

To Winter-
changes.

Winter soon will shroud these pleasant valleys,
Weave his snow-wreaths o'er our favorite hill;
When from icy cave he sternly sallies,
What will lend his frozen heart a thrill?

Memories and
blessings manifold.

Cherished memories of the Summer weather,
Blessings manifold that with us stay;
God's great love that leaves us still together,
These can brighten Winter's dreariest day.

Savin-Hill, September, 1855.

W. W. M.

K I S S I N G B E T T Y S C U D D E R .

A SKETCH OF CORAM, LONG-ISLAND.

SOME TIME when Lord Cornbury was Governor of the province of New-York, and Nathaniel Platt was town-clerk at Coram, on the Island of Nassau, or Long-Island, in the said province, a notable case came up before the justice who at that time kept the peace at Coram. The details of this are partly collected from town-records, part from the antiquarian researches of the historian of Long-Island, and from the quaint and singular discourses which Judge Benson delivered, to their great edification, before that learned body, the New-York Historical Society, which they prized most highly from his venerable age. Partly I got them from insular tradition, (if I may speak so,) and the rest from that tricky and communicative crew of spirits who at this day turn the tables upon the people, and rap alphabetically as with a mallet upon the round earth. They told me all about Becky Scudder, as she then was, and of Becky Scudder as she now is, in her angelic mould, and they recommended me to print the narrative in the KNICKERBOCKER Magazine. I told them to go directly to Mr. Clark. 'Will the spirits,' said I, 'communicate with Mr. Clark?' 'NO!' they replied with a triple rap of the most emphatic kind.

Coram was a place where the devil played his pranks occasionally in old times. From there to Quog and Squam Beach, on the one side, to Devil's Tavern and Devil's Stepping-Stones on the other, (which Judge Benson speaks of,) and all around Speonk and Skunk's Manor, he used to 'step it about pretty lively.' There were some witches, and the spirit of a drunken Indian fiddler, who used to float in a skiff or canoe on moon-light nights around Mosquito Cove, and adjacent parts, where he thrummed away upon the strings till he got all the porpoises in a state of excitement, and set them a leaping over each other's backs, and thrashing the water with their tails, and pumping up the brine through holes in their snouts, (which the devil bored with a gimblet,) like so many whales. From there to the light-house on Eaton's Neck, he played 'Barbara Allen' on one string, till the people were sick of it.

I shall have more to say about him on another occasion, in my work, '*De Antiq. Passovic, et de quibusdam aliis rebus.*'

One thing, however, which the Indian did, I will mention in passing, although it has no connection with my present narrative; but the opportunity may never occur (if I do not write my work) to allude to it again. One night, while he was playing on his violin, the notion seized him to coax all the porpoises in the Sound through a narrow inlet, called 'the Gut' into Huntington Harbor. He did so. When the day dawned, the tide being at the full, the porpoises were seen throwing up their backs and cutting all kinds of antics. A very singular notion seized the mind of one William Gardiner, who at that early hour was counting his chickens, that he would turn those porpoises into oil. He would call all hands together, arm them with spears and harpoons, blockade with boats the narrow inlet which is called 'the Gut,' then when the tide sank low, and the porpoises retreated to the Sound, they would find the way barricaded, and every one of them would die with a harpoon in his back.

He did so. The boats were anchored in their place; the tide retreated; the porpoises were in shoal-water; they approached the place with their noses set; they veered about and retreated. The men stood with weapons in their hands. A second time the porpoises arrived in a fishy column, steadily, and with great fury, but when they came to the boats, they curved their backs, they whisked their tails, and leaping high in air, one after another, in spite of all opposition, with a fearful rush over the boats, which compelled the men to fall upon their stomachs, attained the open Sound.

But notwithstanding occasional sport such as the above, they used to have a pretty quiet time of it on Long-Island. Nothing was to be heard there but the surf, as the sound of it came booming from the narrow beaches over the Big Plains, as far as Back-Bone, where the echoes were thrown back. On Sabbath, the people went to meeting-house to the sound of a drum, for which, by a town-vote, they gave the drummer so many shillings a year, the value to be paid in samp or Indian-corn, and he drummed them all into church, where one Jonathan Edwards, I think his name was, or some one else of less greatness, preached vast and dismal sermons, two hours and a half in length, by the hour-glass. There were some offenders against the laws of society, it is true, and now and then they used to whip a negro or an Indian, laying the lashes upon his bare back until he cried like a loon. And people may say what they like about it in these piping times of new dispensations. Prisons are very good in their way, and gallows are good in their way; for some must be put in limbo, and others must be hanged; but for petty and for paltry tricks, such as chicken-stealing and the like, which are apt to come off scot-free, there is nothing so salutary as a good sound licking.

