



**The Algerine captive; or, The life and adventures
of Doctor Updike Underhill: six years a prisoner
among the Algerines. [Three lines from...**

Royall Tyler

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"ONE of the first observations, the author of the following sheets made, upon his return to his native country, after an absence of seven years, was the extreme avidity, with which books of mere amusement were purchased and perused by all ranks of his countrymen. When he left New England, books of Biography, Travels, Novels, and modern Romances, were confined to our sea ports; or, if known in the country, were read only in the families of Clergymen, Physicians, and Lawyers: while certain funeral discourses, the last words and dying speeches of Bryan Shaheen, and Levi Ames, and some dreary somebody's Day of Doom, formed the most diverting part of the farmer's library. On his return from captivity, he found a surprising alteration in the public taste. In our inland towns of consequence, social libraries had been instituted, composed of books, designed to amuse rather than to instruct; and country booksellers, fostering the new born taste of the people, had filled the whole land with modern Travels, and Novels almost as incredible. The diffusion of a taste, for any species of writing, through all ranks, in so short a time, would appear impracticable to a European. The peasant of Europe must first be taught to read, before he can acquire a taste in letters. In New England, the work is half completed. In no other country are there so many people, in proportion to its numbers, who can read and write; and therefore, no sooner was a taste for amusing literature diffused than all..."

This is an edition of a classical book first published in the eighteenth century.

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