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DOROTHEA INGRAM

A Story of Early Colonial Days.

BY CHARLES C. HAHN.

CHAPTER XII.

A WILD, WET NIGHT.



HE harsh sentence was carried out at once, and the poor young woman was compelled to suffer an indignity that has left a lasting stain upon the character of our Puritan ancestors.

The cruel treatment which his wife received decided Egbert to remove from Sagnauck to some other place in the colony or to his home in old England. The latter plan was chosen for him within a few days by an unexpected letter from his father. Egbert's elder brother had been killed while hunting, and the father wished to recall the younger son, who would now be the next Lord of Sagnauck.

But before Egbert Ingram could arrange to leave Sagnauck other events were shaping themselves to keep him here in the place of his wife's persecution. The inhuman sentence of the Puritan judges had brought on a low fever, and before a week had passed Dorothea Ingram was insane. Her insanity was of a mild form, and the raptures which filled her mind were of the most exquisite kind.

Some days dark, ghostly clouds swept over her and in the wall of darkness around, queer forms intermingled with each other, fantastic shapes, distorted faces of men and women. These would appear and fade and others come. At times some woodland scene would appear as plain as if she were looking out of her window at the forests, which surround her home; the waves of the sea would beat in her imagination and tall, towering castles built themselves and disappeared before her eyes.

But at all times a light cloud seemed to float before her eyes, a cloud which she was ever trying to penetrate and which was so thin that she was ever in hopes of finding what was behind it. Sometimes the cloud passed away and then some other object appeared. Now it was Egbert, now the minister, and now some other object. At length the brilliant intellect was able to understand what the object of its desire was. It was the face of her mother, whose figure she had never seen, but whose portrait she had worn for almost all her life.

Once did she see the vision, through clouds of darkness, and the gentle influence of her spirit mother brought a peace, and Dorothea sank into an unconscious, childish sleep. After that, still, the vision never entirely faded. She felt that the fair form was hovering over her and the consciousness brought her to her senses.

During Dorothea's illness, her husband never left the cabin, and yet the two were never in need. Every morning, when he awoke, Egbert found by his bedside some article of game, a fish or a fowl, or a piece of venison.

This soon became known to the busy people of the village, and every effort was made to learn from what source he received them. Falling in this they fell upon the old theory that Dorothea was being protected by that unknown power which the minister had referred to in the days of the trial.

Mr. Granville was not slow to hear in fact he took pains to in-

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