

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Calvin Henderson Wiley

Table of Contents

<u>Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.....</u>	<u>1</u>
Calvin Henderson Wiley.....	1
<u>DEDICATION THE SECOND.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>TO</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>PREFACE.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>HORACE LOCKWITTER, OF NEW YORK.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>CHAPTER I. ALAMANCE IN THE OLDEN TIME.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>CHAPTER II. THE DESCRIPTION OF ALAMANCE CONTINUED BY THE PARSON.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>CHAPTER III. THE OLD-FIELD SCHOOL.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>CHAPTER IV. A VISIT TO THE OLD-FIELD SCHOOL.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>CHAPTER V. THE TURNING OUT OF THE MASTER.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>CHAPTER VI. A GREAT MAN AT ALAMANCE.....</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>CHAPTER VII. A CHRISTMAS DINNER AT ALAMANCE.....</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>CHAPTER VIII. LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.....</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>CHAPTER IX. THE STORY OF HECTOR M'BRIDE.....</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>TO MISS MALVINA.....</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>TO SOPHRONIA.....</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>TO ANASTASIA A Wish.....</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>ROTHA'S SONG.....</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>CHAPTER X.....</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>CHAPTER XI. A SAGE CONVERSATION AND A SAGE CONCLUSION.....</u>	<u>48</u>
<u>TO EDITH.....</u>	<u>49</u>
<u>ON HER QUITTING SCHOOL.....</u>	<u>50</u>
<u>CHAPTER XII. THE CHART.....</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>CHAPTER XIII. CHARACTER IN WHOM ALL OUR READRRS WILL RECOGNIZE AN OLD</u> <u>ACQUAINTANCE.....</u>	<u>54</u>
<u>CHAPTER XIV. THE FISH-FRY A KETTLE OF FISH.....</u>	<u>56</u>
<u>CHAPTER XV. A LADY CONFIDENT AND A SENTIMENTAL LADY.....</u>	<u>61</u>
<u>CHAPTER XVI. A SCENE BEHIND THE CURTAIN, AND ONE IN FRONT.....</u>	<u>63</u>
<u>CHAPTER XVII.....</u>	<u>66</u>
<u>Miss Artemesia to Henry Warden.....</u>	<u>67</u>
<u>CHAPTER XVIII. THE EXHIBITION.....</u>	<u>69</u>
<u>CHAPTER XIX. WAR.....</u>	<u>73</u>
<u>CHAPTER XX. THE HEROINES OF ALAMANCE.....</u>	<u>74</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXI. WAR AT HOME.....</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXII. A BURIAL AT ALAMANCE.....</u>	<u>77</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXIII. WAR ON THE EMBATTLED FIELD.....</u>	<u>78</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXIV. RETROSPECTIONS.....</u>	<u>80</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXV. A MOUNTAIN HOME IN NORTH CAROLINA.....</u>	<u>83</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXVI. ADVENTURES IN THE MOUNTAINS.....</u>	<u>85</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXVII. LUCY NEAL.....</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXVIII.....</u>	<u>91</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXIX. HOME AFTER A LONG ABSENCE.....</u>	<u>94</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXX. DISCOVERIES.....</u>	<u>97</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXXI. WARDEN LEAVES ALAMANCE AGAIN.....</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>'WHEN TIME ITS SILENT WORK HAS DONE.....</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXXII.....</u>	<u>102</u>
<u>CHAPTER XXXIII.....</u>	<u>106</u>

Table of Contents

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

<u>CHAPTER XXXIV.</u>	107
<u>CHAPTER XXXV.</u>	110
<u>CHAPTER XXXVI. THE COUNTRY INN.</u>	113
<u>CHAPTER XXXVII.</u>	115
<u>CHAPTER XXXVIII. CAPTAIN DEMIJOHN SETS OUT TO SEE THE WIDOW POWELL.</u>	118
<u>CHAPTER XXXIX. TRAGEDY AT THE INN.</u>	123
<u>CHAPTER XL. SCRAPS OF MY OWN HISTORY.</u>	125
<u>BY ALAN ROSS.</u>	125
<u>IMPROMPTU.</u>	129
<u>CHAPTER XLI. AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE AND A NEW ONE.</u>	130
<u>CHAPTER XLII. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALAN ROSS CONTINUED.</u>	132
<u>TO LOUISE.</u>	137
<u>WE MET AS STRANGERS.</u>	137
<u>CHAPTER XLIII.</u>	140
<u>CHAPTER XLIV.</u>	142
<u>CHAPTER XLV. EVENTS HASTEN TO THEIR CONCLUSION.</u>	145
<u>CHAPTER XLVI. A NIGHT OF ADVENTURES.</u>	147
<u>CHAPTER XLVII. EVENTS STILL HASTEN ONWARD.</u>	150
<u>CHAPTER XLVIII.</u>	152
<u>CHAPTER XLIX.</u>	155
<u>CHAPTER L.</u>	155
<u>'Nathan Glutson To Public Justice, Dr.</u>	158
<u>CHAPTER LI. A SAD AND SWEET REMEMBRANCE.</u>	161
<u>CHAPTER LII. THE MASTER BEGINS TO MAKE A STRANGE DISCOVERY.</u>	163
<u>CHAPTER LIII.</u>	166
<u>M'Bride's Letter.</u>	167
<u>CHAPTER LIV.</u>	169
<u>CHAPTER LV. HOME AGAIN AFTER A LONG ABSENCE.</u>	170
<u>CHAPTER LVI.</u>	172
<u>Letter First, from Henry Warden to Edith Mayfield.</u>	173
<u>Edith's Answer.</u>	173
<u>Letter Second, from Henry Warden.</u>	173
<u>Letter Third from Henry Warden.</u>	174
<u>CHAPTER LVII.</u>	175
<u>Letter from the Master to his friend, J. R., of Philadelphia.</u>	178
<u>CHAPTER LVIII. CONTAINS MORE SENTIMENT THAN INCIDENT, AND NOT MUCH OF</u> <u>EITHER.</u>	180
<u>CHAPTER LIX.</u>	183
<u>CHAPTER LX.</u>	185
<u>CHAPTER LXI. AND THE LAST.</u>	188

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Calvin Henderson Wiley

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- DEDICATION THE SECOND.
- TO
- PREFACE
- HORACE LOCKWITTER, OF NEW YORK.
- CHAPTER I. ALAMANCE IN THE OLDEN TIME.
- CHAPTER II. THE DESCRIPTION OF ALAMANCE CONTINUED BY THE PARSON.
- CHAPTER III. THE OLD-FIELD SCHOOL.
- CHAPTER IV. A VISIT TO THE OLD-FIELD SCHOOL.
- CHAPTER V. THE TURNING OUT OF THE MASTER.
- CHAPTER VI. A GREAT MAN AT ALAMANCE.
- CHAPTER VII. A CHRISTMAS DINNER AT ALAMANCE.
- CHAPTER VIII. LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.
- CHAPTER IX. THE STORY OF HECTOR M'BRIDE.
- TO MISS MALVINA.
- TO SOPHRONIA.
- TO ANASTASIA A Wish.
- ROTHA'S SONG.
- CHAPTER X.
- CHAPTER XI. A SAGE CONVERSATION AND A SAGE CONCLUSION.
- TO EDITH.
- ON HER QUITTING SCHOOL.
- CHAPTER XII. THE CHART.
- CHAPTER XIII. CHARACTER IN WHOM ALL OUR READRRS WILL RECOGNIZE AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.
- CHAPTER XIV. THE FISH-FRY A KETTLE OF FISH.
- CHAPTER XV. A LADY CONFIDENT AND A SENTIMENTAL LADY.
- CHAPTER XVI. A SCENE BEHIND THE CURTAIN, AND ONE IN FRONT.
- CHAPTER XVII.
- Miss Artemesia to Henry Warden.
- CHAPTER XVIII. THE EXHIBITION.
- CHAPTER XIX. WAR.
- CHAPTER XX. THE HEROINES OF ALAMANCE.
- CHAPTER XXI. WAR AT HOME.
- CHAPTER XXII. A BURIAL AT ALAMANCE.
- CHAPTER XXIII. WAR ON THE EMBATTLED FIELD.
- CHAPTER XXIV. RETROSPECTIONS.
- CHAPTER XXV. A MOUNTAIN HOME IN NORTH CAROLINA.
- CHAPTER XXVI. ADVENTURES IN THE MOUNTAINS.
- CHAPTER XXVII. LUCY NEAL.
- CHAPTER XXVIII.
- CHAPTER XXIX. HOME AFTER A LONG ABSENCE.
- CHAPTER XXX. DISCOVERIES.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

- CHAPTER XXXI. WARDEN LEAVES ALAMANCE AGAIN.
- 'WHEN TIME ITS SILENT WORK HAS DONE.
- CHAPTER XXXII.
- CHAPTER XXXIII.
- CHAPTER XXXIV.
- CHAPTER XXXV.
- CHAPTER XXXVI. THE COUNTRY INN.
- CHAPTER XXXVII.
- CHAPTER XXXVIII. CAPTAIN DEMIJOHN SETS OUT TO SEE THE WIDOW POWELL.
- CHAPTER XXXIX. TRAGEDY AT THE INN.
- CHAPTER XL. SCRAPS OF MY OWN HISTORY.
- BY ALAN ROSS.
- IMPROMPTU.
- CHAPTER XLI. AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE AND A NEW ONE.
- CHAPTER XLII. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALAN ROSS CONTINUED.
- TO LOUISE.
- WE MET AS STRANGERS.
- CHAPTER XLIII.
- CHAPTER XLIV.
- CHAPTER XLV. EVENTS HASTEN TO THEIR CONCLUSION.
- CHAPTER XLVI. A NIGHT OF ADVENTURES.
- CHAPTER XLVII. EVENTS STILL HASTEN ONWARD.
- CHAPTER XLVIII.
- CHAPTER XLIX.
- CHAPTER L.
- 'Nathan Glutson To Public Justice, Dr.
- CHAPTER LI. A SAD AND SWEET REMEMBRANCE.
- CHAPTER LII. THE MASTER BEGINS TO MAKE A STRANGE DISCOVERY.
- CHAPTER LIII.
- M'Bride's Letter.
- CHAPTER LIV.
- CHAPTER LV. HOME AGAIN AFTER A LONG ABSENCE
- CHAPTER LVI.
- Letter First, from Henry Warden to Edith Mayfield.
- Edith's Answer.
- Letter Second, from Henry Warden.
- Letter Third from Henry Warden.
- CHAPTER LVII.
- Letter from the Master to his friend, J. R., of Philadelphia.
- CHAPTER LVIII. CONTAINS MORE SENTIMENT THAN INCIDENT, AND NOT MUCH OF EITHER.
- CHAPTER LIX.
- CHAPTER LX.
- CHAPTER LXI. AND THE LAST.