There was a stool of repentance in the churches on Long-Island, on which offenders, like Captain Underhill, the valiant warrior against the Indians, used to sit occasionally for his peccadillos about the fair sex, whereon he did so bewail his sins that his voice could not be heard for 'y° blubbling.' But the justices, deacons, and elect-men, by their

joint and pious endeavors, kept the devil pretty well at bay, only he would now and then show his foot, as at the 'Stepping-Stones,' aforementioned.

The case to which I allude, and which the court had before it, was a mild form of assault and battery, resulting in little damage. To this day an occasional offender is brought to trial for a similar transgression, to teach 'fast' young men to reflect a little before they venture upon a 'smack.' The law sometimes thrusts its arm pretty deep into the pockets of the culprit, and in old times his capital was endangered by an investment in *the stocks*. 'Kissing goes by favor,' which is right.

During the harvest-time at Coram, the boys and girls were binding wheat-sheaves in the field together. The latent jollity which there is in people will show itself, however restricted by the encampment of rules, or by an established severity of manners. Codes are artificial, but mirth is natural; and although the social life of the colonies was pretty grim and pretty grum, and what with the absence of luxury, the imminence of danger, the pressure of toil, the prohibition of sports, or the inability to engage in them, life assumed a stern and serious aspect, there was still a time when the profane fiddle would squeak out. There was some fatness in the lean land, and now and then at least an oily negro would 'yaw-haw!' over a basket of chips. On Long-Island, where there is a good deal of level plain, and muck, and sand, and barren sea-beach, and the inhabitants are disposed to be moody, they would sometimes shake with laughter, as well as with ague. There was some fun at Coram, and some relaxation at Buckram.

The boys and girls were binding wheat-sheaves, and the work went on merrily, and there was much song and laughter, and the minister looked with a pleased face over the rails; for many matches were the result of these festivals. In a corner of the field, at the base of a yellow stack, there was deposited a corpulent little jug with a short neck, and I am grieved to say that it contained rum. I think that it is very probable that the circulation of that fluid, imbibed as it was without any suspicion in those innocent days, caused a lightness in the head, and an activity of the animal spirits, which in old Puritan times was thought nothing of, but which is now considered as derogatory to character.

'Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur cum illis.'

Well, the boys and girls were binding wheat-sheaves in the field at Coram. It was near sun-down; the crop was mostly harvested; but although they had toiled diligently all day, their spirits did not flag. If the whole island had been a wheat-field, they could have garnered it in company no doubt. Cheerful labor does not result in painful weariness. Hitherto they had transgressed no rule of propriety, till all of a sudden, Bill Barkaloo, who was working at the same sheaf with Betty Scudder, threw his arms around her neck, and kissed her lips with a resounding smack. It was the height of audacity, and although the blood mounted to her eyes in anger, and she slapped his cheeks until his ears rang, he ran away and threw himself upon the ground, and rolled and roared with laughter.

Bill Barkaloo was about twenty years old, old enough to know better. He was a fellow with a big, bushy head of red hair, red face, covered with freckles, with a hand as hard as iron, and a grasp like the grip of a vice, and a voice like the roaring of many waters. He made a great noise as he drove his team, standing up in his checked shirt, and singing and hallooing to his cattle. He had an honest heart, but a reputation for wildness. His progress in the catechism had been hitherto small, and he had more than once been reprov'd in meeting. He used to hang his bushy head over the gallery on Sabbath till his face became as ruddy as a piece of raw beef, and then rolling his quid in his cheek, ogling and staring about him, find what amusement he could, and exhibit a lack of attention to the preached word, to the no small disturbance of the speaker. Sometimes he would fall fast asleep, and snore so rancously as to be heard over the whole building, or he would set the negroes who congregated in the loft a-tittering, and otherwise mar the solemnity of the day. He was moreover fond of horses, (which fact alone, if there were no others against him, would have been sufficient to stamp him in the eyes of truly religious people.) He knew the points of a horse; he trotted and cantered, and swore often in doing the same. Nevertheless, at the very depth of his character, there was a seriousness which no body had as yet fished up, because those who looked into him were more superficial than they thought that he was. He admired Betty Scudder, (and not he only,) for she was the gem of Coram, the pride of the Big Plains, and the flower of Long-Island; and he could have swam through the surf, clambered to the top of the Back-Bone, or crossed over the 'Devil's Stepping-Stones' to win her. He would have fought single-handed against all the Montauks to save her. When Betty milked the cow, he would sometimes watch his chance, and if the coast was clear, and no one stirred about the homestead, he would scale the fence, and kneeling down, assist her at the fragrant udders, although she protested that she did not want his help; and as the alternate snowy streams descended into the milk-pail, he would attune his coarse pipes to what love-ditties he could; then as the evening-star shone bright, he would retire to his own inclosure to tend his colt, or to unyoke his oxen. It was a pity that his reputation was not better, and that he had no standing in the church; that they looked upon him as an almost irredeemable sinner.

