

“Ho ! ho ! for the day of peace is done,
And the day of wrath too well begun !
Bring forth your grain from your barns and mills ;
Drive down the cattle from off your hills ;
For Boston lieth in sore distress,
Pallid with hunger and long duress,
Her children starve while she hears the beat
And the tramp of the redcoats on every street !”
What, ho ! What, ho ! Like a storm unspent,
Over the hillsides he came and went ;
And Parson White, from his open door,
Leaning bare-headed that August day,
While the sun beat down on his temples gray,
Watched him until he could see no more.
Then straight he strode to the church and flung
His whole soul into the peal, he rung ;
Pulling the bell-rope till the tower
Seemed to rock in the sudden shower.
The shower of sound the farmers heard,
Rending the air like a living word !
Then swift they gathered, with right good will,
From field and anvil and shop and mill,
To hear what the parson had to say
That would not keep till the Sabbath day.
For only the women and children knew
The tale of the horseman galloping through—
The message he bore, as up and down
He rode through the streets of Windham town.
That night, as the parson sat at ease
In the porch, with the Bible on his knees,
Thanking God that at break of day
Frederic Manning would take his way,
With cattle and sheep from off the hills,
And a load of grain from the barns and mills
To the starving city, where General Gage
Waited unholy war to wage.
His little daughter beside him stood,
Hiding her face in her muslin hood,
In her arms her own pet lamb she bore,
As it struggled down to the oaken floor :