TO
JAMES IREDELL, ESQ.,
THIS WORK,
THE FIRST FRUITS OF MY PEN,
ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.
WITH A HOPELESS WITH THAT IT MAY RENDER
THE NAME OF SO GOOD A MAN
AS IMMORTAL AS IT DESERVES TO BE.

YOUR FRIEND,
THE AUTHOR.

DEDICATION THE SECOND.

TO

THY name, sweet friend, should also grace
This book, whose heroine thou art,
And take in fame's proud fane the place
It long has held within my heart,

The brightest, dearest, could I see
That this poor offering of mine
Would, by the world's applause, e'er be
For such a name a proper shrine.

There may, perchance, however, fall
Upon the book and on the scribe
Oblivion's unwelcome pall,
Or censure of a heartless tribe;

And, therefore, I will brave alone
The dangers of this untried sea.
The losses all shall be my own
The glories I will share with thee!

New York, *Sept.* 1847.

PREFACE

BY

HORACE LOCKWITTER, OF NEW YORK.

ONCE on a time it was my fortune to pass through that remote and unexplored part of our country designated on the maps as the State of North Carolina. To my great surprise, I found that the inhabitants were neither Cannibals, Salamanders, nor Fire-eaters, nor even Pagans, though there was among them a considerable sprinkling of Jews. Men and women generally dressed after the European fashion, lived in houses with chimneys, and ate three times a-day, though at very unusual hours breakfast, for instance, was served up at seven in the morning, dinner at about one, *post meridian*, and supper at sundown but, bating this barbarous custom, and the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

still more barbarous habit of going to bed at ten o'clock at night, I became satisfied that the better portion of the inhabitants might be considered as a Christian, civilized people. That class of the natives who live naked in the woods, subsisting on acorus, raw snails, and wild onions, I did not see, nor could I ascertain their exact locality. Those with whom I mingled were a plain, unfrizzled people, sadly addicted to sobriety and matrimony, and greatly deficient in the art of lying, and other fashionable accomplishments and amusements. It was the fashion among the men to shave their faces, and among the women to preserve the original forms bestowed on them by Nature; and I was credibly informed that there were many idolatrous worshippers of those fabulous deities, Love and Friendship, whose temples still exist in considerable numbers. True, missionaries are among them, doing all they can to eradicate the seeds of this noxious superstition, especially among the young and enlightened; but the common people still cling, with singular tenacity, to the antiquated notions of their fathers. So much for the inhabitants. Of the face of the country, its locality, climate, and productions, I regret that I did not take fuller notes, and cannot but hope that some enterprising traveller will yet explore those unknown regions, and give the world the benefit of his investigations and discoveries. The State (as it is in compliment called) is situated somewhere between the Arctic Ocean and Cape Horn, and the climate is a medium between that of Siberia and Equador. The principal productions of the soil are tar (so called from Tar River, on which it grows), tobacco, and Indian maize. The largest cities are those of Henderson (named after General Pinckney Henderson, of Texas), Ashboro', and Buncombe; and the only seaport town is that called Nag's Head, on account of its having been built in a semicircle round the bay, into which are emptied the waters of the Yadkin. This information, scant as it is, exhausts my memoranda in regard to the country and people at large.

It was my luck, good or bad, to be delayed several days at a very neat and pleasant village, the shady serenity and repose of which forcibly reminded me of those South Sea Islands, in regard to which so many enchanting stories have recently been written. My landlord, to whom I hereby make my acknowledgments for his kindness and liberality, formally introduced me to all of his boarders, and thus I became acquainted with an attorney at law, and a gentleman of some local celebrity as a writer. I was informed that this last-named gentleman was writing a book, and it at once occurred to me that he had made a happy hit. A North Carolina book! What a gem for the curious in literature! I supposed, of course, that it was a fiction, and I was enraptured at the idea. All the rest of the habitable and uninhabitable globe has been explored: the character, inhabitants, and manners of all other parts are familiar even to our school-boys. But here, thought I, in this fabulous country here, in this, the only dark corner of the earth is a proper scene for the expatiations of genius, and especially French genius. Here can be located wizards, enchanters, hippogriffs, wild giants, swarthy dwarfs, apparitions, prodigies, wandering Jews, mysteries, murders, rapes, and rapine. Here is the place to lay the scene; here all the enginery of a popular fiction-writer's brain may be planted. Hence may stalk forth to astonish, delight, and electrify the world, frightful phantoms, blood-reeking assassins, incarnate devils, celestial wantons, spiritual rowdies, angelic rogues, philanthropic villains, holy martyrs, who love other men's wives, chaste vestals, who consume with immortal ardour for other women's husbands, charitable fiends, satyrs, wood-nymphs, and dragons, with all their accompaniments of cross-purposes, horrible rencontres, glorious suicides, heroic murders, magnanimous robberies, blood, thunder, and earthquakes! Happy man! fortunate genius! You have a world of your own a glorious theatre for an infernal tragedy. (So thinking, I called one morning at the office of the attorney, and found him listening, with apparent interest, to the story of an old man who had embarked in a suit to recover three dollars and thirty-seven cents out of an insolvent debtor! Seven times the old gentleman took his leave, and seven times he returned with new instructions about his suit, and an increased thickness of tongue. At last, when tolerably drunk, after many and oft-repeated instructions to his counsel to be vigilant and ferocious, he took an affectionate and final leave. The next instant a host of boys lounged in and sat an hour, and these were succeeded by a very voluble gentleman, who, fearing, as he alleged, that his friend might be alone and suffering in solitude, had come down to cheer him up. In the afternoon I called again, and though I heard voices in the room I could not distinguish a single object in it. The floor was slippery with spittle, and the smoke from the pipes of a dozen furious village politicians was so thick that it really seemed to me I could feel it. Having settled the affairs of the nation, these embryo statesmen gave way at last to several octogenarians, who were still telling anecdotes of their youth long after my friend's hopes of even a cold supper had become utterly desperate. When I returned at night I more than ever felt for the misfortunes of the village writer. He was seated by his table with a new pen in his hand, a quire of clean paper

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

before him, looking with an abstracted and melancholy face at two gentlemen who were silently lounging, much at their ease, in one corner of the room, each puffing a segar Determined to outsit these gentry, I remained till half after one, and left them in a most lively and wakeful humour.)

Day after day I met with the like state of things at the attorney's office, till at last I was fortunate enough to find him alone. I at once broached the subject that had been dwelling on my mind, and on that hint he spoke. I can never forget his looks, or his words either, as he launched off into a most pathetic account of the miseries of his situation, and an eloquent philippic against bores. He concluded by declaring that he had given up in despair, for it was his destiny to be bored. What a fate! To have a gimblet boring against each rib every hour of the day, would be delicious titillation compared with the agonies of a moral augerization. I agreed with him that an author, among the hapless and accursed race of whom he spoke, was in a worse condition than the man who lies down to sleep among the spiders, tarantulas, centipedes, chigoes, and mosquitoes that swarm in countless thousands about every blade of grass and every leaf and flower in the valley of the Rio Granda : but still, I suggested, he might find time for the production of a fiction of the kind I alluded to. He astonished me by declaring that he should never defile his pen in the composition of stuff to feed the morbid appetites of a delirious public. Such were his words, and my astonishment became disgust when he intimated his dislike to the writing of a history of North Carolina, which he might fill with all sorts of portents, prodigies, and marvellous adventures. Notwithstanding the fuss made about it by her literati, said he, the history of my native and dear old State would be, indeed, an 'unvarnished tale,' and a very brief one, too, for all the most stirring and delightful incidents are of too little general interest to suit the comprehensive purpose of history. In the broad scope of Clio's eye, there is little in Carolina that rises to the level of her vision, but there is a glorious field for another muse. There have been men here who only wanted a theatre to render them world-renowned; and these men, and the remarkable local incidents in which our annals abound, need only the pen of a Scott to render them as famous as the similar men and events in Scottish story. Hereupon my friend, who had become confidential, read me portions of his work, which was a sort of book of memoirs, and from the inequalities in the style of which the writer's varying humours and constant interruptions and afflictions were clearly discernible, and I even imagined that I could tell where a sentence had been commenced early in the morning, with a clear head and a lively fancy, and finished late at night, with a foggy brain and jaded body. Still I advised the publication of the book, and, after a vast deal of hesitation, the author concluded to follow my counsel. I think I *could* write something, said he, for I have loved my pen from boyhood, and I have materials; I want opportunity, however, and if this undertaking succeeds, I will make opportunity. Now, I have a regular calling of a different character, and my interviews with the muses are like the devotions of a heathen in a Christian land brief and secret. I am bored, watched, and suspected of some outlandish and pagan practice; but once let me be afloat as an author, and name and vocation will be more respected.

And I, replied myself, will write your preface, and save your modesty by speaking myself of the disadvantages under which you laboured. What else shall I say? Any thing *ad captandum*? No, sir, he exclaimed, No, sir, not a word : if my book has merits somebody will find them out ; if it has none let it sink. You, however, may say this much : Say to the North Carolinians that I have ever loved my native State as tenderly, perhaps, as those sons upon whom this partial mother has more freely bestowed her smiles and her caresses that, like the bard of Ayr, filled with her traditions, and dwelling with fervent delight on her glorious recollections, I have, even from a child, hoped that I, in honour of this good old mother,

'Some usefu' plan or book might make,
Or sing a sang at least.'

Say to them, these Carolinians, that they ought to reward me, if only for my intentions but whether they do or not I shall not die of a broken heart. Say to my friends, that if my book is a failure, they will praise and patronize me the more, and tell the public generally to 'consult my title-page.' .

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I thought to myself that a man's friends were apt to be kind in proportion to his success; but remembering that the author was a simple-hearted Carolinian, I only asked him what more I should say. He earnestly requested me to disclaim for him any intention of painting or hitting at the characters of any of his cotemporaries, and to say that his book, its incidents, and the persons introduced are purely historical, and belong to a by-gone age. In a word, he concluded, I have written for my own amusement and for the gratification of the public. Yet some will censure, some ridicule, and some will be offended and talk of slander and libel; and thus a general clamour will be raised by those for whose edification I have laboured. If so, let the world wag on I shall certainly write on. I can truly say I hate no one and I fear no one, and if any petty soul hates me, he is expending his animosity to little purpose, for I shall never feel it or regret it. With a conscience void of offence towards all God's creatures, I have

'A tear for those who love me,
And a smile for those who hate.'

