# THE PIONEERS

*James Fenimore Cooper*

# The Pioneers

# Chapter 1

> “See, Winter comes, to rule the varied years, Sullen and sad, with all his rising train; Vapors, and clouds, and storms.”—Thomson.

Near the centre of the State of New York lies an extensive district of country whose surface is a succession of hills and dales, or, to speak with greater deference to geographical definitions, of mountains and valleys. It is among these hills that the Delaware takes its rise; and flowing from the limpid lakes and thousand springs of this region the numerous sources of the Susquehanna meander through the valleys until, uniting their streams, they form one of the proudest rivers of the United States. The mountains are generally arable to the tops, although instances are not wanting where the sides are jutted with rocks that aid greatly in giving to the country that romantic and picturesque character which it so eminently possesses. The vales are narrow, rich, and cultivated, with a stream uniformly winding through each. Beautiful and thriving villages are found interspersed along the margins of the small lakes, or situated at those points of the streams which are favorable for manufacturing; and neat and comfortable farms, with every indication of wealth about them, are scattered profusely through the vales, and even to the mountain tops. Roads diverge in every direction from the even and graceful bottoms of the valleys to the most rugged and intricate passes of the hills. Academies and minor edifices of learning meet the eye of the stranger at every few miles as be winds his way through this uneven territory, and places for the worship of God abound with

that frequency which characterize a moral and reflecting people, and with that variety of exterior and canonical government which flows from unfettered liberty of conscience. In short, the whole district is hourly exhibiting how much can be done, in even a rugged country and with a severe climate, under the dominion of mild laws, and where every man feels a direct interest in the prosperity of a commonwealth of which he knows himself to form a part. The expedients of the pioneers who first broke ground in the settlement of this country are succeeded by the permanent improvements of the yeoman who intends to leave his remains to moulder under the sod which he tills, or perhaps of the son, who, born in the land, piously wishes to linger around the grave of his father. Only forty years[2] have passed since this territory was a wilderness.

Very soon after the establishment of the independence of the States by the peace of 1783, the enterprise of their citizens was directed to a development of the natural ad vantages of their widely extended dominions. Before the war of the Revolution, the inhabited parts of the colony of New York were limited to less than a tenth of its possessions, A narrow belt of country, extending for a short distance on either side of the Hudson, with a similar occupation of fifty miles on the banks of the Mohawk, together with the islands of Nassau and Staten, and a few insulated settlements on chosen land along the margins of streams, composed the country, which was then inhabited by less than two hundred thousand souls. Within the short period we have mentioned, the population has spread itself over five degrees of latitude and seven of longitude, and has swelled to a million and a half of inhabitants, who are maintained in abundance, and can look forward to ages before the evil day must arrive when their possessions shall become unequal to their wants.

It was near the setting of the sun, on a clear, cold day in December, when a sleigh was moving slowly up one of the

mountains in the district we have described. The day had been fine for the season, and but two or three large clouds, whose color seemed brightened by the light reflected from the mass of snow that covered the earth, floated in a sky of the purest blue. The road wound along the brow of a precipice, and on one side was upheld by a foundation of logs piled one upon the other, while a narrow excavation in the mountain in the opposite direction had made a passage of sufficient width for the ordinary travelling of that day. But logs, excavation, and every thing that did not reach several feet above the earth lay alike buried beneath the snow. A single track, barely wide enough to receive the sleigh,[3]denoted the route of the highway, and this was sunk nearly two feet below the surrounding surface.

In the vale, which lay at a distance of several hundred feet lower, there was what, in the language of the country, was called a clearing, and all the usual improvements of a new settlement; these even extended up the hill to the point where the road turned short and ran across the level land, which lay on the summit of the mountain; but the summit itself remained in the forest. There was glittering in the atmosphere, as if it was filled with innumerable shining particles; and the noble bay horses that drew the sleigh were covered, in many parts with a coat of hoar-frost. The vapor from their nostrils was seen to issue like smoke; and every object in the view, as well as every arrangement of the travellers, denoted the depth of a winter in the mountains. The harness, which was of a deep, dull black, differing from the glossy varnishing of the present day, was ornamented with enormous plates and buckles of brass, that shone like gold in those transient beams of the sun which found their way obliquely through the tops of the trees. Huge saddles, studded with nails and fitted with cloth that served as blankets to the shoulders of the cattle, supported four high, square-topped turrets, through which the stout reins led from the mouths of the horses to the

