RHYMING.

[Another of the following contributions is unknown. It is said to be the "youngest one" published in the English language.—C. F. A.]

A little maid with sweet blue eyes
Looked upward with a shy surprise
Because I asked her name;
Then rose and bent her golden head,
While o'er her face soft blushes spread
Like some swift rosy flame;
Then looking up, she softly said,
"My name is Mamma's Darling."

"Tell me your mother's name, my dear,"
And stooping low I paused to hear—
The little maid seemed musing;
"Why, mamma's name's like mine, you know,
But just because we love her so,
We call her Mamma Darling."

"Tell me your papa's name," I cried;
The little maiden's eyes grew wide;
"My papa? Don't you know?
Why, ever since the baby died
Mamma and I have always tried
To cheer him from his sorrowing;
And my mamma and I love best
To call him Papa Darling."

"What did you call the baby, dear?"
The answer came quite low but clear:
"The baby—oh, I wonder what
They call him now in heaven;
But we had only one name here,
And that was Baby Darling."

Swift years flew by, and once again
That little maid so tender
Stood by my side, but she had grown
Like lilies, tall and slender;
This time 'twas I that called her name,
And swift the blushes grew like flame
Across mist of morning;
I clasped her in my arms and kissed
My tender-hearted Darling.

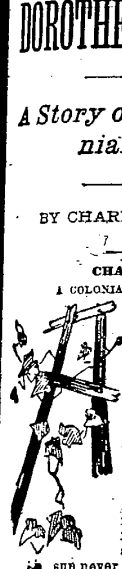
DOROTHEA INGRAM.

A Story of Early Colonial Days.

BY CHARLES C. HAHN.

CHAPTER I.

A COLONIAL SETTLEMENT.



ALL night long the woods had re-echoed the sweet trill of the New England nightingale. Toward daybreak the vesper and the hair bird had taken up the song, and set their leafy homes ringing with their voices.

The morning broke cool and exhilarating. All around the settlement circled the deep forest, so dense and luxuriant that the sun never penetrated its deepest glades, nor entirely drove away the night from beneath its innermost trees, which interlaced branches to bar the intruder out.

So thick was the forest that no grass, save here and there a solitary blade or cluster concealed the rich black loam, the productive farms of future generations. But the dainty blue violet and other wood flowers bloomed in their season, in scant profusion. Now, however, only the latest of summer's colors brightened the earth or perfumed the leafy arches with their fragrance. Instead, the ground was beginning to be covered with an irregular mosaic of dead and dying autumn leaves. The trees, too, were displaying the same diversity of color. As one looked down into the depths of the forest he could trace every shade of green and brown, with here and there a scarlet fringe. Here is all oak with leaves still green as spring, and farther on a distant cousin who is coming out in colors such as artists never hope to imitate with paint and brush; while standing side by side with this gay young gallant is a more unfortunate brother doomed to pass into his winter's sleep in dusky, ugly brown. The long feather-limbed elms and branching maples that have not yet been touched by frost, protected, perhaps, by other trees, proclaim their respective family traits, and wave aloft their family colors of a lighter tint of green than the hard-wooded oak; while those which have felt the first touches of winter's pioneersman are gracefully turning themselves into the more subdued of autumn colors, more delicate, if less gorgeous, than the colors of the oak. Sometimes the poison ivy twines in and out among the branches of some friendly tree and mingles its bright red leaves with the green of its supporter. When the tree is brown, as perchance it may be, the brilliant colors peeping out from beneath or behind the more sober suit, reminds one of a gayly plumaged bird flirting its feathers within its cage or of a captive peering out from behind his prison bars.

In Sagnauck also signs of autumn were visible, and the thrifty pioneers were following nature in their preparation for the long winter months. The gardens were being robbed of their spoils, and immense mounds marked the places where the crops of potatoes and turnips and apples had been covered with thick layers of straw and earth, to protect them from the severe New England cold.

