groaning old bark whose name is glorious in the annals of our country while Time shall endure, and whose merest splinter would to-day be enshrined in gold; there she lay swinging gently to the send of the great Atlantic whose waves broke sonorously upon the beach outside, and came racing around the point a flood of shattered and harmless monsters, moaning and hissing, to find their prey escaped and safely landlocked.

"There's no boat, I say, and there's an end on't," repeated Master Jones truculently as he stepped on deck, and two men who had been earnestly conversing at the stern of the brig turned round and came toward him. They were John Carver, already governor of the colony, and William Bradford, his lieutenant and successor. The governor was the first to speak, and the somewhat measured accents of his voice, with its inflections at once kindly and haughty, told of gentle breeding, of a calm and dignified temper, and of an aptness at command.

"And why no boat, Master Jones?" asked he quietly. "Methought by the terms of our agreement you were to aid us in every way in making our settlement."

"And I'm not going back of my word, am I, master?" demanded Jones peevishly. "A pack of wenches going ashore with tubs and kettles and bales and such gear is not a settlement, is it?"

"Nay, but a means thereto if haply they find the place convenient," replied Carver pleasantly. "At any rate, we will send them, since it has been promised, and the same boat will serve to transport them with their gear that is already fitted to help us ashore with the pinnace."

"And our own men will do all that is required in lading and rowing the boat," added Bradford in his mild, persuasive voice. Jones, overborne by a calm authority against which he could not bluster, turned on his heel muttering some surly assent. Carver slightly smiled as he watched the square and clumsy form expressing in every line of its back the futile rage of an overborne coward, and, turning toward the companion way, he called,—

"Howland, John Howland, a word with thee!"

"Ay, sir," replied a blithe young voice; and presently a handsome head of pure Saxon type, as indeed were both Bradford's and Carver's, appeared above the hatchway, and a strong young fellow swinging himself upon deck approached the governor, saying apologetically,—

"I was helping to get out the pinnace, and there is a mort of dust and dirt about her."

"I'll give thee a pleasanter task, John," replied Carver, smiling affectionately upon his young retainer. "Thou and John Alden and Gilbert Winslow shall take charge of the women who fain would go ashore to wash their clothes. They will use the boat already lying alongside, and thou

hadst better advise with Mistress Brewster for the rest. I leave it all with you twain."

"I will do my best, sir," replied Howland with a smile that showed his short, strong teeth and made his blue eyes twinkle pleasantly; then returning to the hatchway he called down,—

"Ho, Alden! You're wanted, man, and so is Gilbert Winslow."

"He's not here, then," responded a heavier voice, as a splendid young giant swung himself up on deck and ran his fingers through a shock of curling chestnut hair; a glorious youth, six feet and over in his hose of hodden gray, with the shoulders and sinews of an athlete, and the calm, strong face of an Egyptian god.

"What is it, John?" asked he, fixing his dark eyes upon Howland with the affectionate gladness one reads in the eyes of a dog called to his master's side, but of which few human natures are capable.

"Why, Jack, thou and I and Gilbert Winslow are appointed squires of dames to some of the women who would fain go ashore to wash clothes, and we are to pack them into yonder boat, row them ashore, and then purvey wood, water, and such like for them."

"I'd liefer haul out the pinnace," replied Alden with a grimace. "But your will is mine."

"Nay, the governor's will is thine and mine, and it is he set us this task. Where is Winslow?"

"In the cabin belike, chatting with Mary Chilton. It's the work he best loves," replied Alden grimly. "But I'll find him."

"And some of the boys, Jack," suggested Howland, as the younger man turned away. "Bart Allerton and Love Brewster, Giles Hopkins and Crakstone and Cooke, any of the lads that you fall foul of, except the Billingtons,—of them I'll have none."

"And why not the Billingtons, worshipful Master Howland, lackey of the governor, and page-boy to his wife," demanded the voice that had interrupted Mistress Hopkins, and turning toward it, Howland confronted a short, square woman, not without a certain vulgar comeliness of her own, although now her buxom complexion was florid with anger and her black eyes snapping angrily, while the arms akimbo, the swaying figure, and raised voice betrayed Helena Billington for precisely what she was, a common scold and shrew. Howland was a brave man; he had already showed both strength and prowess when, washed overboard in a "seel" of the ship, and carried fathoms deep in mid-ocean, he caught the topsail-halyards swept over with him and clung to them until he was rescued in spite of the raging wind and waves that repeatedly dragged him under; nor in the face of savage foe, or savage beast, or peril by land or sea, was John Howland ever known less than the foremost; but now in face of this angry woman he found naught to say, and blushing and stammering and half laughing fairly turned and ran away, springing up the stairs to the elevated deck cabins, in one of which Elder Brewster and his family had their lodging.