hands of the driver, who was a negro, of apparently twenty years of age. His face, which nature had colored with a glistening black, was now mottled with the cold, and his large shining eyes filled with tears; a tribute to its power that the keen frosts of those regions always extracted from one of his African origin. Still, there was a smiling expression of good-humor in his happy countenance, that was created by the thoughts of home and a Christmas fireside, with its Christmas frolics. The sleigh was one of those large, comfortable, old-fashioned conveyances, which would admit a whole family within its bosom, but which now contained only two passengers besides the driver. The color of its outside was a modest green, and that of its inside a fiery red, The latter was intended to convey the idea of heat in that cold climate. Large buffalo-skins trimmed around the edges with red cloth cut into festoons, covered the back of the sleigh, and were spread over its bottom and drawn up around the feet of the travellers - one of whom was a man of middle age and the other a female just entering upon womanhood. The former was of a large stature; but the precautions he had taken to guard against the cold left but little of his person exposed to view. A great-coat, that was abundantly ornamented by a profusion of furs, enveloped the whole of his figure excepting the head, which was covered with a cap of mar ten-skins lined with morocco, the sides of which were made to fall, if necessary, and were now drawn close over the ears and fastened beneath his chin with a black rib bon. The top of the cap was surmounted with the tail of the animal whose skin had furnished the rest of the materials, which fell back, not ungracefully, a few inches be hind the head. From beneath this mask were to be seen part of a fine, manly face, and particularly a pair of expressive large blue eyes, that promised extraordinary intellect, covert humor, and great benevolence. The form of his companion was literally hid beneath the garments she wore. There were furs and

silks peeping from under a large camlet cloak with a thick flannel lining, that by its cut and size was evidently intended for a masculine wearer. A huge hood of black silk, that was quilted with down, concealed the whole of her head, except at a small opening in front for breath, through which occasionally sparkled a pair of animated jet-black eyes.

Both the father and daughter (for such was the connection between the two travellers) were too much occupied with their reflections to break a stillness that derived little or no interruption from the easy gliding of the sleigh by the sound of their voices. The former was thinking of the wife that had held this their only child to her bosom, when, four years before, she had reluctantly consented to relinquish the society of her daughter in order that the latter might enjoy the advantages of an education which the city of New York could only offer at that period. A few months afterward death had deprived him of the remaining companion of his solitude; but still he had enough real regard for his child not to bring her into the comparative wilderness in which he dwelt, until the full period had expired to which he had limited her juvenile labors. The reflections of the daughter were less melancholy, and mingled with a pleased astonishment at the novel scenery she met at every turn in the road.

The mountain on which they were journeying was covered with pines that rose without a branch some seventy or eighty feet, and which frequently doubled that height by the addition of the tops. Through the innumerable vistas that opened beneath the lofty trees, the eye could penetrate until it was met by a distant inequality in the ground, or was stopped by a view of the summit of the mountain which lay on the opposite side of the valley to which they were hastening. The dark trunks of the trees rose from the pure white of the snow in regularly formed shafts, until, at a great height, their branches shot forth

horizontal limbs, that were covered with the meagre foliage of an evergreen, affording a melancholy contrast to the torpor of nature below. To the travellers there seemed to be no wind; but these pines waved majestically at their topmost boughs, sending forth a dull, plaintive sound that was quite in consonance with the rest of the melancholy scene.

The sleigh had glided for some distance along the even surface, and the gaze of the female was bent in inquisitive and, perhaps, timid glances into the recesses of the forest, when a loud and continued howling was heard, pealing under the long arches of the woods like the cry of a numerous pack of hounds. The instant the sounds reached the ear of the gentleman he cried aloud to the black:

“Hol up, Aggy; there is old Hector; I should know his bay among ten thousand! The Leather-Stocking has put his hounds into the hills this clear day, and they have started their game. There is a deer-track a few rods ahead; and now, Bess, if thou canst muster courage enough to stand fire, I will give thee a saddle for thy Christmas dinner.”

The black drew up, with a cheerful grin upon his chilled features, and began thrashing his arms together in order to restore the circulation of his fingers, while the speaker stood erect and, throwing aside his outer covering, stepped from the sleigh upon a bank of snow which sustained his weight without yielding.

In a few moments the speaker succeeded in extricating a double-barrelled fowling-piece from among a multitude of trunks and bandboxes. After throwing aside the thick mittens which had encased his hands, there now appeared a pair of leather gloves tipped with fur; he examined his priming, and was about to move forward, when the light bounding noise of an animal plunging through the woods was heard, and a fine buck darted into the path a short distance ahead of him. The appearance of the animal was sudden, and his flight inconceivably rapid; but the traveller

