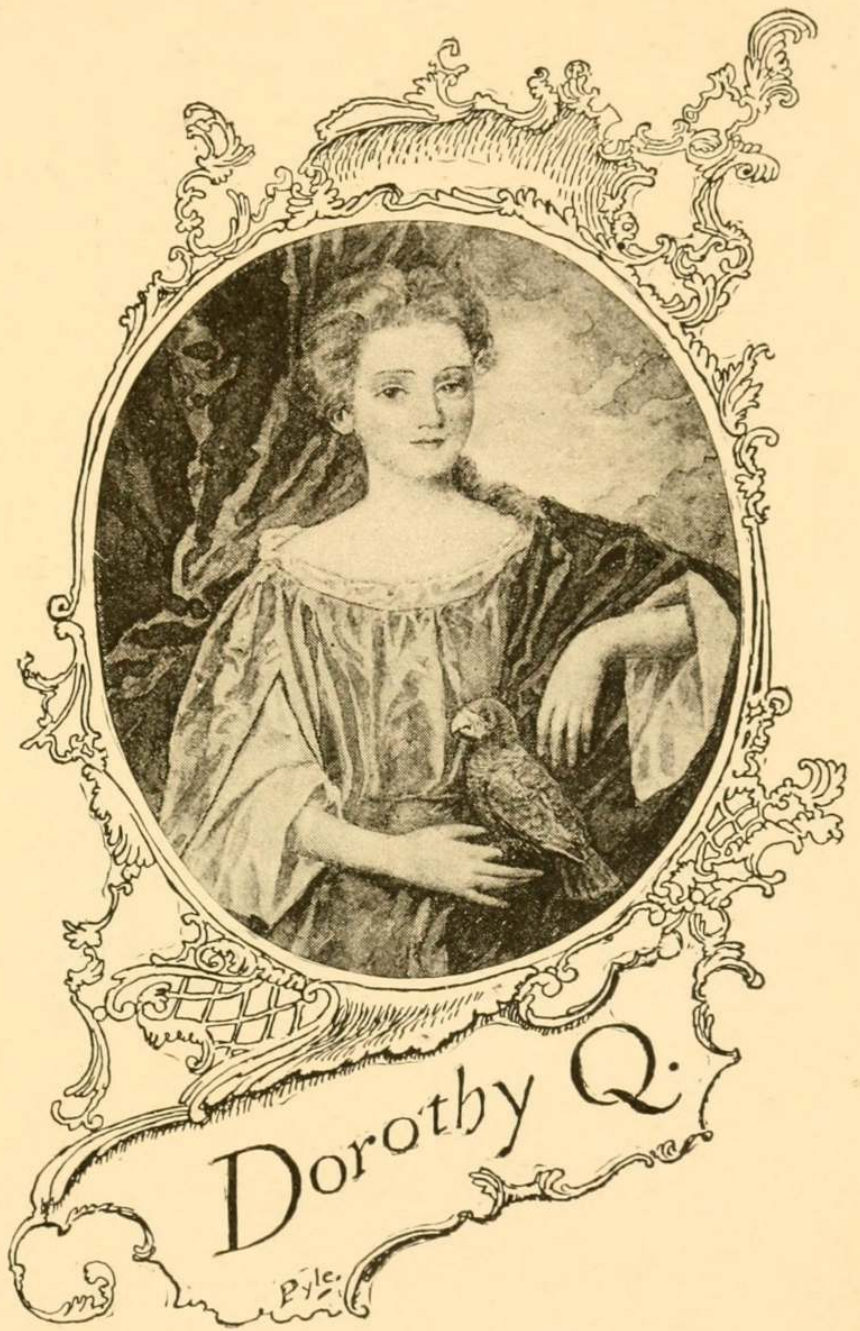




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Dorothy Q.

Pyle







# Dorothy Q

*Together with*

A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party  
&

Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill Battle

By **Oliver Wendell Holmes**

*With Illustrations by*

Howard Pyle

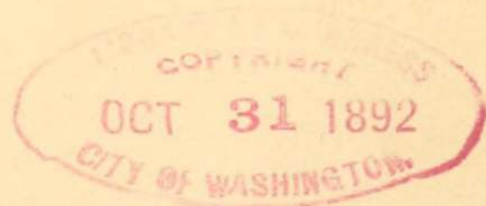


*Boston and New York*

Houghton, Mifflin and Company

The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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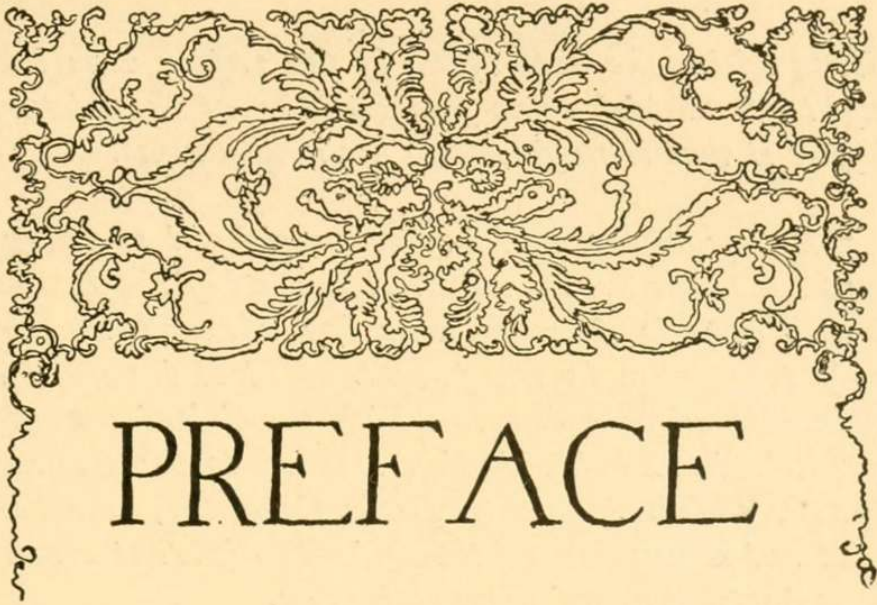
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# PREFACE

 DOROTHY QUINCY, the subject of the first poem in this volume, was aunt of the first Josiah Quincy, Junior, "that fervid orator who expended his life for the cause of his country, dying on ship-board in sight of home, as he returned from England after hostilities had begun only seven days." She was also the aunt of a second Dorothy Quincy, who became the wife of John Hancock, President of the first Continental Congress.

The painting hung in the house of my grandfather, Oliver Wendell, which was occupied by British officers before the evacuation of Boston. One of these gentlemen amused himself by stabbing poor Dorothy (the pictured one) as near the right eye as his swordsmanship would serve him to do it. The canvas was so decayed that it became necessary to remount the painting, in the process of



doing which the hole made by the rapier was lost sight of. I took some photographs of the picture before it was transferred to the new canvas.

The tax on tea, which was considered so odious and led to the act on which *A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party* is founded, was but a small matter, only two pence in the pound. But it involved a principle of taxation, to which the Colonies would not submit. Their objection was not to the amount, but the claim. The East India Company, however, sent out a number of tea-ships to different American ports, three of them to Boston.

The inhabitants tried to send them back, but in vain. The captains of the ships had consented, if permitted, to return with their cargoes to England, but the consignees refused to discharge them from their obligations, the custom house to give them a clearance for their return, and the governor to grant them a passport for going by the fort. It was easily seen that the tea would be gradually landed from the ships lying so near the town, and that if landed it would be disposed of, and the purpose of establishing the monopoly and raising a revenue effected. To prevent the dreaded consequence, a number of armed men, disguised like Indians, boarded the ships and threw their whole cargoes of tea into the dock. About seventeen persons boarded the ships in Boston harbor, and emptied three hundred and forty-two chests of tea.<sup>1</sup> Among these "Indians" was Major Thomas Mel-

<sup>1</sup> Holmes's *Annals of America*, vol. ii. pp. 181-2.

ville, the same who suggested to me the poem,  
"The Last Leaf."

*The story of Bunker Hill battle is told as literally in accordance with the best authorities as it would have been if it had been written in prose instead of in verse. I have often been asked what steeple it was from which the little group I speak of looked upon the conflict. To this I answer that I am not prepared to speak authoritatively, but that the reader may take his choice among all the steeples standing at that time in the northern part of the city. Christ Church in Salem Street is the one I always think of, but I do not insist upon its claim. As to the personages who made up the small company that followed the old corporal, it would be hard to identify them, but by ascertaining where the portrait by Copley is now to be found, some light may be thrown on their personality.*

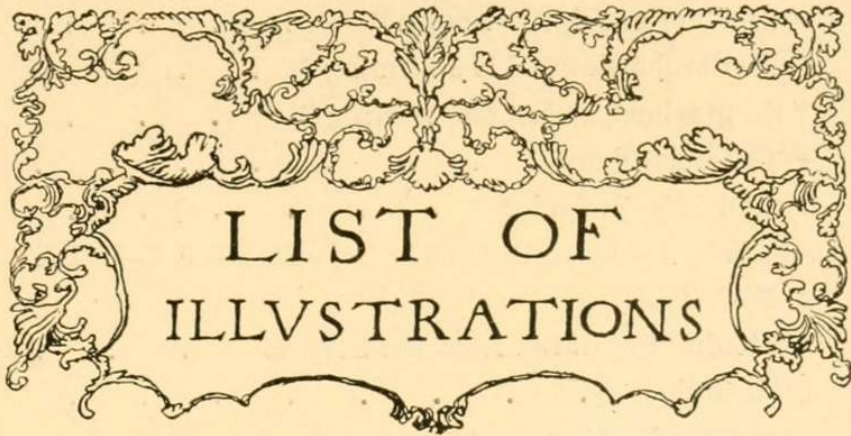
*Daniel Malcolm's gravestone, splintered by British bullets, may be seen in the Copp's Hill burial-ground.*

O. W. H.









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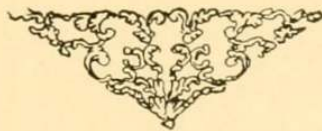
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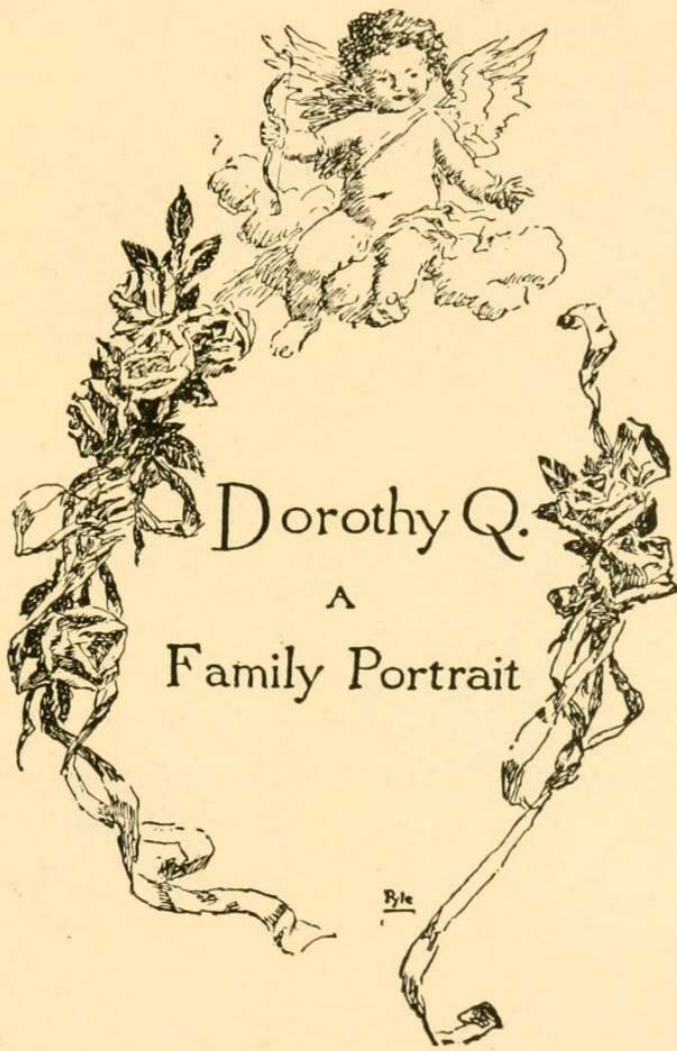
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Dorothy Q.  
A  
Family Portrait

Syle



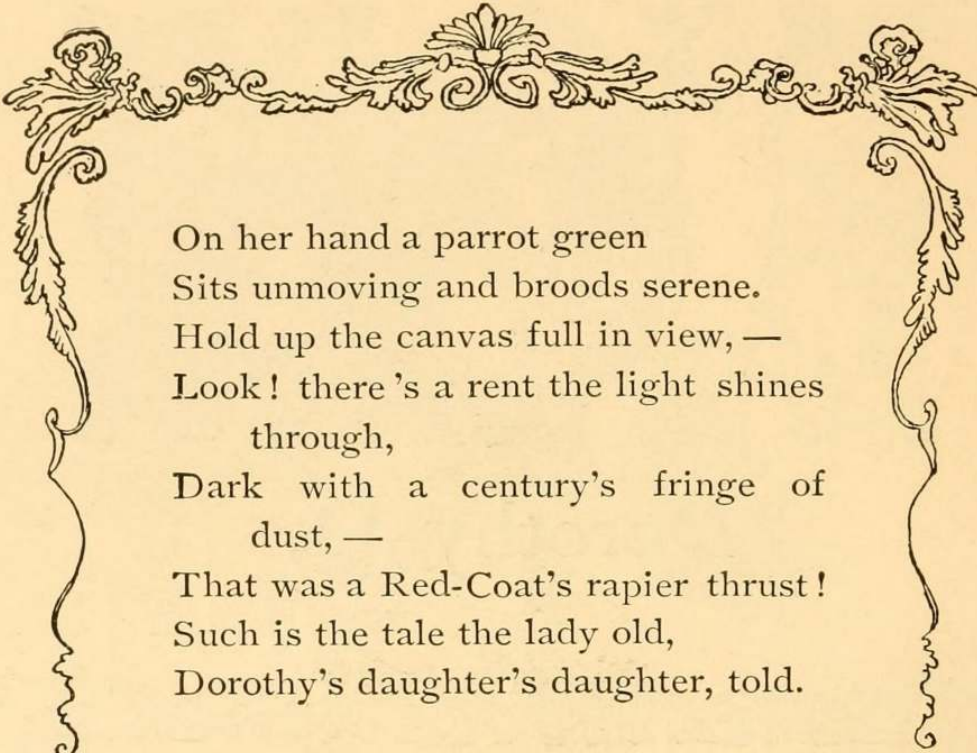
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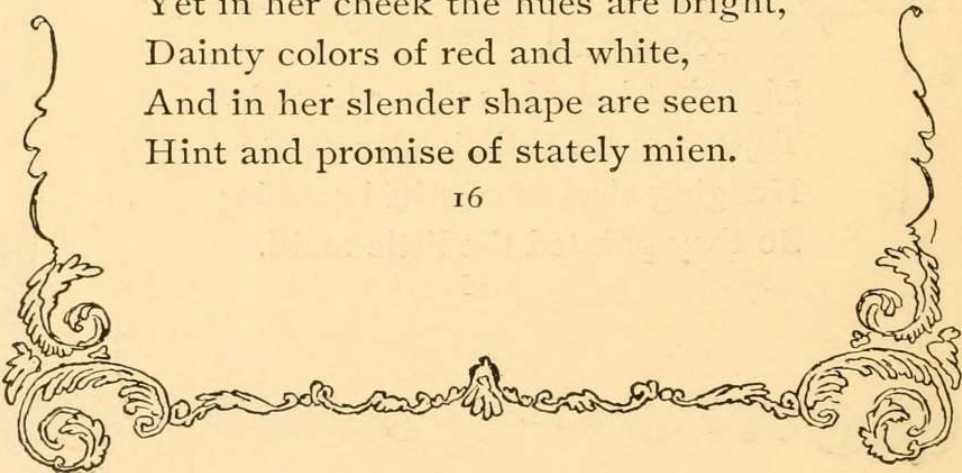
## Dorothy Q.

GRANDMOTHER'S mother : her age, I  
guess,  
Thirteen summers, or something less ;  
Girlish bust, but womanly air ;  
Smooth, square forehead, with up-  
rolled hair,  
Lips that lover has never kissed ;  
Taper fingers and slender wrist ;  
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade ;  
So they painted the little maid.



On her hand a parrot green  
Sits unmoving and broods serene.  
Hold up the canvas full in view, —  
Look! there's a rent the light shines  
    through,  
Dark with a century's fringe of  
    dust, —  
That was a Red-Coat's rapier thrust!  
Such is the tale the lady old,  
Dorothy's daughter's daughter, told.

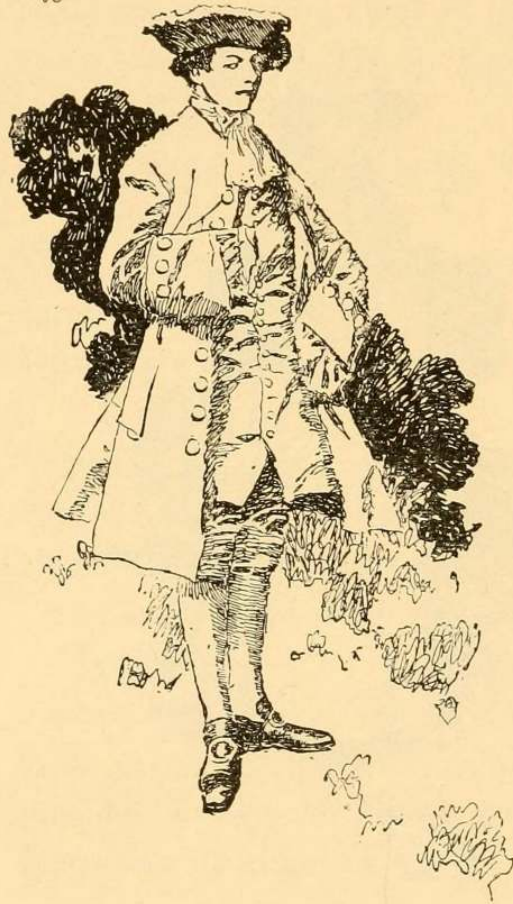
Who the painter was none may tell, —  
One whose best was not over well;  
Hard and dry, it must be confessed,  
Flat as a rose that has long been  
    pressed;  
Yet in her cheek the hues are bright,  
Dainty colors of red and white,  
And in her slender shape are seen  
Hint and promise of stately mien.



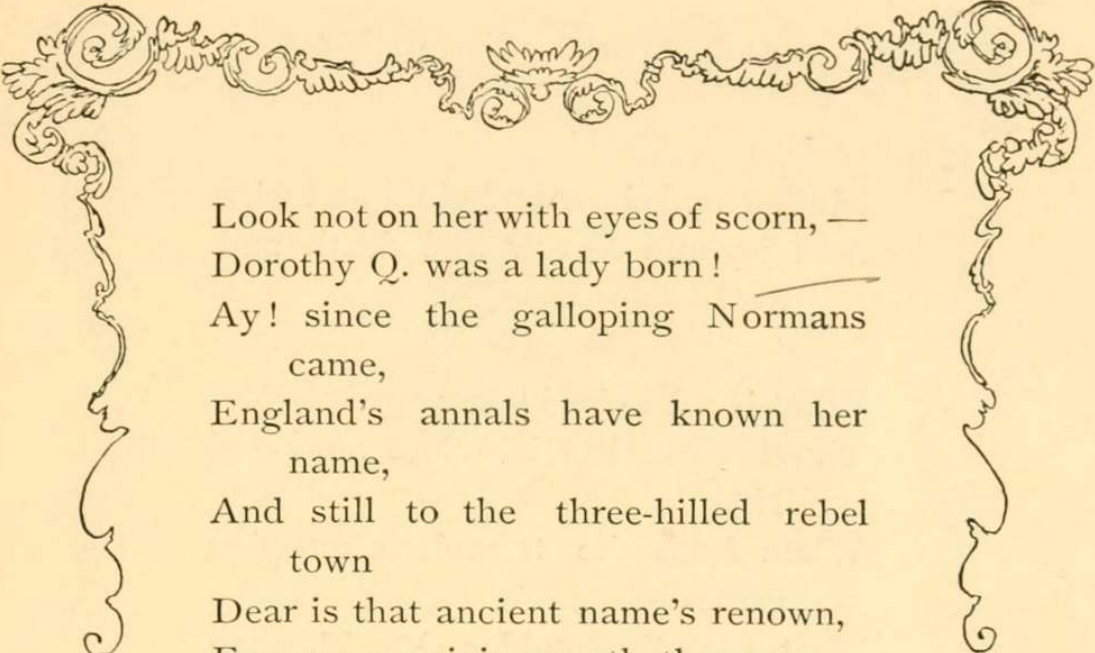




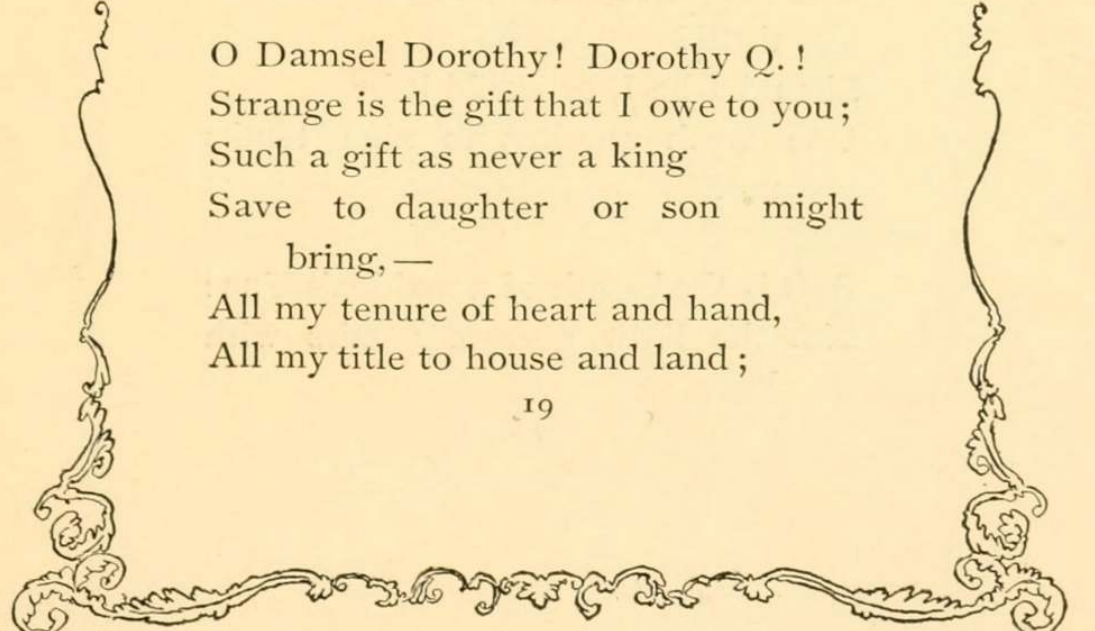
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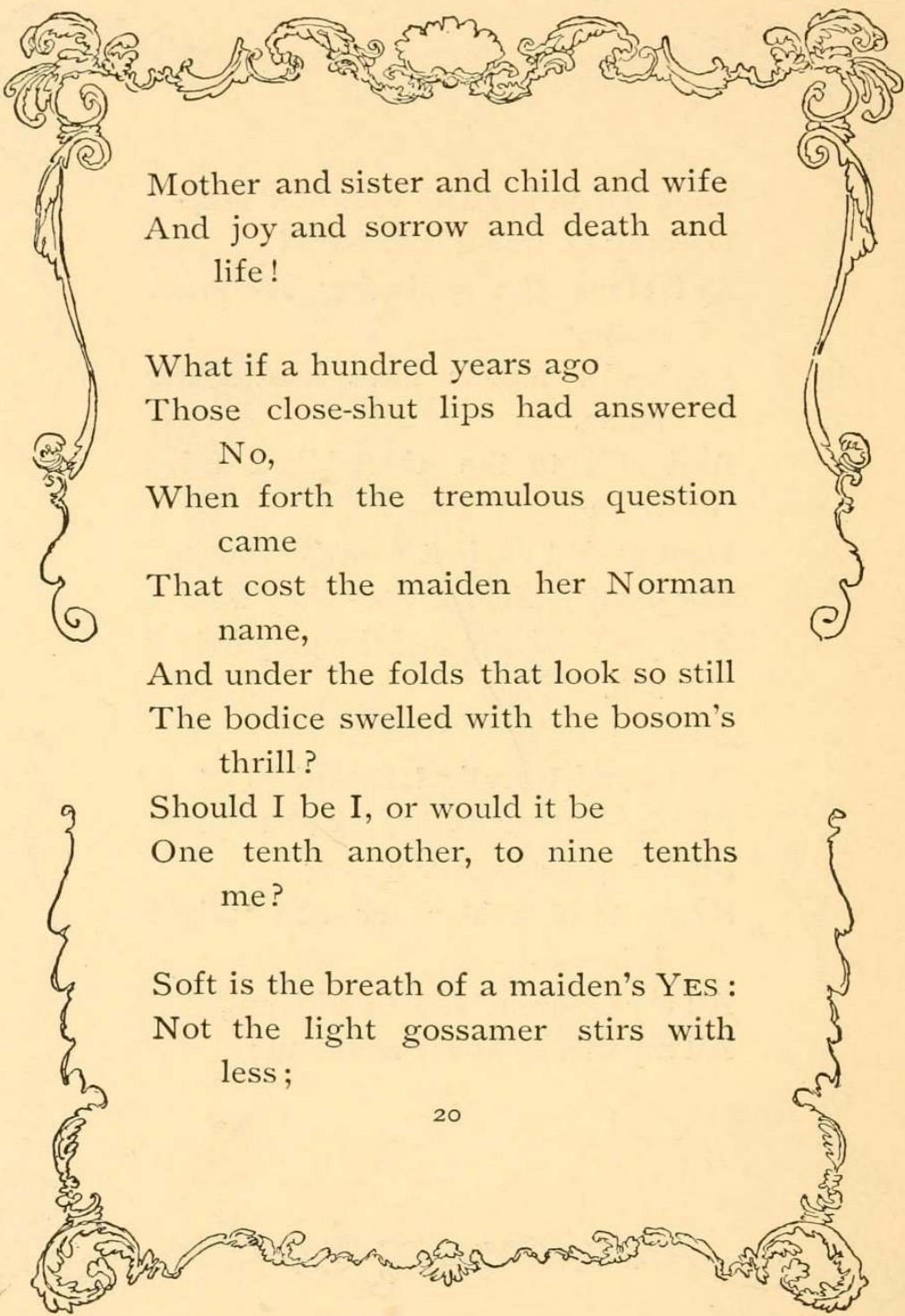
J. P.



Look not on her with eyes of scorn, —  
Dorothy Q. was a lady born!  
Ay! since the galloping Normans  
    came,  
England's annals have known her  
    name,  
And still to the three-hilled rebel  
    town  
Dear is that ancient name's renown,  
For many a civic wreath they won,  
The youthful sire and the gray-haired  
    son.



O Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q. !  
Strange is the gift that I owe to you;  
Such a gift as never a king  
Save to daughter or son might  
    bring, —  
All my tenure of heart and hand,  
All my title to house and land ;



Mother and sister and child and wife  
And joy and sorrow and death and  
life!