Mistress Brewster, a pale, sweet-faced woman, already at fifty-four dressing and behaving as the venerable mother in

Israel, came forward to meet him, and smiling indulgently asked,—

"Now what hast thou done to goodwife Billington, thou naughty lad? I hear thy name in her complaint, and indeed all the company can hear it, if they will."

"I did but say I would none of her boys in my party, dear Mistress Brewster, and I hope you'll say so too," replied Howland, uncovering his yellow head. "They are the greatest marplots and scapegraces"—

"Nay, nay, John! Say no evil, or thou'lt make me think thou hast 'scaped grace thyself," suggested the elder's wife with her gentle smile. "And prithee, what is thy party? Are my boys bidden, or must they e'en bide with the Billingtons?"

"The party is your party, dear dame, for the governor sent me to ask your commands upon it, and if Love and Wrestling will give us such aid as their years allow, I shall be most grateful."

And then in simple phrase Howland repeated the governor's instructions, and requested those of the dame, who at once convened an informal council of matrons, and so well advised them that in a scant hour the clumsy boat, rolling and bumping against the side of the brig, was laden with bales of clothing, tubs whose hoops John Alden, a cooper by trade, was hurriedly overlooking, and sundry great brass and copper kettles, household necessities of that epoch, and descending as relics to us who look upon them with respectful wonder as memorial brasses of the "giants of those days."

A flock of women, all demurely and plainly dressed, although the most of them were under thirty years of age, stood waiting at the head of the ladder until the cargo was stored, and Howland, sending his assistants back on deck, planted himself upon the gunwale of the boat, and holding out his hand to a stout, solid-looking woman with a young girl beside her said,—

"Mistress Tilley, you had best come first, for you will be apt at helping the others, as I hand them down. And thou, too, Elizabeth, if thou wilt."

"And Constance Hopkins and Remember Allerton," pleaded the girl, lifting a sweet, saucy face to the young man; "we never are separated, for we're all of an age, all going on sixteen you know."

"Hush, Bess, thou'rt malapert," chided her mother, descending heavily into the boat, while a mutinous young voice above called out,—

"Nay, I'm not going. Stepmother won't spare me."

"Now Constance Hopkins, thou naughty hussy, wilt thou grumble at tarrying with me to care for thine own dear sister and brother? Fie on thee, girl!"

"They're not my own," grumbled Constance in Remember Allerton's ear. "Giles is my own brother and he is to go, and Damaris and Oceanus are but half sister and brother, and she's but my stepmother."

"Hush, now, or she'll hear and thou'lt come by a whipping," whispered Remember hastily, as Dame Hopkins turned from Mistress Winslow who had spoken to her, and came toward the girls. "I'll stay aboard with thee, Constance, and help thee with the babies."

"Thou'rt a dear good wench and I love thee," replied Constance in the same tone, and, as the stepmother placed the muffled baby in her arms, she took him without comment, and went below followed by Elizabeth Tilley.

Two trips of the capacious boat sufficed to carry women, clothes, utensils, and assistants across the three quarters of a mile of shallow water lying between the brig and the shore, and the boys who went in the first boat were at once set to work to gather dry stuff from the thickets of scrub oak and pine sparsely clothing the beach, and to build several fires along the margin of a large pool or perhaps pond of fresh water divided from the harbor by a narrow beach of firm white sand. Beach and pond have long since been devoured by the hungry sea, but stumps of good-sized trees are still dug from the dreary sands environing Provincetown, to show what once has been.

The second boat-load arrived, and by help of Alden's stalwart arm, Howland's cool decision and prompt action, and Winslow's quick eye and ready aid to any woman needing assistance, the apparatus was soon adjusted, and a dozen pairs of strong white arms were plunged in the suds, or throwing the clothes into the great caldrons bubbling over the fires which the boys gayly replenished.