appeared to be too keen a sportsman to be disconcerted by either. As it came first into view he raised the fowling-piece to his shoulder and, with a practised eye and steady hand, drew a trigger. The deer dashed forward undaunted, and apparently unhurt. Without lowering his piece, the traveller turned its muzzle toward his victim, and fired again. Neither discharge, however, seemed to have taken effect,
The whole scene had passed with a rapidity that confused the female, who was unconsciously rejoicing in the escape of the buck, as he rather darted like a meteor than ran across the road, when a sharp, quick sound struck her ear, quite different from the full, round reports of her father's gun, but still sufficiently distinct to be known as the concussion produced by firearms. At the same instant that she heard this unexpected report, the buck sprang from the snow to a great height in the air, and directly a second discharge, similar in sound to the first, followed, when the animal came to the earth, failing head long and rolling over on the crust with its own velocity. A loud shout was given by the unseen marksman, and a couple of men instantly appeared from behind the trunks of two of the pines, where they had evidently placed them selves in expectation of the passage of the deer.
"Ha! Natty, had I known you were in ambush, I should not have fired," cried the traveller, moving toward the spot where the deer lay—near to which he was followed by the delighted black, with his sleigh; "but the sound of old Hector was too exhilarating to be quiet; though I hardly think I struck him, either."
"No—no——Judge," returned the hunter, with an inward chuckle, and with that look of exultation that indicates a consciousness of superior skill, "you burnt your powder only to warm your nose this cold evening. Did ye think to stop a full-grown buck, with Hector and the slut open upon him within sound, with that pop-gun in your hand! There's plenty of pheasants among the swamps; and the snow-birds

are flying round your own door, where you may feed them with crumbs, and shoot them at pleasure, any day; but if you’re for a buck, or a little bear’s meat, Judge, you’ll have to take the long rifle, with a greased wadding, or you’ll waste more powder than you’ll fill stomachs, I’m thinking.”
As the speaker concluded he drew his bare hand across the bottom of his nose, and again opened his enormous mouth with a kind of inward laugh.
“The gun scatters well, Natty, And it has killed a deer before now,” said the traveller, smiling good-humoredly. “One barrel was charged with buckshot, but the other was loaded for birds only. Here are two hurts; one through the neck, and the other directly through the heart. It is by no means certain, Natty, but I gave him one of the two
“Let who will kill him.” said the hunter, rather surily.
“I suppose the creature is to be eaten.” So saying, he drew a large knife from a leathern sheath, which was stuck through his girdle, or sash, and cut the throat of the animal, “If there are two balls through the deer, I would ask if there weren’t two rifles fired— besides, who ever saw such a ragged hole from a smooth-bore as this through the neck? And you will own yourself, Judge, that the buck fell at the last shot, which was sent from a truer and a younger hand than your’n or mine either; but, for my part, although I am a poor man I can live without the venison, but I don’t love to give up my lawful dues in a free country. Though, for the matter of that, might often makes right here, as well as in the old country, for what I can see.”
An air of sullen dissatisfaction pervaded the manner of the hunter during the whole of his speech; yet he thought it prudent to utter the close of the sentence in such an undertone as to leave nothing audible but the grumbling sounds of his voice.
“Nay, Natty,” rejoined the traveller, with undisturbed good-humor, “it is for the honor that I contend. A few dollars will pay for the venison; but what will requite me for the lost

honor of a buck’s tail in my cap? Think, Natty, how I should triumph over that quizzing dog, Dick Jones, who has failed seven times already this season, and has only brought in one woodchuck and a few gray squirrels.”

“Ah! The game is becoming hard to find, indeed, Judge, with your clearings and betterments,” said the old hunter, with a kind of compelled resignation. “The time has been when I have shot thirteen deer without counting the fa’ns standing in the door of my own hut; and for bear’s meat, if one wanted a ham or so, he had only to watch a-nights, and he could shoot one by moonlight, through the cracks of the logs, no fear of his oversleeping himself neither, for the howling of the wolves was sartin to keep his eyes open. There’s old Hector”— patting with affection a tall hound of black and yellow spots, with white belly and legs, that just then came in on the scent, accompanied by the slut he had mentioned; “see where the wolves bit his throat, the night I druv them from the venison that was smoking on the chimney top—that dog is more to be trusted than many a Christian man; for he never forgets a friend, and loves the hand that gives him bread,”

There was a peculiarity in the manner of the hunter that attracted the notice of the young female, who had been a close and interested observer of his appearance and equipments, from the moment he came into view. He was tall, and so meagre as to make him seem above even the six feet that he actually stood in his stockings. On his head, which was thinly covered with lank, sandy hair, he wore a cap made of fox-skin, resembling in shape the one we have already described, although much inferior in finish and ornaments. His face was skinny and thin al most to emaciation; but yet it bore no signs of disease— on the contrary, it had every indication of the most robust and enduring health. The cold and exposure had, together, given it a color of uniform red. His gray eyes were glancing under a pair of shaggy brows, that over hung them in long

hairs of gray mingled with their natural hue; his scraggy neck was bare, and burnt to the same tint with his face; though a small part of a shirt-collar, made of the country check, was to be seen above the overdress he wore. A kind of coat, made of dressed deer-skin, with the hair on, was belted close to his lank body by a girdle of colored worsted. On his feet were deer-skin moccasins, ornamented with porcupines' quills, after the manner of the Indians, and his limbs were guarded with long leggings of the same material as the moccasins, which, gartering over the knees of his tarnished buckskin breeches, had obtained for him among the settlers the nickname of Leather-Stocking. Over his left shoulder was slung a belt of deer-skin, from which depended an enormous ox-horn, so thinly scraped as to discover the powder it contained. The larger end was fitted ingeniously and securely with a wooden bottom, and the other was stopped tight by a little plug. A leathern pouch hung before him, from which, as he concluded his last speech, he took a small measure, and, filling it accurately with powder, he commenced reloading the rifle, which as its butt rested on the snow before him reached nearly to the top of his fox-skin cap.