Yellow ears of corn showed themselves through the lower chinks of the log granaries which before another month would be filled to the very brim. Beside the kitchen doors lay golden heaps of mammoth pumpkins and long-necked squashes, which were being constantly diminished by the busy housewife and her daughters, who cut and hung them in long festoons from the kitchen rafters. Embryo woodpiles, which before another month would be heaped high as the house and again dwindle down to their present size by spring, marked each home. Shelter for cattle was being made more secure, and the pens were filled with hogs, which had nothing to do all day but munch the yellow ears of corn and grow fat for Christmas killing.

Upon the inlets which had been cut from the settlement into the woods to let in the rays of human work and life farther out, were rows of corn shocks, not unlike in appearance the Indian wigwams which a century before may have graced their very site. These little indentations in the forest, like so many arms reaching from the town to reclaim the land, contrasted it from the woody prison which still for miles around had been the work of five years of honest toil, of felling of trees and grubbing of roots, which now made of the rich black earth had been reclaimed and was yielding an abundant harvest. This harvest the sturdy boys of the colony were attacking as though it were an Indian village to be ransacked, and, having laid the wigwams low, proceeded leisurely to separate them into piles of yellow ears and great heaps of fodder—the one rich winter food for the cattle; the former to be hauled to the mill by the creek and ground into meal for family ash-cakes, bread, and puddings.

This mill, which was owned by the colony, was a picturesque building, had been brought from the mother country in pieces and set up here by Sagnauck Creek, which wound around the east and south of town. The pilgrims had done their best to make it prosaic, but by some unwritten law a mill is always picturesque, build it prim and straight as we will. The very rudeness in structure of Sagnauck mill added to its beauty. Anything else than unplaned planks or riven boards for the roof would have been out of place among the trees which grew up to its very walls, and the leaves which beat a tattoo upon the roof with every wind that blew. A dam had been thrown across the creek just below the curve to the westward; banking up a deep pool, around which the willows grew, sweeping their long limbs over the surface and under which the boys passed hours with hook and line. The water, held back by the dam of logs, rushed down tumultuously through the sluice-gates, turned the great wheel which set the machine in motion, escaped and went on its way though the woods, a little angry with dam and wheel, but rather merry withal over its regained freedom.

All night long the woods had re-echoed the trill of the nightingale, and all day long the sound of the woodman's ax made sweet music for the wives at Sagnauck.

Down deeper in the forest and farthest from the settlement—so far, in fact, that the sound of his ax could but faintly be heard at the edge of the wood—the man who had blazed the way and led the colonists to their new home was preparing his winter fuel on this autumn morning. But no woman's heart would have quickened its beat for a moment with thoughts of the chopper, had one heard the ring of his ax, or known it was his. For Mark Hillary was the black sheep of Sagnauck, and up to date had succeeded in acquiring for himself a reputation for roughness and, if not for crime, the near approach to it, which caused his respectable neighbors to look upon him as little better than a heathen, if not worse. The minister said "worse," and in truth his conduct, and open ridicule of those institutions which our Puritan forefathers held most dear, gave ample reason for his low repute among them. With a strong will-power, aided by great physical strength, he had all his life spurned control and resented anything which savored of compulsion or restriction upon his rights or freedom of thought and action. Thus he had come at once in contact with church and state.

Early in life Mark Hillary had crossed the ocean and lent his strength in building up the New England, hoping in her to find the freedom he had not secured in old England, so when he encountered the rigid laws of the Puritan government, which prescribed not only what he must believe and do, but what he must believe and think, his nature rebelled, and, being called to account once or twice for some careless remark concerning the Puritan faith, he abjured religion and took the position of open antagonism to the church. Then, being badgered by both church and state, both of which had been founded to allow freedom of belief, he became cynical and took care to spare no one, not even the Rev Henry Granville, if opportunity afforded a sharp repartee.

And yet a close observer must have been able to detect some good in the man. If he abjured his fellows, he at least found friends among the lower animals, and he was thoroughly at home in the forest. His "place was in the front," he was wont to say, and, in time, he grew accustomed to add, "as far from the white man as possible." So, after a year in the settlement, he had built him a cabin in the woods, half a mile west, and rarely entered the village except on Sunday and lecture days.