Not all the women of the Mayflower were thus engaged, however, for several were delicate in health, and several others had servants who took this ungentle labor upon themselves; but those who did not labor with their hands felt no superiority, and those who did had no shame in so doing; and although the manners of the day inculcated a certain deference of manner and speech from the lower



rank to the higher, and from youth to age, the very fact that every one of these persons had abandoned home and friends and comfort that they might secure liberty, induced a sense of self respect and respect for others, which is the very root and basis of a true republic. Thus Katharine Carver, wife of the governor, daughter of Bishop White, and sister of Robinson, the pastor of the community left behind in Leyden, although she sent her maid Lois, and her manservant Roger Wilder, to do the required work, came ashore with the rest, and by a touch here and a word there, and her interest and sympathy, took her part in the labor of the whole, and delicate woman and well-born lady though she was, made each of those hard-working sisters feel that it was only her weakness, and not her station, that prevented her doing all that they did. "Eleven o' the clock," said John Alden, as the Mayflower's cracked bell told six hoarse strokes. "They said they'd bring our dinner ashore for us," and he looked wistfully toward the ship.

"Who said?" asked Howland; "for I've more faith in some say-sos than in some others."

"Well, if I remember, 't was Mistress Moline's who told me," replied Alden carefully careless.

"Oh, ay," assented Howland, his blue eyes twinkling. "But I thought she was ill, poor woman."

"Nay, I meant Mistress Priscilla Moline's," retorted the giant, blushing. "She said somewhat to me of an onion soup which she flavors marvelously well."

"Ah, yes, onion soup," retorted Howland gravely. "Methought it must be some such moving theme you

discussed yester even as you sat on the cable. I noted even at that distance the tears in your eyes."

"And if there were tears in mine eyes it is no matter of mocking, for Mistress Priscilla was telling me that her mother is sick as she fears unto death, and"—

"John Howland, the boat is coming off with the rest of our company and noon-meat for us all. Wilt thou and John Alden receive and help them ashore, while Gilbert helps us to make ready here?"

"Surely we will, Mistress Carver," replied Howland heartily, for his relationship toward the governor and his beautiful wife was rather that of a younger brother than of a retainer; and although the smallness of his fortune had induced him to accept the patronage of the older and wealthier man, it was much as a lad of noble lineage was content a few years before this to become first the page and then the squire of a belted knight.

The boat, unable to reach the shore on account of the flatness of the beach, stuck fast about a bow-shot from dry land, and the men and boys at once tumbled over the edge and prepared to carry not only the luggage, but the female passengers ashore. Alden seeing this prospect, tore off his boots and stockings, and plunging into the chill water hastened to the stern of the boat where a slender, vivacious girl, brown, dark-eyed, and with cheeks glowing with the dusky richness of a peach, stood balancing herself like a bird and giving orders to a young man already in the water.

"Now have a care, Robert Cartier, of that kettle. If thou spillst the soup"—

"The onion soup, Mistress Priscilla?" asked Alden approaching unperceived. Priscilla cast a look at him from the corners of her long eyes, and replied carelessly,—

"Yes, Master Alden, an onion soup. Is that a favorite dish with your worship?"

"Why, thou knowest,"—began the young man with an air of bewilderment, but Priscilla interrupted him.

"Since thou art here with thy broad shoulders, John Alden, thou wilt do well to make them of use. There is Mistress Allerton struggling with a hamper beyond her strength, and there are bales of clothes that must not be wet. Load thyself, good mule, and plod shoreward."

"To be sure I will and gladly, fair mistress," replied Alden patiently. "But first let me take thee ashore dry-shod, and then I will bring all the rest."

"Beshrew thee for a modest youth," retorted Priscilla, the peach color of her cheeks deepening to pomegranate; "when I go ashore I will convey myself, or my brother will carry me; and thou, since thou art so picksome, may set thyself to work, and ask naught of me."

"But why art thou so tart when I meant naught," began Alden, bewildered; but again the girl cut him short with a stinging little laugh.

"Thou never meanest aught, poor John; but I have no time to waste with thee. Here, Robert, these come next, and take Mistress Allerton's hamper as well."

"Nay, that is for me," growled Alden, seizing the basket from the hands of the astonished servant who relinquished it with a stare and a muttered exclamation in French; for William Moline, called Mullins by the Pilgrims, his wife, son,

daughter, and servant were all of the French Huguenots, who fleeing from their native land planted a colony upon the river Waal in Holland, and were at this time known as Walloons. Learning enough of Dutch to carry on the business of daily life, and of English to communicate with their co-religionists of the Pilgrim church in Leyden, they retained French as the dear home language of their birth, and the young people, like Priscilla and her brother Joseph, used the three languages with equal facility.