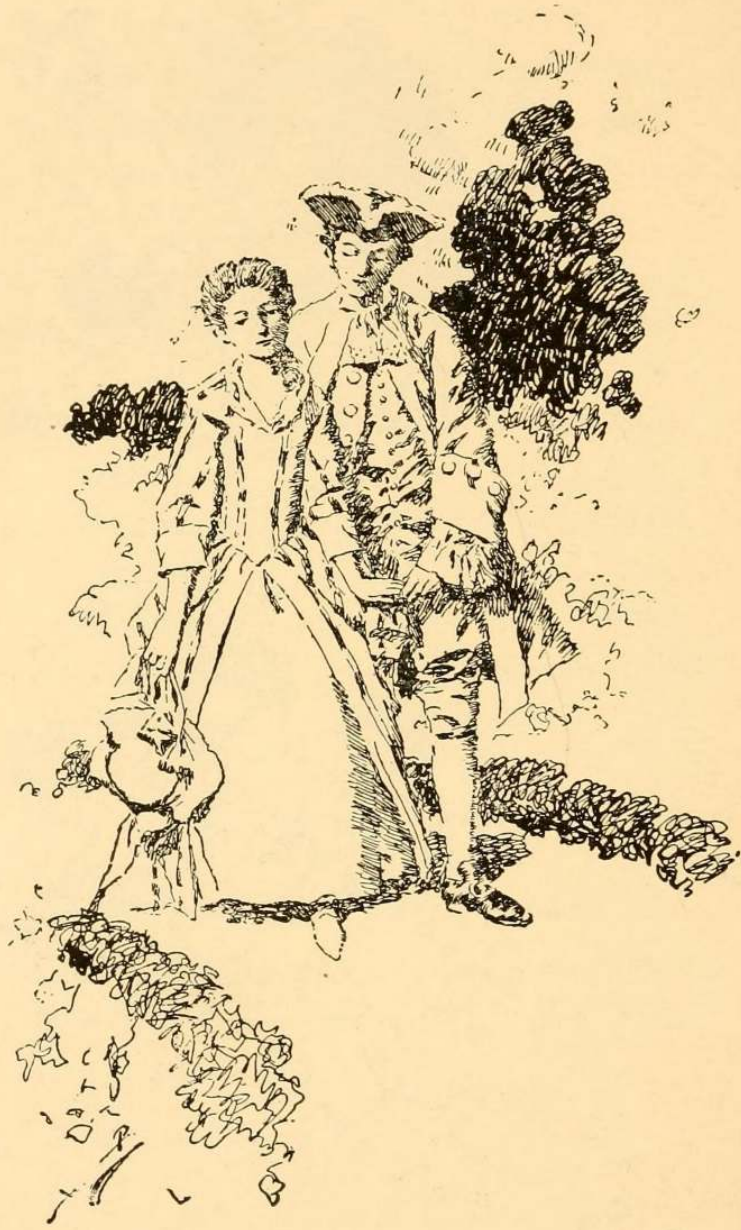
What if a hundred years ago  
Those close-shut lips had answered  
No,  
When forth the tremulous question  
came  
That cost the maiden her Norman  
name,  
And under the folds that look so still  
The bodice swelled with the bosom's  
thrill?

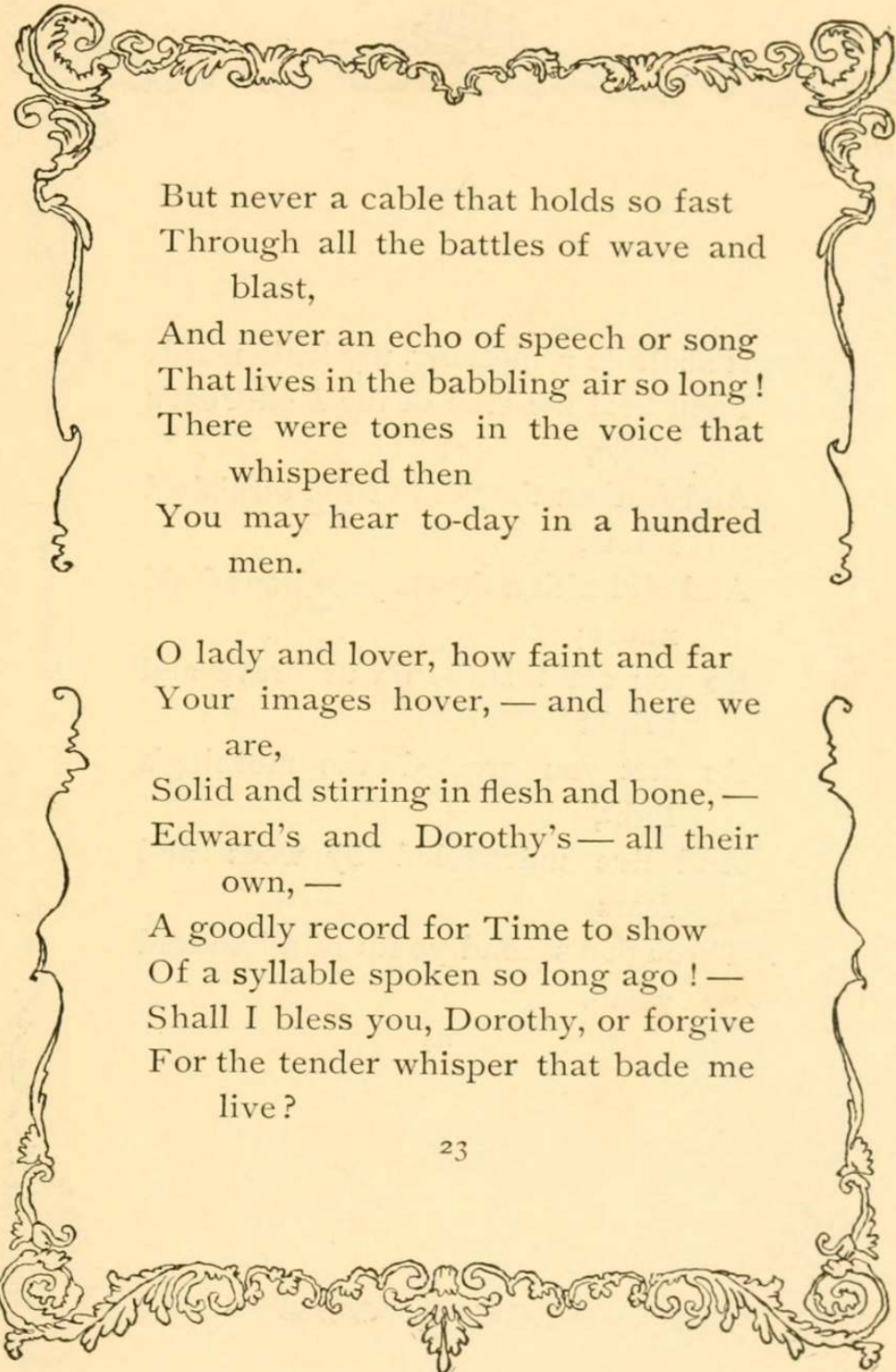
Should I be I, or would it be  
One tenth another, to nine tenths  
me?

Soft is the breath of a maiden's YES :  
Not the light gossamer stirs with  
less ;





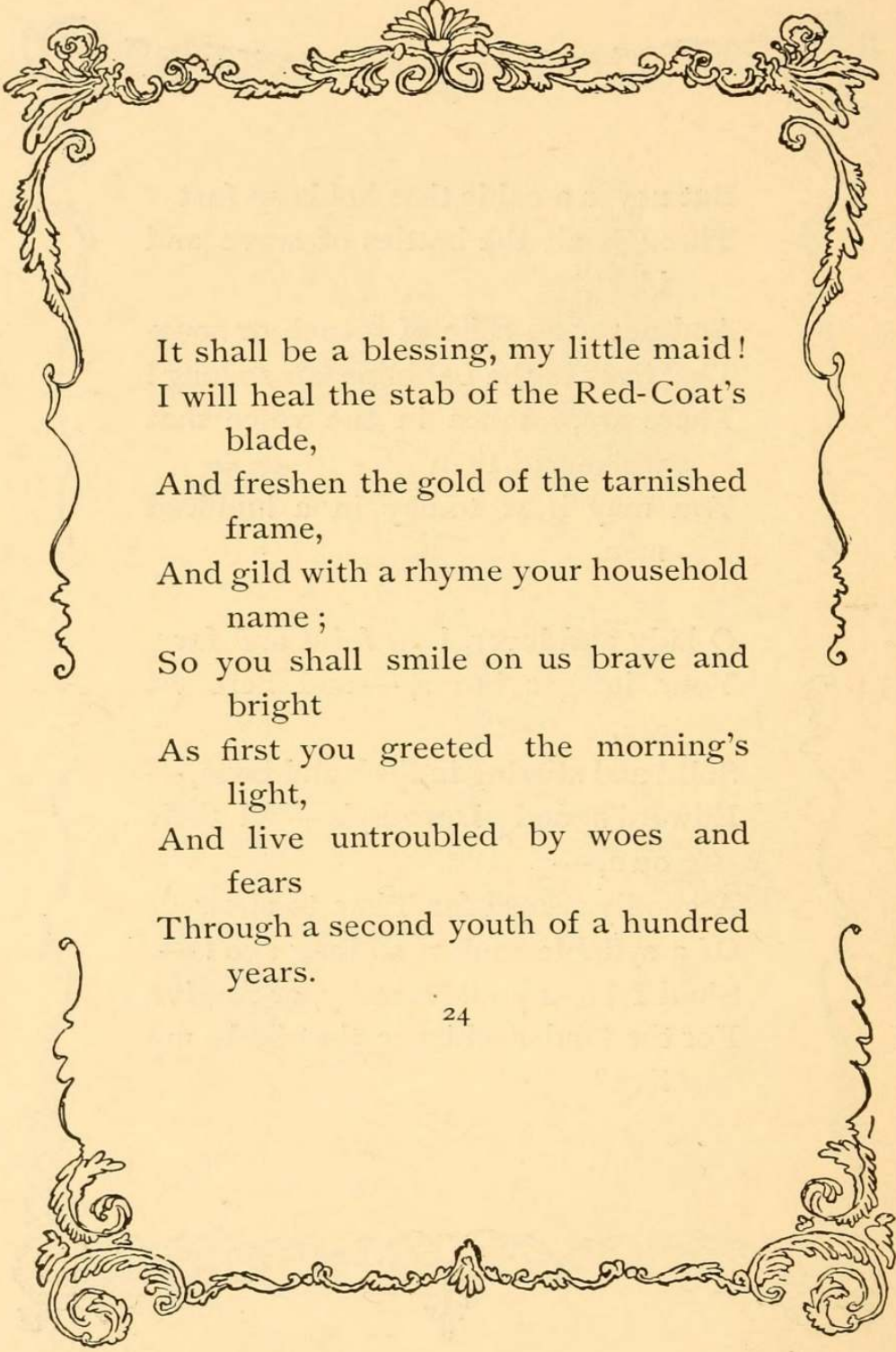




But never a cable that holds so fast  
Through all the battles of wave and  
    blast,  
And never an echo of speech or song  
That lives in the babbling air so long!  
There were tones in the voice that  
    whispered then  
You may hear to-day in a hundred  
    men.

O lady and lover, how faint and far  
Your images hover, — and here we  
    are,  
Solid and stirring in flesh and bone, —  
Edward's and Dorothy's — all their  
    own, —  
A goodly record for Time to show  
Of a syllable spoken so long ago! —  
Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive  
For the tender whisper that bade me  
    live?

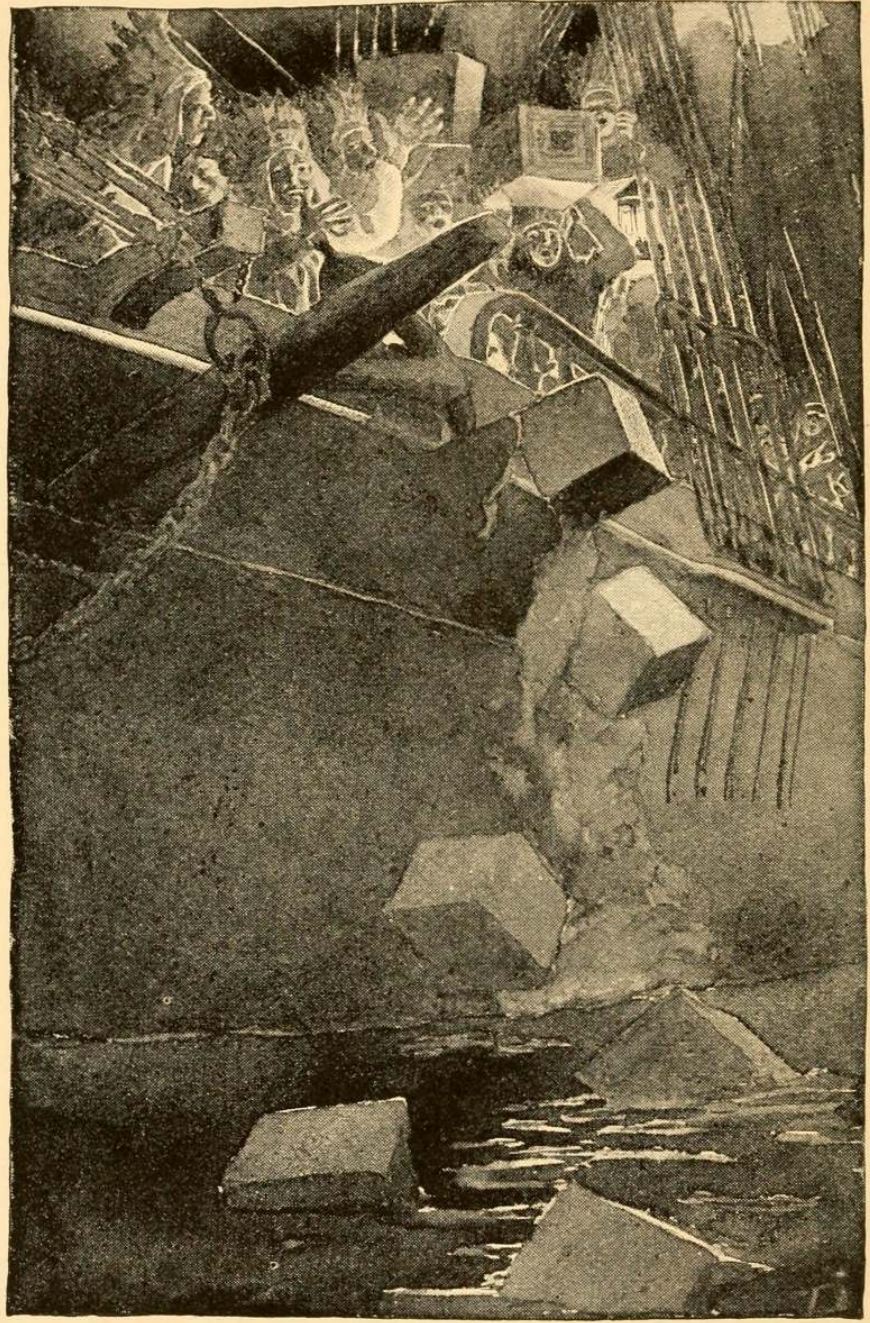




It shall be a blessing, my little maid!  
I will heal the stab of the Red-Coat's  
blade,  
And freshen the gold of the tarnished  
frame,  
And gild with a rhyme your household  
name ;  
So you shall smile on us brave and  
bright  
As first you greeted the morning's  
light,  
And live untroubled by woes and  
fears  
Through a second youth of a hundred  
years.



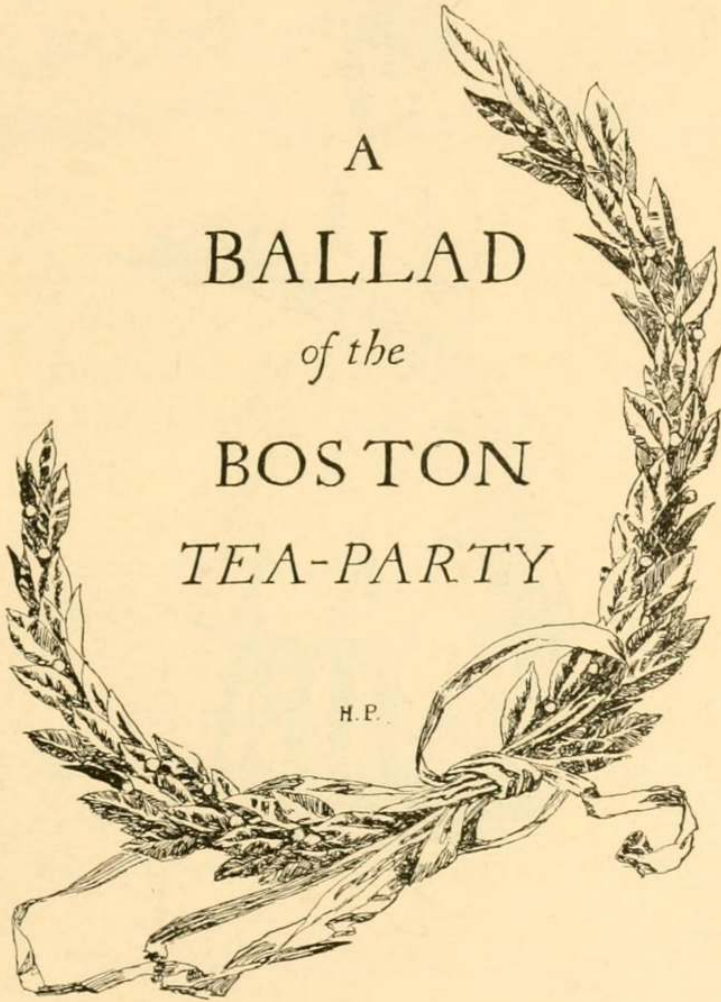






A  
BALLAD  
*of the*  
BOSTON  
TEA-PARTY

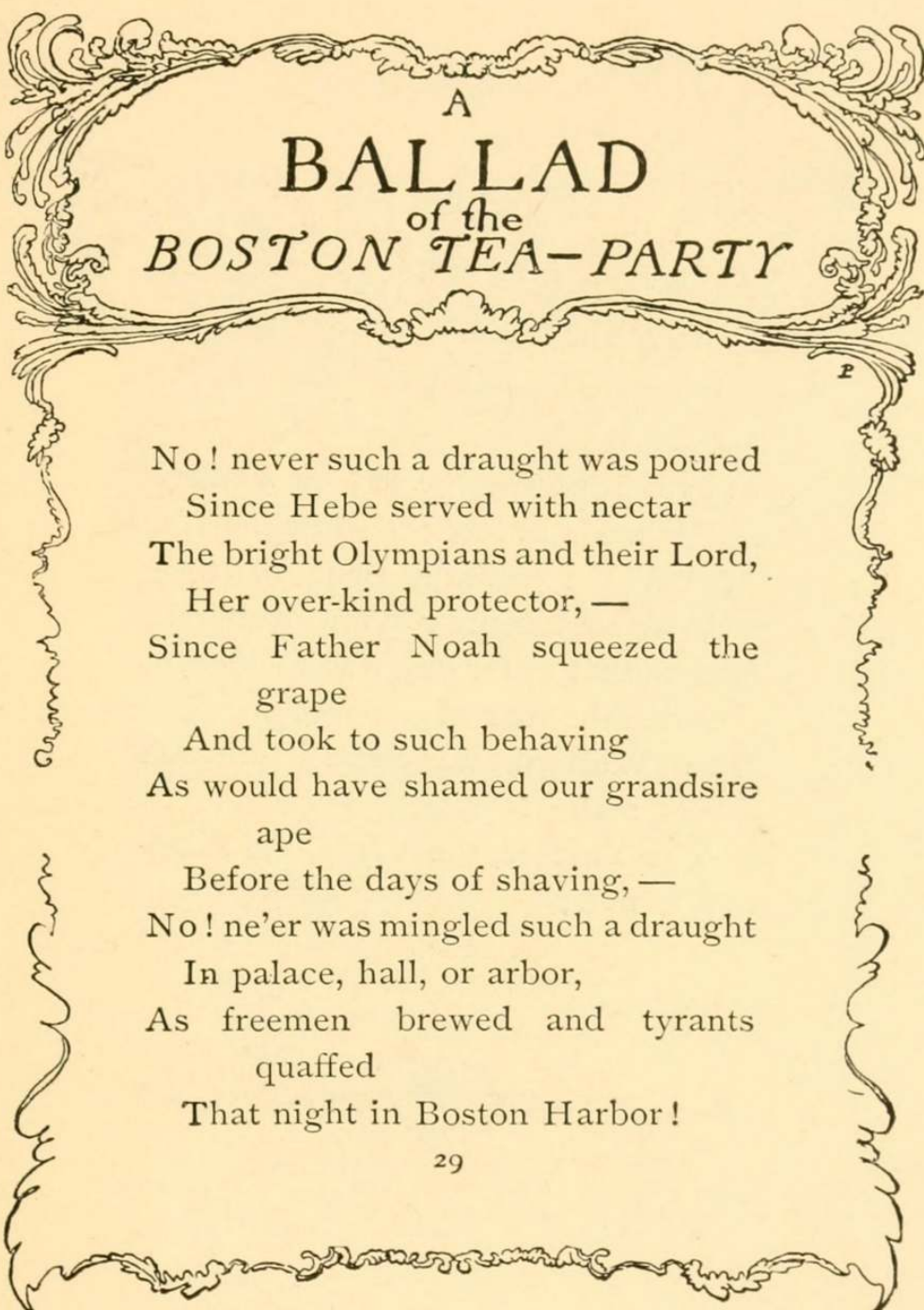
H.P.





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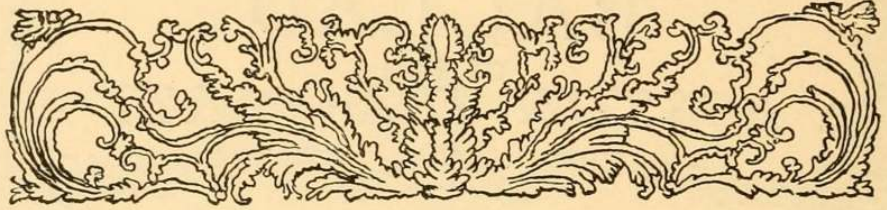
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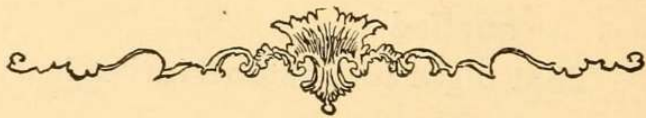
A  
BALLAD  
of the  
BOSTON TEA-PARTY

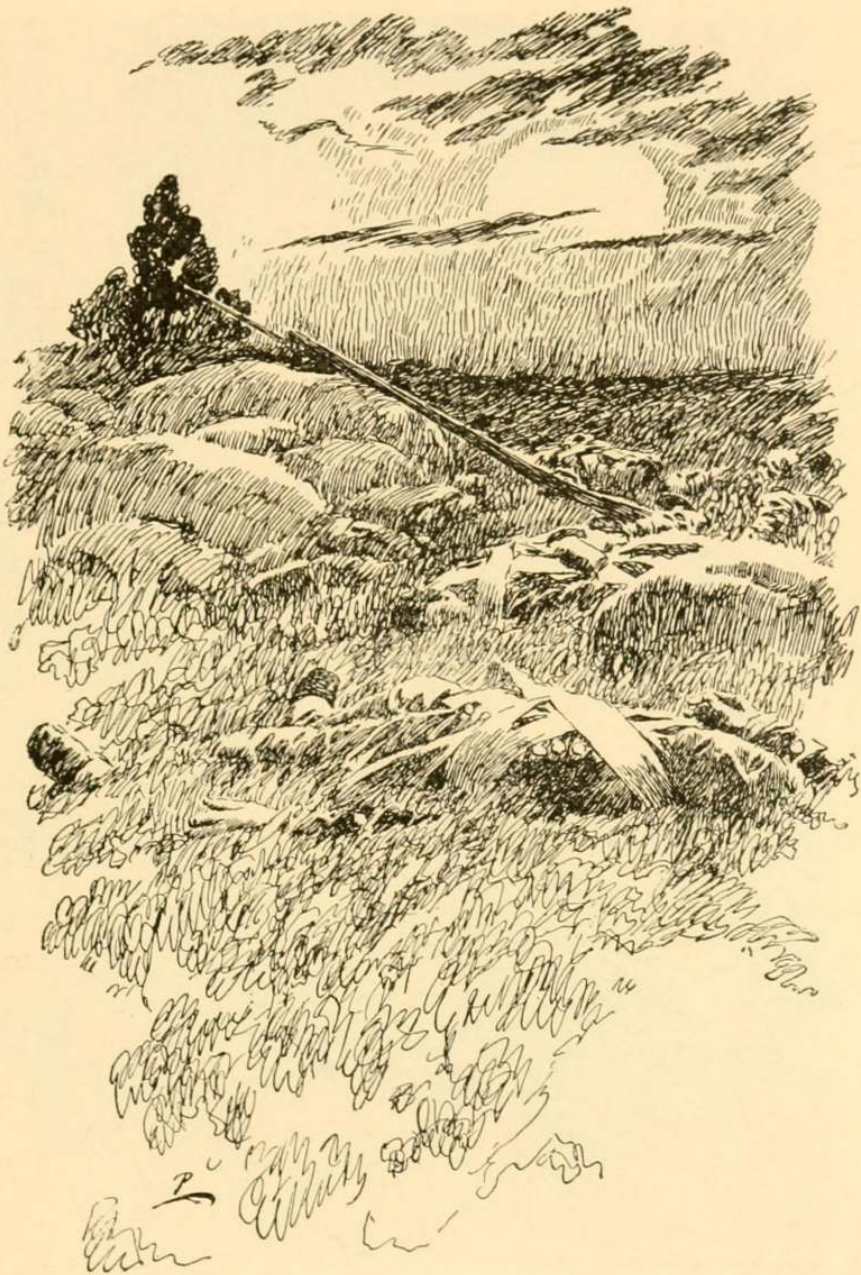
No! never such a draught was poured  
Since Hebe served with nectar  
The bright Olympians and their Lord,  
Her over-kind protector, —  
Since Father Noah squeezed the  
grape  
And took to such behaving  
As would have shamed our grandsire  
ape  
Before the days of shaving, —  
No! ne'er was mingled such a draught  
In palace, hall, or arbor,  
As freemen brewed and tyrants  
quaffed  
That night in Boston Harbor!