The traveller had been closely examining the wounds during these movements, and now, without heeding the ill-humor of the hunter's manner, he exclaimed:

"I would fain establish a right, Natty, to the honor of this death; and surely if the hit in the neck be mine it is enough; for the shot in the heart was unnecessary—what we call an act of supererogation, Leather-Stocking."

"You may call it by what larned name you please, Judge," said the hunter, throwing his rifle across his left arm, and knocking up a brass lid in the breech, from which he took a small piece of greased leather and, wrapping a bail in it, forced them down by main strength on the powder, where he continued to pound them while speaking. "It's far easier to call names than to shoot a buck on the spring; but the

creatur came by his end from a younger hand than either your'n or mine, as I said before."
"What say you, my friend," cried the traveller, turning pleasantly to Natty's companion; "shall we toss up this dollar for the honor, and you keep the silver if you lose; what say you, friend?"
"That I killed the deer," answered the young man, with a little haughtiness, as he leaned on another long rifle similar to that of Natty.
"Here are two to one, indeed," replied the Judge with a smile; "I am outvoted—overruled, as we say on the bench. There is Aggy, he can't vote, being a slave; and Bess is a minor—so I must even make the best of it. But you'll send me the venison; and the deuce is in it, but I make a good story about its death."
"The meat is none of mine to sell," said Leather-Stocking, adopting a little of his companion's hauteur; "for my part, I have known animals travel days with shots in the neck, and I'm none of them who'll rob a man of his rightful dues."
"You are tenacious of your rights, this cold evening, Natty," returned the Judge with unconquerable good-nature; "but what say you, young man; will three dollars pay you for the buck?"
"First let us determine the question of right to the satisfaction of us both," said the youth firmly but respect fully, and with a pronunciation and language vastly superior to his appearance: "with how many shot did you load your gun?"
"With five, sir," said the Judge, a little struck with the other's manner; "are they not enough to slay a buck like this?"
"One would do it; but," moving to the tree from be hind which he had appeared, "you know, sir, you fired in this direction—here are four of the bullets in the tree."
The Judge examined the fresh marks in the bark of the pine, and, shaking his head, said with a laugh:

“You are making out the case against yourself, my young advocate; where is the fifth?”
“Here,” said the youth, throwing aside the rough over coat that he wore, and exhibiting a hole in his under-garment, through which large drops of blood were oozing.
“Good God!” exclaimed the Judge, with horror; “have I been trifling here about an empty distinction, and a fellow-creature suffering from my hands without a murmur? But hasten—quick—get into my sleigh—it is but a mile to the village, where surgical aid can be obtained—all shall be done at my expense, and thou shalt live with me until thy wound is healed, ay, and forever afterward.”
“I thank you for your good intention, but I must decline your offer. I have a friend who would be uneasy were he to hear that I am hurt and away from him. The injury is but slight, and the bullet has missed the bones; but I believe, sir, you will now admit me title to the venison.”
“Admit it!” repeated the agitated Judge; “I here give thee a right to shoot deer, or bears, or anything thou pleasest in my woods, forever. Leather-Stocking is the only other man that I have granted the same privilege to; and the time is coming when it will be of value. But I buy your deer—here, this bill will pay thee, both for thy shot and my own.”
The old hunter gathered his tall person up into an air of pride during this dialogue, but he waited until the other had done speaking.
“There’s them living who say that Nathaniel Bumppo’s right to shoot on these hills is of older date than Marmaduke Temple’s right to forbid him,” he said. “But if there’s a law about it at all, though who ever heard of a law that a man shouldn’t kill deer where he pleased!—but if there is a law at all, it should be to keep people from the use of smooth-bores. A body never knows where his lead will fly, when he pulls the trigger of one of them uncertain firearms.”

Without attending to the soliloquy of Natty, the youth bowed his head silently to the offer of the bank-note, and replied:
“Excuse me: I have need of the venison.”
“But this will buy you many deer,” said the Judge; “take it, I entreat you;” and, lowering his voice to a whisper, he added, “It is for a hundred dollars.”
For an instant only the youth seemed to hesitate, and then, blushing even through the high color that the cold had given to his cheeks, as if with inward shame at his own weakness, he again declined the offer.
During this scene the female arose, and regardless of the cold air, she threw back the hood which concealed her features, and now spoke, with great earnestness.
“Surely, surely—young man—sir—you would not pain my father so much as to have him think that he leaves a fellow-creature in this wilderness whom his own hand has injured. I entreat you will go with us, and receive medical aid.”
Whether his wound became more painful, or there was something irresistible in the voice and manner of the fair pleader for her father’s feelings, we know not; but the distance of the young mans manner was sensibly softened by this appeal, and he stood in apparent doubt, as if reluctant to comply with and yet unwilling to refuse her request. The Judge, for such being his office must in future be his title, watched with no little interest the display of this singular contention in the feelings of the youth; and, advancing, kindly took his hand, and, as he pulled him gently toward the sleigh, urged him to enter it.
“There is no human aid nearer than Templeton,” he said, “and the hut of Natty is full three miles from this— come, come, my young friend, go with us, and let the new doctor look to this shoulder of thine. Here is Natty will take the tidings of thy welfare to thy friend; and shouldst thou require it, thou shalt return home in the morning.” The young man succeeded in extricating his hand from the

