

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

## "MAIDS OF SALEM."\*

"Above in the side gallery, within the Maids' Pew, a girl had laughed! The boys seated on the pulpit stairs nudged each other as the square-toed shoes of vengeance for once passed them by and creaked to the gallery. Korah Putnam, who better than any other urchin in Salem knew the taste of the God-in-office, wrote a name with his stubby forefinger on the sanded floor.

"'Fay Gay!'"

"In the Maids' Pew all were preternaturally grave. A girl in a white muslin sprigged with roses, pink ribbon quilled into roses within her hood, roses in the tucker about her pretty neck, sat marooned as it were, her companions ostentatiously drawn away from her to the pews' limit.

"The minister's voice spoke solemnly from the pulpit.

"'Favour Gay, stand forth!'"

"The girl thus hailed rose to her feet, a lovely creature of fifteen or so, though the tints and dimples of a Dresden china shepherdess no longer showed in her frightened face."

In indignation at the punishment meted out to the girl, a stranger from the Bachelors' Pew opposite sprung clear into the aisle. Obadiah Tinner, about to drag forth the bundle of rose-sprigged muslin and sobs, found himself grappled from behind by a strong arm.

The punishment recoiled on his own head, and he was sentenced to sit in the stocks till sundown, where one-eared Zebah elected to sit with him, and pretty Fay surreptitiously brought him her own dinner, so there were mitigations.

All this happened in New England in the early part of the seventeenth century.

This dainty, graceful piece of girlhood was suspected of witchcraft. Her escape from prison caused the arrest of her gentle and spiritual mother, who in her turn lay under the terrible accusation of those superstitious times. Her refusal to disclose her daughter's whereabouts was balanced against the "white name and bearing of the woman, and the opinion of the judges was wavering towards dismissal when Judge Sewall cried out in a great voice:

"'Widow Gay, Widow Gay, nigh a year ago I was warned in a vision of witchcraft a-brewing in your house, and, when I bade you confess, it has since seemed to me that you laid a spell on me to lull my suspicions.'"

"A woman alone among men. Stripped of her garments by callous hands, surrounded by gloating eyes searching the fair trembling body for scar, mole or freckle, such a devil mark as should prove her a witch. Love was yet capable of thankfulness that she and not her child had had the pain and shame.

\* By K. L. Montgomery. John Long, Ltd., Haymarket.

"Tell us what you know and you shall have your life," she was bidden at last, but Love Gay did not speak. Her life with Favour's at stake!

"Let her die as she will," said Governor Phipps. "Ye have still three days and nights."

Three days and nights of torture and ceaseless command, "Confess! Speak!"

Outside summer sunshine and summer dusk, humming birds resting among roses, free winds blowing over laughing waters.

It was on the third night that the men, striving to break a woman to their will, gave an exultant shout.

"She speaks—speaks!"

Thickly whispering, the parched lips, the swollen tongue had broken silence. "Jesus—and again Jesus."

He who put the rope round her neck said she whispered one word, what he could not hear. The radiance on her face had hardly faded when the heralds sounded welcome from the other Shore.

H. H.

## CONFERENCE DAY, JUNE 17th, 1915.

A Day's Conference, convened by the National Council of Trained Nurses, will be held on June 17th, at the Rooms of the Medical Society, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W. The Morning Session will be devoted to Papers on the "Duty of the Trained Nurse in War," when a Resolution on the State Registration of Trained Nurses will be submitted, and the need for a Trained Nurses' Economic League will be discussed.

Mrs. Walter Spencer has most kindly invited those attending the morning session to luncheon at 2, Portland Place, W.

At 3 p.m. the Afternoon Session will open, the Papers to be grouped under the heading of "The Place of the Imperial Mother in Peace and War."

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, the President, will give the opening address on "A Scheme for Social Service in relation to the Soldier: (a) Scientific Domestic Management; (b) Personal Hygiene; and (c) Preventive Nursing." Each of these Sections of Service will be subdivided, and supported by experts.

Before the Meeting closes, Mrs. Fenwick will propose the organization of a new secular Order of Sisters, to make it possible for women of the nation to perform their duty in relation to the Navy and Army in peace and war.

Tickets (free) for the Conference can be obtained at 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

BEATRICE CUTLER, *Hon. Secretary.*

## WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Oh! weary souls so laden with earth's sorrows,  
Oh! aching hearts so saddened by earth's pain,  
Who in your griefs hope for no bright to-morrow,  
Arise! be strong—take courage once again!

R. Main.

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