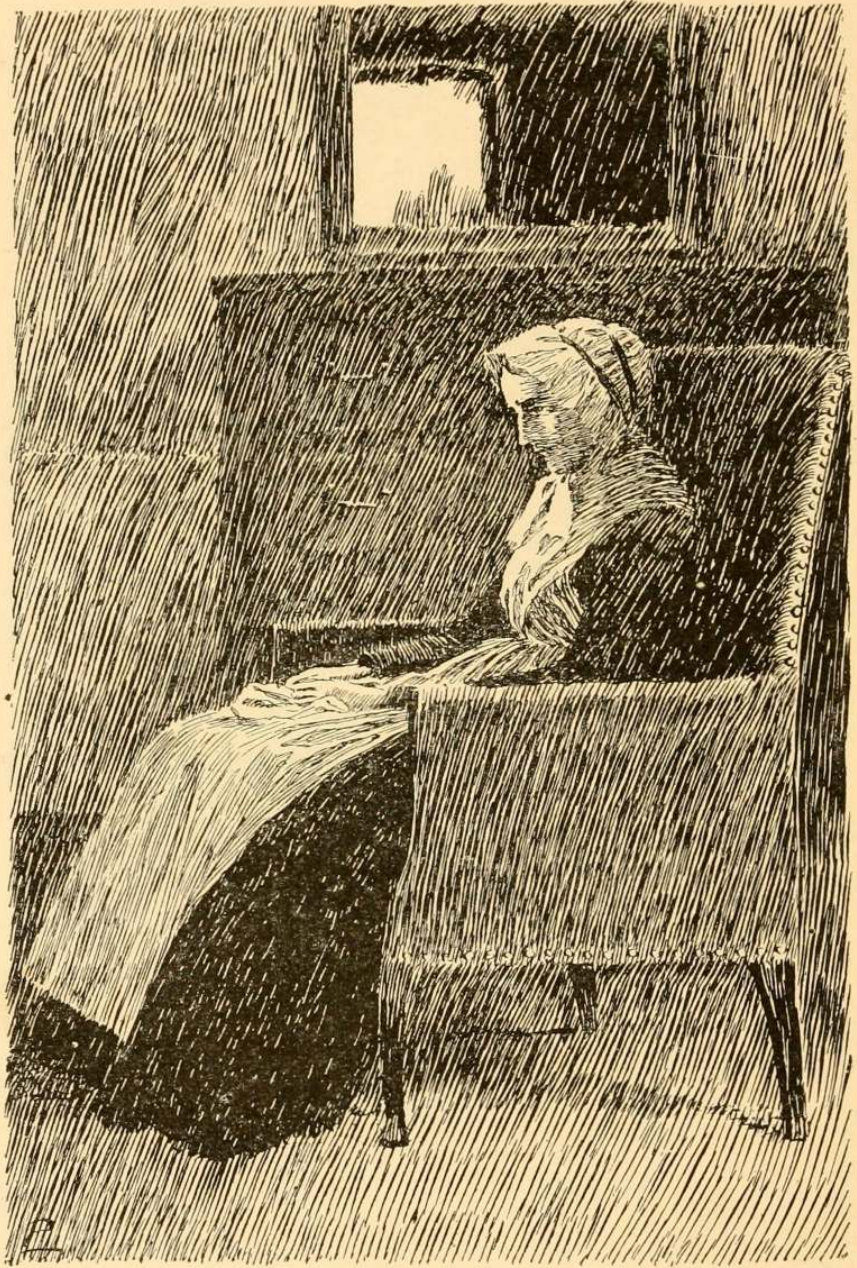


It kept King George so long awake,  
His brain at last got addled,  
It made the nerves of Britain shake,  
With sevenscore millions saddled ;  
Before that bitter cup was drained,  
Amid the roar of cannon,  
The Western war-cloud's crimson  
stained  
The Thames, the Clyde, the Shan-  
non ;







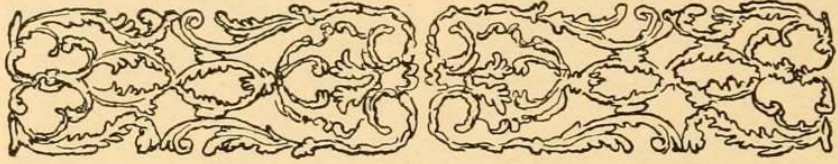






Full many a six-foot grenadier  
The flattened grass had measured,  
And many a mother many a year  
Her tearful memories treasured;  
Fast spread the tempest's darkening  
pall,  
The mighty realms were troubled,  
The storm broke loose, but first of all  
The Boston teapot bubbled!

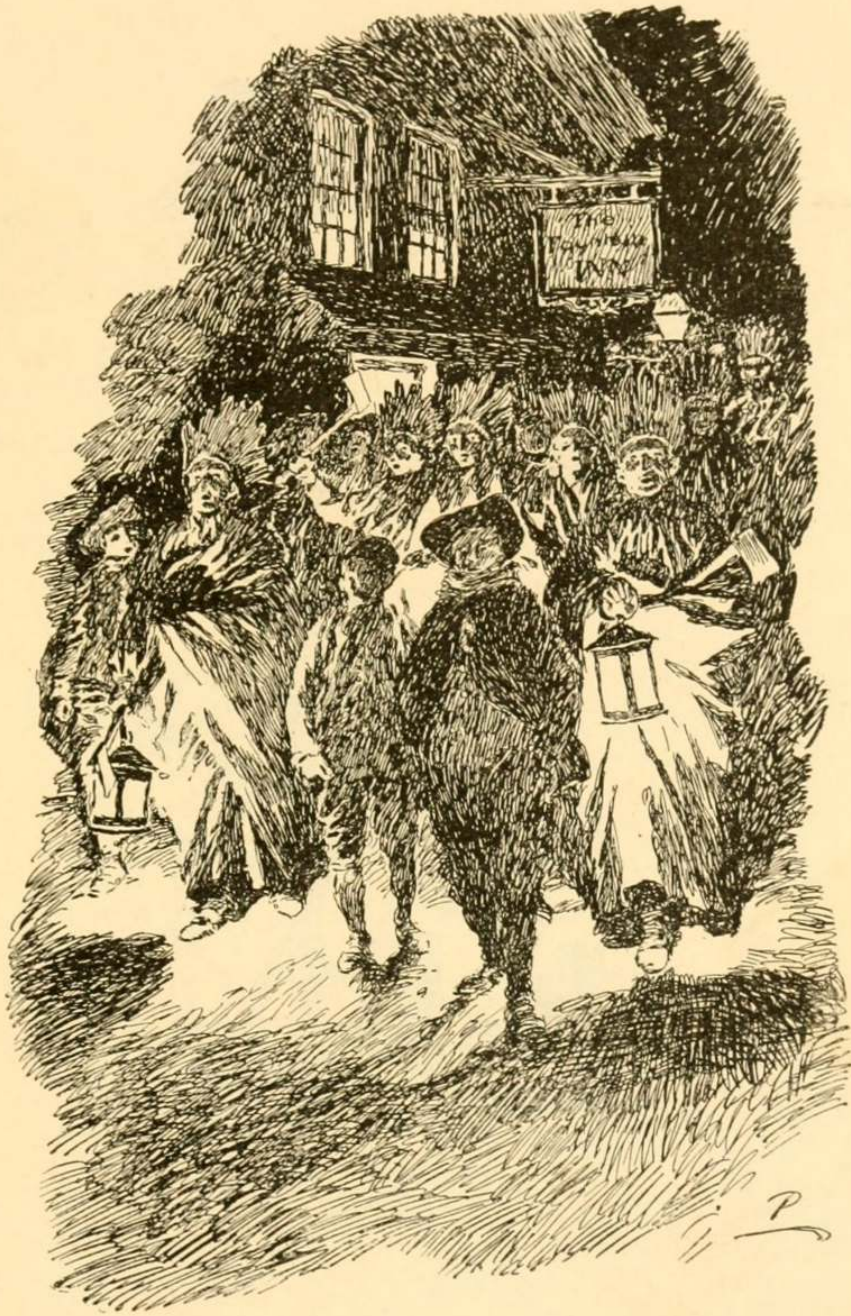




An evening party, — only that,  
No formal invitation,  
No gold-laced coat, no stiff cravat,  
No feast in contemplation,  
No silk-robed dames, no fiddling band,  
No flowers, no songs, no dancing, —  
A tribe of red men, axe in hand, —  
Behold the guests advancing !



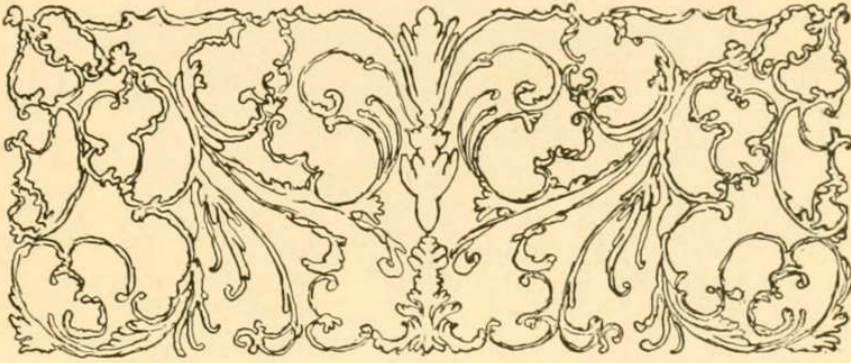






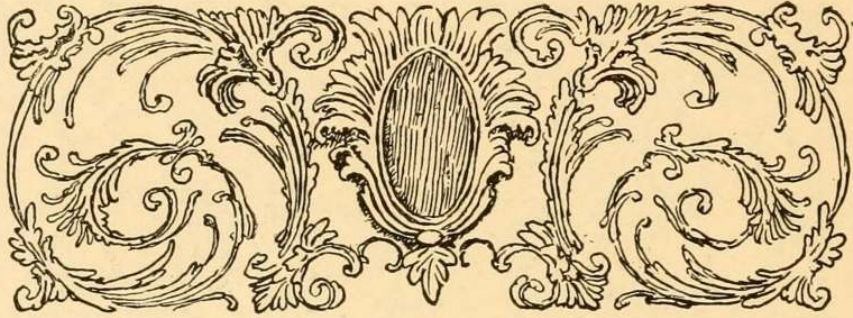


P



How fast the stragglers join the  
throng,  
From stall and workshop gathered!  
The lively barber skips along,  
And leaves a chin half-lathered;



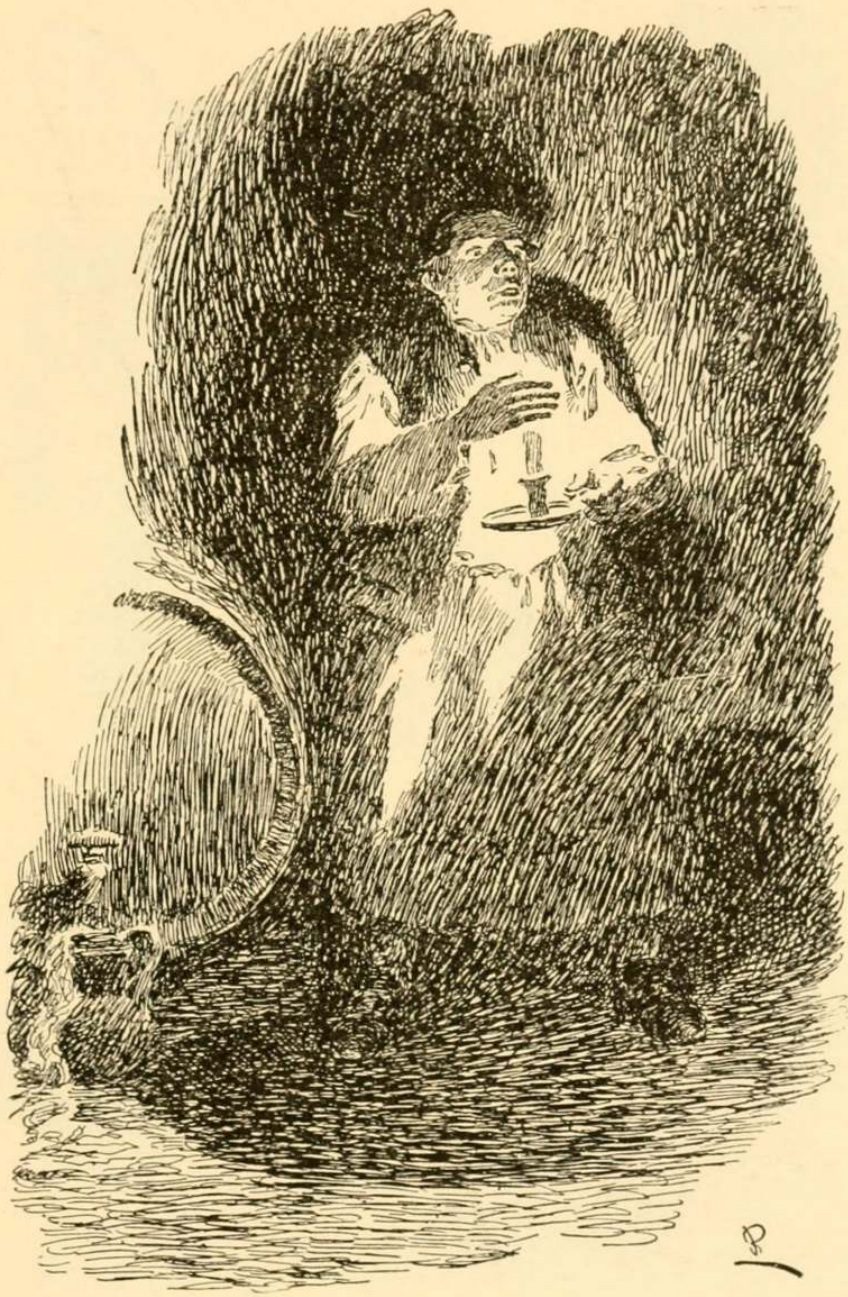


The smith has flung his hammer  
down, —

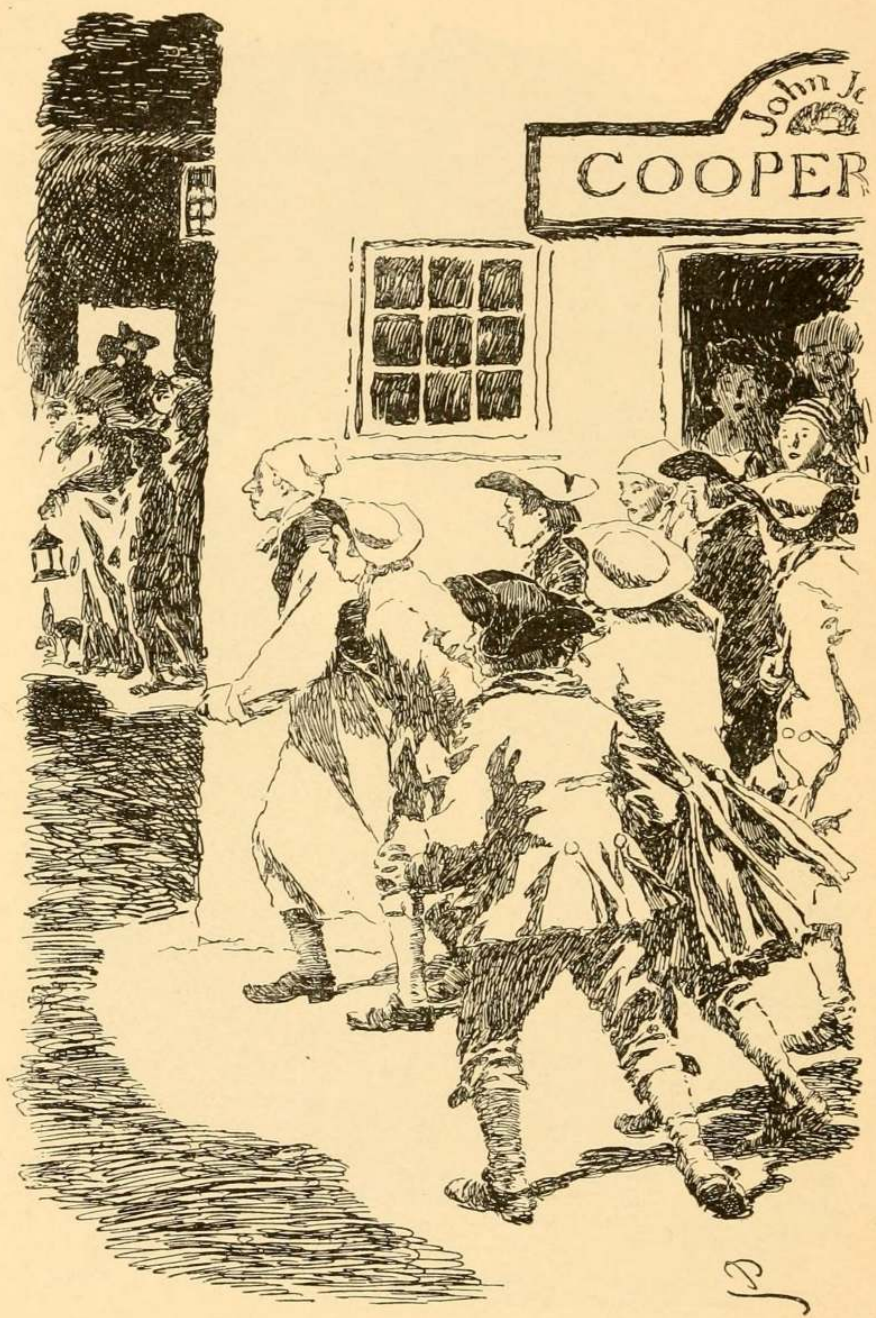
The horseshoe still is glowing ;  
The truant tapster at the Crown  
Has left a beer-cask flowing ;



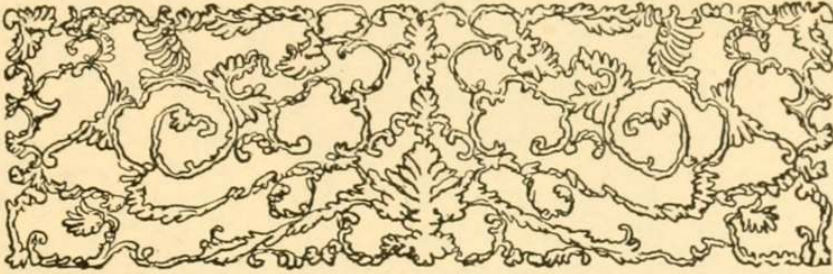




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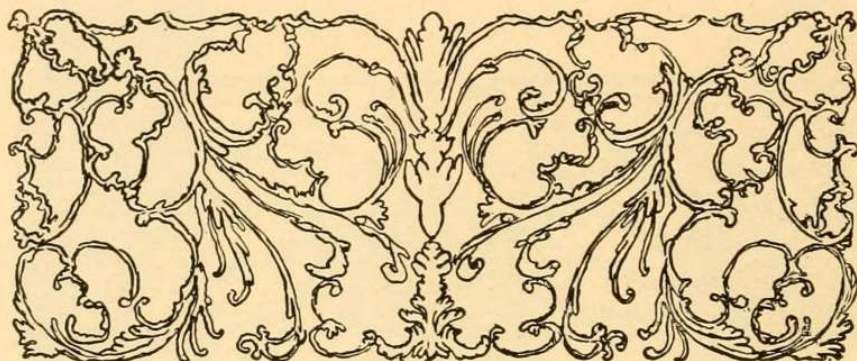




The cooper's boys have dropped the  
adze,  
And trot behind their master;  
Up run the tarry ship-yard lads, —  
The crowd is hurrying faster, —



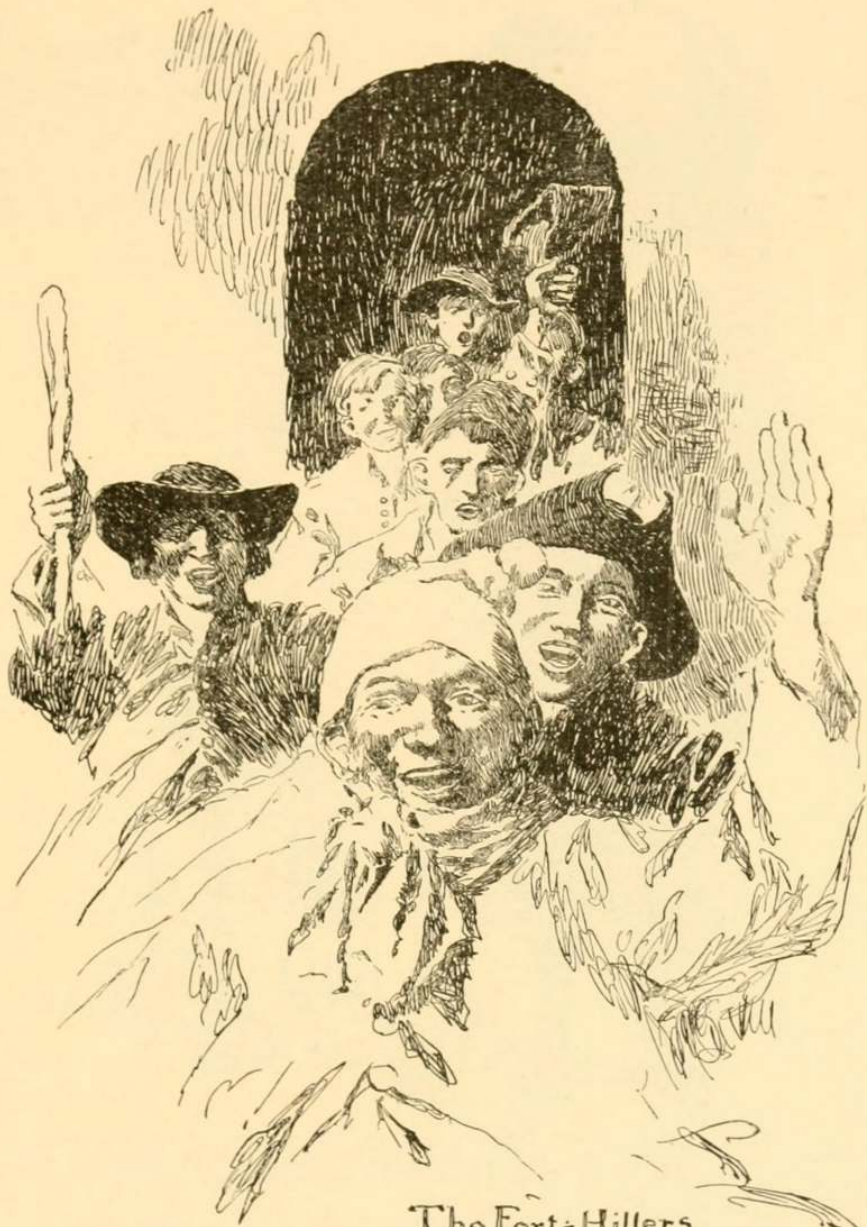




Out from the Millpond's purlieus  
gush

The streams of white-faced millers,  
And down their slippery alleys rush  
The lusty young Fort-Hillers ;

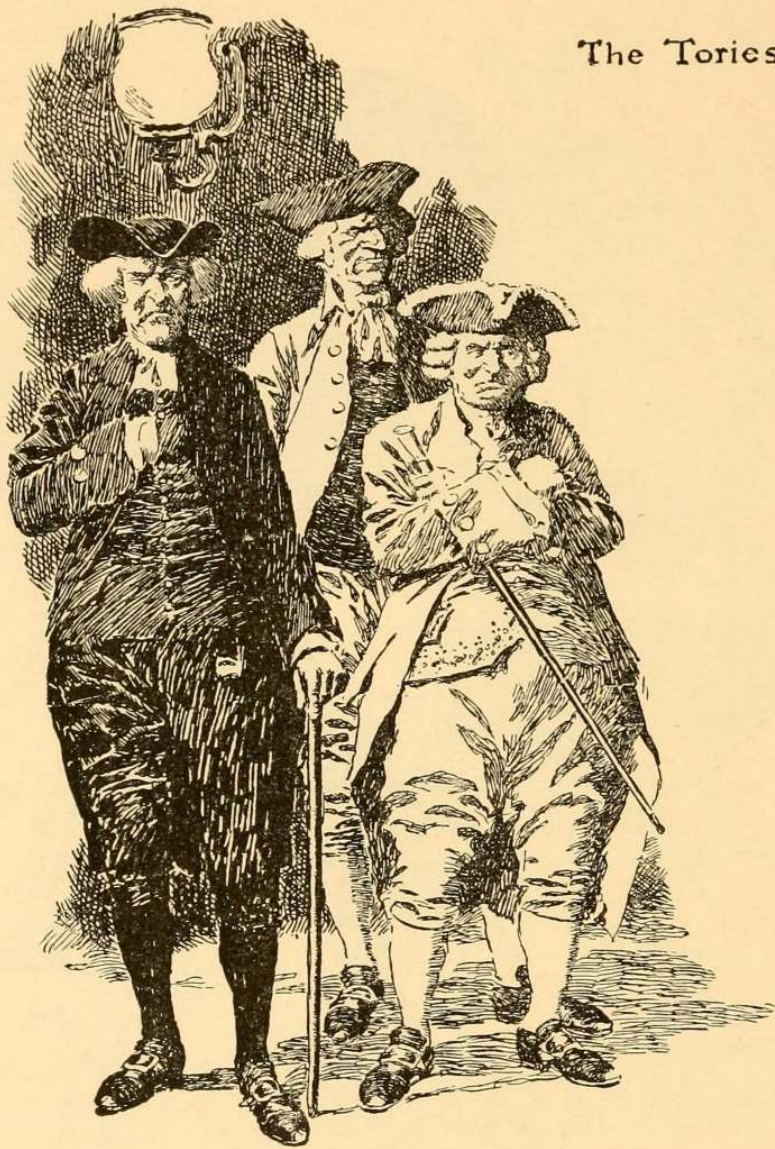




The Fort-Hillers.

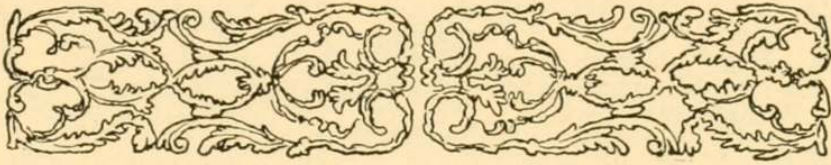


The Tories.



F





The ropewalk lends its 'prentice  
crew, —

The tories seize the omen :

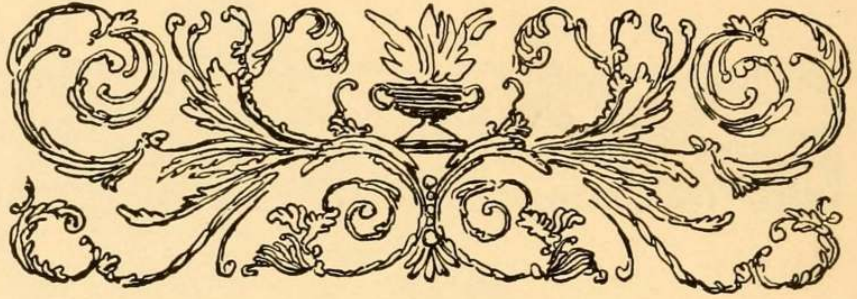
“ Ay, boys, you 'll soon have work to  
do

For England's rebel foemen,  
' King Hancock,' Adams, and their  
gang,

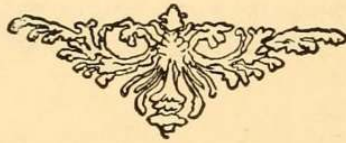
That fire the mob with treason, —  
When these we shoot and those we  
hang,

The town will come to reason.”