Reader! I have given you a brief sketch of the country in which the following scenes are laid. I have feebly depicted the difficulties with which the author contended, and pourtrayed faintly his good intentions. The book is before you, and though it treats not of Lapland witches, nor of gibbering spectres in old German castles, and contains not, for your fastidious palate, a savoury dish of unnatural and astounding fictions, seasoned with the reeking filth, infamy, and iniquity of St. Giles and the Faubourgs, it may still interest or amuse you for an idle hour. Peace be with you all!

CHAPTER I. ALAMANCE IN THE OLDEN TIME.

ON a bright Sabbath morning in June, some three quarters of a century ago, a wayfarer, in passing through one of the middle counties of North Carolina, came to a country church which attracted his attention. There was something in the appearance of things about the place which harmonized with the traveller's feelings, and, dismounting and securing his horse to the bough of a tree, he concluded to wait for the services of the day. The more he looked round him, the better was he pleased with his resolution; for the church and all about it wore a grave and antique air that impressed him much, and rendered him curious to see what sort of people worshipped there. There were two houses, one of which was very large, the sober gravity of its faded red contrasting not unpleasantly with the white sashes of its numerous windows. Over each of the four doorways there was a small, semicircular shed, supported by arms of painted iron that came out, arched akimbo, from the walls, and decorated round the edges with curiously carved work, about which, and on the fretted cornices, swarms of wasps were sunning themselves, and working on their tiny buildings. The steps, which were all of hewn granite, were, at the end doors, six or eight feet high, owing to the declivities which, from near the centre of the church, ran down to two small creeks that met a few hundred yards north of the edifice. On this side, and in the angle of the plateau, or elevation, was another and smaller house, with a chimney, and surrounded by sycamores. From here the eye ranged over an extensive, open country, and several farm-houses and plantations were in view. The other sides were shaded by a few stately and venerable oaks, which, at a short distance from the house, were merged in thick forests of similar growth, in whose leafy coverts myriads of sweet-voiced birds were singing. Not far from the church was an extensive grave-yard, walled in with rock, and entered by an arched gateway, the stone pillars of which were faced with plates of blue slate, on which were Latin inscriptions in honour of the builder of the walls. Hundreds of monuments of various kinds, of marble, rock, and brick, and of all ages, indicated that this silent city was peopled with several generations of a large parish or congregation, while the devices and inscriptions on the tombstones, the holly-trees and cedars, the green ivy and the beds of flowers, attested the taste and piety of the living, and their tenderness and affection for the memory of the dead, each one of whom must have been followed to his last resting-place by troops of sorrowing friends. The stranger, from the grave-yard, went into the church, which, though not dilapidated, bore unequivocal signs of age. The lower part was divided into five compartments

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

by three aisles, one of which ran the full length of the edifice from east to west, and the other two led from it to the two doors on the southern side. In the centre of the other side was a lofty pulpit of mahogany, ascended by a flight of narrow, balustraded stairs, and overhung by a sounding-board supported by rods from the ceiling, and so wrought and painted as to resemble a mass of billowy clouds just rising above the horizon on a summer evening. Immediately in front of the pulpit, and joining it, but several feet lower, was the stand or pulpit of the clerk, and round three sides of the building, a little higher than the pulpit proper, ran a gallery with balusters in front. The traveller marked all these things with the eye of a virtuoso; and wondering, whence in a country like this, could come the opulence to build and the people to fill such an edifice, he returned to the yard, where he met a neatly-dressed lad, who at once and strongly excited his interest. The boy was quite young, but on his face was plainly visible the stamp of a bright mind and a good heart, his dark, brilliant eyes, gleaming with an expression tender, pensive, and intelligent.

Don't be afraid of me, my pretty friend, said the stranger. I hope we'll soon get better acquainted, and like each other.

I am not afraid of you, sir, replied the boy; I am not afraid of any one here; but I never saw you before. Do you belong to Alamance?

Is that the name of this congregation?

Yes, sir.

No, said the traveller; I came from a distant country, and only stopped here to look at the place. But what brought you here so early?

I always come early, replied the boy; I like to get here before any one else does, to ramble over the grave-yard, and sit on the tomb-stones, and think.

The answer going straight to the traveller's heart, he and his new acquaintance soon became intimate, and sitting down on a bench, in the shade of a tree, the time flew fast with both until the Alamancers began to arrive. They came streaming in by different roads, on foot, on horseback, and in gigs; the young ladies generally dashing up on high-mettled and prancing steeds, which they managed with grace and ease. There was no noise but the clatter of the horses' hoofs and the rattle of the gigs; no confusion and bustle; no loud talking and laughing, nor simpering and grimacing, and fro by the females, to show their flaunting dresses, their fluttering ribbons, and smirking faces. The traveller noticed that, with a quiet but hearty manner, every body shook hands with every body else, and then the females went into the house, the young ones sitting modestly and silently in their high-backed pews, while the men, gathering in groups under the trees, talked over their neighbourhood affairs. The traveller noticed also, that in that great multitude of every age, from the white-headed patriarch of three-score and ten to the toddling infant, each one, even among the blacks, bore himself with a still and hushed gravity, while their looks, without being austere, wore an expression sedate and solemn. He observed also, and he marvelled at the fact, that there was not one meanly-clad person in the crowd, and that even the negroes, of whom there were many, were neatly dressed. He noticed, too, that his youthful friend was a great favourite with old and young, and he saw whispered questions frequently put to him, to which he replied by shaking his head. He remained with the boy, and each new-comer cordially shook his hand, but asked him no questions.

Who is that fine-looking old gentleman, who is hitching his horse to the sycamore behind the church? asked the stranger.

That, replied the boy, is the Rev. Dr. David Caldwell, our minister, sir. He is going into the session-house to put on his silk cloak, and it's time to go in. You must sit in father's pew, and I'll carry you to it.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The stranger entered, following his youthful guide, and saw that his face was scrutinized by more than one, while his bald head seemed to blush during the whole of the service, as if conscious that it was the grand central object of attraction for all the eyes in that crowded audience. He knew, however, that the eyes were kind, and many of them bright, and he was delighted at the edifying silence, attention, and decorum that pervaded the assembly. He was pleased with the sermon, and still more pleased with the singing, the solemn harmony of which impressed him more than he had ever been before on such an occasion. All joined in the song; and, all seeming to know the tunes and to have melodious voices, a strain, grand, solemn, and soul-inspiring swelled through the spacious building, subduing in every heart its worldly lusts and its selfish passions, and lifting it, in devout fervour, above the things of time and sense. After the sermon the congregation were dismissed for a short recess, and the traveller, meditating on what he had heard and seen, was following a crowd in the direction of the spring, when he was accosted by his acquaintance of the morning.

Mother wants to see you, said the boy; and, following him, the stranger came to where three persons were sitting on the grass, in the shade of a sycamore. One of them he at once recognized as the minister, who, with a smile, said to the boy,

Introduce us, Henry, to your friend.

I don't know his name, answered Henry, looking inquiringly at the traveller.

M'Bride, Hector M'Bride, is my name, said the stranger; I am a sojourner, who stopped here to hear a sermon, and an excellent one it was.

And my name, said the parson, is Caldwell, and I am happy to make your acquaintance. Mr. M'Bride, this is my friend, Mr. Warden, and that is his lady. Your young friend there is their son Henry. As the days are long, and your dinner may be late, Mrs. Warden thought you might be pleased to join us in a snack, in which case you will please fall to.

I thank you, one and all, for your kindness, replied M'Bride, and without ceremony, will honour your collation with a traveller's appetite.

Do you purpose to make any stay at Alamance? asked Warden, as they were discussing cold chicken, biscuit, and pies. You must excuse the question, as it is not prompted by idle curiosity.

I readily excuse it, answered M'Bride, and, as far as I can, will answer it with pleasure. I am, as I said, a wayfarer, and I have no particular destination in view, having, like the knights-errant in the old romances, given the reins to my horse, and letting him carry me whither-soever his pleasure leads him.

Surely, said the parson, you are not about to revive that ancient order going about in quest of adventures, succouring the distressed and rescuing imprisoned damsels. I see no helmet, lance, or armour.

I may be said to be seeking the same ends, replied M'Bride, though not with sword, lance, and buckler, for I belong to the peace establishment. In short, accidents and crosses at an early age gave me a distaste for business; and, having wandered about till I have nearly spent my slender patrimony, I am looking out for a place where the schoolmaster is needed. When I find such a place, if the people suit me I am hard to please and I suit them, I shall bring myself to anchor. Indeed, to be plain with you all, though you are strangers to me, I have a theory which I long to see carried out. We all come into the world with ingenuous, innocent, and honourable hearts: where do all the selfish men and begging your pardon Mrs. Warden mischievous women come from?

We are corrupted by the world, said Mrs. Warden.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Exactly, exclaimed the master; and who corrupts the world? We were all good once. The truth is, parents and teachers take it for granted that other children will be corrupted, and, in self-defence, they teach their own to be cunning, selfish, and double minded. Now this is a great evil under the sun, and I wish to see how far the schoolmaster can correct it.

I like your notions, said the parson, and, if you will remain awhile at Alamance, we'll have some further discourse upon these subjects, and perhaps, too, may find a location that will suit you.

In which case, said Warden, I shall look for you to be my guest, and trust we will be able to make you comfortable.

The traveller consented to go with Warden that night, and saw that the arrangement gave no little satisfaction to the boy Henry, whose admiration he had won, by the facility with which he had translated the Latin inscriptions at the grave-yard gate, and who continued to act as his cicerone, introducing him to various people, and showing him all the curiosities about the place. When the services for the day were concluded, the gravity of the congregation seemed considerably abated, and they went round, taking leave of each other, and pressing the parson to go to their houses. He had, however, kindly to refuse all invitations, for he was engaged to go with Warden, who, by the way, had to wait a long time for his reverend friend, as this latter made it a point to attend to their horses all maiden ladies who were without a beau. It may be mentioned, too, by the way, that many of these, who were somewhat advanced in years, desired their spiritual guide to make known to the sedate-looking traveller, that their fathers' houses were ever open for the reception of strangers. Women's hearts are ever kind, and they were moved with affectionate interest when they saw so grave, gentlemanly, and decent-looking a bachelor (as they feared) wandering about, solitary and alone, without a companion to share his sorrows and heighten his joys.

CHAPTER II. THE DESCRIPTION OF ALAMANCE CONTINUED BY THE PARSON.

THE Rev. Dr. Caldwell and Hector M'Bride sat up late at Warden's, smoking their pipes and discussing various matters. Each one displayed much learning and acuteness, and the parson was so much taken with his new acquaintance that, to induce him to remain at Alamance, he gave the following description of that ancient community.