A little offended and a good deal puzzled by the change in Priscilla's manner since their last interview, Alden devoted himself to unloading the boat without again addressing her, until he saw her confide herself to the arms of her brother to be taken ashore; then seizing an armful of parcels, he strode along close behind the slender stripling whose thews and sinews were obviously unequal to his courage, and who floundered painfully over the uneven sands. At last he stumbled, recovered himself, plunged wildly forward, and fell flat upon his face, while his sister, suddenly seized and held aloft in two strong arms, did not so much as wet the hem of her garment, until with a few swift strides her rescuer set her on dry land and turned to help the boy who came floundering after them with a rueful and angry countenance.

"'Twas all thy fault, Priscilla," began he. "Twisting and squirming to see who was coming after us."

"Nay,'t was the fault of some great monster who came trampling on our heels, and making the water wash round my feet. Some whale or griffin belike, though he has hid himself again," and the girl affected to shade her eyes and

scan the sparkling waters, while Alden strode moodily away. Priscilla glanced after his retreating figure, and spoke again to her brother in a voice whose cooing softness poor John had never heard.

"Thou poor dripping lad! And such a cough as thou hast already! Come with me sweetheart, and I'll set thee between two fires, and put my duffle cloak about thee, and heat some soup scalding hot. I would I had a sup of strong waters for thee—ah yes, I see!"

And hurriedly leading her brother to a sheltered nook between two great fires, she cast her cloak over his shoulders, and then sprang up the sand-hill with the graceful strength of an antelope to the spot where Doctor Fuller stood talking with a man whose appearance demands a word of description. Short and square built, the figure bespoke strength and long training in athletic exercises, while the haughty set of the head, the well-shaped hands and feet, and the clear cut of the features told of gentle blood and the habit of predominance. The bare head was covered with thick chestnut hair, worn at the temples by pressure of a steel cap, and well matched in color by eyes whose strong, stern glances carried defeat to the hearts of his savage foes even before his quick blows fell. The mouth, firmly closed beneath its drooping moustache, was like the eyes, stern and terrible in anger, but like them it was capable of a winning sweetness and charm only known to those he loved, those he pitied, and to the life-long friends whose loving description has come down to us; for this was Myles Standish, the soldier and hero of the Pilgrims; their dauntless defender in battle, their gentle nurse in illness,

their councilor and envoy and shining example in peace; the right arm of the colony, its modest commander, and its intelligent servant.

As Priscilla approached, the two men ceased their conversation and turned toward her, neither of them unconscious of the beauty, grace, and vigor which clothed her as a garment, yet each restrained by inborn chivalry and respect from expressing his opinion.

"Oh, Doctor, or you, Captain Standish, have either of you a flask of strong waters about you? My poor Joseph has fallen in the water, and it is so cold, and he has already a cough."

"Yes, we saw him fall. He was overloaded for such a stripling," said the doctor, with his dry smile, while Standish, hastily pulling a flask from his pocket, said,—

"Here is some well-approved Hollands gin, Mistress Priscilla; and I would advise a good draught as soon as may be, and have it heated if it may be."

"Here, hand it me. I will go and give my friend Joseph a rating for undertaking tasks beyond his strength, though belike the fault was none of his!" And the doctor seizing the flask strode down the hill, while Priscilla lingered to ask,—

"How doth Mistress Standish find herself to-day? I heard she was but poorly."

"Ay, poorly enough," replied the Captain with a shadow chasing the smile from his eyes. "She is hardly strong enough for these shrewd winds and rough adventures. I had done better to leave her in England until we are established somewhere."

"There's more than one in our company, I fear me, that has adventured beyond their strength," replied Priscilla sadly, as she remembered her mother's hectic flush and wasting strength and her brother's cough.

"A forlorn hope, perhaps, set to garrison this by-corner of the world, but not forgotten by the Commander-in-chief, remember that, maid Priscilla," said the captain kindly and cheerily. "There in the Low Countries our worst trouble was that the home government never backed us as they should, and more than once we felt we were forgot and neglected; but in the warfare we have to wage here in the wilderness we can never fear that."

"Yet soldiers may die at their post here as well as there," said Priscilla, turning to go down the hill.

"So long as the work is done it matters little what becomes of the soldier," replied Myles briefly, and the two rejoined the group around the fires.

Before nightfall the clothes, dried and sweet with the sunshine and pure air, were carefully folded into the tubs and kettles, the dinner was neatly cleared away, and the whole company in several trips of the boats conveyed on board, while the carpenters and their volunteer aids remained to work while daylight lasted upon the pinnacle, the Pilgrims' own craft, intended for exploration along the shore, and for fishing when they should have made a settlement.

But Joseph Molines had not shaken off his chill by means of the captain's Hollands gin, nor did his mother or Rose Standish find themselves better in the evening than they had been in the morning, and as the darkness of the

November night closed around the lonely bark, gaunt shadowy forms, Disease and Famine and Death, seemed shaping themselves among the clouds and brooding menacingly over the Forlorn Hope, as its soldiers slept or watched beneath.





## CHAPTER II.

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### THE LAUNCH OF THE PINNACE.

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"Mary! Mary Chilton! Maid Mary mine!" called Priscilla Molines in her clear bird-voice, as she ran down the steps leading to the principal cabin. "Come on deck and see the launch of the pinnace! The carpenters call her fit for use if not finished, and the men have gone ashore to launch her. Where art thou, poppet!"

"Here," replied a gentler and sweeter voice, as Mary Chilton came forward, a long gray stocking dangling from her hands, and stood in a slant ray of sunshine which lighted her golden hair to a glory, and showed the pure tints of her May-bloom face and clear blue eyes; a lovely English face in its first fresh rapture of morning beauty.

"Right merrily will I come, Priscilla, if there be aught to see," continued she, throwing down the stocking which she was knitting for her father. "Truly my eyes ache with staring at nothingness."

"Well, there's a trifle this side of nothingness on the beach at this minute," retorted Priscilla, pinching her friend's ear. "Men call it Gilbert Winslow."

"Hush, hush, Priscilla!" whispered Mary, with a scared look toward her mother's cabin. "If anybody heard such folly! And Mistress White already tells my mother that we two are over-light in our carriage and conversation."

"Mistress White"—began Priscilla sharply, but ended the exclamation with a saucy laugh and said instead, "Yes, truly as thou sayest, my May, mine eyes ache with gazing upon nothingness and my tongue aches with speaking naught but wisdom. It is out of nature for young maids to be as staid as their elders, and methinks I do not care to be. Let us be young while we have youth, say I."

She looked perilously pretty as she arched her brows and pouted her ripe lips, and Mary looked at her in loving admiration, while she answered sagely,—

"You and yours are French, Priscilla, and I am all English like my forbears; so thou mayst well be lighter natured than I—I mean no harm, dear."

"No harm is done, dear mother in Israel," replied Priscilla half mockingly, and seizing Mary's hand she led her on deck, where many of the women and children were collected, watching the preparations on shore for the launch of the pinnace, which, much strained by bad stowage between decks, had needed about a fortnight's work done upon her before she was fit for service.

"They only wait for her to set forth on a second exploration," said Priscilla confidentially; "and a little bird sang in my ear that they would go to-morrow."

"What little bird?" asked Mary curiously; but before Priscilla could reply another voice interposed; it was that of Bridget Tilley, who had come on deck to seek her daughter Elizabeth, and now sharply inquired,—

"Another expedition, say you? And my goodman scarce brought back from death's door, whither the first jaunt led him! Nay, now, 'tis not right, 'tis all one as murder, to hale

dying men out of their beds and into that wilderness. No blessing will follow such work, and I'll cry upon the governor or the captain or the elder to stop it!"

"What is it, Mistress Tilley? Any wrong that I can help set right?" asked a sweet voice, and Bridget turned toward the speaker with a somewhat more subdued manner, lowering her voice as she said,—

"Thank you kindly, Mistress Standish, and God be praised that you can be on deck; but my matter is this," and again she poured out her anxieties and her fears, until Rose Standish, a fair white rose now, and trembling in the shrewd autumn air so soon to scatter her petals and bear the pure fragrance of her life down through the centuries, until men to-day love her whom they never knew, leaned wearily against the bulkhead and said,—

"Rest easy, dear dame. Thou'rt all in the right, and it behooves us to protect our lords from their own rash courage, just as it befits their courage to protect us against salvages and wild beasts. I will whisper in my husband's ear that Master Tilley is all unfit to carry out his own brave impulses, and I will conspire with Mistress Carver and Mistress Bradford, and, above all, with our dear mother, the elder's wife, that each shall make petition to her lord to see that no sick or overborne man be allowed to adventure himself on the expedition. Will that satisfy thee, dame?"