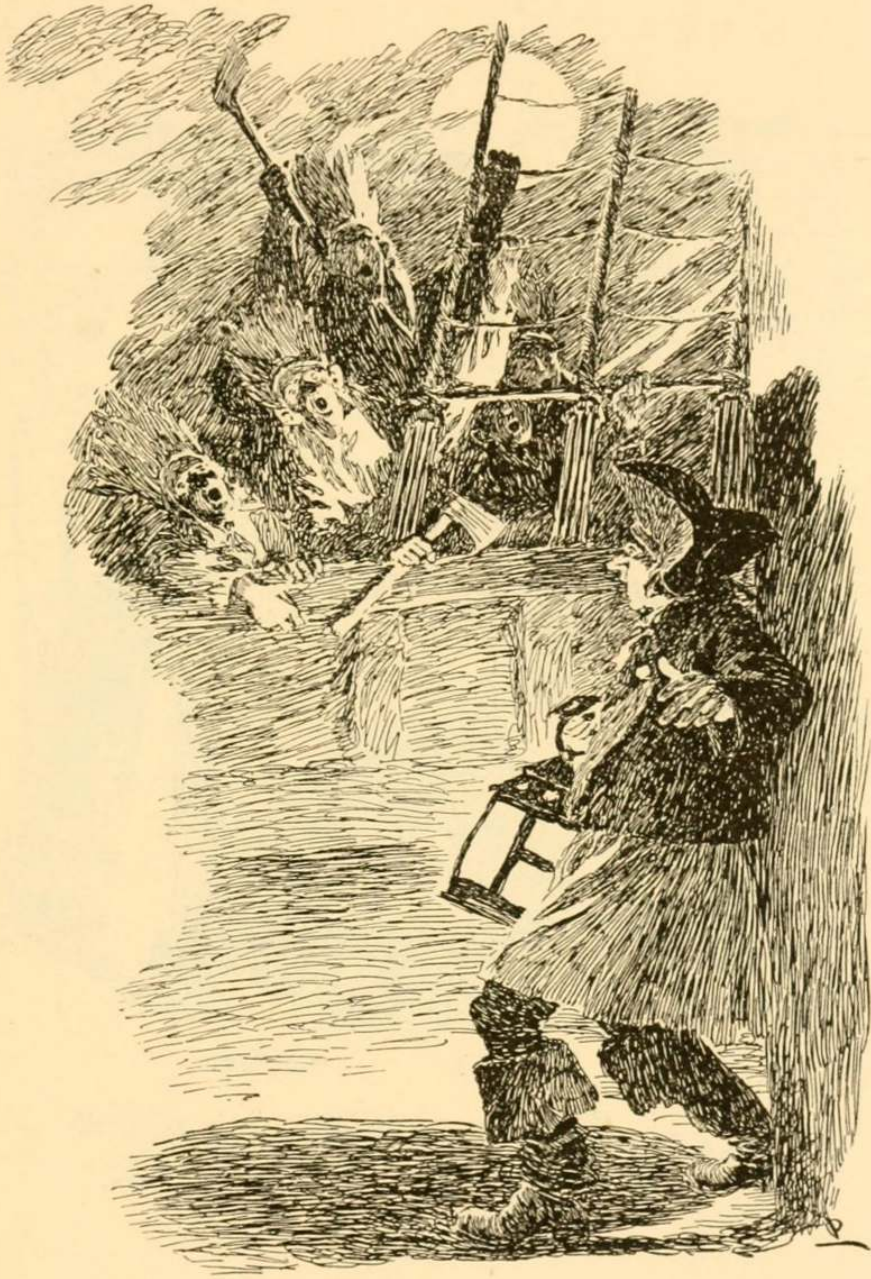




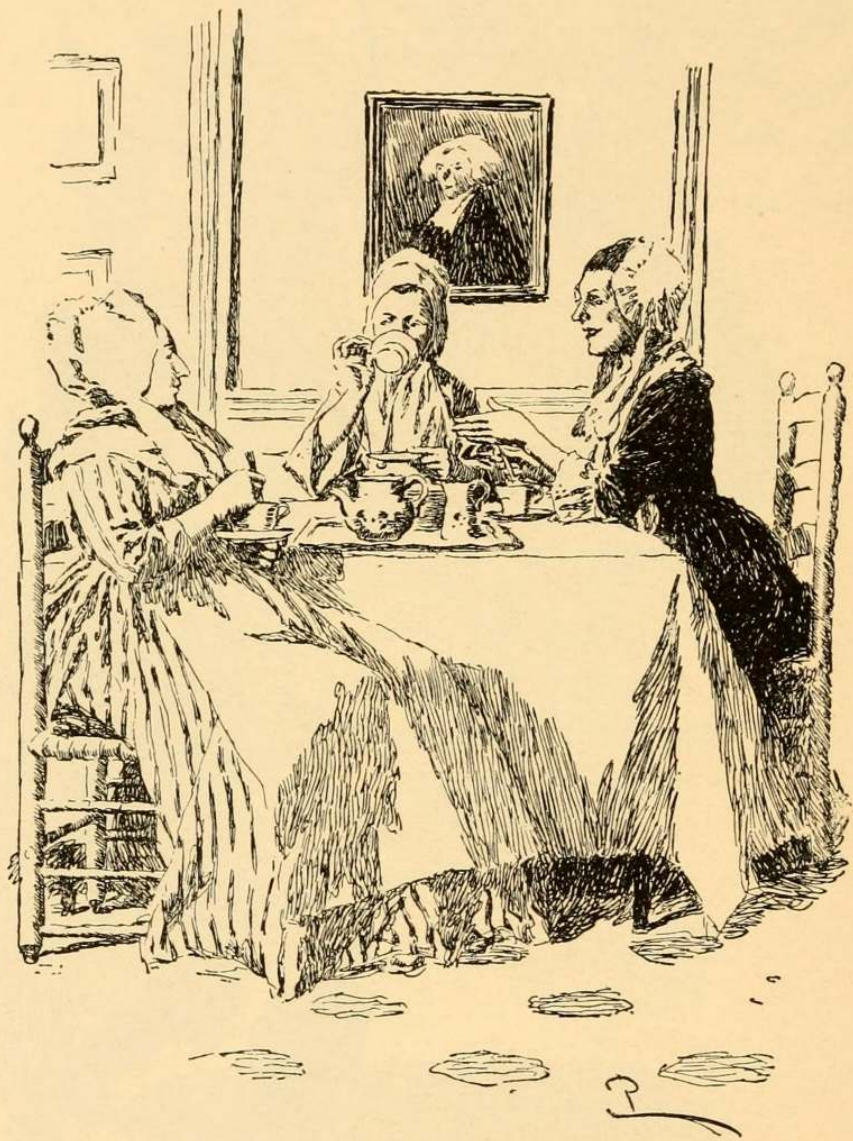
On — on to where the tea-ships ride!  
And now their ranks are forming, —  
A rush, and up the Dartmouth's side  
The Mohawk band is swarming!  
See the fierce natives! What a glimpse  
Of paint and fur and feather,  
As all at once the full-grown imps  
Light on the deck together!  
A scarf the pigtail's secret keeps,  
A blanket hides the breeches, —  
And out the cursèd cargo leaps,  
And overboard it pitches!

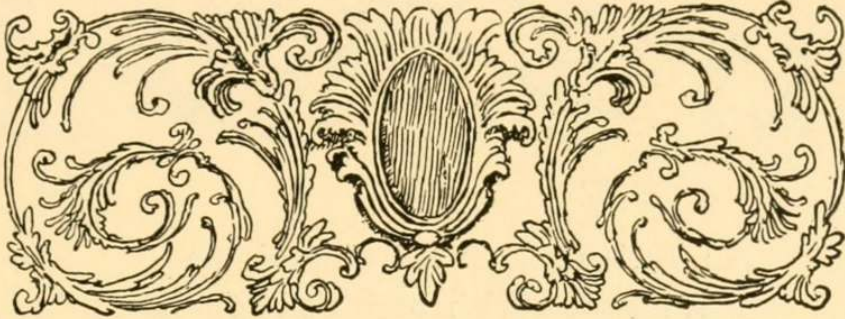








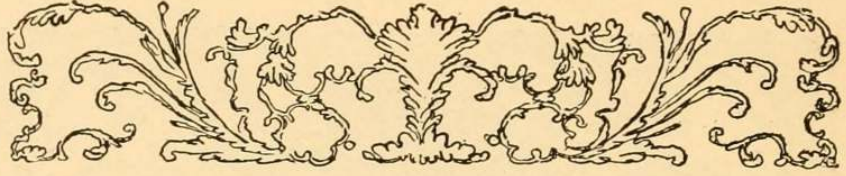




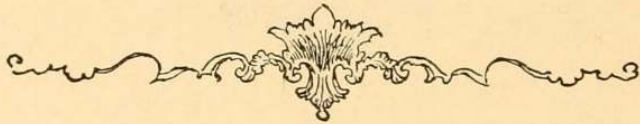
O woman, at the evening board  
So gracious, sweet, and purring,  
So happy while the tea is poured,  
So blest while spoons are stirring,  
What martyr can compare with thee,  
The mother, wife, or daughter,  
That night, instead of best Bohea,  
Condemned to milk and water !



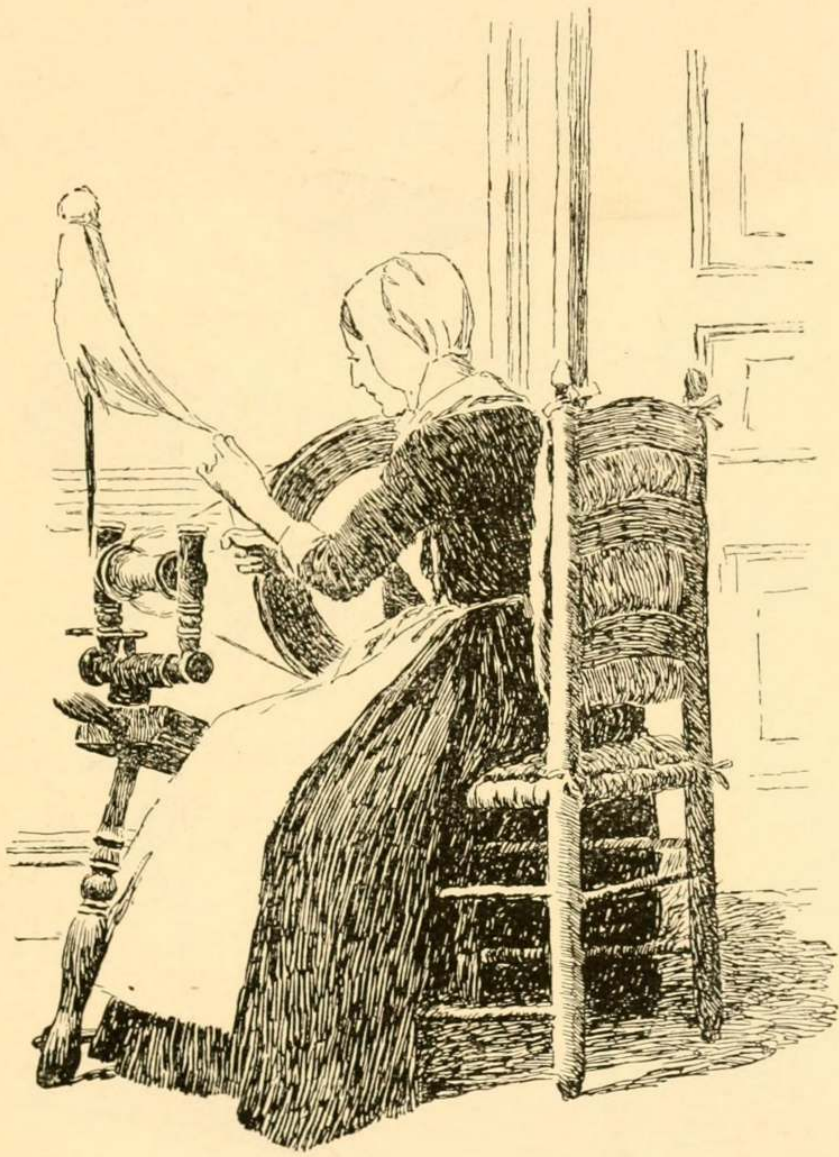




Ah, little dreams the quiet dame  
Who plies with rock and spindle  
The patient flax, how great a flame  
Yon little spark shall kindle !  
The lurid morning shall reveal  
A fire no king can smother,  
Where British flint and Boston steel  
Have flashed against each other !  
Old charters shrivel in its track,  
His Worship's bench has crumbled,  
It climbs and clasps the union-jack,  
Its blazoned pomp is humbled,  
The flags go down on land and sea  
Like corn before the reapers ;  
So burned the fire that brewed the tea  
That Boston served her keepers !

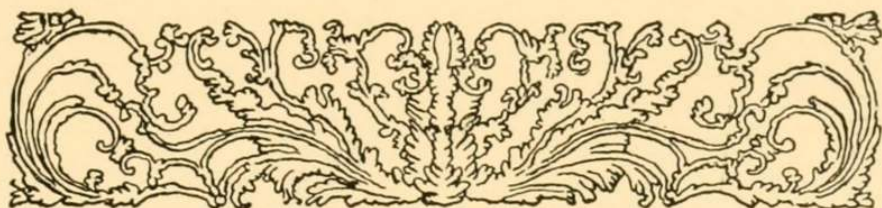






P





The waves that wrought a century's  
wreck

Have rolled o'er whig and tory ;  
The Mohawks on the Dartmouth's  
deck

Still live in song and story ;  
The waters in the rebel bay  
Have kept the tea-leaf savor ;  
Our old North-Enders in their spray

Still taste a Hyson flavor ;  
And Freedom's teacup still o'erflows  
With ever fresh libations,  
To cheat of slumber all her foes  
And cheer the wakening nations !

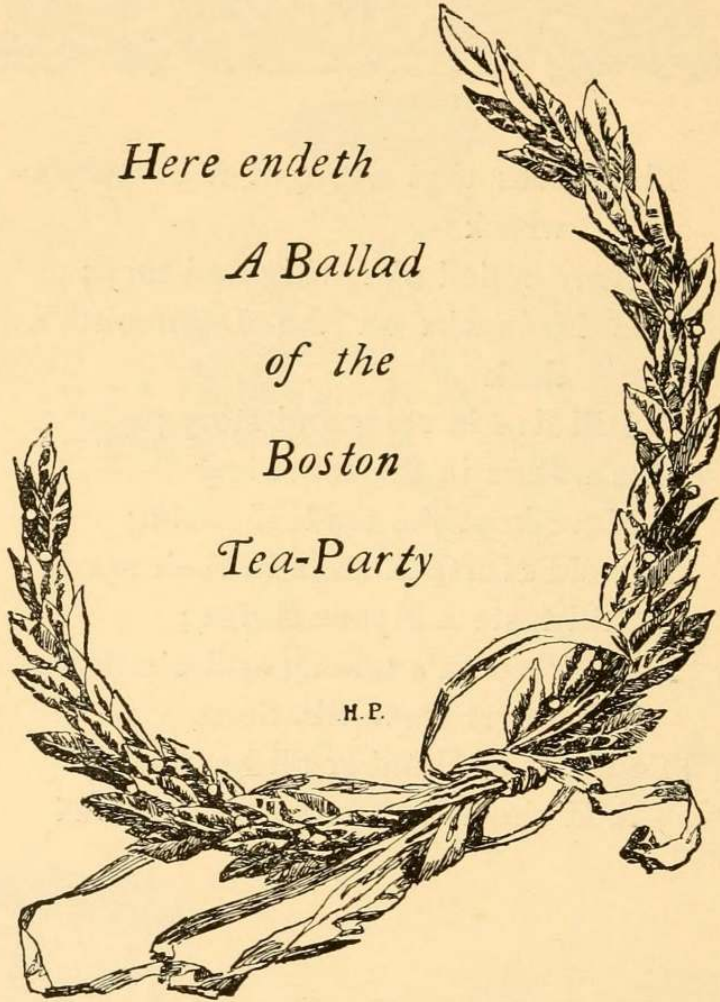




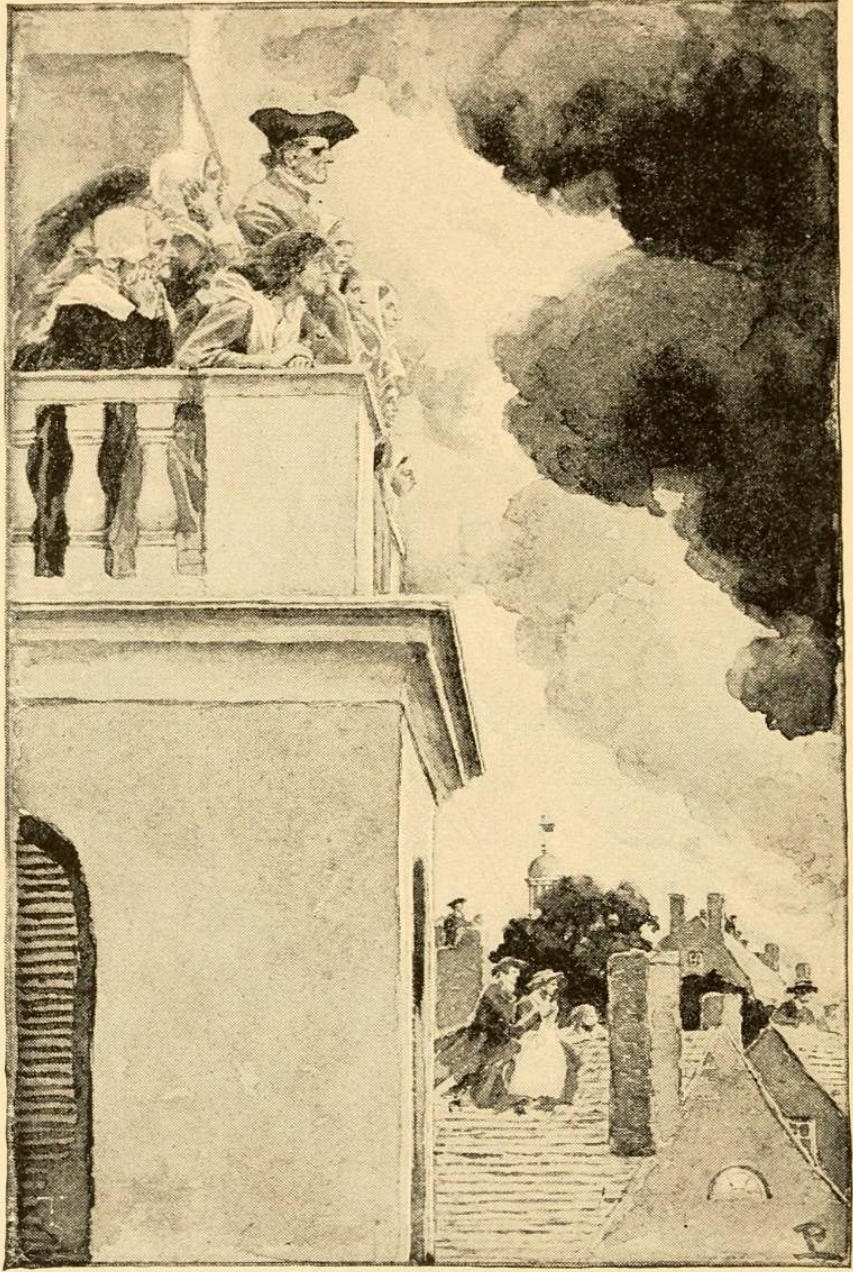
*Here endeth*

*A Ballad  
of the  
Boston  
Tea-Party*

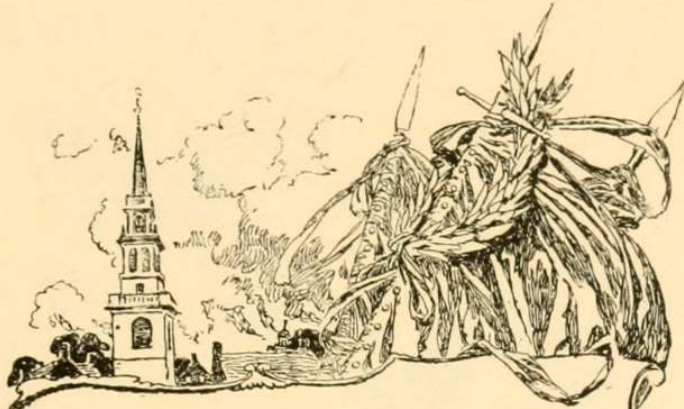
H.P.





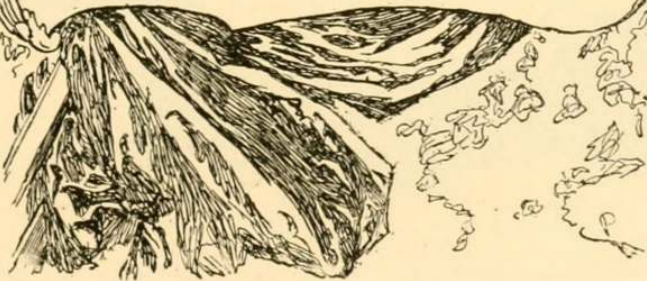


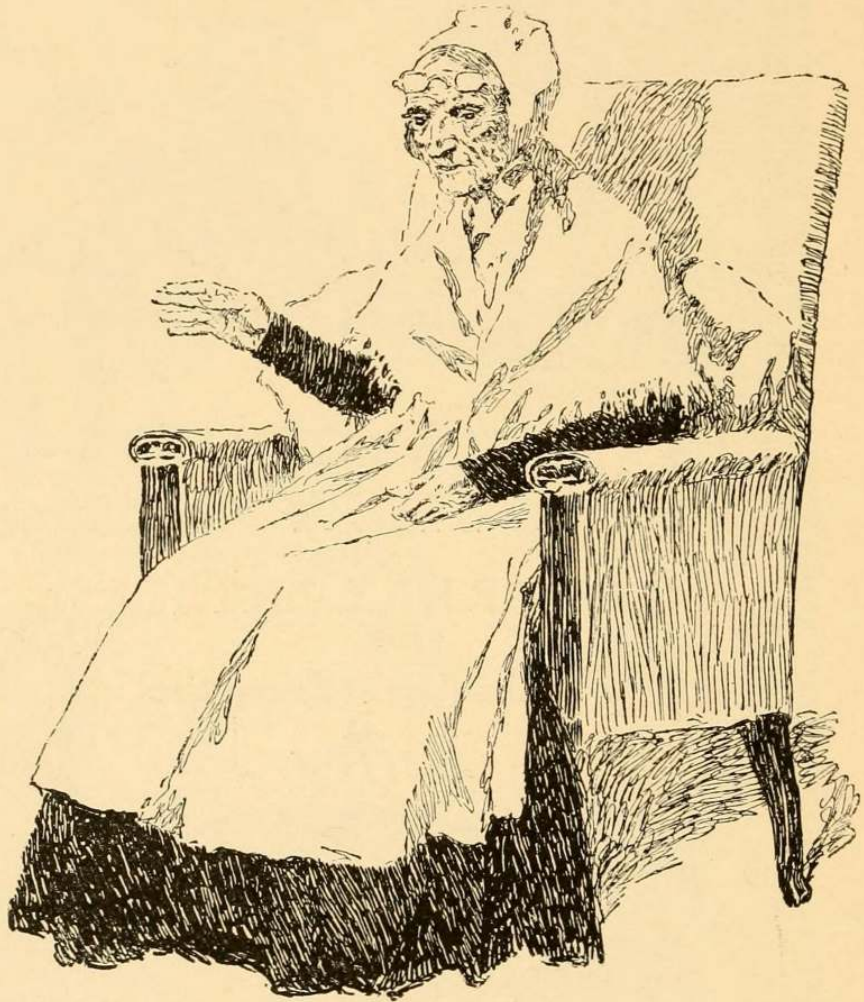




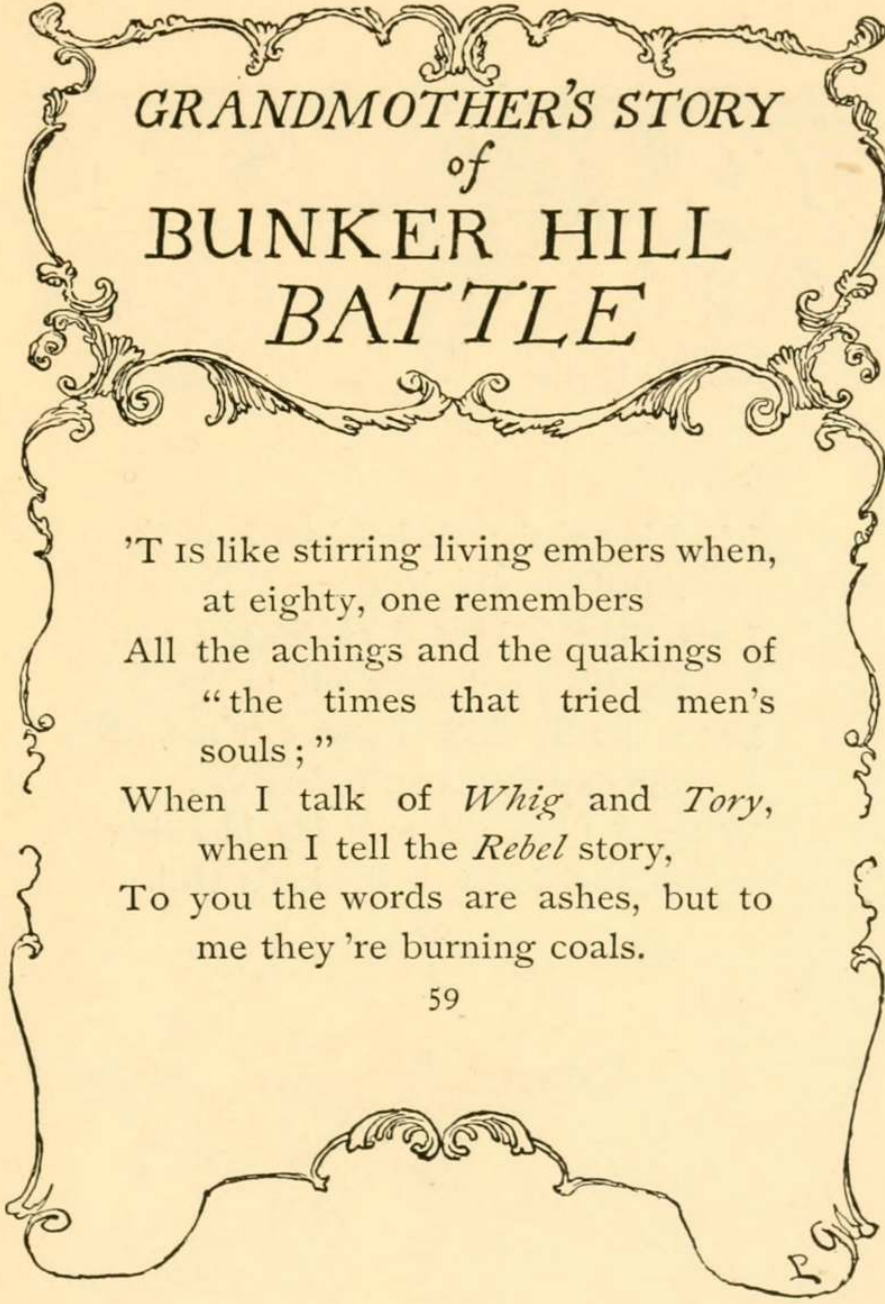
GRANDMOTHER'S  
STORY  
of  
BUNKER HILL BATTLE

As she saw it from the  
*Belfry*





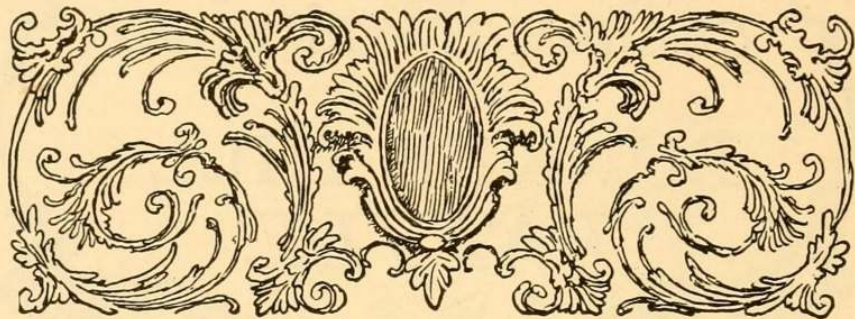
R



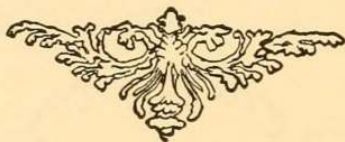
GRANDMOTHER'S STORY  
of  
BUNKER HILL  
BATTLE

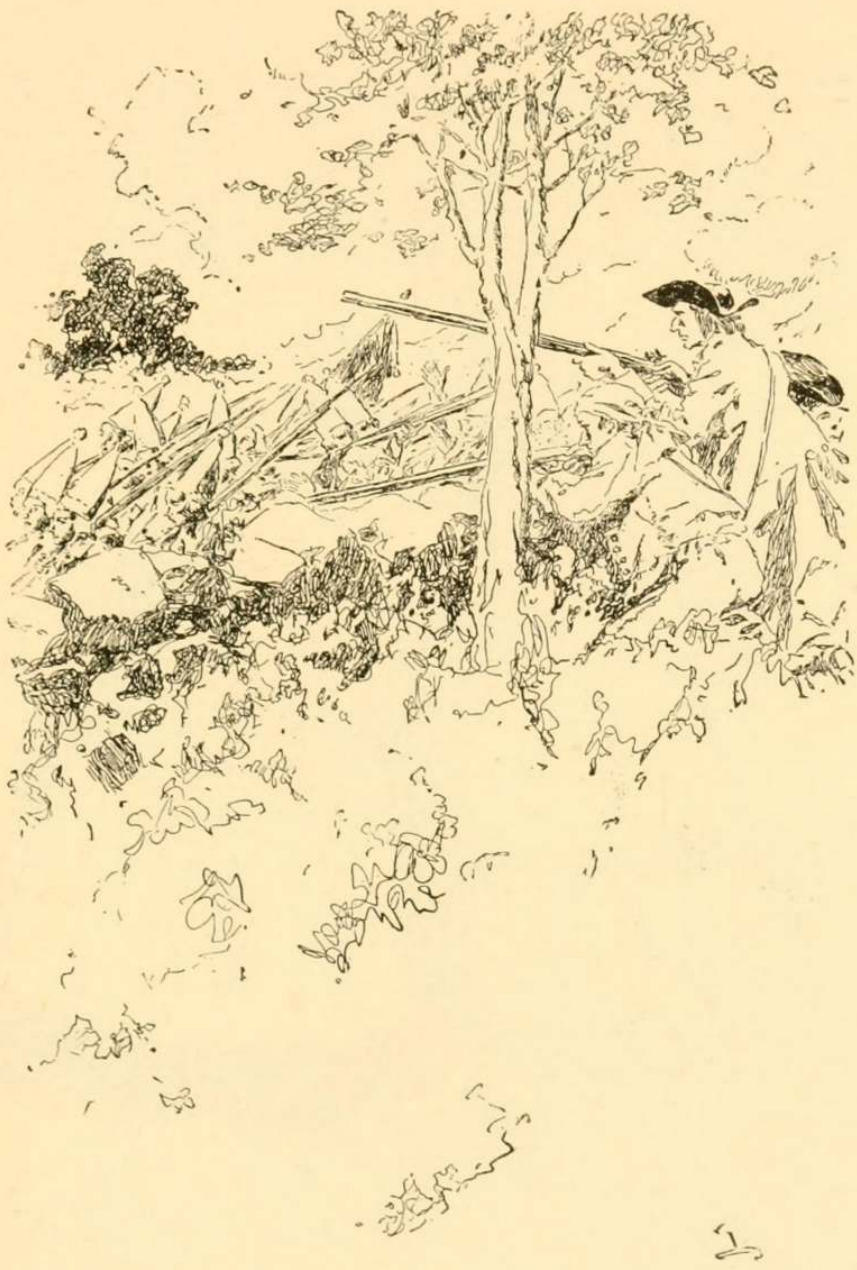
'T is like stirring living embers when,  
at eighty, one remembers  
All the achings and the quakings of  
"the times that tried men's  
souls;"  
When I talk of *Whig* and *Tory*,  
when I tell the *Rebel* story,  
To you the words are ashes, but to  
me they 're burning coals.