warm grasp of the Judge, but he continued to gaze on the face of the female, who, regardless of the cold, was still standing with her fine features exposed, which expressed feeling that eloquently seconded the request of her father. Leather-Stocking stood, in the mean time, leaning upon his long rifle, with his head turned a little to one side, as if engaged in sagacious musing; when, having apparently satisfied his doubts, by revolving the subject in his mind, he broke silence. “It may be best to go, lad, after all; for, if the shot hangs under the skin, my hand is getting too old to be cutting into human flesh, as I once used to, Though some thirty years agone, in the old war, when I was out under Sir William, I travelled seventy miles alone in the howling wilderness, with a rifle bullet in my thigh, and then cut it out with my own jack-knife. Old Indian John knows the time well. I met him with a party of the Delawares, on the trail of the Iroquois, who had been down and taken five scalps on the Schoharie. But I made a mark on the red-skin that I’ll warrant he’ll carry to his grave! I took him on the posteerum, saving the lady’s presence, as he got up from the ambushment, and rattled three buckshot into his naked hide, so close that you might have laid a broad joe upon them all”—here Natty stretched out his long neck, and straightened his body, as he opened his mouth, which exposed a single tusk of yellow bone, while his eyes, his face, even his whole frame seemed to laugh, although no sound was emitted except a kind of thick hissing, as he inhaled his breath in quavers. “I had lost my bullet-mould in crossing the Oneida outlet, and had to make shift with the buckshot; but the rifle was true, and didn’t scatter like your two-legged thing there, Judge, which don’t do, I find, to hunt in company with.”

Natty’s apology to the delicacy of the young lady was unnecessary, for, while he was speaking, she was too much employed in helping her father to remove certain articles of baggage to hear him. Unable to resist the kind urgency of

the travellers any longer, the youth, though still with an unaccountable reluctance, suffered himself to be persuaded to enter the sleigh. The black, with the aid of his master, threw the buck across the baggage and entering the vehicle themselves, the Judge invited the hunter to do so likewise.

“ No, no,” said the old roan, shaking his head; “I have work to do at home this Christmas eve—drive on with the boy, and let your doctor look to the shoulder; though if he will only cut out the shot, I have yarbs that will heal the wound quicker than all his foreign ‘intments.” He turned, and was about to move off, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he again faced the party, and added: “If you see anything of Indian John, about the foot of the lake, you had better take him with you, and let him lend the doctor a hand; for, old as he is, he is curious at cuts and bruises, and it’s likelier than not he’ll be in with brooms to sweep your Christmas ha’arths.”

“Stop, stop,” cried the youth, catching the arm of the black as he prepared to urge his horses forward; “Natty—you need say nothing of the shot, nor of where I am going—remember, Natty, as you love me.” “Trust old Leather-Stocking,” returned the hunter significantly; “he hasn’t lived fifty years in the wilderness, and not larnt from the savages how to hold his tongue— trust to me, lad; and remember old Indian John.”

“And, Natty,” said the youth eagerly, still holding the black by the arm. “I will just get the shot extracted, and bring you up to-night a quarter of the buck for the Christmas dinner.”

He was interrupted by the hunter, who held up his finger with an expressive gesture for silence. He then moved softly along the margin of the road, keeping his eyes steadfastly fixed on the branches of a pine. When he had obtained such a position as he wished, he stopped, and, cocking his rifle, threw one leg far behind him, and

stretching his left arm to its utmost extent along the barrel of his piece, he began slowly to raise its muzzle in a line with the straight trunk of the tree. The eyes of the group in the sleigh naturally preceded the movement of the rifle, and they soon discovered the object of Natty's aim. On a small dead branch of the pine, which, at the distance of seventy feet from the ground, shot out horizontally, immediately beneath the living members of the tree, sat a bird, that in the vulgar language of the country was indiscriminately called a pheasant or a partridge. In size, it was but little smaller than a common barn-yard fowl. The baying of the dogs, and the conversation that had passed near the root of the tree on which it was perched, had alarmed the bird, which was now drawn up near the body of the pine, with a head and neck so erect as to form nearly a straight line with its legs. As soon as the rifle bore on the victim, Natty drew his trigger, and the partridge fell from its height with a force that buried it in the snow.