No doubt this seclusion had much to do with the low repute he fell into, for the man who despises the smallness of his companions is rarely loved by those he esteems so poorly, especially if he takes no pains to conceal his opinion. But out there by himself he communed with nature in his rough way, was happy, and would have been a tolerably decent man had he been left alone. He knew every bird around his cabin, and watched over their nests as though they were his own property.

"My village," he sometimes said to himself, "what more need have I of friends?"

He took genuine pleasure also in sitting at evening in his cabin door and watching the tall trees, straight and stiff in the calm summer, or bowing before the storm which now and then passed overhead. Once he was heard to speak to them as if they had been endowed with life, which speech, being carried to the minister, caused no little concern in the society, and was carefully filed away to be brought out at some later day, when chance should be given to force this heathen into conversion, or when his offenses had accumulated sufficiently to give pretext for driving him away.

On this same morning at nine o'clock the minister left his sermon unfinished upon his desk, and, with a very severe look upon his long, slim face, walked with quick, nervous step down the one street of Sagnauck.

The Rev. Henry Granville was a tall and well-built man, but his emaciated body, sunken, sallow cheeks, and the nervous twitch of his muscles as he rested, stood or walked, showed that his once strong constitution had been broken either by too lengthy sittings by the study lamp or by some secret trouble, which, commencing with the mind, had gradually spread through his body until the whole man had become its prey. The tall frame was now little more than a skeleton and he habitually bowed his head—not in self-depreciation, but through weakness and nervousness. The reverend gentleman would have found it a difficult task to have hidden from justice had he ever committed a crime. He was at all times and in all places Henry Granville, and could do more than that no man could do. His long black cook, who never saw him without, unless it might be his wife, and rumor said that he even slept in it; the nervous twitching of his body, raising his shoulders and lowering his head; his long strides in walking—all these were familiar to each person, great or small, in the settlement, and never yet had he been able to appear at one end of the street but that Dame Prouty, who lived at the opposite extreme and was near-sighted, had not recognized him, if she chanced to look his way.

On this particular morning the minister was even more nervous than usual, and a deep cloud, portending severe displeasure from some cause or other, darkened his brow. And as he passed quickly down the street he scarcely raised his eyes from the ground to reply to the respectful salutations tendered him by those members of his flock whom he met. But, hurrying on, he paused not for an instant until he entered the gate of the great house of the village, and, after a sharp rap with the iron knocker, was admitted into the office of the pioneer Squire.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRIAL.

Pausing this morning in his work, Mark Hillary saw John Atlee, the colonial constable, approaching. Then leaning upon his ax-handle, he waited until the constable had stopped and bade him good-morning, when, without paying any attention to the situation, he demanded:

"What do you want, Atlee? You haven't come out here just for a friendly talk, I know, so just spit out what you have and go."

The officer's face changed color under this rough greeting. For Mark Hillary had been particularly hard upon several of Atlee's weak points, and a most bitter enmity had sprung up between them. But he quickly regained the usual malignant look which always marked his face when near Hillary, and, in the manner which his soul thought would be most aggravating to the rough iconoclast, replied:

"I'm sorry to come on'cheer on such an errand, being as me and you used to be such cronies; but an 'umble officer o' the law must do his dooty, if it is unpleasant. I've got here in my pocket a writ for you, Mark Hillary, which bids you come before the magistrate and plead guilty or not guilty to a charge of blasphemy, so I guess you'd better lounge along with me."

"The church and the state keep up this ganging pretty well," was Hillary's rejoinder. "Wonder which one of my remarks touched the parson's flank this time." And he burst into a loud laugh that made the little constable turn pale, as, perhaps, Hillary meant it to do.

Throwing on his loose blouse, which had been hanging upon the limb of a tree, Mark, with a brief "Come along," started for the village. This was not the figure the little man had been expecting to cut. He had been proud of his commission and had thought with elation of appearing upon the street of Sagnauck with his old enemy following in submissive captivity. His peace of mind was not increased by the cutting witticisms which Hillary fired at him continually, and which were all the more galling because the poor fellow felt his inferiority in not being able to understand them all.

Arriving at the Squire's house Hillary entered with no more ceremony than he would have entered the poorest cabin in the village, and with a hearty salutation to the Magistrate said:

"The church must love me well to send for me in the midst of woodchopping. Seems as if I am about the most popular man in Sagnauck, at least you send for me oftener than any other. I'm ready—fire away. The meeting's open." With a glance at the minister, who squirmed in his chair, and half rose intending to rebuke such lightness, but whom the Squire motioned to remain seated, Mark sat down.

The charge was read, in which it was stated with all due form, that Mark Hillary, of Sagnauck, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, had on several occasions offended the sacred laws of Sagnauck, his Majesty the King, broken the peace of Sagnauck, and done lasting injury to God's church by denying the power of God, denouncing His holy word, and indulging in his vicious propensity for sneering, and by ridiculing the holy men of old whose lives were given us for patterns of life.

"Mark Hillary," began the Squire, after the charge had been read, "you are here charged by the Rev. Henry Granville, first, with having stated openly that the ten commandments were not to be obeyed. What have you to say to the charge?"

"I never said exactly that," replied Hillary. "But what I did say was that where we are commanded to make no image of anything in heaven or on earth or under the earth, that it is not binding, because, if binding, you, Squire, must take down those pictures from your walls; and I also said that where we are told to observe the Sabbath day is not binding, or, if it is, we are all breaking God's law, for no one observes that day. We all keep Sunday, not Saturday."

"Blasphemy!" ejaculated the Rev. Henry Granville.

"Again, you are charged with speaking lightly of the Holy Bible, the sacred book of God, and have not only ridiculed the holy men therein mentioned, but have denied that we are to be governed by those books known as the Old and New Testaments."

"Certainly, Squire. Was David such a saintly man that we should follow his example? Didn't he steal a man's farm and kill another to get his wife, when he already had a hundred or more? How many wives does Rev. Henry Granville think a man ought to have? And, as to that, old book, I confess I care little for the first part of it, for it is only a history of the Jews, and I'm no Jew. Some parts of the New Testament are all right and some are not. Paul runs down matrimony, and, while running it down, says he thinks he has the spirit of God. If he thought so, I don't. And, as for sending that slave back to the man who claimed to own him—— I know you all believe in one man owning another, but I don't; and I don't believe that what Paul said then will hold good a hundred years from now. It may to-day, but that does not make it right."

"You hear him!" again interrupted the minister. "His own words bear witness against him."

"Again," continued the Squire, "you are charged with denying that the inspired words of our Lord, the New Testament, are to be the rule of our lives."

"Why, Squire, for I read them every day, what I say was, that you worshiped the book instead of God. And I deny that God wrote it. Christ founded His Church and left His apostles to run it." (Greens from the minister.) "They wrote to different churches according to the churches' needs. Some of them are good for us, some are not."

"Lastly," said the squire, "I have here what purports to be a poem, in your hand. Is it yours?"

"Yes; I see no reason for denying it," quoth Hillary, after looking at the manuscript.

In measured tones the minister then read the following:

GOD IS DEAD.

The God of ages, God of might and power,
The mystic, dread I AM, who through the past
Ruled all the universe, lay still in death:
The glorious symphony of earth and sky
Had ceased, and death-like silence reigned in heaven.
In state the Monarch lay before the Throne;
His pall a shining cloud of light, so bright;
So terrible that none dare turn his eyes
Upon the bier; and none dare lift the pall
And gaze on that great One, whom men had thought
Could never die.

The deepest silence. Then
Came slowly, lowly, sadly forth the deep
Majestic funeral march. The heavenly choir
Was mute. The air itself of heaven broke forth
And throbbed with low, sad dirges for its King.
Softly it came, mysterious chanting, such
As men or angels never heard before.
He died. Through space confusion ruled.
Around
Our earth the long pent storm of ages burst
Its barriers and swept across its face.
Stout trees were bent. The very mountains bowed
Before the storm. Loud peals of thunder rolled
From pole to pole. The vivid lightning flashed.
The sea was in a fury lashed, and waves,
High as the heaven, broke upon the shore.
The dead, who in their graves had slept arose,
And in white garments, weird and wild, came forth
From every land and deepest ocean depth,
And walked upon the earth. The souls of those
Long dead, whose bodies were corrupt, blew here
And there before the storm with shrieks and moans—
Unearthly mists from heaven and hell—and cried:
"O, God is dead!" in plaintive minor notes,
The sad refrain which mingled with the chant
Of white-robed, wandering dead, who walked the earth
And cried "that God, who was the king of souls,
Was now no more."

