

with hot coals at home, and a second time during the morning from the hearthstone of a neighboring farm house or a noon house. these foot warmers helped to make endurable to the goodwives the icy chill of the meeting house; and round their mothers foot stove the shivering little children sat on their low crickets, warming their half frozen fingers. some of these foot stoves were really pretentious church furnishings. i have seen one brassen foot stove which had the owners cipher cut out of the sheet metal, and from the side was hung a wrought brass chain. by this chain, a century ago, the shining polished brass stove was carried into church in the hands of a liveried black man, who held it ostentatiously at arms length, that neither ash nor scorch might touch his scarlet velvet breeches. and after he had tucked it under my ladys tiny feet as she sat in her pew, he retired to his freezing loft high up among the beams, the nigger pew, where, i am sorry to record, he more than once solaced and warmed himself with a bottle of kill devil which he had smuggled into church, until he fell ignominiously asleep and his drunken snores so disturbed the minister and the congregation, that two tithingmen were forced to climb the ladder like staircase and pull him down and out of the church and to the neighboring tavern to sleep off the effects of the liquor. for being a man and a brother and, above all, in spite of his petty idiosyncrasies, a very good and cherished servant, he could not be thrust out into the snow to freeze to death. but with the extreme puritan contempt of comfort even foot stoves were not always allowed. the first church of roxbury, after having one church edifice destroyed by fire in, prohibited the use of footstoves in meeting, and the roxbury matrons sat with frozen toes in their fine new meeting house. observed the reflection of fire over the sea and was immediately after told by a slave that it was the palace that was burning. there were horses in plenty at the post house; he had chosen a strong one and had got to the spot before the crowd had collected. how the fire had originated, so far remained undiscovered. caesar, he said, was in the act of observing the heavens when a flame broke out in a store shed close to the tower. antinous was the first to detect it, cried fire, and warned his master. i found hadrian in the greatest agitation; he charged me to superintend the work of rescuing all that could be saved. at lochias. verus helped me greatly and indeed with so much boldness and judgment that i owe very much to him. caesar himself kept his favorite within the palace, for the poor fellow burned both his hands. oh cried balbilla with eager regret. how did that happen when hadrian and antinous first came down from the tower they brought with them as many of the instruments and manuscripts as they could carry. when they were at the bottom caesar observed that a tablet with important calculations had been left lying up above and expressed his regret. meanwhile the fire had already caught the slightly built turret and it seemed impossible to get into it again. but the dreamy bithynian can wake out of his slumbers it would seem, and while caesar was anxiously watching the burning bundles of flax which the wind kept blowing across to the harbor the rash boy rushed into the burning building, flung the tablet down from the top of the tower and then hurried down the stairs. his from whom it came, though, on the face of it, it was not likely she would be much the wiser if she did. she was still at the window when the door of the opposite house was opened, and the little old lady came hurriedly out. she had only her cap upon her head, and she held an open letter in her hand; the letter, it was evident. when she reached the little green gate she seemed to recollect herself, and, putting her hand to her head, went back into the house. ida waited anxiously to see if she would come out again, and presently she appeared, this time in her bonnet, but still with the letter in her hand. she crossed the street, and seemed to be coming to the house. then the bell rang, and in she came. idas curiosity became intense, and was not lessened by the fact that the little old lady did not come to her, but stayed below talking with some one. the old gentleman had not returned, so it must be nurse. at last the conversation came to an end, and mrs. overthway came upstairs. she kissed ida very tenderly, and inquired after her health; but though she seemed more affectionate than usual, ida felt persuaded that something was the matter. she drew a chair to the fire, and the old lady sat down, saying may i stay a little with you, my dear oh, thank you said ida, and put a footstool for the old ladys feet. Mrs