"Right well, and you are all one with the saints we used to honor, though we do know better now."

"'Tis the most comfortable promise I've heard in many a day, dear Mistress Standish," cried Priscilla vivaciously. "And well do I believe that the whispers of the wives are more

weighty than the shouts of the husbands. I've never proved it myself, being but a maid; yet I have ere now marked how the prancing of the noblest steed is full deftly checked by a silken rein."

"It were well if a rein were put upon thy tongue, girl," severely interposed a comely matron sitting near. "Thou'rt over forward for thy years, Priscilla. Shamefastness and meekness become a maid, and when thou knowest more thou'lt say less."

"Thanks, Mistress White, I will try to profit by your discourse," replied Priscilla demurely; but her tone did not satisfy the matron, who sharply rejoined,—

"See that thou do, Mistress Malapert, or I'll ask the elder to deal with thee. Here he is now."

And, in fact, Elder Brewster, who had caught the tone of Mistress White's voice, drew near to the group, saying pleasantly, "A goodly sight yonder, is it not? And how well our strong fellows set their shoulders to the toil! What shall we call the pinnacle when she is launched, Mistress White?"

"Methinks Discretion would be a good name, Elder," replied the lady with a glance at the two girls. "Surely, we have room for it in our company."

"Truth, my daughter, and yet to my mind Charity is a sweeter name, and one more likely to float us over troubled waters." And the elder's pleasant smile disarmed his words of all sting. "Priscilla," continued he, turning to the girl, "I hear that thy father keeps his bed to-day, and thy mother is but poorly."

"Indeed, sir, they are both in evil case," replied Priscilla sadly. "Neither of them has stomach for such food as is at

hand, and so they weaken daily. John Alden shot some little birds yesterday, and I made broth of them, but, saving that, my mother has taken no meat for days."

"I will go and visit them," said the elder, and forgetting the launch he had come up to see, he went at once.

"See! See! There she goes!" cried Elizabeth Tilley, as the great boat slid gracefully down her ways to the water, dipped her bows deeply, and finding her level rode upon an even keel.

"There she goes!" echoed Constance Hopkins and Remember Allerton, who with Elizabeth Tilley constituted what may be called the rosebud division of the Pilgrim girls, all glowing in the freshness of early youth, all comely, strong, and vivacious. Priscilla Molines and Mary Chilton with Desire Minter, a distant relative and charge of Governor Carver's, made another little group of older girls, and then came the young matrons of whom there were many, while Mistress Brewster in the dignity of middle life was the recognized head and guide of all.

"Yes, there she goes," cried Priscilla, clapping her hands and dancing upon her slender feet. "And Mary," continued she, dropping her voice to a whisper, "it was Captain Standish who gave that last mighty shove"—

"Nay, it was John Alden," interrupted Mary innocently.

"I tell thee, girl, it was the captain. John Alden is ever at his elbow and striving to imitate him, but our captain is still the leader, and I do honour a man who can think as well as do, and act as well as talk. Of talkers we have enow, the dear knows; Master Winslow and Master Allerton can so argue that they would force you to swear black was white

and the moon a good Dutch cheese an they chose, and they can lay out work marvelously well for others to carry out, but I mark that their own hands abide in their pockets for the most part. Then there are plenty of strong arms with no head-pieces, like John Alden and your good friend Gilbert Winslow and John Howland and"—

"Nay, nay, Priscilla, thou shalt not wrong good men so," interrupted Mary, her fair face coloring a little. "The leaders aye must lead, and the younger and simpler aye must follow in every community, and I mark not that those you flout for speaking so well fail of their share in the labor, nor do I think John Alden or the rest would do well to thrust their advice upon their betters. At all rates, yon boat had not slid down so merrily if John Alden had not put his shoulder to the work."

"Yea, put his shoulder where the captain laid his hand," retorted Priscilla with her mocking laugh, and then putting her arm around Mary's shoulders, she added affectionately, —

"What a wise little woman thou art, ever looking at both sides of the matter while I see but one! And in truth, perhaps, it is better that there be these varied excellences, so that all comers may be suited, just as thou art fond of porridge while I would liefer have soup."

"And art a rare hand at compounding it," replied Mary admiringly. "How Desire Minter smacked her lips over the dish thou gavest her the other day."

"That poor Desirée, as my gossip Jeanne De la Noye used to call her! I like well to give her some tasty bit, for it makes