All nature bowed before
The storm of ages, and all nations bowed
Before the storm which rent the soul—the storm
Through all the eons feared, and which now it
Had burst, through all eternity should roll.
For God was dead. No power was there to stay
The tempest, nor the wave of dark despair.
E'en Satan, in the lowest depths of hell,
That tempest feared, and bowed before the doom
That then approached him, for eternity,
Even in hell, was now tenfold a curse.
The power which hell's existence caused was gone,
But in its place there sprang more direful powers,
Which could not be controlled, and which could not
Control.

Then suns whirled into flaming suns;
Stars into stars; and earth and suns and stars
Were one in wildest chaos. Frightened men
And flitting souls, archangels, devils, saints
Fled here and there, and sought in vain for rest.
The soul was pierced—divided—and its shrieks
Were heard above the roar of storm and flood.
And heav'n was now no more, for heav'n is God
—And God was dead.

Loud cried a voice from near
The Throne! Swift passed a bier on wheels of fire!
A flash of light shone through all space, and God
Was borne to his last resting-place!
And over all the sea and darkness rolled,
Surrounding, guarding, holding down the mass
Which now flew on and on through space.

Having read the blasphemous verses, the minister sat down as if the case were ended. No questions were put to the accused, or he might have explained this last charge as easily as he had the former ones. The Squire and the minister consulted together for a few moments, and then, apparently more to please the minister than from a sense of justice, the former pronounced sentence according to the rigid laws of the Puritans. Hillary was fined the sum of £5 10s.

"I won't pay it!" he exclaimed, and in default was taken into custody by the constable.

CHAPTER III.

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

I have said little as yet with regard to the Rev. Henry Granville; in truth, have only mentioned him and his emaciated frame. The minister was a young man, not yet forty years old, and had come to the settlement full of health with the other colonists five years before. His family, when he removed to Sagnauck to become the pastor of the Puritan flock, consisted of a wife and one child—a girl. He had come to the new land in the first flush of youthful ambition—ambitious to do stern work for his stern God, and had at once thrown himself into the arena, ready to combat Popery and witchcraft. Popery he had studied in the old country until he knew it by heart. He could discourse fluently against apostolic succession and the supremacy of St. Peter; he had the subject of indulgences down to a fine point, and could show up the infamy of Peter—pelept, the Pope—in great style; he was also well versed in the ritual, and could show the most prejudiced—for extempore prayer—that the devil lurked in the prayer-book. As for bishops, priests, and deacons, he leveled them all at one fell blow; for did not bishop and presbyter mean the same in the New Testament, and was not a deacon a man set apart to serve tables and look after the widows? And when it came to candles and incense, he had only but to ask where either was commanded by Christ, and his opponent was silenced, or so he thought. It is true that when he brought forward the latter argument some of the weak or ungodly ones asked where in the Bible he found sanction for infant baptism, and for women coming to communion; but he passed them by as scoffers.

But when he came to Sagnauck he found another attractive subject for investigation. The mystery of Popery, and candles, and incense had lost its charms because he there met with no believers in the chair of St. Peter. Consequently he had turned his study to the next most inviting subject.

Puritan he was to the core. Mediæval and mystical he was through and through. If he had not one mystical subject to study, he must secure another.

So from Romanism he glided into witchcraft, and each was alike mystical and unknown to him.

And I do not blame him. In fact, if my careless words of mine, so far, have led the reader to believe that I am unfriendly to the Rev. Henry Granville, I wish he would disabuse himself of the idea at once. He is not my ideal of a man or of a minister, but he is my warped ideal of a Puritan student. I wish I had lived when he did. I should have believed in witches and fairies with him.