On one occasion, he had pinched the arm of Betty at singing-school, but the reproof had been so severe, that he placed himself for a long time on his good behavior. The temptation in the wheat-field was too much for Bill Barkaloo's philosophy. Betty was exceedingly toothsome. She had a form which was exquisite in its proportions. Her height was not one tithe of an inch amiss. The belt around her waist was as sweetly fitted as the girdle of Venus. Her head was poised upon a neck as graceful as the wild white swan's; her arms (which he had pinched) were most deliciously plump, with dimples at the elbows; her cheeks as red as roses; and her lips as tempting as cherries. Her eyes also, in color betwixt jet-black and chestnut, when she let down their long lashes, in hue so softened, but when in anger she uplifted the lashes, resplendent in their fire, were enough to put the amorous soul in

a blaze. What wonder then, that when at arms'-length from her, in the full flush of the spirits which the harvest brings, he threw his arms around her neck, and fondly kissed her. It was a crime which admitted of no atonement except by committing it again, which brought after it no repentant tears or remorse of conscience; for he went away, and his ears tingled with the delicious electricity from Betty's fingers.

Betty went home and told her mother, and her mother told the old man, who was smoking his pipe on the door-sill. He mumbled and groaned, but did not take it much to heart. Bill Barkaloo would, at some day or other, come into possession of a good farm, and that alone would atone for a multitude of sins. Nevertheless, this improper act was talked of, and produced a deal of scandal. The young people at their little gatherings would cry out: '*Who* kissed Betty Scudder?' putting an arch and emphatic emphasis upon the first word, which was provocative of mirth. At last, the matter became so aggravated, that it was deemed advisable to bring up the culprit, and at least to try him for misdemeanor.

The gay blade of Coram was summoned to answer to the charge, as well as those who could testify to the kissing of Betty Scudder. The investigation excited a deal of interest, from the place where it happened, through all the intervening villages to Montauk Point. Old maids and old wives discussed it with eager interest, while in the mouths of young Coram, and of young Buckram, of young Skunk's Manor, and of young Mosquito Cove, the words became a proverb, which were handed down through several generations, with their accompanying cadence: '*Who* kissed Betty Scudder?'

Young Barkaloo came to the trial in a brave suit of clothes, and with a showy team of horses, accompanied by all the gallantry of Coram. His hair looked redder and his freckles more numerous than ever, while his merry laugh was heard on the way, as if to defy the consequences of his misdemeanor. What had he done? Merely stolen a kiss in open day from one of the fairest of Eve's daughters, which he was willing to replace with another. Did Betty condemn him? If she did at first, there was reason to think, that upon reflection, she admired his dashing boldness; that she was stung with compunction for boxing his ears; and that with a woman's tenderness she now sympathized with him in his 'peck of troubles.' I have somewhere read that one day, as a young man was twisting up a wheat-sheaf in the field, he bound up a viper or a rattlesnake, which made an effort to strike him. We shall see whether this sheaf contained a rattlesnake or flowers! The following extract is from the town-records of Coram, copied *verbatim et literatim*:

'15 October 1701. William Barkaloo for kissing Betty Scudder. Fady Polhemus testified that he was in y^e wheat-field of Mr. Ludlum, and that he saw him put his arms round her neck, but that he did not see him kiss her. Cannot say that he heard him say that he meant to do it. Knows the defendant very well, but never played cards with him. Bought a cow of him before last fast-day, for which paid him; have also traded with him Considerabel, all right. Did not hear him

smack her, but thinks he might have heard him if he had done so. Knows nothing more about it.

‘SOOKEY CARL examined.