"Lie down, you old villain," exclaimed Leather-Stocking, shaking his ramrod at Hector as he bounded toward the foot of the tree, " lie down, I say." The dog obeyed, and Natty proceeded with great rapidity, though with the nicest accuracy, to reload his piece. When this was ended, he took up his game, and, showing it to the party without a head, he cried: " Here is a tidbit for an old man's Christmas—never mind the venison, boy, and remember Indian John; his yarbs are better than all the foreign 'intments. Here, Judge," holding up the bird again, "do you think a smooth-bore would pick game off their roost, and not ruffle a feather?" The old man gave another of his remarkable laughs, which partook so largely of exultation, mirth, and irony, and, shaking his head, he turned, with his rifle at a trail, and moved into the forest with steps that were between a walk and a trot. At each movement he made his body lowered several inches, his knees yielding with an inclination inward; but, as the sleigh turned at a bend in

the road, the youth cast his eyes in quest of his old companion, and he saw that he was already nearly concealed by the trunks of the tree; while his dogs were following quietly in his footsteps, occasionally scenting the deer track, that they seemed to know instinctively was now of no further use to them. Another jerk was given to the sleigh, and Leather-Stocking was hid from view.

# Chapter 2

All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens:
Think not the king did banish thee:
But thou the king.—Richard II

An ancestor of Marmaduke Temple had, about one hundred and twenty years before the commencement of our tale, come to the colony of Pennsylvania, a friend and co-religionist of its great patron. Old Marmaduke, for this formidable prenomen was a kind of appellative to the race, brought with him, to that asylum of the persecuted an abundance of the good things of this life. He became the master of many thousands of acres of uninhabited territory, and the supporter of many a score of dependents. He lived greatly respected for his piety, and not a little distinguished as a sectary; was intrusted by his associates with many important political stations; and died just in time to escape the knowledge of his own poverty. It was his lot to share the fortune of most of those who brought wealth with them into the new settlements of the middle colonies.

The consequence of an emigrant into these provinces was generally to be ascertained by the number of his white servants or dependents, and the nature of the public situations that he held. Taking this rule as a guide, the ancestor of our Judge must have been a man of no little note.

It is, however, a subject of curious inquiry at the present day, to look into the brief records of that early period, and observe how regular, and with few exceptions how inevitable, were the gradations, on the one hand, of the

masters to poverty, and on the other, of their servants to wealth. Accustomed to ease, and unequal to the struggles incident to an infant society, the affluent emigrant was barely enabled to maintain his own rank by the weight of his personal superiority and acquirements; but, the moment that his head was laid in the grave, his indolent and comparatively uneducated offspring were compelled to yield precedency to the more active energies of a class whose exertions had been stimulated by necessity. This is a very common course of things, even in the present state of the Union; but it was peculiarly the fortunes of the two extremes of society, in the peaceful and unenterprising colonies of Pennsylvania and New Jersey,

The posterity of Marmaduke did not escape the common lot of those who depend rather on their hereditary possessions than on their own powers; and in the third generation they had descended to a point below which, in this happy country, it is barely possible for honesty, intellect and sobriety to fall. The same pride of family that had, by its self-satisfied indolence, conduced to aid their fail, now became a principle to stimulate them to endeavor to rise again. The feeling, from being morbid, was changed to a healthful and active desire to emulate the character, the condition, and, peradventure, the wealth of their ancestors also. It was the father of our new acquaintance, the Judge, who first began to reascend in the scale of society; and in this undertaking he was not a little assisted by a marriage, which aided in furnishing the means of educating his only son in a rather better manner than the low state of the common schools of Pennsylvania could promise; or than had been the practice in the family for the two or three preceding generations.

At the school where the reviving prosperity of his father was enabled to maintain him, young Marmaduke formed an intimacy with a youth whose years were about equal to his

own. This was a fortunate connection for our Judge, and paved the way to most of his future elevation in life.
There was not only great wealth but high court interest among the connections of Edward Effingham. They were one of the few families then resident in the colonies who thought it a degradation to its members to descend to the pursuits of commerce; and who never emerged from the privacy of domestic life unless to preside in the councils of the colony or to bear arms in her defense. The latter had from youth been the only employment of Edward's father. Military rank under the crown of Great Britain was attained with much longer probation, and by much more toilsome services, sixty years ago than at the present time. Years were passed without murmuring, in the sub ordinate grades of the service; and those soldiers who were stationed in the colonies felt, when they obtained the command of a company, that they were entitled to receive the greatest deference from the peaceful occupants of the soil. Any one of our readers who has occasion to cross the Niagara may easily observe not only the self importance, but the real estimation enjoyed by the hum blest representative of the crown, even in that polar region of royal sunshine. Such, and at no very distant period, was the respect paid to the military in these States, where now, happily, no symbol of war is ever seen, unless at the free and tearless voice of their people. When, therefore, the father of Marmaduke's friend, after forty years' service, retired with the rank of major, maintaining in his domestic establishment a comparative splendor, he be came a man of the first consideration in his native colony which was that of New York. He had served with fidelity and courage, and having been, according to the custom of the provinces, intrusted with commands much superior to those to which he was entitled by rank, with reputation also. When Major Effingham yielded to the claims of age, he retired with

dignity, refusing his half-pay or any other compensation for services that he felt he could no longer perform.
The ministry proffered various civil offices which yielded not only honor but profit; but he declined them all, with the chivalrous independence and loyalty that had marked his character through life. The veteran soon caused this set of patriotic disinterestedness to be followed by another of private munificence, that, however little it accorded with prudence, was in perfect conformity with the simple integrity of his own views.
The friend of Marmaduke was his only child; and to this son, on his marriage with a lady to whom the father was particularly partial, the Major gave a complete conveyance of his whole estate, consisting of money in the funds, a town and country residence, sundry valuable farms in the old parts of the colony, and large tracts of wild land in the new—in this manner throwing himself upon the filial piety of his child for his own future maintenance. Major Effingham, in declining the liberal offers of the British ministry, had subjected himself to the suspicion of having attained his dotage, by all those who throng the avenues to court patronage, even in the remotest corners of that vast empire; but, when he thus voluntarily stripped himself of his great personal wealth, the remainder of the community seemed instinctively to adopt the conclusion also that he had reached a second childhood. This may explain the fact of his importance rapidly declining; and, if privacy was his object, the veteran had soon a free indulgence of his wishes. Whatever views the world might entertain of this act of the Major, to himself and to his child it seemed no more than a natural gift by a father of those immunities which he could no longer enjoy or improve, to a son, who was formed, both by nature and education, to do both. The younger Effingham did not object to the amount of the donation; for he felt that while his parent reserved a moral control over his actions, he was relieving himself of a

fatiguing burden: such, indeed, was the confidence existing between them, that to neither did it seem anything more than removing money from one pocket to another.

One of the first acts of the young man, on corning into possession of his wealth, was to seek his early friend, with a view to offer any assistance that it was now in his power to bestow.

The death of Marmaduke's father, and the consequent division of his small estate, rendered such an offer extremely acceptable to the young Pennsylvanian; he felt his own powers, and saw, not only the excellences, but the foibles in the character of his friend. Effingham was by nature indolent, confiding, and at times impetuous and indiscreet; but Marmaduke was uniformly equable, penetrating, and full of activity and enterprise. To the latter therefore, the assistance, or rather connection that was proffered to him, seemed to produce a mutual advantage. It was cheerfully accepted, and the arrangement of its conditions was easily completed. A mercantile house was established in the metropolis of Pennsylvania, with the avails of Mr. Effingham's personal property; all, or nearly all, of which was put into the possession of Temple, who was the only ostensible proprietor in the concern, while, in secret, the other was entitled to an equal participation in the profits. This connection was thus kept private for two reasons, one of which, in the freedom of their inter course, was frankly avowed to Marmaduke, while the other continued profoundly hid in the bosom of his friend, The last was nothing more than pride. To the descend ant of a line of soldiers, commerce, even in that indirect manner, seemed a degrading pursuit; but an insuperable obstacle to the disclosure existed in the prejudices of his father

We have already said that Major Effingham had served as a soldier with reputation. On one occasion, while in command on the western frontier of Pennsylvania against a league of the French and Indians, not only his glory, but the safety of

himself and his troops were jeoparded by the peaceful policy of that colony. To the soldier, this was an unpardonable offence. He was fighting in their defense—he knew that the mild principles of this little nation of practical Christians would be disregarded by their subtle and malignant enemies; and he felt the in jury the more deeply because he saw that the avowed object of the colonists, in withholding their succors, would only have a tendency to expose his command, without preserving the peace. The soldier succeeded, after a desperate conflict, in extricating himself, with a handful of his men, from their murderous enemy; but he never for gave the people who had exposed him to a danger which they left him to combat alone. It was in vain to tell him that they had no agency in his being placed on their frontier at all; it was evidently for their benefit that he had been so placed, and it was their "religious duty," so the Major always expressed it, "it was their religions duty to have supported him."

At no time was the old soldier an admirer of the peaceful disciples of Fox. Their disciplined habits, both of mind and body, had endowed them with great physical perfection; and the eye of the veteran was apt to scan the fair proportions and athletic frames of the colonists with a look that seemed to utter volumes of contempt for their moral imbecility, He was also a little addicted to the expression of a belief that, where there was so great an observance of the externals of religion, there could not be much of the substance. It is not our task to explain what is or what ought to be the substance of Christianity, but merely to record in this place the opinions of Major Effingham.

Knowing the sentiments of the father in relation to this people, it was no wonder that the son hesitated to avow his connection with, nay, even his dependence on the integrity of, a Quaker.

It has been said that Marmaduke deduced his origin from the contemporaries and friends of Penn. His father had

married without the pale of the church to which he belonged, and had, in this manner, forfeited some of the privileges of his offspring. Still, as young Marmaduke was educated in a colony and society where even the ordinary intercourse between friends was tinctured with the aspect of this mild religion, his habits and language were some what marked by its peculiarities. His own marriage at a future day with a lady without not only the pale, but the influence, of this sect of religionists, had a tendency, it is true, to weaken his early impressions; still he retained them in some degree to the hour of his death, and was observed uniformly, when much interested or agitated, to speak in the language of his youth. But this is anticipating our tale.

When Marmaduke first became the partner of young Effingham, he was quite the Quaker in externals; and it was too dangerous an experiment for the son to think of encountering the prejudices of the father on this subject. The connection, therefore, remained a profound secret to all but those who were interested in it,

For a few years Marmaduke directed the commercial operations of his house with a prudence and sagacity that afforded rich returns. He married the lady we have mentioned, who was the mother of Elizabeth, and the visits of his friend were becoming more frequent. There was a speedy prospect of removing the veil from their intercourse, as its advantages became each hour more apparent to Mr. Effingham, when the troubles that preceded the war of the Revolution extended themselves to an alarming degree.

Educated in the most dependent loyalty, Mr. Effingham had, from the commencement of the disputes between the colonists and the crown, warmly maintained what he believed to be the just prerogatives of his prince; while, on the other hand, the clear head and independent mind of Temple had induced him to espouse the cause of the

people. Both might have been influenced by early impressions; for, if the son of the loyal and gallant soldier bowed in implicit obedience to the will of his sovereign, the descendant of the persecuted followers of Penn looked back with a little bitterness to the unmerited wrongs that had been heaped upon his ancestors.

This difference in opinion had long been a subject of amicable dispute between them: but, Latterly, the contest was getting to be too important to admit of trivial discussions on the part of Marmaduke, whose acute discernment was already catching faint glimmerings of the important events that were in embryo. The sparks of dissension soon kindled into a blaze; and the colonies, or rather, as they quickly declared themselves, *the states*, became a scene of strife and bloodshed for years.

A short time before the battle of Lexington, Mr. Effingham, already a widower, transmitted to Marmaduke, for safe-keeping, all his valuable effects and papers; and left the colony without his father. The war had, however, scarcely commenced in earnest, when he reappeared in New York, wearing the Livery of his king; and, in a short time, he took the field at the head of a provincial corps. In the mean time Marmaduke had completely committed himself in the cause, as it was then called, of the rebel lion. Of course, all intercourse between the friends ceased—on the part of Colonel Effingham it was unsought, and on that of Marmaduke there was a cautious reserve. It soon became necessary for the latter to abandon the capital of Philadelphia; but he had taken the precaution to remove the whole of his effects beyond the reach of the royal forces, including the papers of his friend also. There he continued serving his country during the struggle, in various civil capacities, and always with dignity and usefulness. While, however, he discharged his functions with credit and fidelity, Marmaduke never seemed to lose sight of his own interests; for, when the estates of the

adherents of the crown fell under the hammer, by the acts of confiscation, he appeared in New York, and became the purchaser of extensive possessions at comparatively low prices.

It is true that Marmaduke, by thus purchasing estates that had been wrested by violence from others, rendered himself obnoxious to the censures of that Sect which, at the same time that it discards its children from a full participation in the family union, seems ever unwilling to abandon them entirely to the world. But either his success, or the frequency of the transgression in others, soon wiped off this slight stain from his character; and, although there were a few who, dissatisfied with their own fortunes, or conscious of their own demerits, would make dark hints concerning the sudden prosperity of the unportioned Quaker, yet his services, and possibly his wealth, soon drove the recollection of these vague conjectures from men’s minds. When the war ended, and the independence of the States was acknowledged, Mr. Temple turned his attention from the pursuit of commerce, which was then fluctuating and uncertain, to the settlement of those tracts of land which he had purchased. Aided by a good deal of money, and directed by the suggestions of a strong and practical reason, his enterprise throve to a degree that the climate and rugged face of the country which he selected would seem to forbid. His property increased in a tenfold ratio, and he was already ranked among the most wealthy and important of his countrymen. To inherit this wealth he had but one child—the daughter whom we have introduced to the reader, and whom he was now conveying from school to preside over a household that had too long wanted a mistress.

When the district in which his estates lay had become sufficiently populous to be set off as a county, Mr. Temple had, according to the custom of the new settlements, been selected to fill its highest judicial station. This might make

a Templar smile; but in addition to the apology of necessity, there is ever a dignity in talents and experience that is commonly sufficient, in any station, for the protection of its possessor; and Marmaduke, more fortunate in his native clearness of mind than the judge of King Charles, not only decided right, but was generally able to give a very good reason for it. At all events, such was the universal practice of the country and the times; and Judge Temple, so far from ranking among the lowest of his judicial contemporaries in the courts of the new counties, felt himself, and was unanimously acknowledged to be, among the first.

We shall here close this brief explanation of the history and character of some of our personages leaving them in future to speak and act for themselves.