So, having found no more use for his philippics against poor St. Peter, long since dead, and his successor, the Pope, he turned the channel of his thoughts to the next mystical subject which was worrying the minds of men around him. He read with deep interest the weird stories of Cotton Mather and believed them all; and, in time, so thoroughly did he become imbued with them, that in every stream he saw a nymph, in every tree a demon, and in every old woman the possibilities of a witch. He knew all the infallible signs by which one of these devil's own children could be detected, and, it was reported, had even been present on the occasion of the burning of one of them at Salem, all of which gave his word upon the subject much credence in the settlement.

But, it was not until he had come to Sagnauck that he had any personal experience with these fearful emissaries of the evil one. Soon after he had settled in his new home, Mark Hillary had called upon him and the same day his daughter had gone into convulsions. After that first visit, Hillary, whose rough speech made no favorable impression upon the minister, seldom entered the parsonage. At first the minister thought little of the pioneersman in connection with the sudden nervous attack of his daughter, but as time passed, he learned to look upon the former as a man who had sold himself to the evil one in exchange for that most infernal passion, power over his fellow-man. The minister saw that his child was of that peculiar temperament which made her sensitive to the influences of the unseen world.

At first her experiences with regard to Hillary had been general, but strange. She seldom mentioned his name or betrayed any fear of the man, but whenever he passed her upon the one village street, or in the woods around the settlement, she unconsciously shuddered.

Once, gossip said, when Hillary unexpectedly came upon her and the minister as they were walking hand in hand along the bank of Sagnauck Creek, she uttered a piercing shriek and fell down upon the grass, foaming at the mouth.

At another time they came upon him when he was gazing at the stout trees bowing before the wind, and was muttering to himself as was his custom at such times. Achsah convulsively seized her father's hand and bade him hurry away.

"For do you not see," she said, "he is making the trees bow to him." And the father believed that her sensitive nature had enabled her to detect an evil power which he could not.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SUPERSTITIOUS TRAVELERS.

A Veteran Passenger Conductor Talks of the Whims of Tourists.

No one but the experienced passenger conductor knows just how whimsical and cranky the traveling public really is, says the Pittsburg Post. A traveler may have some peculiar fad or notion when he is on the road, but he never dreams that there are thousands of others just like him, or perhaps worse. In years of experience the conductor rubs elbows with all sorts of people, and in spite of himself becomes a mind and face reader, who takes a back seat from no one except the professional.

"Yes, travelers are superstitious and cranky," said a veteran knight of the punch yesterday in response to a query. "I think the average passenger conductor deals with more oddities daily than the curio collector of a freak show. As to superstition, I think there is more of it crops out on trains than anywhere else. Last week, just as the train was ready to pull out for Chicago, a well-dressed man came out of the coach on the platform and in an agitated manner asked me what day it was.

"I told him it was Friday, and without another word he re-entered the coach, and in a moment returned with his luggage, and by way of explanation stated that he never began a journey Friday and would wait until the next morning. That is only a sample. The much-mooted unlucky thirteen is perhaps the cause of more worry and inconvenience to tourists than any other sign which they deem of ill omen. I have known passengers to begin at the head of the train to see if they could find No. 13 anywhere.

"If the engine happened to be thirteen they would resignedly wait for the next train, and if they succeeded in finding number thirteen on any of the coaches they would hold up their hands in holy horror. I have seen passengers refuse to ride in a coach that held thirteen passengers, and if you will ask any ticket man he will tell you that of all sections in a sleeper thirteen is the most difficult to dispose of.

"Then aside from the superstition which prevails among the traveling public there are countless passengers who are cranky, and if they lose a chance to kick are in bad humor for a week afterward. They kick for a seat in the center of the coach; kick because the train goes too slow or too fast; kick because they are in a draught or because it is too hot. And the worst of it all is that when they kick I am the individual who is called up to hear them, as if I were responsible for the whole business.

"About the only time when some fellows don't kick is when they are on their honeymoon. Everything goes on as smoothly as if it had been ordered so, but let the same men ride on the same train five years later and the chances are they'll kick themselves into exhaustion."

A CHICAGO pugilist died recently from a fracture of the skull received in "a friendly bout." Some of these sports appear to put a very queer construction on the term "friendly."