‘JUSTICE PROBASCO : State what you know.

‘SOOKEY : I know William ; see him a-running, but could not say what it was about. Did not see her box his ears, but heard others say she done so. Know nothing about his milking the cow with Betty. Believe his character is good. Left the field before sun-down. Did not hear Othniel Everett say that the matter would come into court.

‘PETER NOSTRAND examined.

‘JUSTICE PROBASCO : State what you know.

‘PETER NOSTRAND : Was in y^e field, but at the furdur end. Did not notice that y^e defendant kept near Betty. If he had a done so, thinks he should have seen him, but Cant say, as he was too far off. Saw him running, but Cant say what it was for. If he kissed her, would like to been in his place. That’s all, may it Pleas the Court. (*Laughter.*)

‘JUSTICE : Silence ! This proceeding is shameful.

‘ANDRES KASHAW examined : See him do it ; was within three feet of hym. He done it all to oncet. Believe that Betty could not have Helpt Itt. Do not blame her for striking Him. Thinks she served hym right. Never have made any offer of marriage to Betty Scudder. Conduct always proper to her. Have no ill will against William Barkaloo.

‘Several other examinations made. Fined 15s., and bound over to keep the peace.’

Thus much I have been permitted to copy from the records of Coram, and for the rest of this adventure in smacking, am indebted to Judge Benson, the historian of Long-Island, and the author of ‘Ante-Revolutionary and Revolutionary Incidents,’ who has paid much attention to such things.

When Bill Barkaloo was fined fifteen shillings, he roared out with laughter, and in fact he had been giggling and laughing ever since he came into court. He thrust his hand in his pocket and paid the fine in pieces of eight, out of a good store of cash which he had in hand. He also told the Justice to do his worst ; that he was an old fool ; and that as long as the girls liked him, he could afford to pay ; that he would do the same thing over again before the sun went down, and he defied all the select-men of Coram ; that he was of age that day, and that the Bible would prove it. He drove forthwith to Betty Scudder’s, where he found the old man picking chips, and the old woman straining milk in the dairy, and Betty in tears because Bill had been brought into court, and he proposed to marry her. Nor do the records of the island, nor the historian, nor Judge Benson himself declare that she refused the suit. On the contrary, she said that she would think of it ; and she *did* think of it, and she turned it over and over in her mind ; and when it was viewed in all its aspects, and when that fine farm on the Hampstead Plains was taken duly into account, neither did old Mr. Scudder or young Mrs. Scudder venture to raise any objection. On the contrary,

they thought that the wild oats of William had been already sown, and those whom God had joined together, let no man put asunder. Consequently, when the New-Year came around with its happy congratulations, and the new cider was clarified, and Coram for once in a twelve-month put on a glad aspect, and the select-men relaxed their frowns, and the minister smiled, the minister was invited to the comfortable homestead, and there, (amid the same happy company which bound the sheaves of wheat in the late golden, glorious harvest,) when he had made a prayer, which showed how all things worked together for the good of those who loved the LORD; when he had pictured gleaning Ruth, and spoke of William Barkaloo and Boaz, he joined the pair in mutual bonds, and gave his benediction. The fête was happy, and many on 'Long-Island's sea-girt shore' will to this day attest that no harm was done in kissing Betty Scudder.

F. W. S.

M O S S R O S E - B U D S . *

I WALK as in a dream:
 Around me and about me
 The things of this life seem
 A vision's bright creation.
 Within me and without me
 There breathes a quiet tune,
 Like zephyrs born of June,
 That murmur in a garden 'neath the moon.

To hear thy young heart beat,
 And feel thine arms about me,
 Seems fancy's fevered heat,
 Or some wild fascination;
 Not that I mean to doubt thee,
 But oh! my soul had yearned,
 So long, so long had burned,
 That hope to black despair was almost turned.

Thy gift is precious, girl:
 I prize it highly, trust me;
 Had it been gold or pearl,
 Nor bought the boon it bore me,
 It had been worthless, justly.
 For me these buds are fraught
 With bliss too great for thought,
 A joy before whose height all else is naught.

Thy lips have touched mine own,
 Thy heart has trembled near me;
 Thine eyes thy love have shown,
 Peace cast her mantle o'er thee!
 I love thee, MARY, dearly;
 These buds are trebly sweet;
 Through them our spirits meet:
 Behold me! I am kneeling at thy feet.

Philadelphia, Aug. 1, 1855.

* 'CONFESSION of love.' — LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS.