

safe enough now, squire chris. safe i shouldnt like to risk going near him. but you might; hes held fast by that tail of his, and all he could do would be to thrash you with his long body. and bite, said chris. nay; his biting would go for nothing now. what about his fangs snapped off like points of glass. they were sharp enough and poisonous enough, but bound to say the poisons all out on the stone, along with the teeth. razors are very sharp and would make horrible cuts, but not after youd been chopping a piece of stone with them like that, eh, doctor i think you are right, griggs, said the doctor, who seemed fascinated by the reptiles important struggles. well, you are a sneak, cried griggs. gahn would make horrible with you id put my tail between my legs if i were you, only you havent got none. thats right; rattle away. i say, i hope he hasnt gone to fetch a lot of his mates to pitch into us. thats not likely, said the doctor, as he watched the bigger and free snake gliding swiftly away, heedless of the struggles of its companion, which was evidently growing exhausted by its furious efforts to release the lower portion of its body. what are you going to do said the doctor quickly, as griggs handed him his horses rein again. im going to put that chap out of his misery, sir, replied the american. no, no; dont fire. its waste of a charge. not a going to, sir. theres more ways of killing a cat, you know, than hanging it. eh, squire chris as he spoke griggs put his hand to his belt, in which a stout keen hunting or bowie knife was stuck, and drew out the glittering blade. going to cut his head off said chris eagerly. yes, unless you like to, squire. i will, cried chris. i dont want you to run and risks, my boy, said the doctor. do you think you can do it without danger oh yes, father, said the lad, drawing his own horses feet; the restless boys on the pulpit stairs; the tired, sleeping puritan with his head thrown back in the corner of the pew; the vain, strutting, tithingman with his fantastic and thorned staff of office; and then the sudden, electric wakening, and the consternation of the whole staid and pious congregation at such terrible profanity in the house of god. ah it was not two hundred and forty years ago; when i read the quaint words my puritan blood stirs my drowsy brain, and i remember it all well, just as i saw it last summer in june. another catastrophe from too fierce zeal on the part of the tithingman is recorded. an old farmer, worn out with a hard saturdays work at sheep washing, fell asleep ere the hour glass had once been turned. though he was a man of dignity, for he sat in his own pew, he could not escape the rod of the pragmatical tithingman. being rudely disturbed, but not wholly wakened, the bewildered sheep farmer sprung to his feet, seized his astonished and mortified wife by the shoulders and shook her violently, shouting at the top of his voice, haw back haw back stand still, will ye poor goodman and goodwife many years elapsed ere they recovered from that keen disgrace. the ministers, encouraged and urged the tithingmen to faithfully perform their allotted work. one early minister did not love sleepers in ye meeting house, and would stop short in ye exercise and call pleasantlie to wake ye sleepers, and once of a warm summer afternoon he did take hys hat off from ye pegg in ye beam, and put it on, saying he would go home and feed his fowles and come back again, and maybe their sleepe would be ended, and they readie to hear ye remainder of hys discourse. another time he suggested that they might like better the church of england service of sitting down and farewell, inderawe; farewell, till we meet at ticonderoga. then it vanished, and he has never seen it since. ticonderoga repeated lord howe, and looked steadily at alexander, who proceeded: that was the word. my father had never heard it before. the sound of it was so strange that he wrote it down; and when i was a youth of perhaps seventeen summers, and had become a companion to him, he told me the whole story, and we pondered together as to what and where ticonderoga could be. years had passed since he saw the vision, and he had never heard the name from that day. i had not heard it either then. the faces of the listeners were full of grave interest. the strangeness of the coincidence struck them all. and then queried howe, after a silence. then came the news of this war, and some highland regiments were ordered off. my father and i were amongst those to go. we were long in hearing what our destination was to be. we had landed upon these shores before we heard that the expedition to which we were attached was bound for ticonderoga. again there was silence, which mrs. schuyler broke by asking