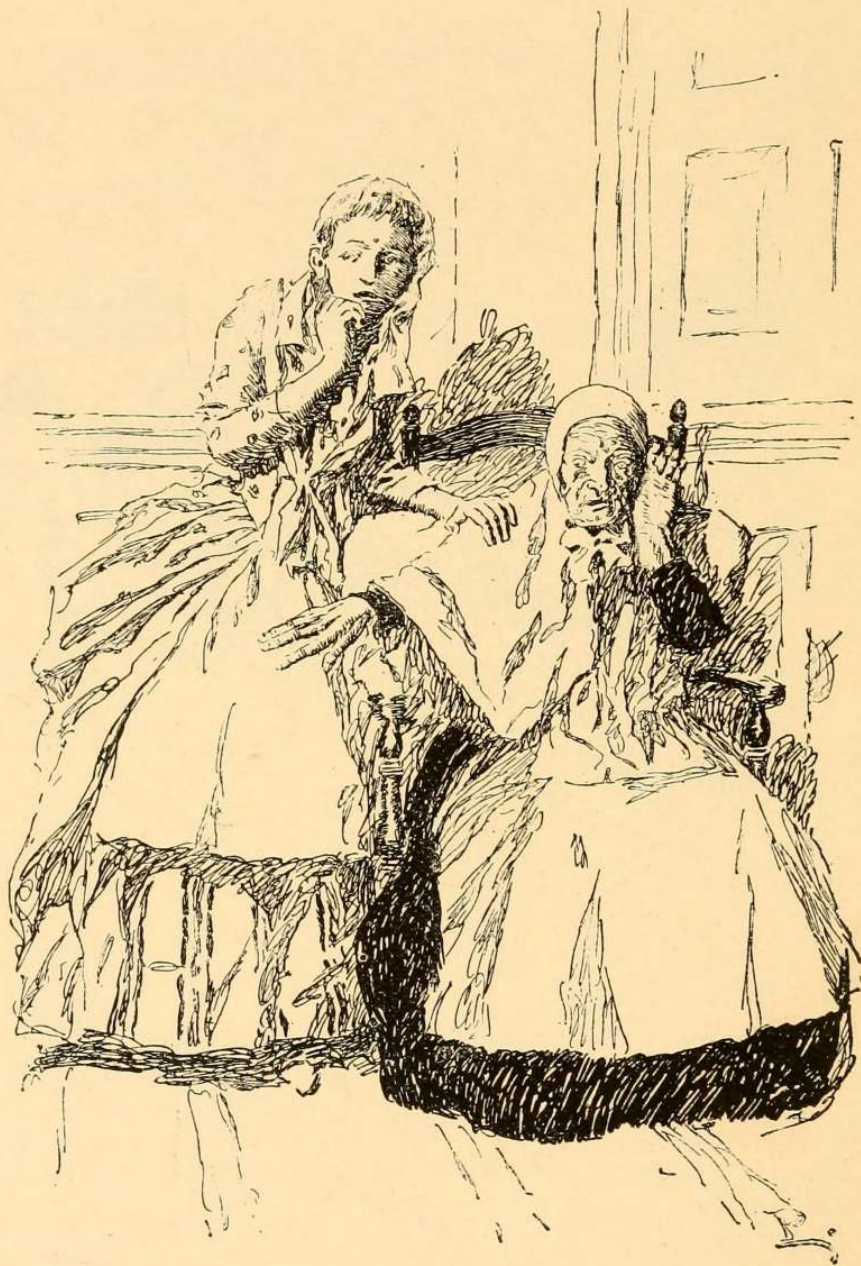




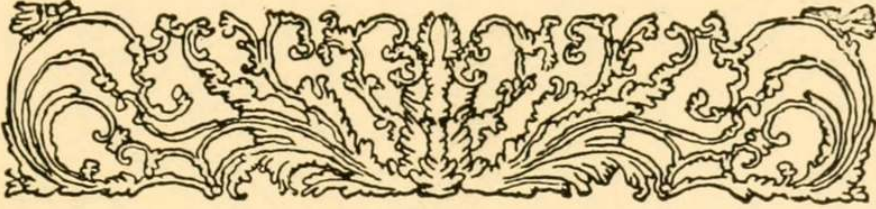
I had heard the muskets' rattle of the  
April running battle ;  
Lord Percy's hunted soldiers, I can  
see their red coats still ;  
But a deadly chill comes o'er me, as  
the day looms up before me,  
When a thousand men lay bleeding  
on the slopes of Bunker's Hill.





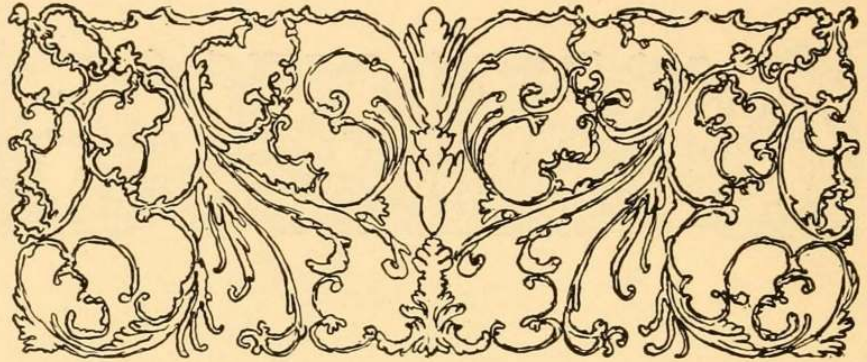






'T was a peaceful summer's morning,  
when the first thing gave us warn-  
ing  
Was the booming of the cannon from  
the river and the shore :  
“ Child,” says grandma, “ what 's the  
matter, what is all this noise and  
clatter ?  
Have those scalping Indian devils  
come to murder us once more ? ”





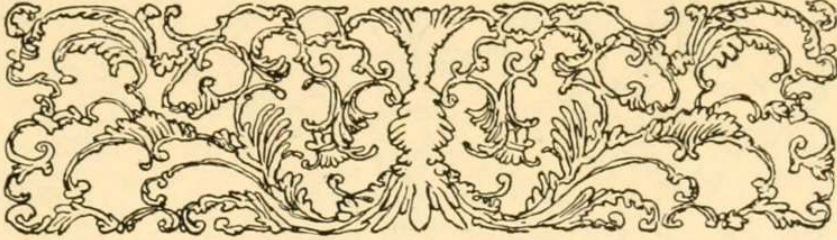
Poor old soul ! my sides were shaking  
in the midst of all my quaking,  
To hear her talk of Indians when the  
guns began to roar :  
She had seen the burning village, and  
the slaughter and the pillage,  
When the Mohawks killed her father  
with their bullets through his  
door.





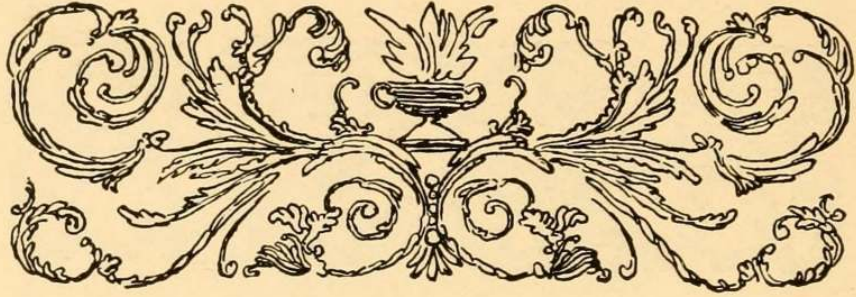






Then I said, " Now, dear old granny,  
don't you fret and worry any,  
For I'll soon come back and tell you  
whether this is work or play ;  
There can't be mischief in it, so I  
won't be gone a minute " —  
For a minute then I started. I was  
gone the livelong day.



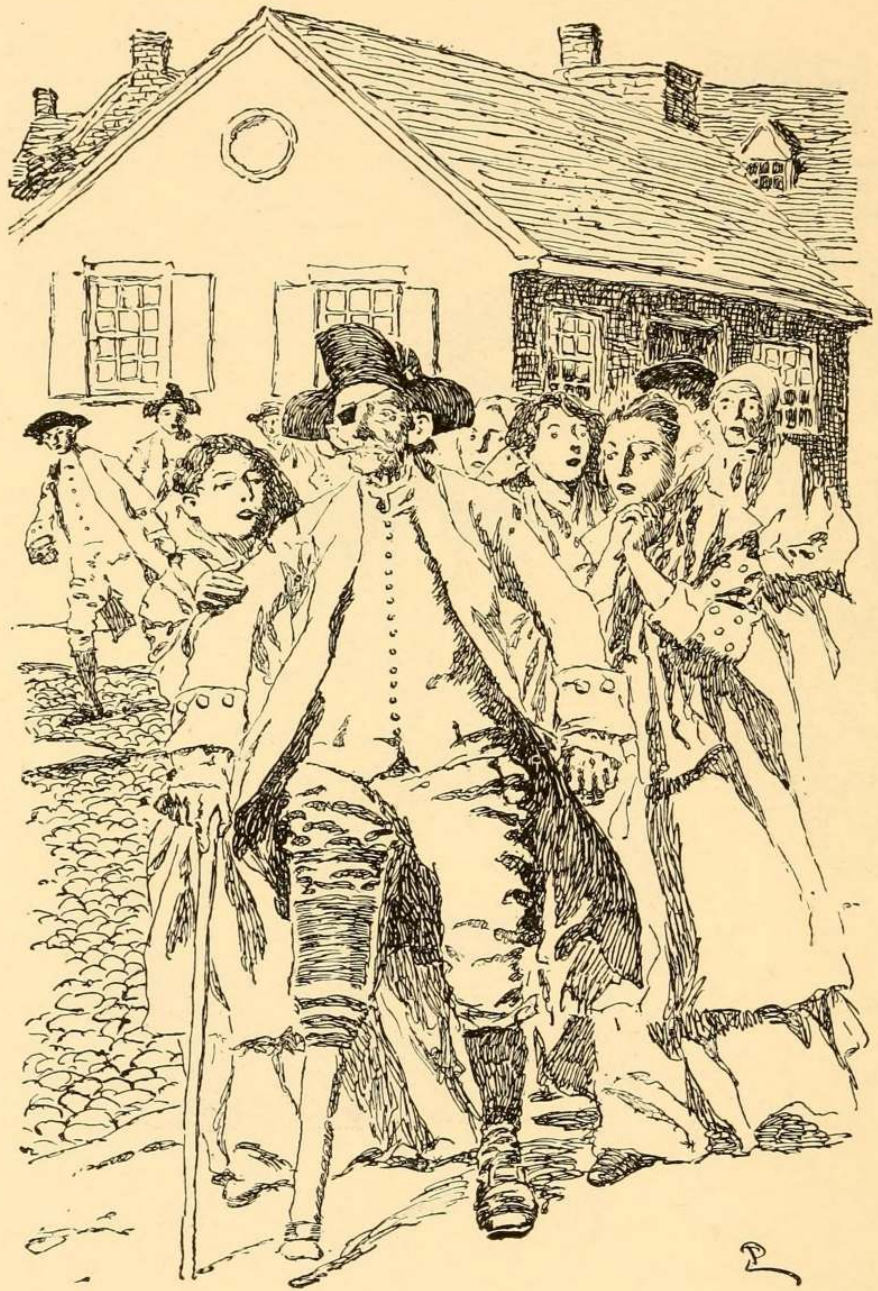


No time for bodice-lacing or for look-  
ing-glass grimacing ;  
Down my hair went as I hurried,  
tumbling half-way to my heels ;  
God forbid your ever knowing, when  
there 's blood around her flowing,  
How the lonely, helpless daughter of  
a quiet household feels !

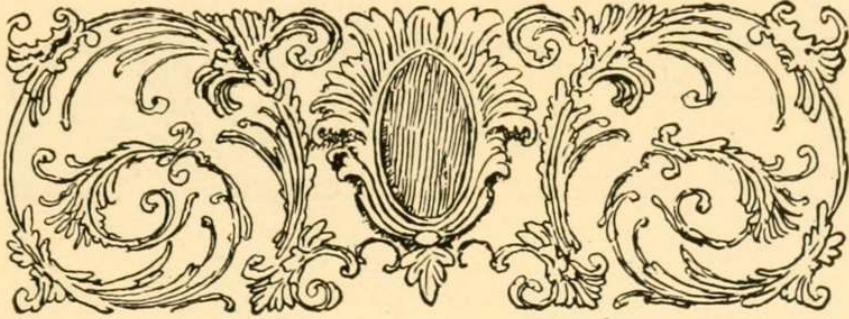








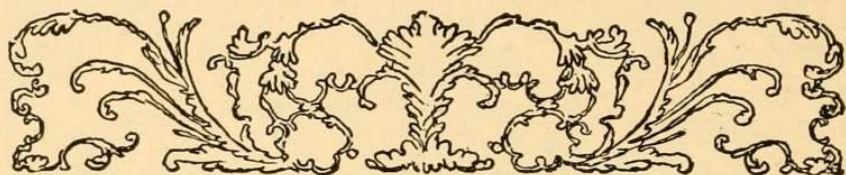




In the street I heard a thumping ; and  
I knew it was the stumping  
Of the Corporal, our old neighbor, on  
that wooden leg he wore,  
With a knot of women round him, —  
it was lucky I had found him,  
So I followed with the others, and the  
Corporal marched before.







They were making for the steeple, —  
the old soldier and his people;  
The pigeons circled round us as we  
climbed the creaking stair,  
Just across the narrow river — oh,  
so close it made me shiver! —  
Stood a fortress on the hill-top that  
but yesterday was bare.

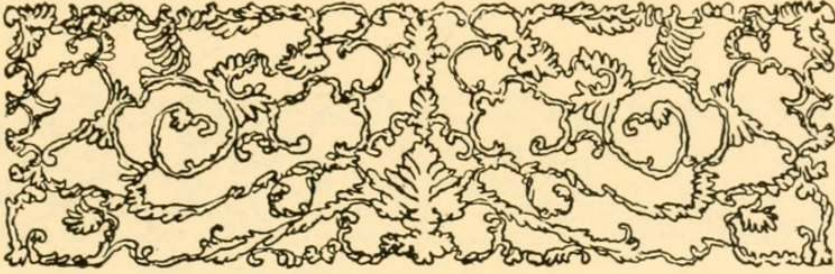








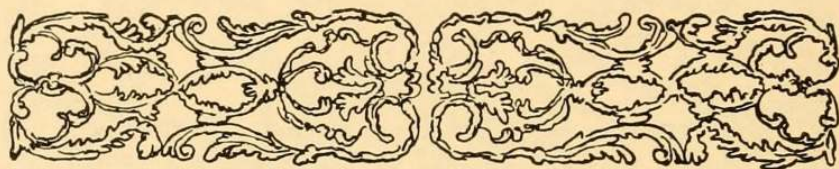




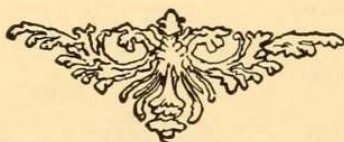
Not slow our eyes to find it ; well we  
knew who stood behind it,  
Though the earthwork hid them from  
us, and the stubborn walls were  
dumb :

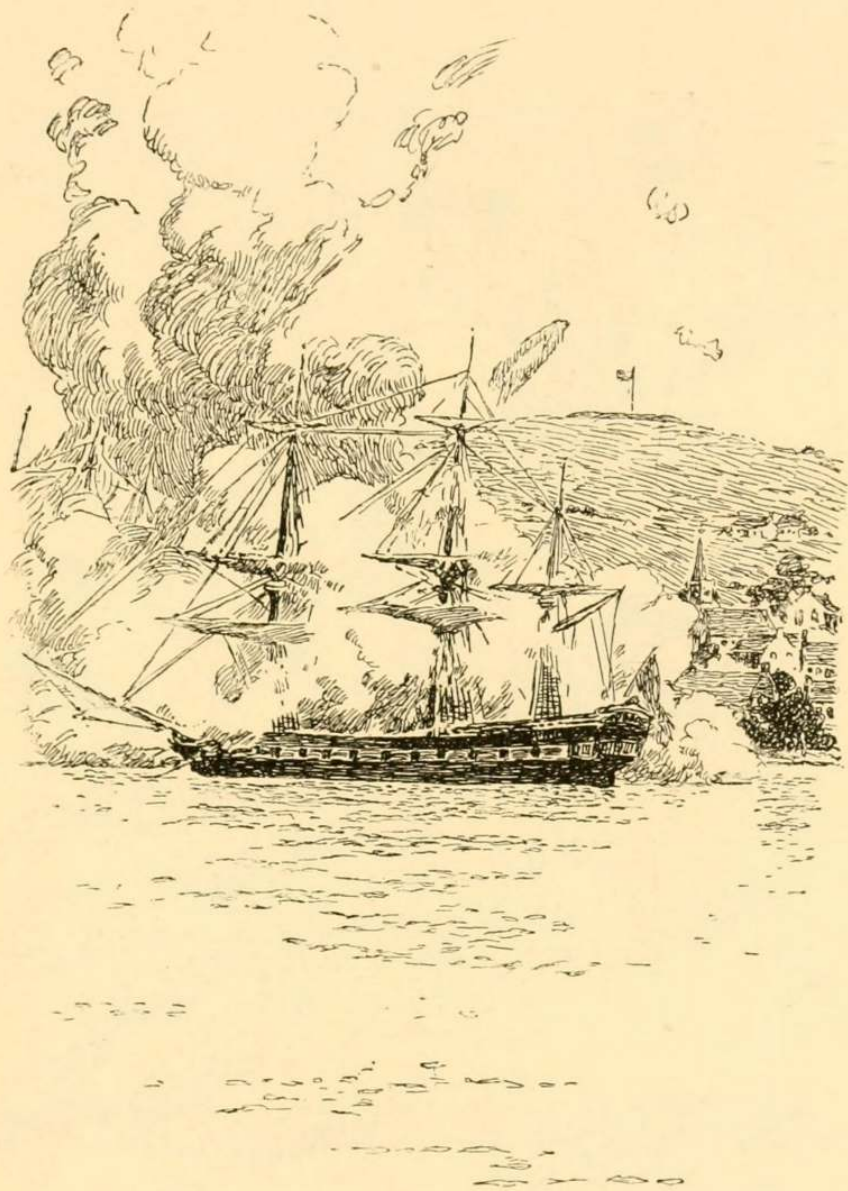
Here were sister, wife, and mother,  
looking wild upon each other,  
And their lips were white with terror  
as they said, THE HOUR HAS  
COME !





The morning slowly wasted, not a  
morsel had we tasted,  
And our heads were almost splitting  
with the cannons' deafening thrill,  
When a figure tall and stately round  
the rampart strode sedately ;  
It was PRESCOTT, one since told me ;  
he commanded on the hill.

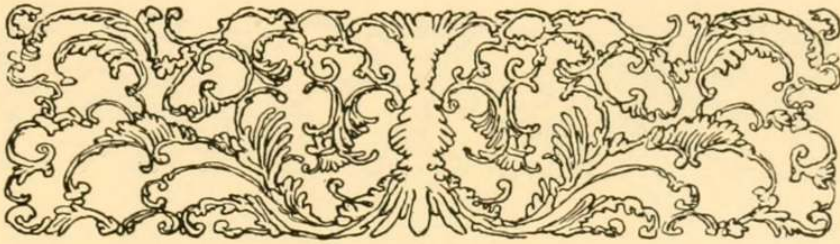




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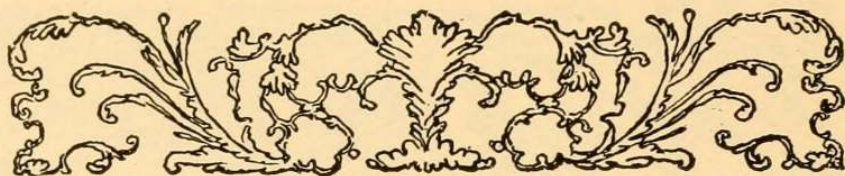




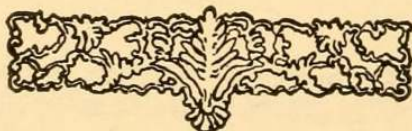


Every woman's heart grew bigger  
when we saw his manly figure,  
With the banyan buckled round it,  
standing up so straight and tall;  
Like a gentleman of leisure who is  
strolling out for pleasure,  
Through the storm of shells and can-  
non-shot he walked around the  
wall.

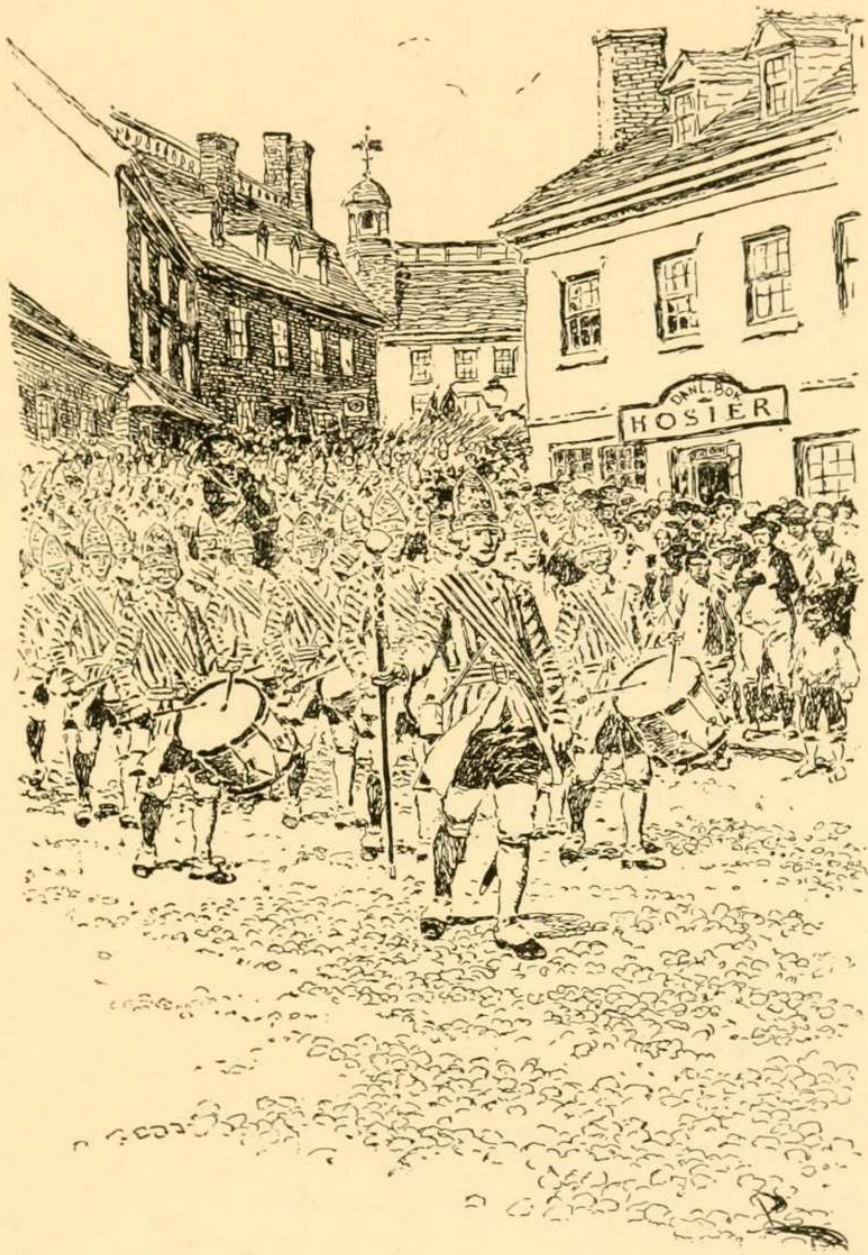


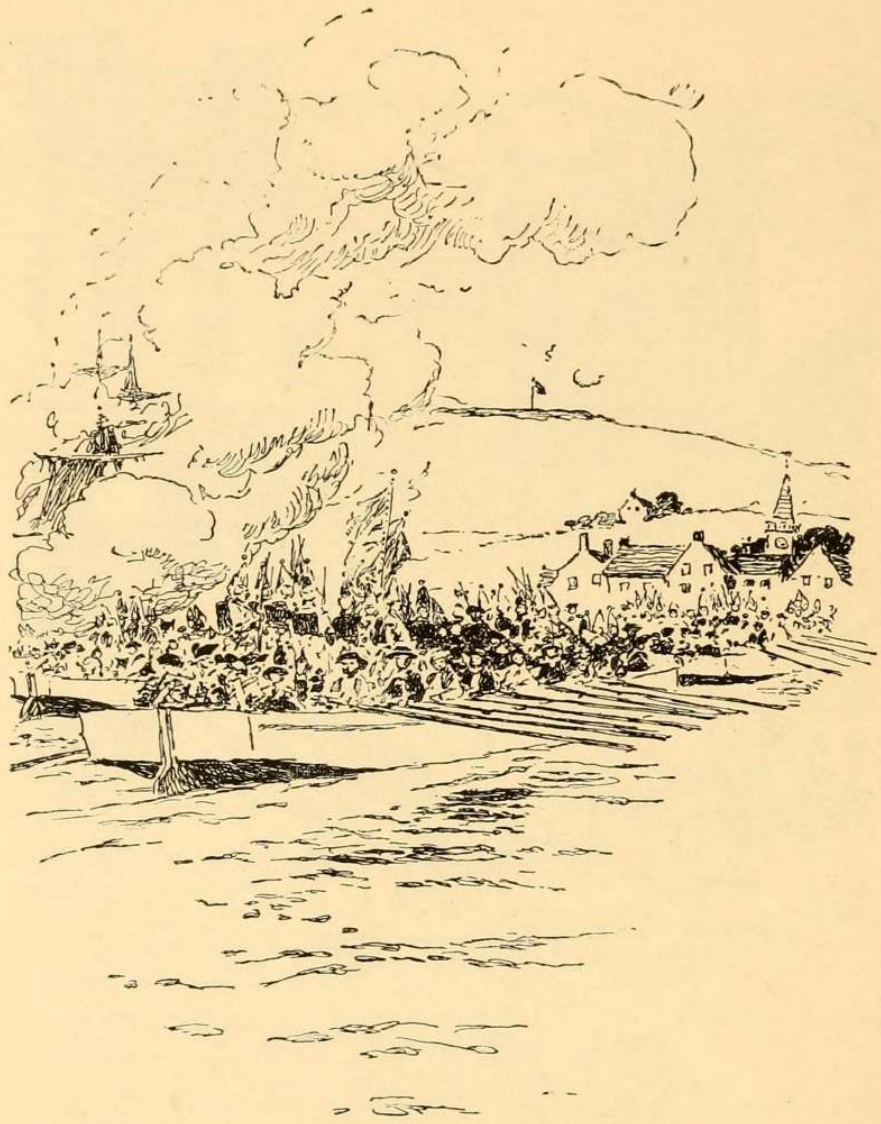


At eleven the streets were swarming,  
for the red-coats' ranks were  
forming ;  
At noon in marching order they were  
moving to the piers ;  
How the bayonets gleamed and glis-  
tened, as we looked far down, and  
listened  
To the trampling and the drum-beat  
of the belted grenadiers !











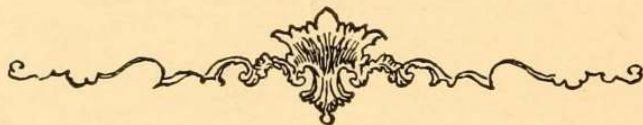
At length the men have started, with  
a cheer (it seemed faint-hearted),  
In their scarlet regimentals, with  
their knapsacks on their backs,  
And the reddening, rippling water, as  
after a sea-fight's slaughter,  
Round the barges gliding onward  
blushed like blood along their  
tracks.

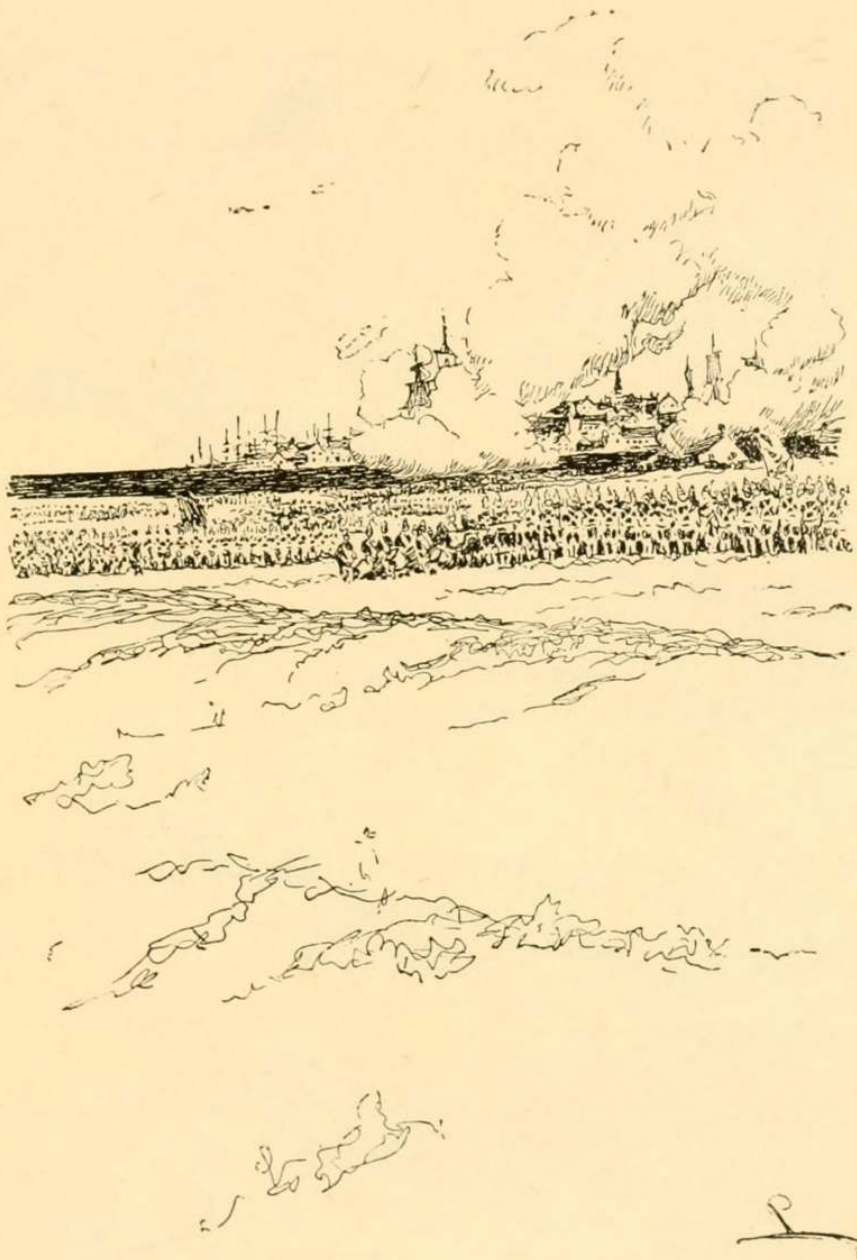


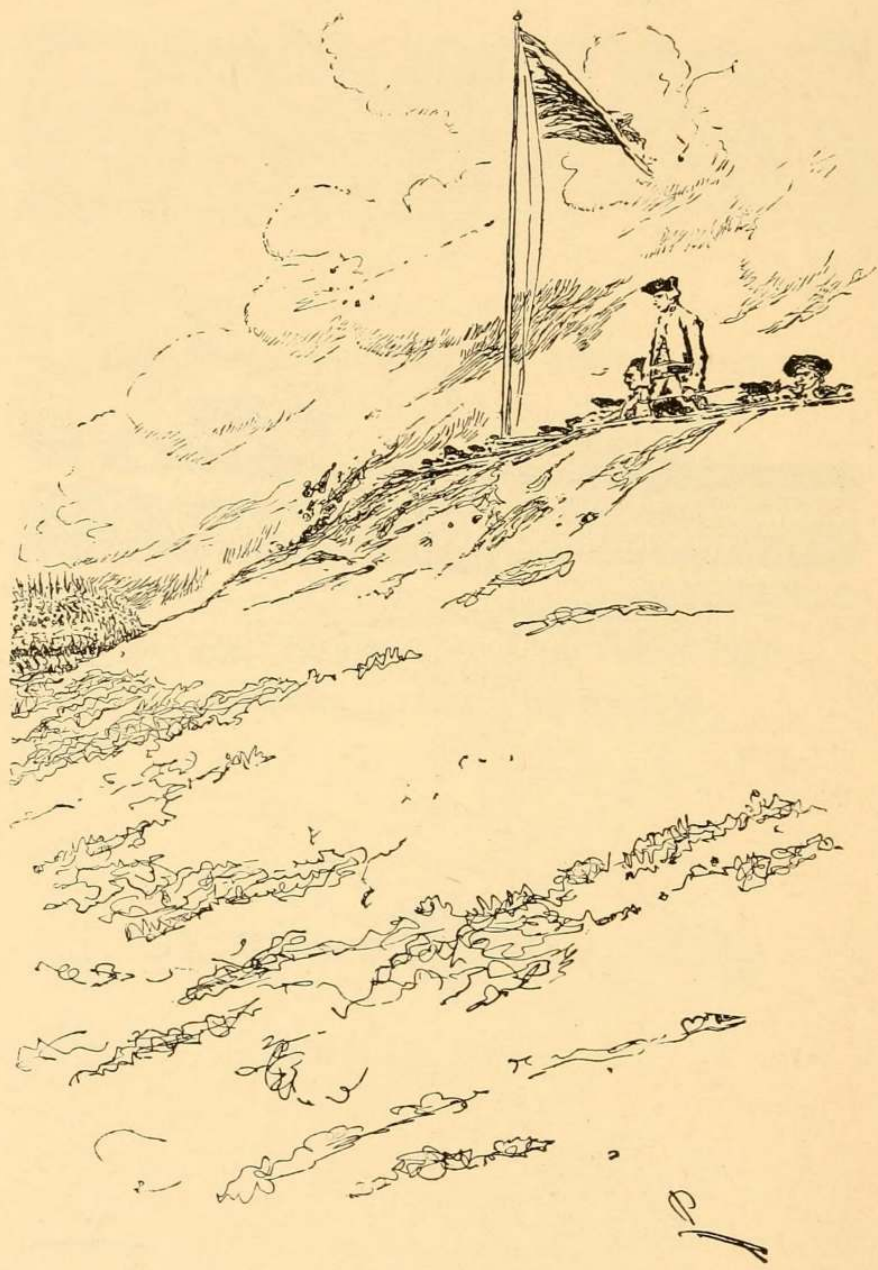




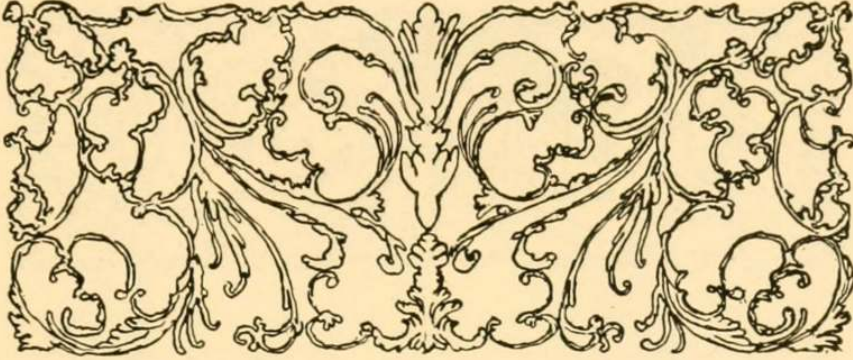
So they crossed to the other border,  
and again they formed in order ;  
And the boats came back for soldiers,  
came for soldiers, soldiers still :  
The time seemed everlasting to us  
women faint and fasting, —  
At last they 're moving, marching,  
marching proudly up the hill.





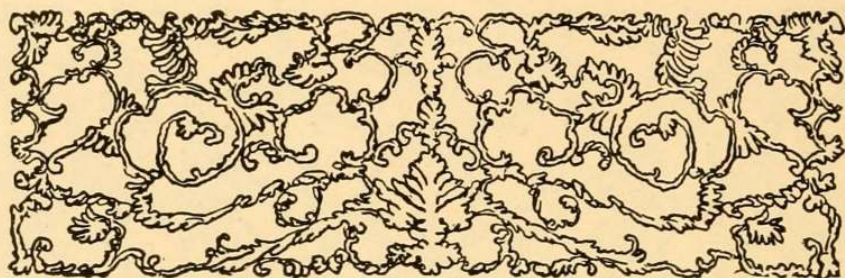






We can see the bright steel glancing  
all along the lines advancing —  
Now the front rank fires a volley —  
they have thrown away their shot;  
For behind their earthwork lying, all  
the balls above them flying,  
Our people need not hurry; so they  
wait and answer not.



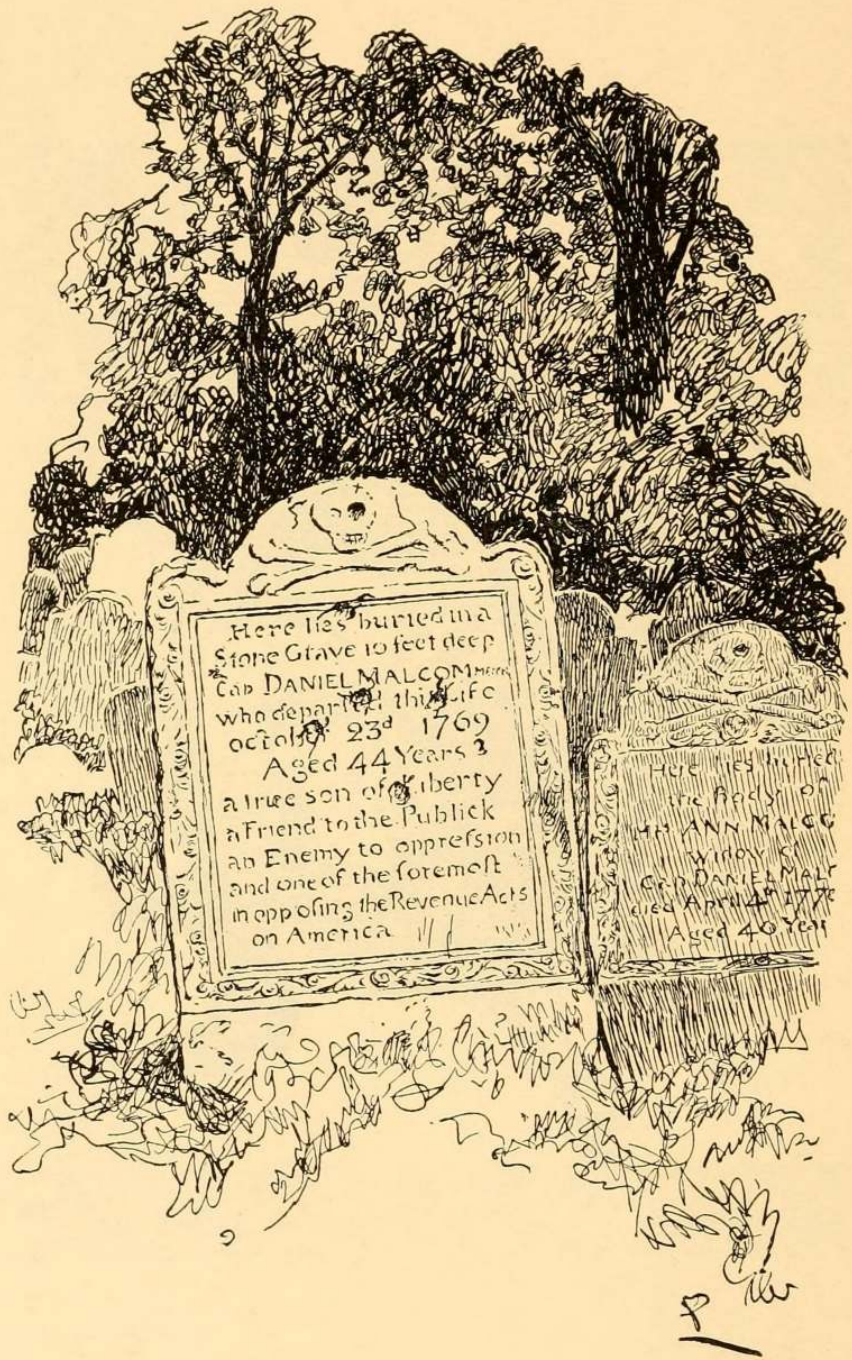


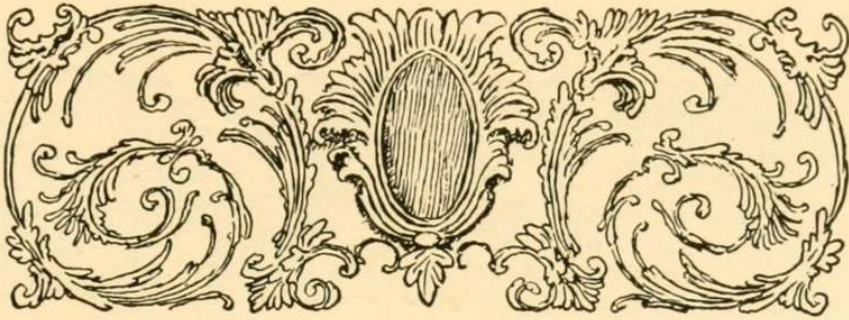
Then the Corporal, our old cripple  
    (he would swear sometimes and  
    tipple), —  
He had heard the bullets whistle (in  
    the old French war) before, —  
Calls out in words of jeering, just as  
    if they all were hearing, —  
And his wooden leg thumps fiercely  
    on the dusty belfry floor : —







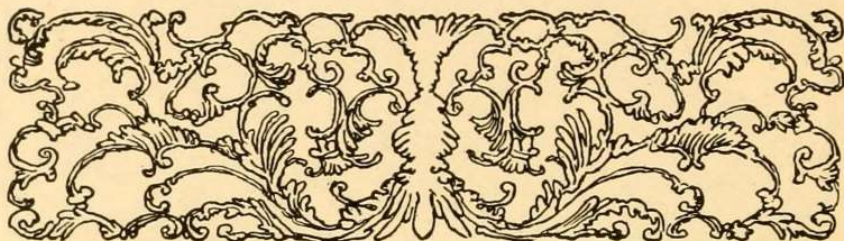




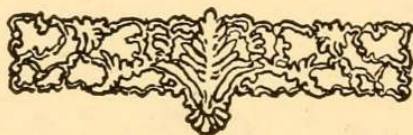
“ Oh! fire away, ye villains, and earn  
King George's shillin's,  
But ye 'll waste a ton of powder afore  
a 'rebel' falls;  
You may bang the dirt and welcome,  
they're as safe as Dan'l Mal-  
colm  
Ten foot beneath the gravestone that  
you've splintered with your  
balls! ”



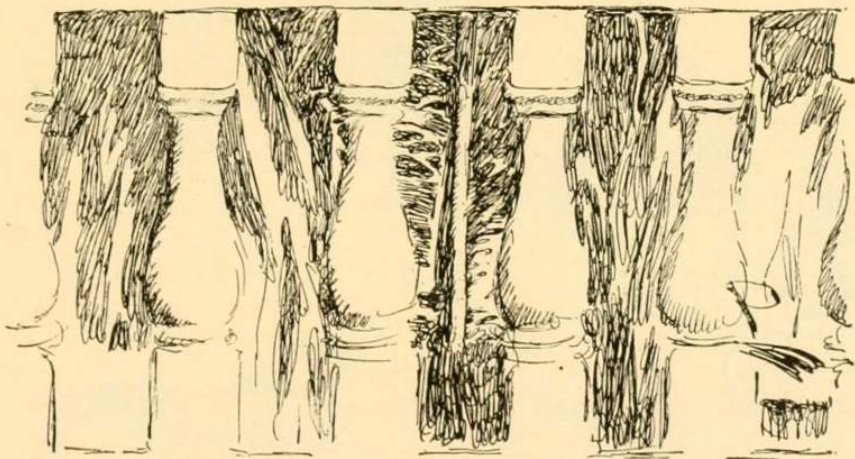
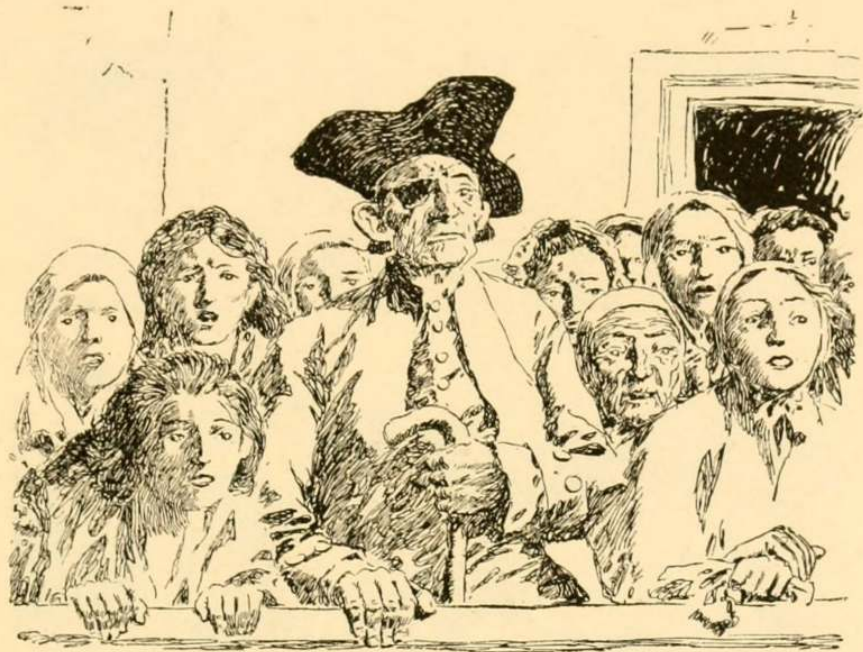




In the hush of expectation, in the  
awe and trepidation  
Of the dread approaching moment,  
we are well-nigh breathless all ;  
Though the rotten bars are failing on  
the rickety belfry railing,  
We are crowding up against them  
like the waves against a wall.

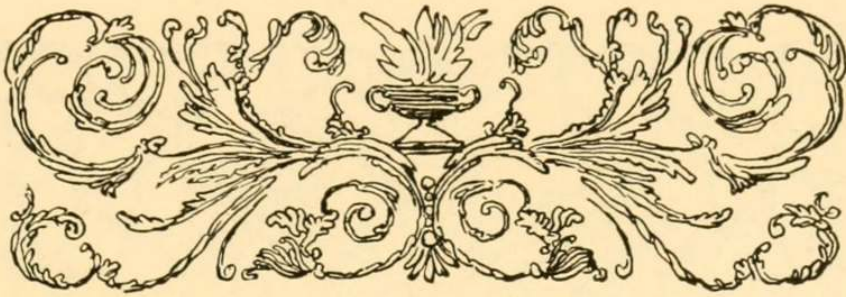








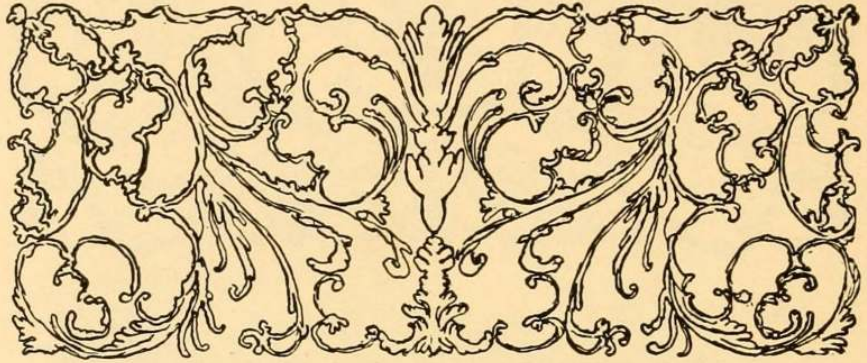




Just a glimpse (the air is clearer),  
they are nearer, — nearer, —  
nearer,  
When a flash — a curling smoke-  
wreath — then a crash — the  
steeple shakes —  
The deadly truce is ended; the tem-  
pest's shroud is rended;  
Like a morning mist it gathered,  
like a thunder-cloud it breaks!

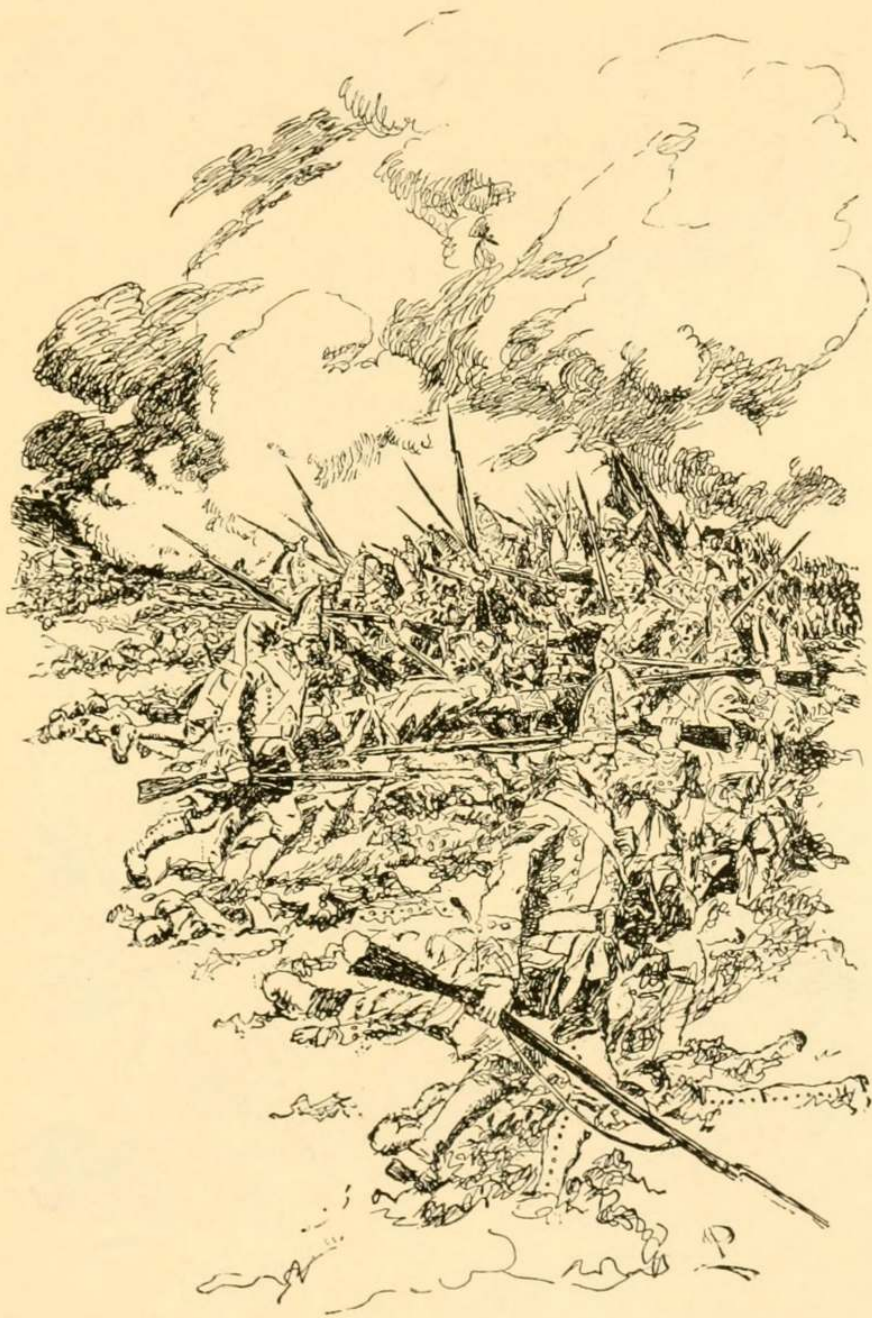




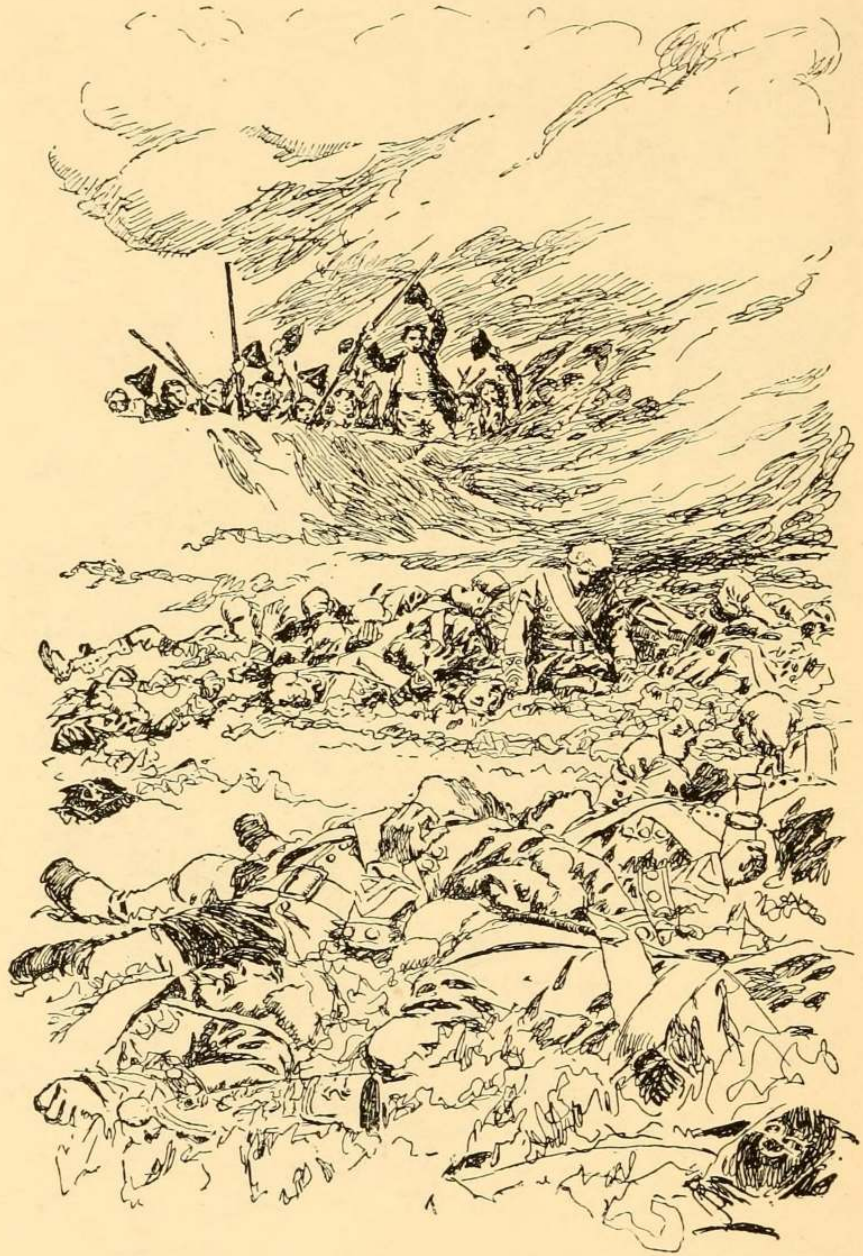


Oh the sight our eyes discover as the  
blue-black smoke blows over !  
The red-coats stretched in windrows  
as a mower rakes his hay ;  
Here a scarlet heap is lying, there a  
headlong crowd is flying  
Like a billow that has broken and is  
shivered into spray.

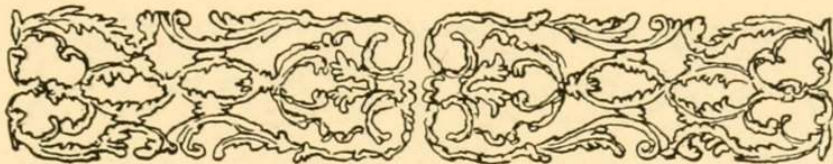












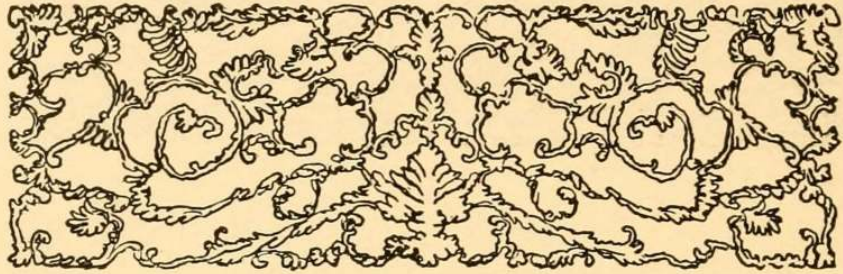
Then we cried, "The troops are  
routed! they are beat — it can't  
be doubted!

God be thanked, the fight is over!"  
— Ah! the grim old soldier's  
smile!

"Tell us, tell us why you look so?"  
(we could hardly speak, we shook  
so), —

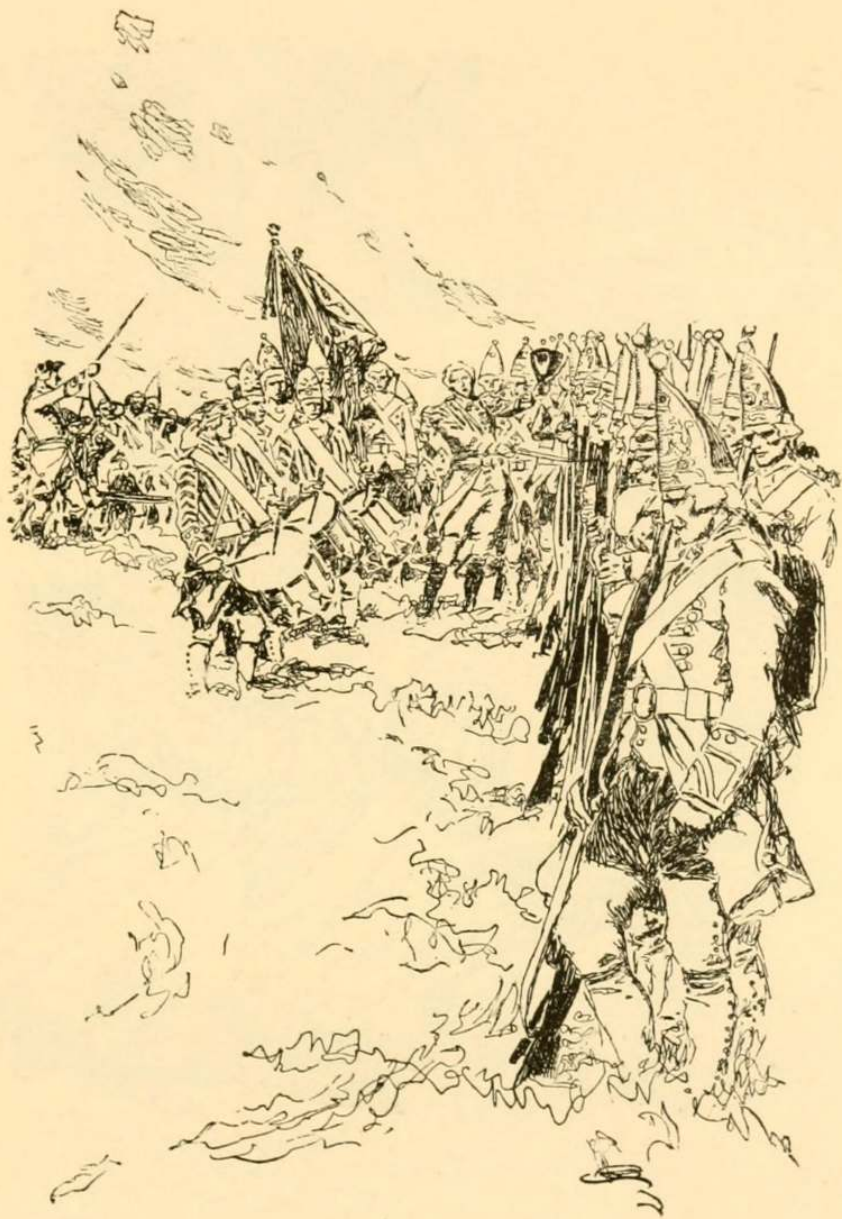
"Are they beaten? *Are* they beaten?  
ARE they beaten?" — "Wait a  
while."





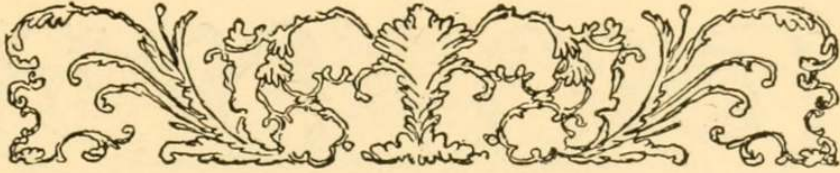
Oh the trembling and the terror! for  
too soon we saw our error:  
They are baffled, not defeated; we  
have driven them back in vain;  
And the columns that were scattered,  
round the colors that were tattered,  
Toward the sullen, silent fortress turn  
their belted breasts again.







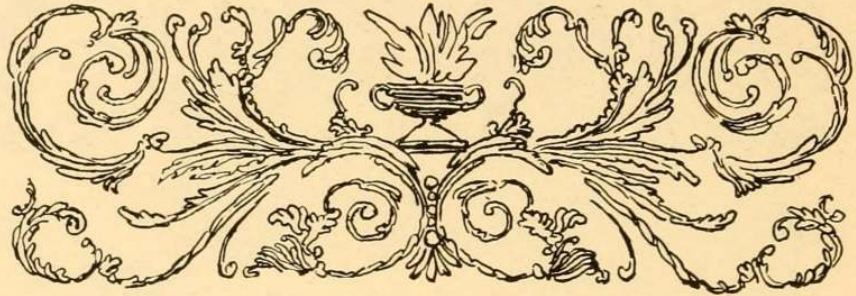




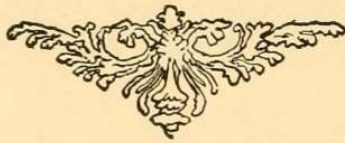
All at once, as we are gazing, lo the  
    roofs of Charlestown blazing !  
They have fired the harmless village ;  
    in an hour it will be down !  
The Lord in heaven confound them,  
    rain his fire and brimstone round  
    them, —  
The robbing, murdering red-coats,  
    that would burn a peaceful town !



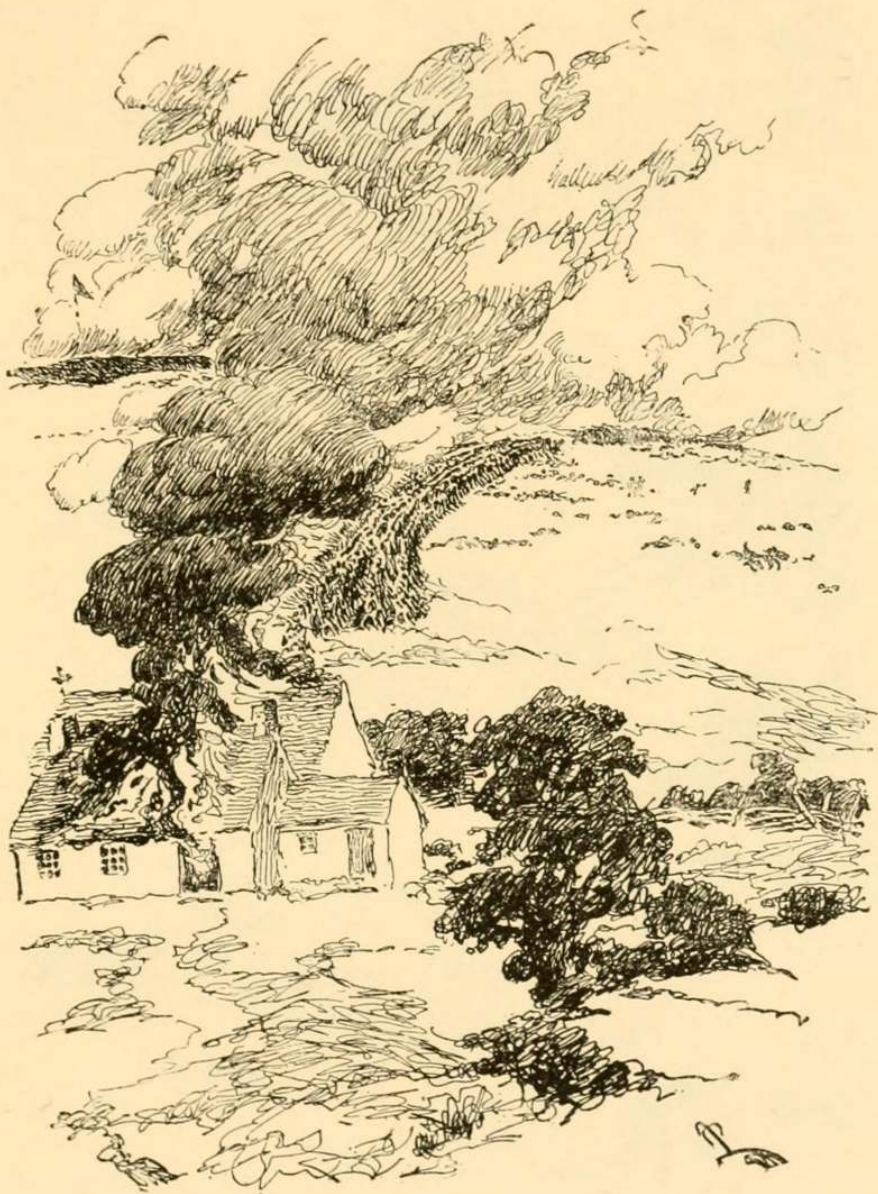


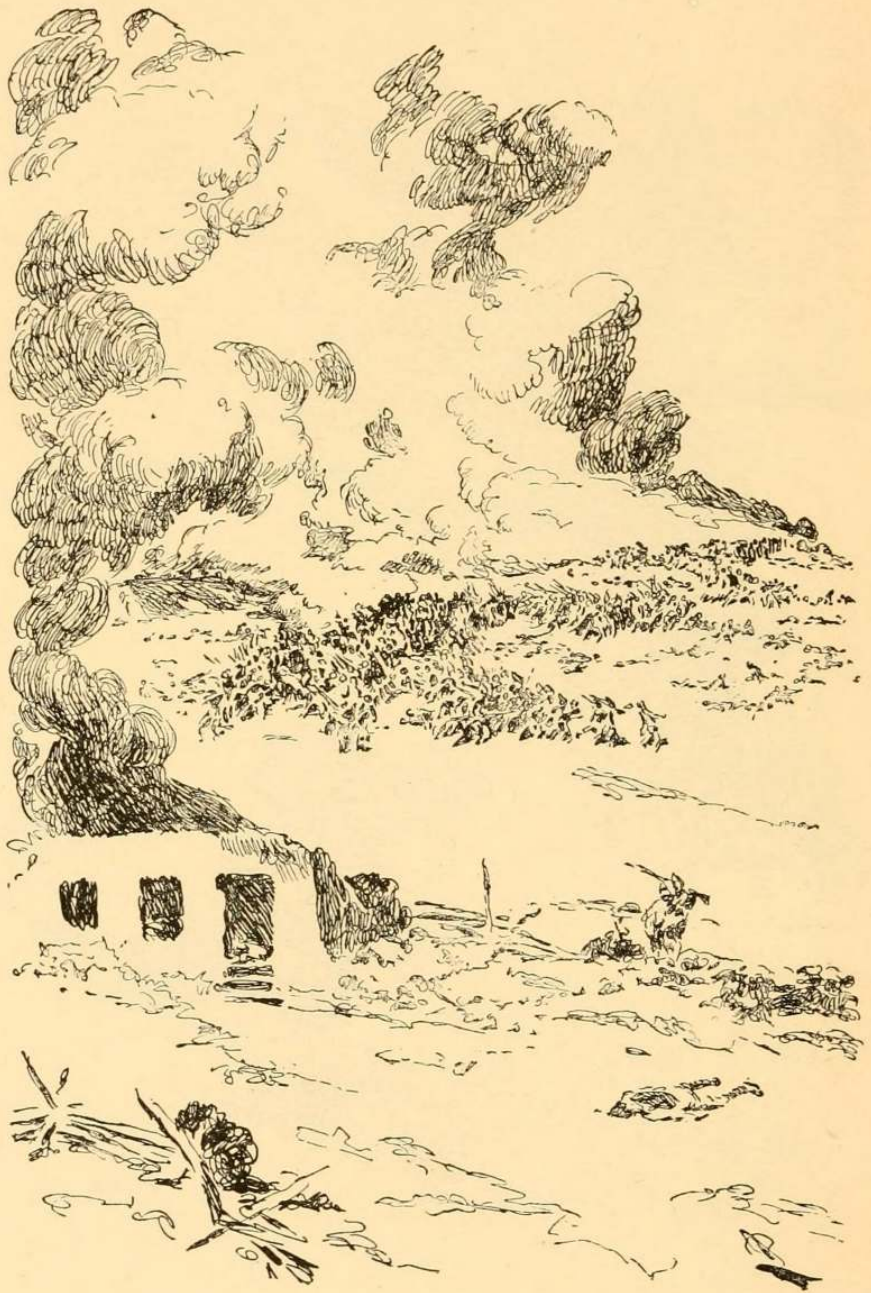


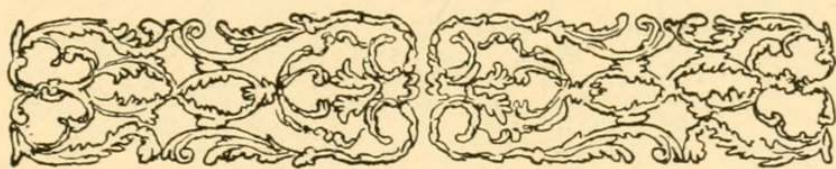
They are marching, stern and solemn ;  
we can see each massive column  
As they near the naked earth-mound  
with the slanting walls so steep.  
Have our soldiers got faint-hearted,  
and in noiseless haste departed ?  
Are they panic-struck and helpless ?  
Are they palsied or asleep ?



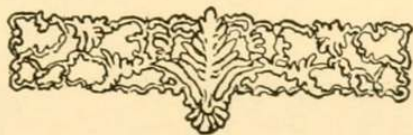








Now! the walls they 're almost under!  
scarce a rod the foes asunder!  
Not a firelock flashed against them!  
up the earthwork they will swarm!  
But the words have scarce been spoken,  
when the ominous calm is broken,  
And a bellowing crash has emptied  
all the vengeance of the storm!

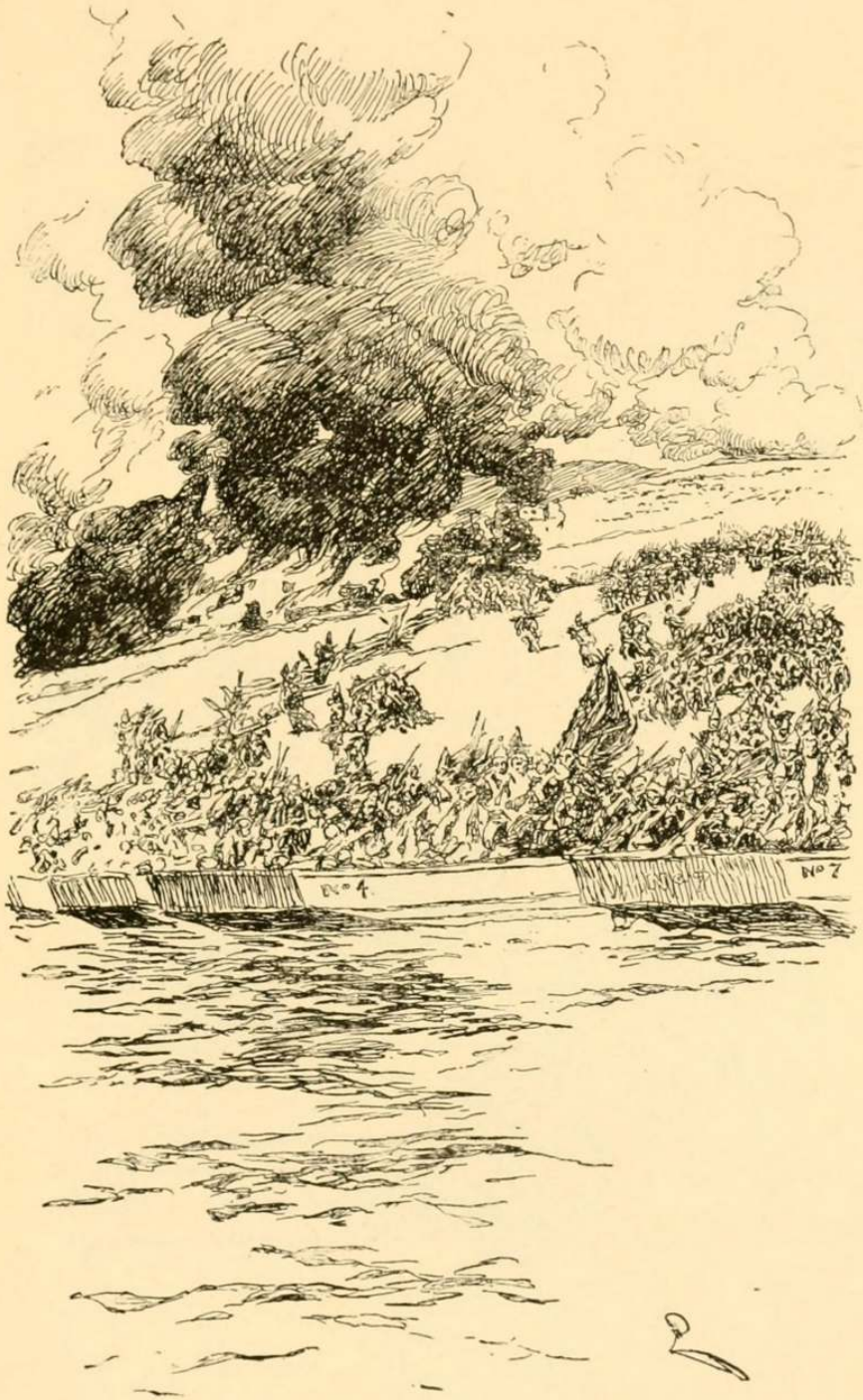




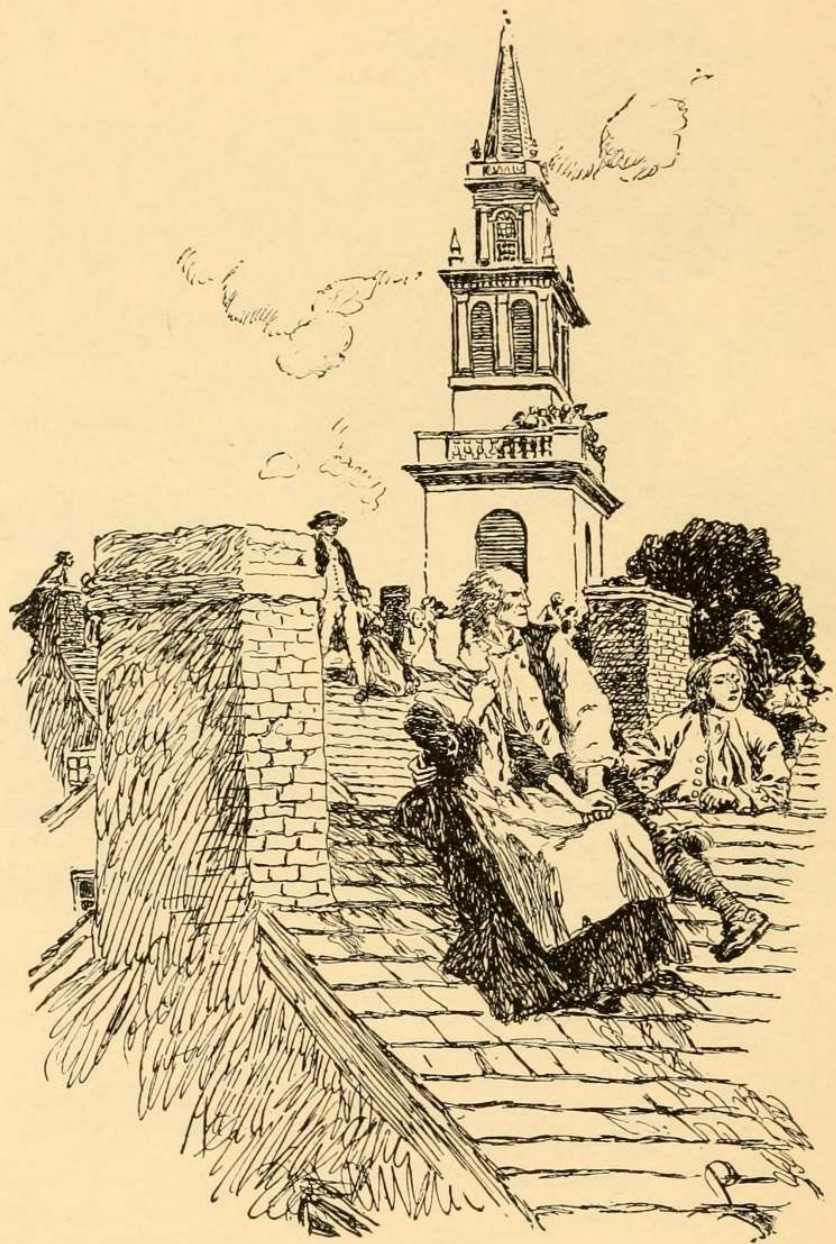


So again, with murderous slaughter,  
pelted backwards to the water,  
Fly Pigot's running heroes and the  
frightened braves of Howe ;  
And we shout, " At last they 're done  
for, it 's their barges they have  
run for :  
They are beaten, beaten, beaten ; and  
the battle 's over now ! "













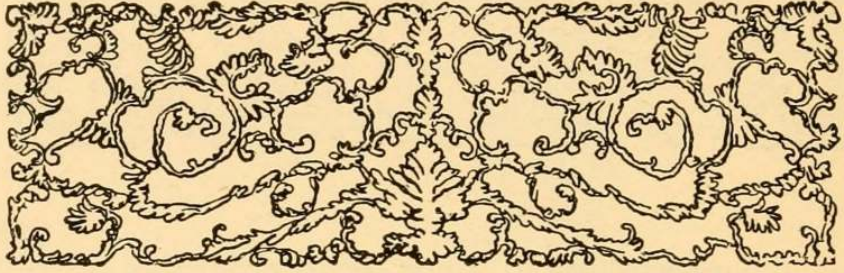
And we looked, poor timid creatures,  
on the rough old soldier's fea-  
tures,

Our lips afraid to question, but he  
knew what we would ask :

“ Not sure,” he said ; “ keep quiet, —  
once more, I guess, they 'll try  
it —

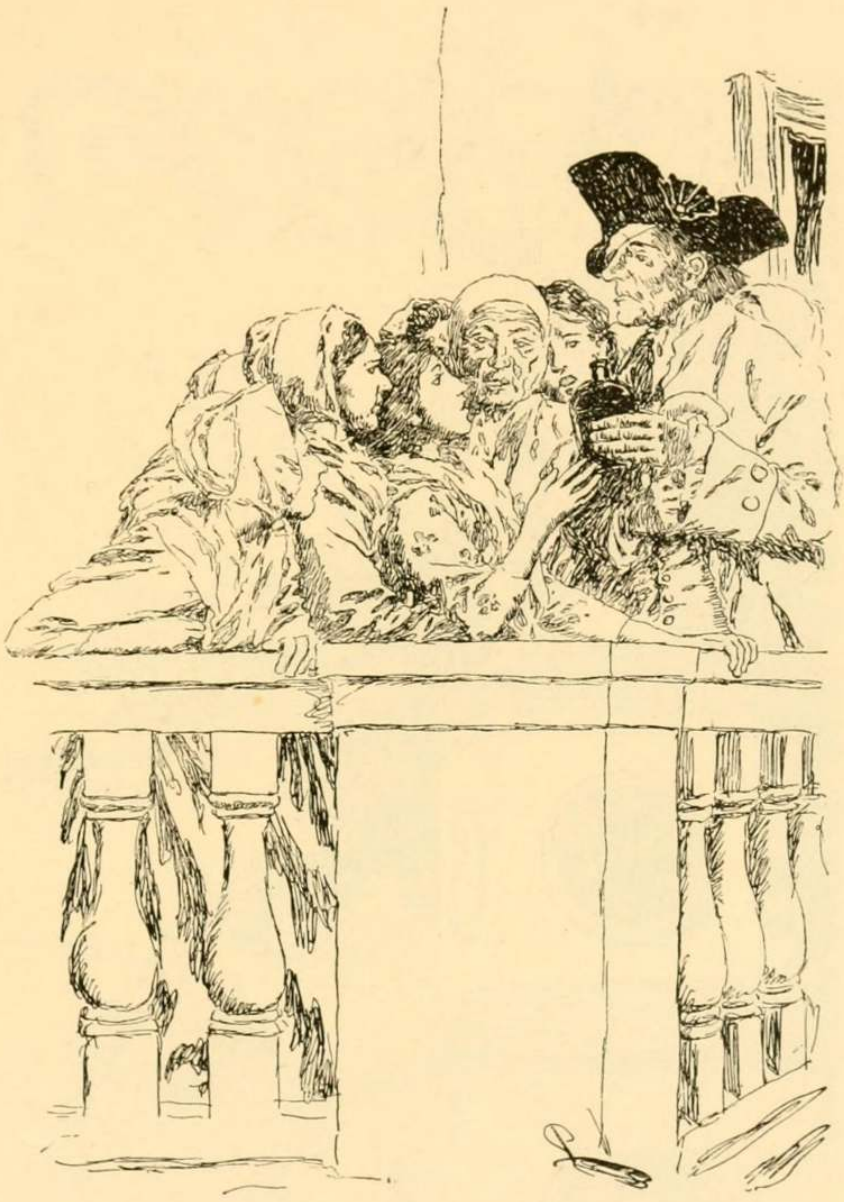
Here 's damnation to the cut-throats ! ”  
— then he handed me his flask,



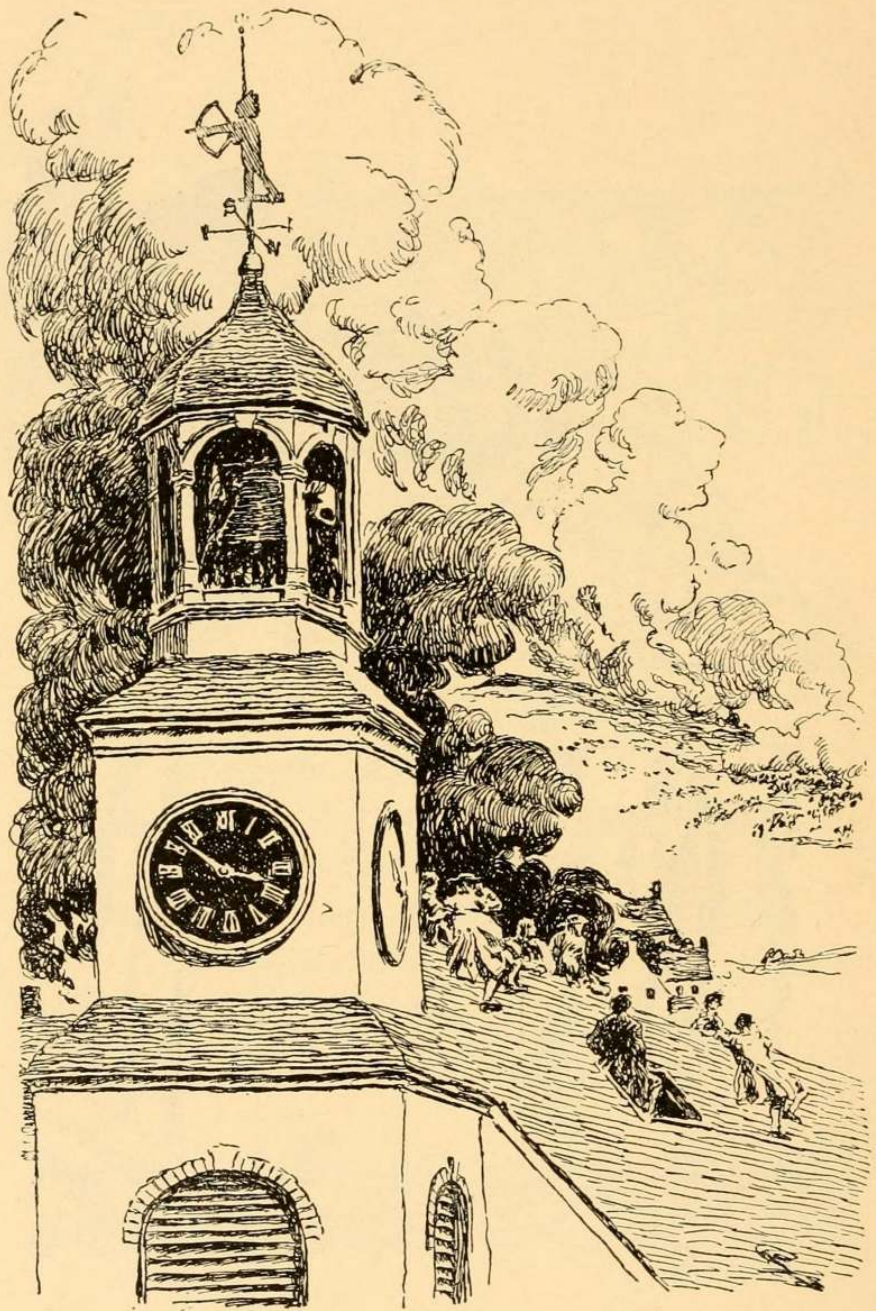


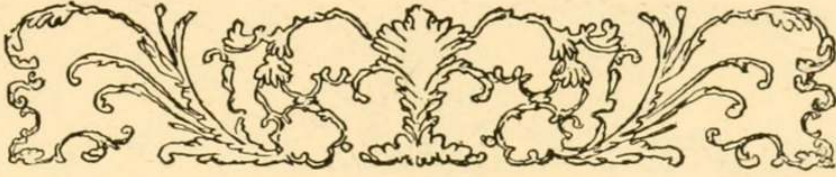
Saying, "Gal, you 're looking shaky ;  
    have a drop of old Jamaiky ;  
I 'm afeard there 'll be more trouble  
    afore the job is done ;"  
So I took one scorching swallow ;  
    dreadful faint I felt and hollow,  
Standing there from early morning  
    when the firing was begun.











All through those hours of trial I  
had watched a calm clock dial,  
As the hands kept creeping, creeping,  
— they were creeping round to  
four,  
When the old man said, “They ’re  
forming with their bagonets fixed  
for storming :  
It ’s the death-grip that ’s a-coming,  
— they will try the works once  
more.”







With brazen trumpets blaring, the  
flames behind them glaring,  
The deadly wall before them, in close  
array they come ;  
Still onward, upward toiling, like a  
dragon's fold uncoiling, —  
Like the rattlesnake's shrill warning  
the reverberating drum !

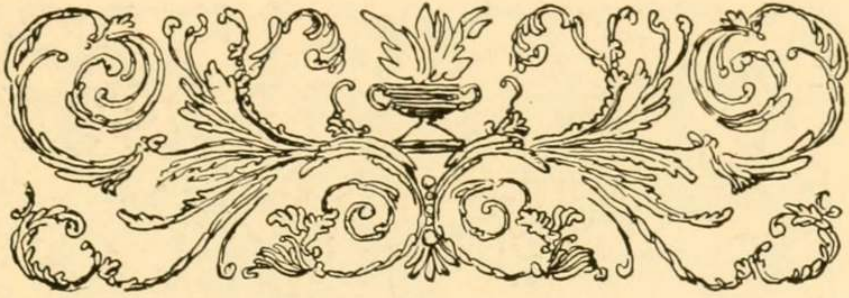








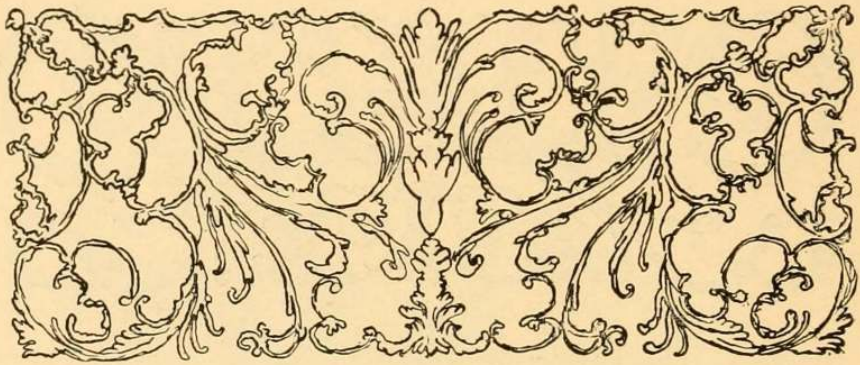




Over heaps all torn and gory — shall  
I tell the fearful story,  
How they surged above the breast-  
work, as a sea breaks over a  
deck ;  
How, driven, yet scarce defeated, our  
worn-out men retreated,  
With their powder-horns all emptied,  
like the swimmers from a wreck ?







It has all been told and painted ; as  
for me, they say I fainted,  
And the wooden-legged old Corporal  
stumped with me down the stair :  
When I woke from dreams affrighted  
the evening lamps were lighted,—  
On the floor a youth was lying ; his  
bleeding breast was bare.

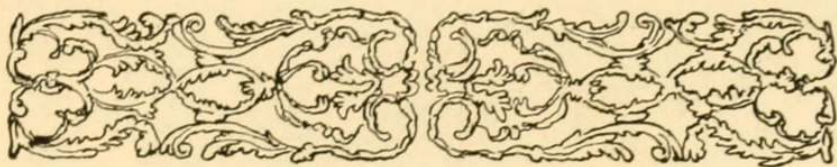










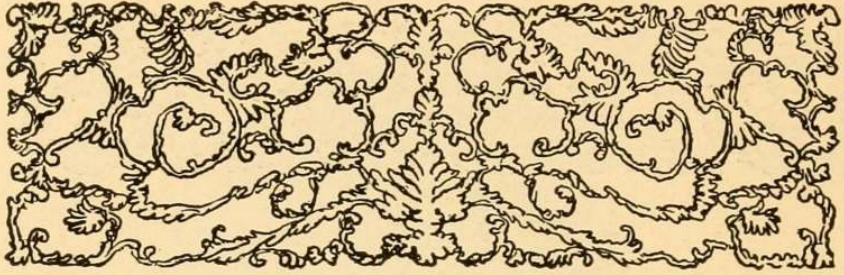


And I heard through all the flurry,  
“Send for WARREN! hurry!  
hurry!”

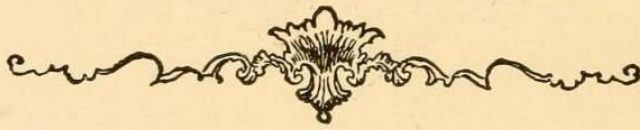
Tell him here 's a soldier bleeding,  
and he'll come and dress his  
wound!”

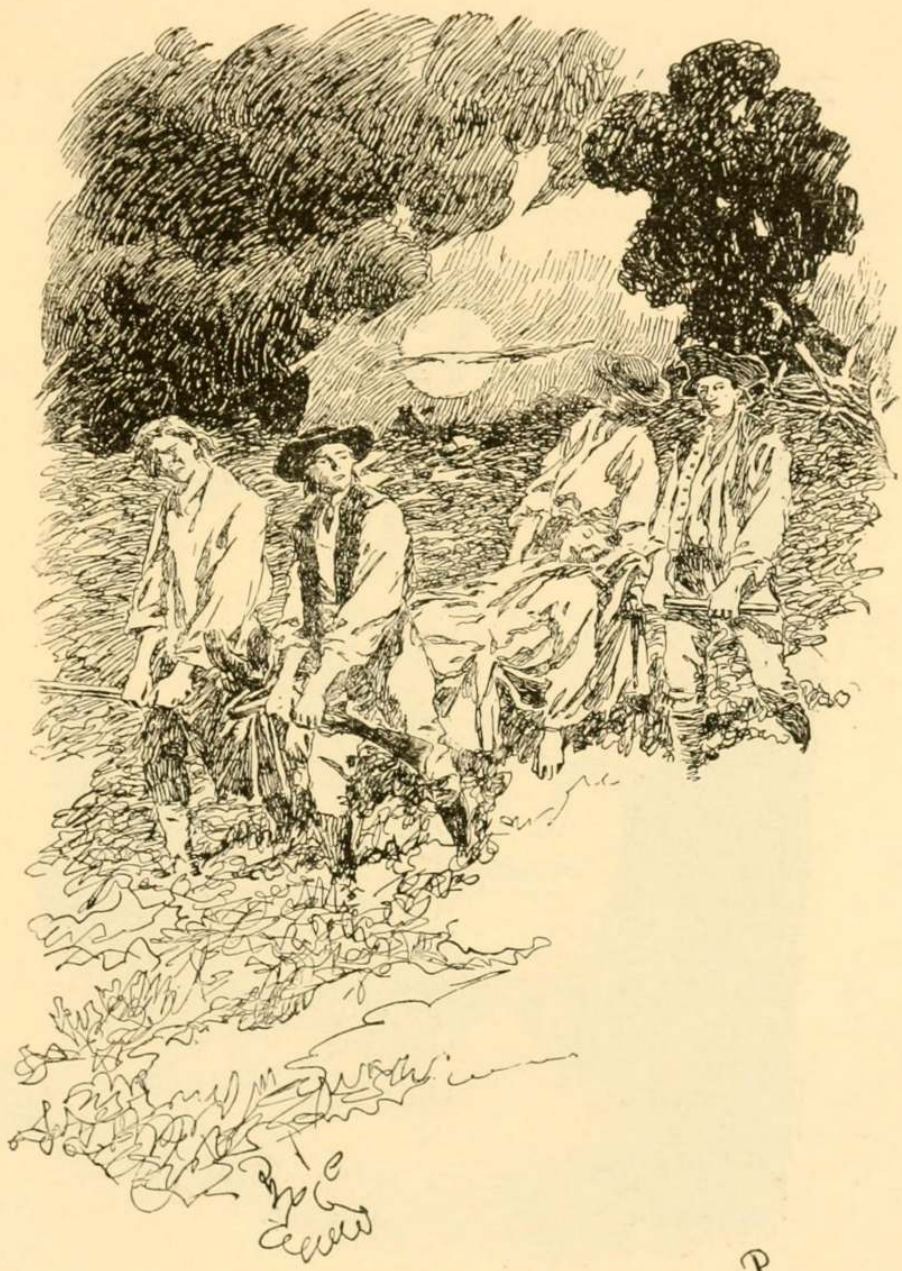
Ah, we knew not till the morrow told  
its tale of death and sorrow,  
How the starlight found him stiffened  
on the dark and bloody ground.





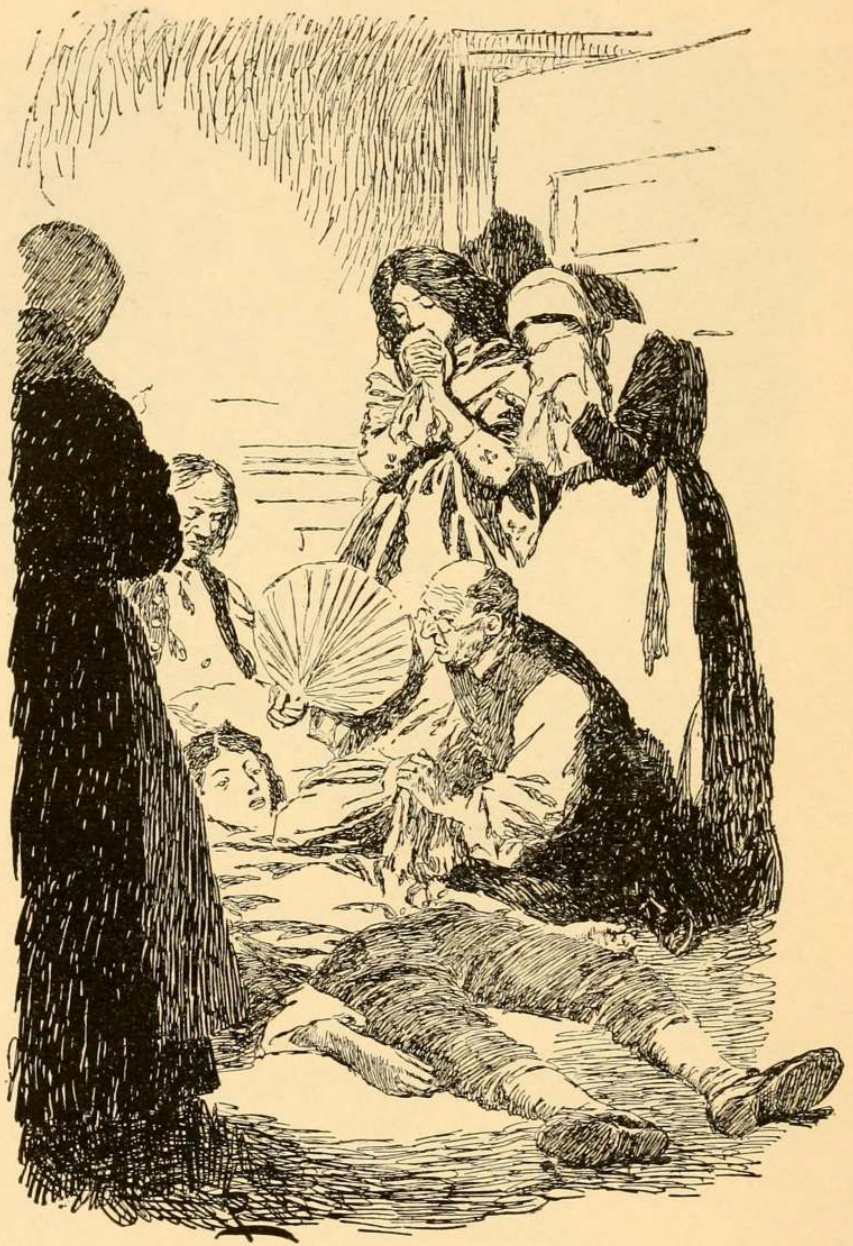
Who the youth was, what his name  
was, where the place from which  
he came was,  
Who had brought him from the bat-  
tle, and had left him at our door,  
He could not speak to tell us; but  
't was one of our brave fellows,  
As the homespun plainly showed us  
which the dying soldier wore.

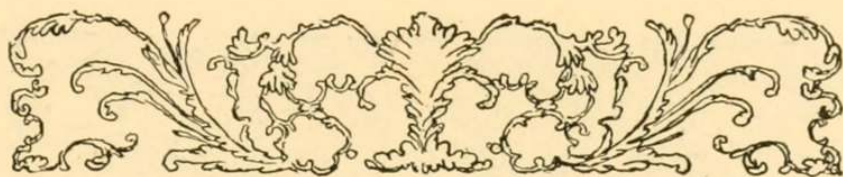




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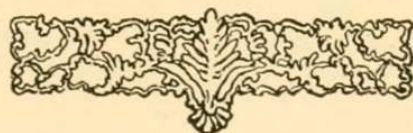




For they all thought he was dying,  
as they gathered round him cry-  
ing, —

And they said, “ Oh, how they ’ll miss  
him ! ” and “ What *will* his  
mother do ? ”

Then, his eyelids just unclosing like  
a child’s that has been dozing,  
He faintly murmured, “ Mother ! ”  
— and — I saw his eyes were  
blue.

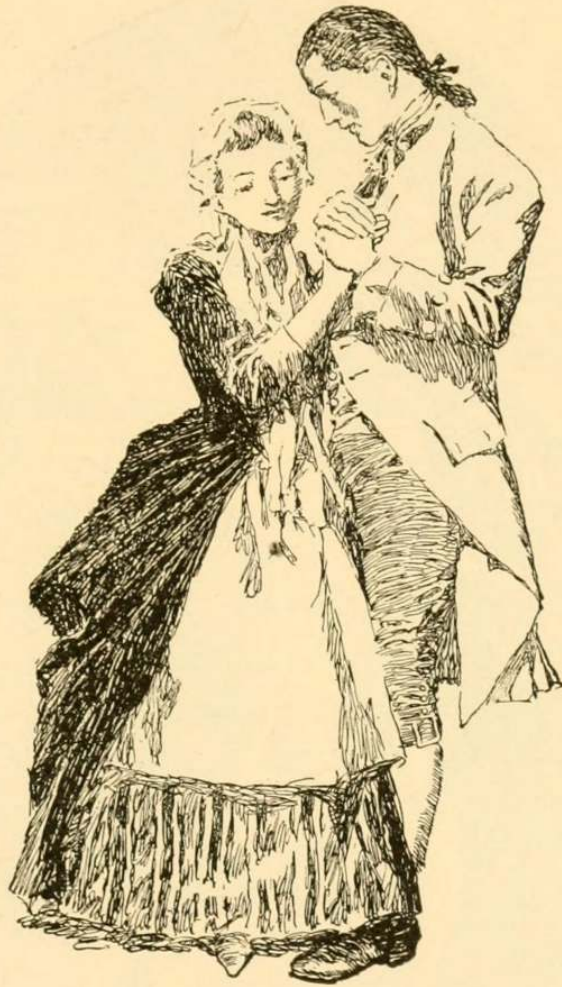




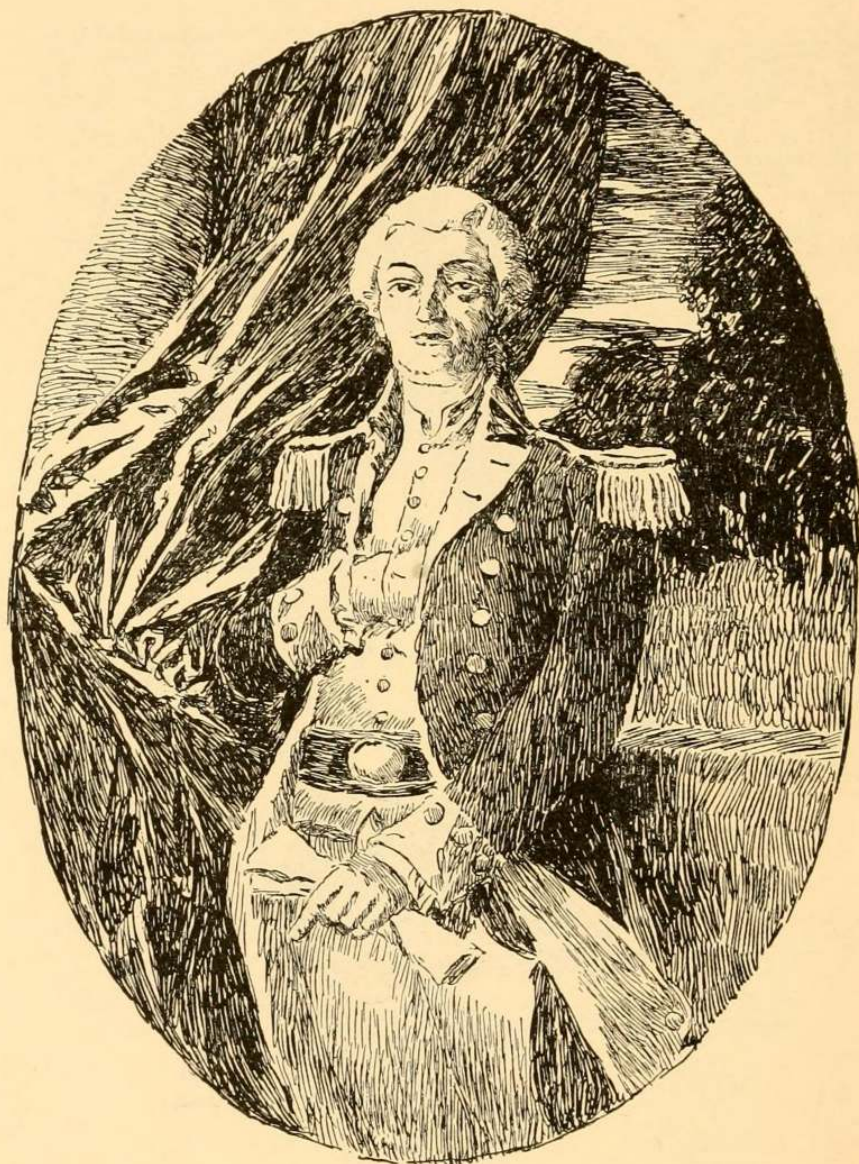
“Why, grandma, how you ’re wink-  
ing!” Ah, my child, it sets me  
thinking  
Of a story not like this one. Well,  
he somehow lived along ;  
So we came to know each other, and  
I nursed him like a — mother,  
Till at last he stood before me, tall,  
and rosy-cheeked, and strong.

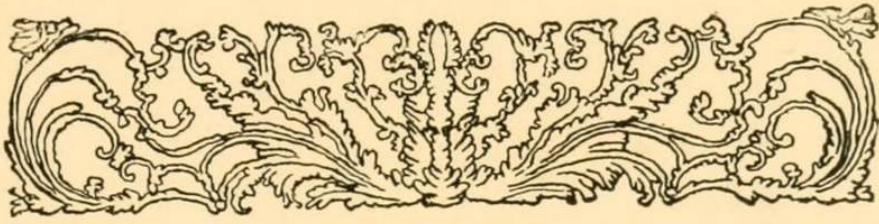






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And we sometimes walked together  
in the pleasant summer weather,  
— “ Please to tell us what his name  
was? ” Just your own, my little  
dear, —

There 's his picture Copley painted :  
we became so well acquainted,  
That — in short, that 's why I 'm  
grandma, and you children all  
are here ! ”











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