Alamance, said he, was one of the first places settled by the whites in middle Carolina. The lands are fertile, the climate pleasant, and the country healthy, and thus this section of the state early attracted the attention of emigrants. Those who came to settle here were, generally, men of character and substance, and were seeking, not so much to advance their worldly fortunes as to promote their happiness, which was intimately connected with the enjoyment of civil and religious freedom. They were mostly 'Scotch-Irish,' a race of men who, the world over, have been proved to be true to their country, to their friends, and their principles, which are always of a liberal cast. They are Presbyterians in religion, republicans in their political notions, and are ever ready to fight or go to the stake for their opinions. Such were the original inhabitants of Alamance, who, far removed from cities and their fashionable follies and vices, were distinguished in their manners by a primeval simplicity, while their characters displayed the *prisca et incorrupta fides*, the incorruptible integrity, candour, faith, and singleness of heart attributed by the poets to a fabled pastoral age. There was originally in the neighbourhood (and it is a large one) but one merchant, and not a single trader at large, by which last term I mean that sort of professional character that prowls about society, flourishing on the vices which he propagates, and the necessities he creates. Nearly every family in the whole community was, and even now is, in independent circumstances, and some are even rich. Still there are no grades and coteries in society; no parties in politics; and no hostile religious sects warring rancourously on each other, and claiming as their object the diffusion of a spirit of Christian philanthropy.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

My parishioners are generally severe in their judgment on themselves, charitable to the failings and shortcomings of others, and, though frugal in their expenditures, ever ready to entertain the stranger and relieve the necessitous. It is, sir, a remarkable and honourable fact, that every one in my congregation, over ten years old, can read and write; some are even well read in history and the belles-lettres, and in every house you are sure to meet with well thumbed copies of 'Fox's Book of Martyrs,' 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' 'The Balm of Gilead,' 'The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul,' and other kindred books. The learning of my people is thus generally of a theological character, and the midwife, and several other good old ladies in my cure, could hold their own against the famous Aquinas, and put to flight all the doctors of the Sorbonne. Thus religious subjects, with tales of religious persecutions, of Indian massacres, and of civil usurpations, exactions and oppressions, while away the winter evenings at every fireside, and tinge with a devotional hue the sentiments and feelings of the Alamancers. Our people, as I have before intimated, would make excellent republicans, for there is among them a deep-rooted aversion, I may say detestation, of every species of tyranny, and an attachment to liberty real, true, genuine, and well regulated liberty stronger than the love of life or the fear of death. They have the virtues becoming citizens of a democracy that first-born hope of philanthropy. The old men are sedate, just, free-hearted, and single-hearted, well understanding their rights, thinking for themselves, and extremely jealous of those who cultivate popularity: the matrons are chaste, dutiful, and affectionate; the maidens pure, simple, artless, pious, tender, and beautiful; and the young men brave, ingenuous, and modest. Among all there is no one aspiring to take the lead. There is none of that restlessness, that reaching for family aggrandizement, that desire of change, which characterizes every community, even in perfect democracies. There is also another notable difference between this people and other wealthy settlements in this country

By your leave, said M'Bride, I will mention one which I have observed.

Certainly, proceed, replied the parson.

Well, then, you must know, continued M'Bride, that I came south expecting to find a different sort of people than those with whom I have had the honour of becoming acquainted. I had heard much, and I had believed what I heard, of the sunny south, of its simple virtues, its knightly courtesies, and its generous feelings. I found its much-boasted, old-fashioned hospitality was but a profuse and wasteful extravagance, dictated by a vainglorious desire for notoriety; its social gatherings disorderly routs; its refinement consisting in a contempt for all other men and places, and in a supercilious and arrogant assumption of infinite superiority, and its intelligence limited to the knowledge of games, and of the histories and pedigrees of blood-horses. When I first came south, to a neighbouring province, I was honoured with an invitation to a great party, given by a wealthy planter in honour of the nuptials of his son. It was to take place in midwinter, and for weeks before the whole country was in a buzz of conversation about it, every body appearing to be in a state of entire felicity at the bare anticipation of the glorious enjoyments of the approaching entertainment. On the day appointed, through sleet, and rain, and snow, I made my way to the house of my host. When I arrived, I heard a great tumult, saw loose horses scampering about, carriages and gigs broken and upset, and negroes running to and fro in great confusion, some drunk, and all beside themselves and unapproachable in their new-blown dignities and upstart importance. It appeared that every one had brought his own servant to wait upon him and represent his dignity, and, as I came alone, I was utterly neglected, until, with a handful of silver, I worked upon the sympathies of the most humble-looking negro I saw, got him to show me to the gentlemen's dressing-room and take charge of my horse. I was ushered into a granary, warmed by a villainous old stove, and, in the presence of a parcel of roistering gallants, who paid no attention to me, I arranged my dress. Feeling myself prepared to be ushered into the company of the ladies, I followed the sound of a fiddle, and found myself at the door which opened into the public saloon. As no one met me to welcome me in, and as it was rather moist to wait long out of doors, I followed the example of others, and was soon wedged so tight in the middle of the passage, that I could move in no direction, and could scarcely turn my head. All those around me were chatting and laughing like men in hysterics, making a most forlorn attempt at being perfectly happy, although some were fairly choked by the pressure, some squeezed into a jelly, and all fixed immovably in their stations. Through a door on one side, I saw into a room, around the sides of which men and women were packed together as if put up for exportation, and in the centre of which some young folk were

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

dancing, each one having about eight inches square on which to cut his capers. On the other side of the passage was another room, in which I beheld a sea of old ladies' faces, solemn, prim, and proud, while their bodies were so jammed together that they looked like one solid bale of dry-goods compressed into the smallest possible space. After I had got thoroughly warmed, and even began to perspire, in my position, I felt a disposition to change my location. Accordingly, I learned from a Christian-looking gentleman that there were offices in the yard where married and elderly men could amuse themselves. To one of these I went, and found the tobacco smoke as thick as a London fog, and the floor one broad pool of spittle. I could dimly see that the bed was covered with men, the fireplace surrounded, and that all were deeply interested in games of whist that were going briskly on at several tables, which were covered with decanters of brandy and whiskey. The other offices I found tenanted in like manner, and so, hungry, cold, and wretched, I wandered about without meeting a soul who seemed to take the slightest interest in me. That night I lay, with a great number of others, in the granary, and the hardest scuffle I ever had was for a single blanket, with which I had covered, thereby depriving several of the only thing they had to interpose between themselves and the straw. Next day I indulged in some comments not very eulogistic of such entertainments, and was stared at and avoided as an ignorant and ill-bred booby, totally destitute of all taste for refined and aristocratic amusements. The fact is, I was sadly deficient in their fashionable accomplishments; for, if you will believe me, when the old ladies are good cooks, the old gentlemen deep-players, the damsels untiring dancers, and the young gentlemen accomplished fiddlers, they consider themselves as entitled to take rank in the highest circles. Indeed, I found they were a nation of fiddlers, and in every village and hamlet was kept awake by an everlasting scraping of cat gut.

The general features in your picture are true, said the parson; but the colours are too glaring, and the caricature too great. As I was going to observe, a while ago, there is a want of polish among the rich planters of the South. There is little attention paid to the real amenities of life, and a fine scholar or well-read man is a *rara avis*. Nevertheless, we have the materials the richest materials. The men are manly, brave, and generous, the women modest, chaste, and beautiful; and when time and the advance of education have worn away the vices incident to new countries and recently acquired wealth, there will be a population and a society, even in the province of which you speak, not excelled by any in the world. Now Alamance has already made considerable progress, and is as free from southern extravagance and pomposity as from northern avarice and venality. Still human nature is the same in all ages and countries, and not more naturally does the decaying carcass produce and attract vultures and obscene vermin than do communities of men bring together, in the course of time, sharpers and speculators, who reap a golden harvest from the follies they foster and the distresses they produce, as I before observed. Some few of these have lately found their way to Alamance, and, though they wear sheep's clothing, I have more than once heard the howl of the wolf and the cry of his victim. But this is not the worst Cicero says that whatsoever is against nature is contrary to happiness. Now, before the time of Nimrod, that mighty hunter of men yea, even in the days of our first mother, Eve, a certain feud commenced. To speak after the manner of the heathen, Nature was the first goddess the original queen of men and brutes. Her undisputed reign was shorter than the golden one of Saturn, for soon her empire was disturbed by the pretensions of a rival. Fashion arose, and, laying claim to universal dominion, she soon won followers, and her power and influence have been steadily increasing. Like all aspiring rebels, this latter affects to be exactly and in all things the opposite of her rival, and indeed there is between them the broadest difference. The one, with a cheek like the first purple blushes of the early dawn, an eye like the morning star, a step like that of the startled fawn, and a voice like the dove's in spring-time, retreats timidly to her sylvan covert, where her votaries find her, like Eve before the fall, 'The fairest of her daughters,' chaste, simple, tender, and constant. 'Her children arise and call her blessed; strength and honor are her clothing.' The other, bedizened with tawdry lace, blazing with jewels, and blushing with paint, with a brazen front, and a form tortured into a shape more uncouth than that of any monster of the deep, flaunts along the highways and the crowded streets, and is heard and seen in the ball-room and the theatre, with a voice like the siren's, and an eye that lures to destruction. Giddy, fickle, and whimsical in her notions; lascivious and wanton in her manners; and gross, bestial, and vulgar in her ways, she amuses herself at the expense of her followers, making them perform all sorts of antics, transform themselves into the vilest shapes, and martyrize themselves in various ways to show their contempt of Nature. And as this latter makes even brutes respectable, so the former would degrade men and women below the beasts of the field.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

By my soul, that was truly and happily said! exclaimed M'Bride.

Such, continued the parson, are the rival queens. Nature for a long time had undisputed sway at Alamance; but some of our travelled young gentlemen have lately been to the cities, where they saw and fell desperately in love with Fashion. She has, therefore, a few proselytes of both sexes among us, for I have recently noticed some uncouth and frightful apparitions, sprinkled through my congregation. As I am a Christian man, I nearly lost my gravity in the pulpit; for I could not banish the fancy that I was preaching to a set of peripatetic baboons and solemn monkeys. These fashionables, however, made an unfavourable impression, and have been so ridiculed, that I trust that they are heartily ashamed of themselves, and will again assume the shapes and follow the habits of civilized human creatures. They have, I believe, Nebuchadnezzarized (to coin a word) long enough, and will henceforth be satisfied with their lot, as members of the human family.

God grant they may, said Hector M'Bride, but I doubt it. I am half inclined to believe in the doctrine of Pythagoras, with, however, this modification: that the soul, instead of actually migrating, assumes an affinity to that of various beasts, and that the body endeavours to conform itself to these changes. Thus, I have known a man to be transmuted successively from bear to puppy, from puppy to monkey, and from monkey to ass. Some men have an inherent tendency downward; and I can scarcely believe the aggregate human family are advancing in civilization, when I consider what a large majority of individuals seem to grow worse as they grow older.

Perhaps, answered the parson, you generalize too much. It's a dangerous habit but, to change the subject: What say you to an experiment of your theory about teaching at Alamance?

I am willing, with all my heart, returned M'Bride; for I like the people, from your description.

CHAPTER III. THE OLD-FIELD SCHOOL.

IN former times, the Old-Field School was an institution of learning known to and patronized by the highest and lowest in every part of the country. How it got its name is a subject for conjecture. Some are of opinion that it was given in derision, to show that there is no affinity between such places and the great Academia of Plato, which was in the midst of a shady grove, while others derive it from the proximity of these country-schools to fields worn out and unenclosed. Be the origin of its name what it may, it is certain that this institution bore little resemblance to the modern academy, and perhaps still less to the ancient. It was never a bantling of the Government, State of Federal, which, for the good of both, knew it not; and, not being incorporated, it was happily freed from the fostering care of an enlightened board of fat trustees, under whose judicious management the cause of education fares about as well as would the machinery of a modern steam-mill, when controlled by a body of learned mandarins. No such nuisance was ever known to the Old-Field School, nor was it ever subject to sectarian influences, or affected by the political disputes of the country; and from it, therefore, humble as it often was, flowed a stream of morals and literature whose pure waters have refreshed and blessed the country. At Alamance the qualifications of the master were tested by an examination by the parson and others best qualified to judge; and it is to be observed, that the fact of being a leading politician, or of holding a commission to be a justice of the peace, no more made a man a scholar than did the possession of land and negroes render him a gentleman. Once installed into office, the master was subject to the control of no impertinent intermeddlers, and, being absolute monarch in his little kingdom, he governed it according to his own conscience and discretion, and without favour or partiality. The teacher out of school was the equal, the companion, and Mentor of his pupils; and hence, between him and them there was not that awful and impassable gulf which now separates professor and student, and renders them the implacable and hereditary enemies of each other. The master, to diffuse the benefits of his conversation, and to prevent imputations of undue favour to any, was the guest of all his patrons, with each of whom he boarded and lodged by turns, and in the families of all of whom he was an honoured member. It was considered important that he should have at least a moderate share of common sense; he was

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

believed to be subject to human sympathies and mortal feelings, and hence, out of school was regarded as a man and a Christian, and in all neighbourhood affairs had a voice potential.

In those Arcadian times, the boys and girls were supposed to belong to the same human family, and were so brought up and educated together as to be the friends of each other. Thus, an honourable emulation was excited, the confinement of study rendered pleasant, and the young people relieved from that fatal curiosity to penetrate the mystery thrown around the other sex, which now absorbs the entire attention of students.

Such was the general character of the Old-Field School, and it remains only to notice some particulars connected with that of Alamance. Hector M'Bride having been chosen as the teacher, many vague rumours about him got into circulation among the children some representing him as very mild, and others as extremely expert at the use of the birch. His merits were talked over and discussed at length, and no satisfactory conclusion having been arrived at, all determined to wait till they had tried him. On the day of commencement, the scholars, all in new suits, were early at the school-house, and having introduced themselves or been introduced by their fathers to the master, this latter took down their names. Having next critically examined each one, he arranged them in classes, and assigned them to their studies, putting many into branches that they had long ago passed over, remarking that it was better to know one thing well than half-a-dozen badly. This done, he made an address, laying down the principles on which he should conduct the school, and thereupon read a long list of rules, commenting on and explaining each one separately. They were divided into three heads, and concerned the morals, the manners, and the studies of his students. As these rules are still preserved among the master's papers, and may prove interesting to pedagogues, a few of them are here given, with the number of each prefixed:

- 10. The punishments shall consist of whipping, slapping in the hand with the rule, riding the ass, and expulsion, according to the gravity of the offence.
- 11. All the boys and girls may laugh, without noise, when any one is mounted on the ass; but no one shall speak to him, or make gestures or ugly mouths at him, in token of derision.
- 20. When the master tells an anecdote the students are not bound to laugh immoderately, though it will be considered respectful to give some indication of their being pleased or amused.
- 21. Whenever one enters or leaves the house, if a boy he shall bow, and if a girl courtesy, to the master, and when a stranger comes in all shall rise and do the same towards him.
- 22. When the boys meet a stranger on the road they must take off their hats and bow: they are enjoined to be, on all occasions, respectful and attentive to their seniors, and not to talk in their presence, except when bidden.
- 23. Every boy shall consult the comfort and convenience of the girls before his own, and whoever is caught standing between a female and the fire shall be whipped.
- 24. If any boy is caught laughing at the homeliness of a girl, or calling her ugly names, he shall ride on the ass.
- 25. Giggles are detestable, and when a girl is amused she must smile gracefully, or laugh out; and if the master catches any one snickering he will imitate and reprimand her in presence of the whole school.
- 30. Every offender, when called on, must fully inform on himself, remembering, that by telling the truth he palliates his offence.
- 31. When the master's rule falls at the feet of any one, he and all his guilty associates must come with it to the teacher.
- 33. The master will inflict on every common informer the punishment due to the offence of which he maliciously gives information.
- 35. As it is God who gives the mind, and as he has bestowed more on some than on others, it shall be considered a grave offence to laugh at or ridicule any one who is by nature dull or stupid, such persons being entitled to general commiseration rather than contempt.
- 40. The girls must remember that the exemptions to which their sex entitles them are to be used as a shield, and not as a sword; and they are therefore enjoined to eschew the abominable and unlady-like habit of indulging in sarcasms and attempted wit at the expense of the boys. Whenever a girl loses the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

docility, gentleness, and benignity of manners becoming her sex, she forfeits her title to the forbearance and defferential courtesy of the males.

- 41. No one shall, out of school, speak disrespectfully of the master, or of a fellow–student.
- 45. No one shall ridicule, laugh at, or make remarks about the dress of another; the boys are enjoined to be kind and courteous to the girls, the girls to be neat and cleanly in their dresses, and all to act as if they were brothers and sisters, the children of the same parents.
- 50. Let the words of The Preacher be held in constant remembrance, Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, &c., &c.

Such are a few of the many rules which the master declared he would read publicly once a month, and each one of which he said he would rigidly enforce, remarking that it was better to have no laws than good ones not strictly obeyed.

The punishment of riding on the ass was generally inflicted for long–continued and gross neglect of study, vulgarity of manners, and insults to the girls, and was as follows: The culprit, with a large pair of leather spectacles on his nose and a paper cap on his head, with the inscription Fool's Cap, in Roman letters, was mounted astraddle one of the joists, being assisted up by a few cuts of the master's switch, which sometimes played, at intervals, across his legs during the hour that he held his seat. This punishment was only inflicted on the males, and was considered as so disgraceful that it was rarely merited, and when imposed attached a stigma to the culprit, which affected his standing in and out of school, for a long time afterwards.

Having thus got his school under way, the master, to inspire at once an affection for him as a man, as well as respect as a teacher, dismissed his students for recreation, went with them to the old field, helped to lay off the play–ground, and discussed with them the various kinds of sports, teaching them, by explanations and practical illustrations, many new ones, which were considered highly interesting. Thus in the morning he at once established for himself a high character as a scholar and disciplinarian; by noon he was the fast friend of every scholar he had, and that evening boys and girls went home perfectly delighted with their new teacher, and feeling an emulous desire to excel in their studies which they had never felt before. In a word, the master was, in each scholar's eye, the very perfection of a man, and to be like him was the highest ambition of all.

After this auspicious beginning, we will now leave, for a season, the master and his little kingdom.

CHAPTER IV. A VISIT TO THE OLD–FIELD SCHOOL.

THE school–house at Alamance was a neat log–building, situated in the skirt of a thick wood, with a large, old field in front. Those who were studying the higher branches were permitted to get their lessons out of doors; and hence, as we approach we see faces, male and female, peeping at us from behind the sunny side of every fallen tree. We enter, and the whole school simultaneously rising, but keeping their eyes on their books, the boys dip their heads forward, the girls courtesy, and again take their seats; the master, who is hearing a class recite, politely bowing us to a vacant bench. We, being strangers, our arrival is the occasion of an energetic application to study, signified by an emulous effort to see who can bawl the loudest and the fastest. With every variety of note, and in every possible key, and with a sort of modulated cadence or chant, they sing over their lessons, making a not unpleasant melody, and one which is passing sweet to the master's ears. There, in a corner, with his short legs hooked together under the bench, and the big tears still moist on his swollen cheeks, sits a lately–flagellated urchin, who, in the midst of his sorrows, does not forget the proper sing–song tone, as he sobs out, with long intervening pauses, the letters of his alphabet. Just by him, and swaying to and fro on her seat, like one exercised at a camp–meeting by religious influences, sits a girl humming over the Sermon on the Mount, and interjecting alternately an *um* and an *ah* at the end of every sentence, while on all sides the operations of figures and the results of additions, subtractions, multiplications, and divisions, are announced as if they were set to music. At the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

end opposite the fire is the writing-bench, a long slab, supported by pins driven under it into the wall, and lighted by a narrow window, whose shutter is a plank swung on leather hinges. Here, with their rounded backs to us, their arms spread out in wide ellipses, their foreheads knit and frowning, and their mouths working and twisting with every motion of their pens, are some eight or ten making desperate efforts to counterfeit their copy; and there, encircling the teacher, stands the grammar class, reciting their lessons and pinching and sticking pins into each other's backs and elbows. A dense crowd is swaying to and fro in front of the blazing fire, the outs pushing hard to get in, and the ins, whose linsey-woolseys are scorching, making desperate efforts to get out. More than one coy lass is peeping at us over the top of her book, and little strips of paper are constantly and mysteriously flitting about, from the male to the female benches and back again, and yet no one is seen to throw them. The manner of each one, as he takes the pass to go out, or hangs it up on his return, excites a smile in which the master sometimes joins. This is more especially the case when a white-haired urchin pitches his head forward as if he would snap it off, or some tall gawk, with his eye fixed on his sweetheart, in scraping one foot backwards and bending his body forwards, loses his balance and pitches on all-fours into the middle of the room. In the farthest corner of the house we observe a knot of little fellows who are totally oblivious of all going on around them, and are making themselves extremely merry over the master's portrait rudely sketched on a slate, and to which each one gives a touch with his pencil. They are not unseen by a watchful eye, and suddenly their amusement is interrupted by the well-aimed rule, the fall of which at their feet startles them from their seats, as if a thunderbolt had struck in their midst. The slate is instantly laid down with the likeness still on it, and the artists, trembling with fear and blushing with shame at the consciousness of being gazed at by all the school, hide their faces with their books, the more timid beginning to whimper, while the stout-hearted look down on the emblem of justice in sulky silence. *Proximus*, the next class! cries a voice of authority, and as the ring round the master is cleared, there is an instant scampering from near the fire, a few cuts of the master's rod hastening the flight of the fugitives; books that were thrown aside are hastily resumed, some with the wrong end upward, and several gay Lotharios slide softly away from the ends of the benches next to the girls. When this second class have finished their recitation, the master, with a severe gravity, calls out, Bring me the rule. There is a dead silence for a minute, the boys marked out for execution hanging their heads and sadly gazing on the fatal instrument. Bring me my rule, I say, repeats the master, and that slate! The boldest of the culprits now taking hold of the rule as if it were a snake, and slowly edging himself off his seat, marches up to the master, followed by all his guilty associates, one of whom carries the slate. When you draw my likeness again, says the master, you must do it better. This is a miserable botch, for which, and for your laughing, you are punished. So saying, he takes the hand of each and gives it a few gentle taps, whereby the whole school is stimulated to renewed industry, the din of study rising at least a key higher at every slap. At length is heard that sound, of all others the most pleasant to a school-boy's ears, Shut up books for play. All is instant excitement, confusion, and change the master descending from his dignity, and the scholar throwing off his reverence. Hats, bonnets and baskets are snatched from the wooden hooks that stud the walls, and the master is soon surrounded by a bevy of lively, chattering girls, with rose-tinted cheeks, asking him questions, proffering presents, and insisting, each one, on his dining with her. Leaving these and the smaller lads by the fire, we will follow to the old field the larger boys, who, with biscuits and slices of bacon in their hands, have hurried off, with a wild clatter, to the play ground.

It seems they are not for sport to-day, for on the farther side of the field, where the sedge is highest and the sun is warmest, they have clustered together, and, apparently, are engaged in some mysterious and important discussion. As we near them we find that a treasonable plot is hatching against some one whose name is not mentioned. One, like Moloch, is for War, deadly war; another recommends the experiment of a cold bath in a neighbouring stream; while a third is decidedly of opinion that the individual in question should be tied with his back to the bench, and left to cool in the open air. At length, and at the same time, several voices call for the opinion of the judge and in the person referred to we recognize our old acquaintance, Henry Warden, whose fair skin, small, white hand, and slender form seem to indicate that nature had, indeed, designed him for the ermine and the council-room rather than for the rough scenes of the tented field. He owed his soubriquet, however, not so much to his physical constitution as to his habits of thinking and meditating alone, and to the clearness and comprehensiveness of his judgments. All now listened respectfully to his opinion as he modestly, but forcibly unfolded his views.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I think there is a middle course, said he, by which we can gain our ends without using violence or showing any cowardice. We all know he is a worthy man, and we ought not, therefore, to use rough measures unless we are compelled.

But if we miss this chance, answered a stouter boy, named William Glutson, we may never get such another opportunity. I tell you I'm for fun.

There's not much fun or courage either in cruelty, retorted the judge.

And who taught you so much about courage? asked Glutson.

That's my opinion, replied the judge, and I've often heard my mother say the same thing.

That settles the question, said Glutson, with a sneer; when the judge, with flashing eyes, demanded what he meant.

No disrespect, answered Glutson, only I thought and meant that you and the ladies are competent judges in such matters.

Not so good as Mr. Glutson, said the judge, who will be as terrible to an armed enemy as he is gentle and acceptable to the girls.

It was now Glutson's time to ask an explanation, which he did with a sharp voice and flushed cheek; and the judge, in making it, remarked,

I mean, if you are brave then bullies are much belied. Do you wish further information as to my opinion?

Glutson, without replying directly to the questioner, turned to the other boys and observed, that he wished to hear no more of the sage opinions of the heroic judge, or of his very judicious mamma.

Henry's eyes again flashed, and his whole frame quivered with emotion, when Ben Rust interfered to put an end to the quarrel. Ben, who was about the age of Glutson, was a universal peace-maker, never being able to endure to see a fight in which he was not a party militant. His frame was short, compact, and muscular, his chest full, round, and broad, while his large, bushy head seemed to sprout out immediately from between his shoulders without the intervention of a neck: a clear, blue eye, a large, but rather short or snub nose, and a wide mouth, filled with powerful teeth, were the ornaments of a face so formed by nature as to be incapable of any other expression than that of good humour. It was the decided opinion of this interesting worthy, emphatically expressed, that both the judge and Bill Glutson were too tall for their inches by considerably upwards of a jugful, and that they ought to be ashamed of themselves for showing so much temper. You, judge, continued he, are too cussed smart: your wit shaves like a new-honed razor, and you know Bill wants his bristles to grow long. As for you, Billy, my son, don't let me ketch you growlin agin at a smaller boy when your uncle is about. If I do, my Christin friend, you won't know what hurt you. I have a notion that is to say, my foot has a notion any how, to kick you till your nose bleeds; but, howsever, jine hands, both of you, and make friends.

I am not hypocrite enough for that, said the judge.

And I, said Glutson, don't care who knows I hate him.

Well, well, my Christin friends, rejoined Ben, it's a free country, and you can do as you please about that, *providin*, you listen to what your uncle says. I now lay down the law, that there must be no more quarrels or fusses till the grand battle is over; and all on you, like dutiful subjects, must jine in and make common cause agin the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

common enemy. I'm your captin—ginal and brigadier—in—chief, and I declare for the judge's opinion. We'll go accordin to sarcumstances, and be no harder nor the natur of the case demands; and remember you must all be on the ground bright and airly to—morrow mornin, armed and equipped as the law directs, and with ropes, catapults, tornadoes, and all the ingines of war; and now this court—martial is dismissed, *viva voce, nunc pro tunc* and *E pluribus unum*, as old Proximus says.

Having delivered this speech, standing and with great gravity, solemnly emphasizing the Latin words, and particularly rolling out the last ones with deep and swelling tones, Ben whirled a summerset, gave a shout, and, followed by the others, started in a run for the play—ground. As he came up he was violently contended for by the captains of the play: and to settle the matter they cast lots by throwing cross and pile, as it was called, for the first choice. The new hands were then divided off; but the judge, who was moody, made the game unequal by refusing to play. Edith Mayfield, who was on the other side, withdrew also from the play, alleging that she was tired; and the numbers on the opposing sides being equal, the sport went briskly on.

See, said the sweet—voiced girl above named, as she sat down by the judge, see how the ball has blistered my hand.

The blister was hardly visible to the naked eye, but the hand was a very white and tender little one, and the judge must needs take it gently in both of his, examine it very attentively, and hold it to assuage its pain.

Does it hurt much? asked he, as he handled it with the most tender care.

Not very much now, answered Edith, looking up into his face with a smile that made him forget his sorrows; it *was* very painful, but it's nearly cured. How I do despise Will Glutson!

Why, what has he had to do with your hand? asked the judge, in surprise.

He has had nothing to do with it, replied Edith, and never shall; for I can never endure to shake hands with him again.

Has he offended you, Edith?

Not knowing exactly what to say, afraid to tell the truth, and still more afraid of telling an untruth, Edith remained silent.

Tell me, Edith, continued the judge, becoming excited, tell me what he has done to you.

He has done nothing to *me*, she answered, and again paused, with her eyes bent on the ground. I know he's a coward, she at length continued.

And why do you think so? inquired Henry.

I don't know exactly, answered Edith; but I always thought so. He's always laughing at the girls for being timid, imposing on the smaller boys, and is very cruel to the servants.

Your test is a good one, said the judge; but see, the master is going to call to books.

The judge, who never desired any one to side with him in a quarrel, determined that evening to be miserable, but had to abandon his resolution; for he felt that his face was constantly shone upon by the tender eyes of Edith, and whenever he looked at her, and this was not seldom, she would smile in such a way that it was impossible not to feel entirely happy, even in spite of himself.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The hour for being spelled arrived at last, and all the scholars, except a few very small ones, took their stand in a row extending round two sides of the room. Next to the fire was the head or post of highest honour, and by the door was the foot or lowest rank. In the school of Alamance the merit of each scholar was estimated by the rank he held when the school was spelled; and on their return at night, the first information given by the children to their parents was in regard to the number which they stood. Each student always remembered his place, and took it without confusion. On the evening to which we have alluded, Henry Warden, as was usual, stood head. Edith Mayfield occupied her accustomed place, and Ben Rust, as was very unusual, stood third. He got there by accident several days before, and for some time maintained his position by the assistance of the judge and Edith, the latter of whom would laugh out when she was amused and no one was offended; would sometimes whisper pretty loud; and do it so openly, and then look so pleasantly and archly at the master, with a bright sparkle in her eyes, that he could not find it in his heart to chide her. On one occasion, however, Ben could not hear her distinctly, and so he started downward. His progress was continuous; and in a short time, and to the amusement of the whole school, he landed at the foot, saying, in a quiet way, Now I feel more nateral.

Pneumatics! gave out the master to the one who stood next to Warden, who had purposely missed a word, and who now was second, while Edith stood head. The boy could not spell it; the next blundered, and the next did the same. The eyes of Rust began to twinkle; and as the word still kept coming down, his lips began to move, his hand was on his head, and his face turned upward with an expression indicating the profoundest thought. At length the word reached him; and Ben, after a pause, suddenly started, asking,

What did you say the word was?

Pneumatics, answered the teacher: come, be quick; for it is the last word, and the sun is nearly down.

Yes, sir, said Ben: *Pneumatics*! Now let me see; did you say '*pneumatics*' was the word?

I did, replied the master.

And it don't begin with N? asked Ben.

I did'nt say so; but such is the fact.

Pneu–mat–ics! was it all spelled right except the first syllable?

I can't answer any more questions, said the master.

Well, answered Ben, I know *m, a, t*, spells '*mat*,' and *i, c, k, s*, spells '*icks*;' so the question is as to the '*New*.' What can it be? Oh, *G, n, oo, Gnoo, m, a*

Wrong, wrong! exclaimed the master; and so Edith had to spell the word.

The school was now dismissed; and Henry Warden, who was a general favourite, and whose sadness had been observed, had to decline many pressing invitations to go with his fellow–students.

The sun was far down among the trees as the torrent of youthful life, with a merry din, poured out of the school–house, and streaming off by different roads, waked with song, and joke, and boisterous laughter, the echoes of those ancient woods for miles around.

CHAPTER V. THE TURNING OUT OF THE MASTER.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

THE events related in the last chapter took place two days before Christmas, and after Hector M'Bride had been teaching for some time at Alamance. Before the early dawn on the following morning, nearly all the boys and many of the girls assembled at the school-house, and commenced fortifying it to bar the entrance of the master. The window over the writing-bench, though too narrow to admit the body of a man, was closed with slabs, and the door was bolted on the inside with a quantity of bars, beams, and benches, sufficient to have defied the efforts of a battalion without artillery. Besides the chimney, the little window above the master's desk was the only other point of ingress, and here, all the larger boys, mounted on tables and benches, were to take their stand. Through this window, Ben Rust went out and hung on a pole fastened to the roof of the house a small flag, on which were blazoned in large letters, School-boys' Rights, and then tacked on the door a placard, on which was drawn a coil of ropes, with the sentence, No admission but on conditions, written at the bottom. These preparations having been completed, although the sun was not yet up, the students began to look anxiously for the master. Many felt a strange palpitation of the heart; some wished it was well over, and others secretly rued having embarked in the business, and thought they had rather study a week than undertake to gain a holiday by such a hazardous experiment. The more timid, making forlorn efforts at looking unconcerned and telling jokes, trembled at every rustle in the leaves, and all spoke in half-whispered, tremulous tones. Some, with great apparent coolness, amused themselves by trying to scribble on the sheets of paper that lay scattered about, but their hands were unsteady; some made lively attempts to entertain the girls, but their teeth chattered as if they were in an ague; and others clustered about Rust, cracking their wit upon him, and gathering confidence from his quiet, determined manner. Suddenly the sound of footsteps behind the house threw all within into a fever of excitement, some seizing their books, some rushing to the window and the chinks in the wall, and some walking to and fro without any definite purpose. The footsteps still approached, and Ben, listening very attentively, exclaimed,

There's more nor one, by Jove!

Do you think he's brought assistance? asked an ashy-coloured lad, trembling all over.

Surely, no one would take part with him, remarked another.

There's no tellin what may happen, said Ben; and it may be the old folks are going to try to break up the custom, for I've heern sich chat.

If that's the case, we can't fight against our fathers, observed one who desired an excuse to surrender; and suppose they bring pistols.

Suppose the devil comes himself, answered Rust, we'll give him a chunkin; for there's plenty of fire here. Let all Alamance come; the more the merrier, I say.

And so do I, said the judge; and if they choose to fight us, they must take what they get.

By this time the footsteps were heard advancing round to the front of the house, and suddenly, an old black horse with a most woful countenance, came in view. He paused when he saw the heads at the window, and gazing at them very solemnly for several minutes, he gave a feeble neigh, and then gravely walked off in pursuit of his pleasure. The occupants of the castle were prodigiously relieved at what they saw; and becoming by this time used to their situation, they felt ready for a trial of their courage. Ben, now seating himself in the master's chair, requested all to be silent while he made a few remarks.

You see, my Christin friends, said he how a man's fears can make a fool of him. That old crittur which you all took for a legion of armed men, was so tickled at your fright, that though he seems to be a decent and gentlemanly old hoss, he could'nt hold in, and laughed right in our faces. He was so mightily amused, I could see it in his eyes; and did'nt you see how contemptuously he switched his tail, as much as to say, 'good-bye, boys, you're green.' I tell you, the way to get out of danger is to face it: even a painter or a wild cat will walk off if we look him straight

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

in the eyes. You must

Yonder he comes! yonder he comes! exclaimed several who were at the window; and sure enough, the master, with his eyes bent on the ground, a staff in his hand, and a book under his left arm, came in view. All heads were withdrawn from the window, and perfect silence reigned within. Walking leisurely to the door, the master looked for the string of the latch, and finding it was gone, began to rap with his stick.

I surely saw some one at the window, said he; and again he rapped more loudly, calling out Robert Smith!

Sir, answered the boy, running across the room, and forgetting himself till he was seized and admonished to be silent.

Robert, continued the master, open this door, my son. Will no one let me into this house? ho, you within, what fool's play is this!

As no one answered, he continued to rattle at the door, working himself into a towering passion, and uttering the fiercest exclamations. The excitement within was now intense, and many, doubtful of the issue of the attempt to bar out, stood with their books in hand ready to act according to emergency. The master, after repeated efforts, finding the door firmly barred, walked off and began to cut and trim a supply of rods, occasionally looking back to observe the effect of this manoeuvre. Returning again, with his switches in one hand and a beam of wood in the other, he said, solemnly,

Boys, open this door. If you do not, I shall batter it down, and the blame will lie on yourselves.

Read the notice, said one within.

The notice, hah! replied the master, putting on his spectacles; its a bungling fist. Treason, as I live foul treason and rebellion: and it shall be duly punished. Young rebels! admit me instantly into my house, or I'll whip every mother's son of you till the blood trickles down your backs!

Ketchin's before hangin, answered Rust, displaying his face at the window. Praps, my Christin friend, if you'll flog the house you might save yourself a deal of trouble and whip us all in a lump.

Benjamin! Benjamin! are you mad? asked M'Bride.

Not purticularly so, said Ben; how is it with yourself? I hope your exercise keeps you warm, for its an ontolerable cold mornin.

Mr. Rust, retorted the master, it ill becomes you to be jesting thus with your teacher, and I can hardly believe the evidence of my own senses. Let me in, and I'll forgive the past; but wo be to you and your deluded followers if you do not!

Ben, not in the least moved by this appeal, very quietly informed the master that, accordin to the laws of the Medes and Persians, every dog must have its day, and that, therefore, the day of old Proximus was over for the present. All of which, he continued, we'll maintain *viva voce* a piece of gratifying intelligence which was followed by a rap of the master's switch rather uncomfortably close to the speaker's face. The teacher's blows now followed in quick succession, and he and Rust were beginning to pant with their exertions, the one to enter and the other to defend the window, when the latter exclaimed,

Let's parley.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I have nothing more to say, young rebel, M'Bride answered, preparing more rods.

But I have a deal to say to you, said Rust, and it consarns you to listen. We don't want to harm a hair on your head, and are only defendin our nateral rights; but our blood may git hot, and then there's no tellin what may happen. I spose you only wanted to show pluck and then give up; and as we are satisfied with your courage, you had better now surrender.

I'll show you whether I am in fun or not, you saucy whelp, exclaimed the master, whose blows soon cleared the window, one of them welting several faces. Seizing the favorable moment, he sprung to the window, and was half way in when he was grappled by Rust, whom he dragged out after him, and one of the skirts of whose coat was left behind on a nail. The judge and several others tumbled out to sustain their leader: but the foe, breaking loose from the crowd, put his legs into a rapid motion, ill sorting with his usual gravity. The boys, with a loud shout, gave chase, Ben, with his single-skirted coat, leading the pack, and yelping like a beagle-hound. The game, doubling and wheeling round trees with admirable dexterity, soon tired down his pursuers, and coursed off in gallant style. The door was flung open, and the woods swarmed with a merry crowd, shouting, laughing, and betting on the race. The tumult made by those in pursuit became fainter and fainter, and finally died away. Suddenly, and in an opposite direction, it was heard again, and soon the master, far in advance of his followers, dashed through the crowd at the house, darted in at the door, and, slapping his rod on the floor, called sternly, to books! The pedagogue in his chair of authority is a more awful personage than the master out of doors; and, accordingly, M'Bride was now obeyed, and the usual din of study began to be heard when the larger boys entered. They had held a short consultation out of doors, and it was easy to see that their blood was up, and that they contemplated rough measures as they took their stand round the teacher.

Young men, said the latter, take your seats. I am loath to whip you, but you will force me to do it if you do not instantly resume your studies.

Whipping is a game two can play at, answered the judge, and we're as loath to do it as you are. I must, however, inform you, that if you do not grant our demands we can and we will use rough measures.

M'Bride made no reply, but rose to his feet and raised his chair, when the judge exclaimed,

Rust, prepare your ropes; and now, boys, on.

As he darted towards the master, the chair of the latter fell harmless, and with a laugh he said,

I surrender; what's your will?

Here are our demands, answered Henry Warden, and he read the following carefully-written letter:

To Mr. Hector M'Bride.

Sir, You are hereby informed that, in accordance with an ancient and well-established usage, you are to be this day excluded from your school-house and proceeded against as an enemy until you agree to the following terms, to wit: You are to let us have this for a holyday extra, and not count it in the calendar, as it is won by our valour. You are also to spend one pound sterling in the purchase of such refreshments and confections as you may deem proper for us, and on your refusal to comply with these conditions we will feel authorized to compel submission by force: For all of which there are abundant precedents.

We remain your affectionate pupils,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

HENRY WARDEN,
WILL. GLUTSON,
BEN. RUST,
Com'tte.

You have shown your pluck, said the master, and I trust I have also displayed some courage; and now we'll laugh over the little accidents of the day.

So saying, he sat down and wrote an order for the apples, cakes, candies, and cider, which he had before purchased for the occasion and left with his nearest patron. The parents now began to drop in, and were surprised and elated to find their sons had conquered the master so soon. The barring out was a high festival at old field schools, and the prescriptive rights of students in regard to it, were respected by all. On such occasions the situation of the teacher was a trying one. It was considered as his duty to resist to the last, and yet those who so considered desired to see him conquered. The turning out was considered as a sort of miniature war, in which it was incumbent on the master to teach his pupils coolness, fortitude, and perseverance.

At the time referred to, the old people congratulated master and scholar, and were highly pleased with the conduct of both.

Among the visitors was Mr. Cornelius Demijohn, commonly called Corny Demijohn, a sedate bachelor of a grave presence, and weighing some twenty odd stone. Although he had no children, he took a great interest in the school; and having been consulted by the students in regard to the proper method of proceeding in turning out the master, he had arrived early, and, from a concealed position, watched, with lively interest, the fortunes of the day. He was supposed to be skilled in military science, and his heart was as kind as charity, and his hand ever ready to strike for his friend. He was by blood related to no one but his mother at Alamance, yet all seemed to be his nephews and nieces, for he was universally known as Uncle Corny. As usual, his advent created a sensation among the young folk, and especially among the girls, who immediately began to cluster about him, and chatter away like a flock of magpies round a grave Muscovy duck. The old men told long stories of their own exploits on such occasions; the little boys listened, and the young men romped with the females, and assisted them in putting Uncle Corny into trouble. As the day wore towards its noon, the young people became desirous that their parents and teacher should join them in a grand game of town-ball; and, the Rev. Dr. Caldwell arriving about this time, the same request was made of him. The solicitation showed on what terms the parson lived with his people, respect for the minister being tempered by affection for the man; while his ready assent displayed the cheerfulness of a disposition which the studies of his calling had failed to tinge with an austere or fanatic feeling.

All, accordingly, adjourned to the old field, and the sport commenced in earnest. Conscious of innocence, and therefore fearless of the censure of the world, or of Heaven, the sun in his course never looked down on a happier crowd than was that day assembled on the play-ground at the old field school of Alamance. The editor of these memoirs, hurried on by more stirring incidents, regrets that he cannot stop to describe the play, once so interesting to him, and to make a good performer in which required a true eye, a quick hand, and great activity of body. He regrets his inability to chronicle the mishaps of Uncle Corny, and the sprightliness of the master, both of which created no little merriment; and he regrets still more that he cannot hand down to fame the exploits of the parson, the simplicity of whose heart and the energies of whose body, were alike untouched by the blight of advancing years. The master, whose notes we follow, when he comes to the sports of this day, in the very beginning of his account breaks off with the exclamation, *Eheu, priscos felices lusus! Eheu, tempora mutata!* He then continues his remarks with equal beauty and pathos.

We shall not attempt, says he, to draw a picture of what no pen can describe. If there be any yet living who witnessed that, or similar scenes, where age and learning, wisdom and piety, beauty and innocence, forgetting the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

world, its vices, and its sorrows, wore away the winged hours in harmless sport and frolic, they will know that his would be a daring pen who should attempt a description; and if all the actors in those merry scenes are gathered to the last mansions of mortality, it would be a bootless task to dwell on recollections which none can appreciate.

The editor has witnessed similar scenes, and deep in his memory are those scenes engraven, and there shall they remain, the sweetest picture in the recollections of the past, till that memory is darkened by the shadows of death! Pray, then, good reader, excuse the writer if he is tedious and garrulous on trivial matters that interest you but little. Remember that, after the vicissitudes of a long and chequered life, the dear scenes of his early and happy youth are now before him, softened, chastened, and beautified by the moonlight of memory; and surely you will excuse him for taking one longing, lingering look, before he shuts his eyes upon them and dashes into the more memorable but sadder scenes which follow. He is only a half-enchanter; he has conjured up from its mossy grave the fair, pale spirit of the past; but it will not down at his bidding. Bear with him, then, for a little while, and you soon shall be ushered into the midst of stirring times, and of great events, and see enough of

Battles, sieges, fortunes;
Of most disastrous chances
Of moving accidents by flood and field.

CHAPTER VI. A GREAT MAN AT ALAMANCE.

How Nathan Gluston came into the world, and where he first saw the light, was matter of speculation more perplexing than profitable to his neighbours. It is certain that he was the son of his mother; but if he ever had a father, that fortunate personage must have been fond of obscurity, for, according to the gossips, neither wife nor offspring ever knew him as husband or parent. Nathan, however, as well will see, was not one of those who need the influence of illustrious paternity to push them forward in the world. Like other renowned men, he was born with all the elements of greatness in himself, and was destined to reflect from the meridian sun of his own glory an unfading lustre on all his race; as well on those who preceded as on those who came after him on the stage of being. The mystery which envelopes his origin shrouds also his early youth; and for the interesting history of this portion of his eventful life, the world must be indebted to the pen of Nathan himself. Until the publication of his autobiography, we must restrain our impatient curiosity, and take him where the Alamancers found him, at the age of two and twenty. Having attained his majority, and being aware that a prophet is not without honour except in his own country, Nathan left the country of his ancestors and settled at Alamance. A disciple of Saint Crispin, he came with hammer and awl to shoe the Alamancers, thus typifying his more important mission, which was to harness with sound doctrine the souls of his new and simple neighbours, and new-vamp their minds, so as to enable them to walk unhurt over the briers and sharp stones of this thorny wilderness. He pitched his tent, or, to speak more correctly, he built his shop at the crossing of two public roads. A painted sign was hung out, to be gazed at with admiring wonder by every mill-boy that passed along, and printed cards were circulated for the bewilderment of the public generally. Signboards such as his, and cards, were new things at Alamance; and, while they constituted a novelty interesting to the young, they were regarded by some very shrewd old people as unerring indications of the fast-approaching end of the world. The earth, however, despite their opinions, kept on its usual courses, and the Alamancers, satisfied by degrees of Nathan's superior artistical skill, gave him a liberal patronage. Gluston, increasing in worldly substance, took to himself for wife an old spinster with a hundred acres of land, one hundred wrinkles in her face, and five hundred crotchets in her temper. Such were the lands, goods, and chattels, which Nathan got by marriage; and turning all but the crotchets and the wrinkles into money, he took an apprentice to his trade, opened a house of entertainment, and a blacksmith-shop in which he hired some strolling workmen to labour. These shops became the resort of all the idlers in the community, and Nathan held forth to them daily on law, ethics, and politics. Among other things, he became a bailiff, and by his frequent visits to the distant court-house, augmented his influence and importance. He soon added another to his multifarious

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

occupations, in the prosecution of which he still kept in view the public good. He became a money-lender and a shaver of paper, in the discharge of which business, he regulated himself by the wants of the borrower, endeavouring, as far as practicable, to carry out literally the language of Scripture, from him that hath not shall be taken even that he hath. Thus did Nathan manufacture shoes, point coulters, and entertain strangers, charging only three prices for the same; thus did he serve process and shave bonds at fifty *per centum* discount, until he became a man of such vast consequence as to be appointed a justice of the peace. Then it was that he enlarged his garments and his house, put on a grave and sober face, became a severe and rigid moralist, and spoke as one having authority. Sons and daughters were born unto him, and in their early promise he took a becoming pride. He joined the church, in which he was appointed a ruling elder; took an active part in all public matters, and was the terror of all poor vagabonds far and near. The advice and conversation of such a man could not but be profitable and instructive to old and young; and as Nathan was aware of this, and deemed it a sin to hide his light under a bushel, his loud and commanding voice was heard at every public gathering. At such places he was generally the last comer; a proper regard for his own dignity requiring that he should cause himself to be waited for and observed by all eyes when he came. It was therefore late on the day of the barring out mentioned in the last chapter when Nathan arrived at the Old-Field School. He heard a great shout just as he touched the verge of the field, and to his inexpressible mortification saw the Rev. Dr. Caldwell with the fleetness of a deer coursing round the circuit of the town.

Beyond measure scandalized at what he saw he stood, himself unnoticed, gazing on the merry scene with feelings akin to those of Satan, when, from a lofty hill, he beheld with baneful eye the innocent delights of that glorious Eden which his hateful presence was to mar forever. He observed with pride that his own hopeful children, apparently disgusted with what was going on, had retired from the play, and seemed engaged in the amiable occupation of criticising the conduct of their friends. They were so engaged; and just at this time, Edith Mayfield, running to catch a ball on which her upturned eyes were fixed, stumbled against and fell over Emily Glutson, and damaged the latter's bonnet, the finest in the school. Edith, who was the worse hurt of the two, was soon on her feet, laughing at the accident, when a slap in the face by Emily's brother, accompanied by a harsh exclamation, changed her merriment to tears, and sent her off bitterly weeping.

Henry Warden, observing her distress, and hearing in the crowd some remark about William Glutson, hastily enquired of every one around him what had happened. Dreading the consequences, his fellow-students endeavoured to disguise and palliate the matter to the judge, whose suspicions were still strengthened by the vague answers he received. He was instantly by the side of William Glutson, demanding, in no gentle tones, an account of his conduct to Edith Mayfield.

Are you her protector? asked Glutson, with a sneer, at the same time rising to his feet.

I am, was the emphatic response; and you shall apologize this instant.

Not this week, nor ever, to such a milk-faced hero as you, replied the other.

Then, take that, and that! said the judge, striking him several times in the face.

Before Glutson had recovered himself sufficiently to return the blows, Warden, grappled by powerful arms, was thrown some distance on his back, and Ben Rust stood confronting his now furious antagonist. The courage of the latter growing rapidly at the prospect of an interference, he began to let loose a torrent of abuse, and, making an effort to get at his fallen enemy, his nose came into such violent contact with Ben's fist that the blood spurted out, and he yelled with pain and rage.

Very well! coolly observed the keeper of the peace; when this you see, remember me, and the ponderous weapon again brushed through Glutson's face Ben, with his right leg stuck out, gyrating several times on his left foot, and sweeping his arm through the air as if he were knocking down a circle of adversaries.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

These things all happened in a minute, and all the company, with Squire Glutson himself, were soon on the scene of battle. The old field being no place for the investigation of the affair, they adjourned to the house, and Warden and Glutson were properly arraigned and put upon their trial.

My practice, said M'Bride, is first to hear the parties themselves. I desire always to put the scholar on his or her honour, and to inculcate thus the habit of telling the truth even against themselves. William Glutson, stand up here and relate the facts connected with the fight between you and Henry Warden.

His father, fumbling his watch-seals with his right hand, looked round with magisterial gravity and dignity as his son roundly told his story.

Because, said the latter, because I would not take his insolence, Henry Warden struck me in the face, and but for your presence and that of my father I would have thrashed him like a sack.

What insolence? asked the master; tell all that occurred.

Edith Mayfield ran over my sister, hurting her very much, and then making fun of her; and, because I gave her a little lecture for it, Henry Warden came to me in a very insulting manner, and demanded an apology. I refused to give it, and he struck me.

Henry Warden, what have you to say? asked M'Bride.

Nothing, sir, answered the judge.

Come, sir, I want no insolence, said the master; answer at once, what took place between you and William Glutson?

I do not mean to be insolent, replied Henry, but I have no statement to make. I might contradict what has been said, and I had rather be punished for fighting than to be suspected of falsehood.

The master, thinking that the judge was in a temporary pet, dismissed him for the present, and called Rust to the witness's stand. Ben told his story roundly, implicating no one, and leaving it extremely doubtful whether there had been a fight at all. His testimony not being entirely satisfactory to the master, the latter put various questions to him for the purpose of eliciting the whole truth.

Did you, asked he, see the commencement of the fight?

Rust. I can't say adzactly that I did.

M'Bride. What was the first thing that you saw? Were the parties together?

Rust. When I first seed them, they were standin side-and-side, lookin sorter mad, though I could'nt possibly be perticler as to that. Folks sometimes look grum, you know, when they are in a good humour; and, as to the matter of that, I never saw old Father Gruel look pleasin in my life. He eats his dinner as if it was epicac and salts, and

M'Bride. Never mind about Father Gruel. Did you hear any words pass?

Rust. Somthin *was* said after I got to them, but I didn't pay perticler attention to the compliments passed.

M'Bride. Mr. Rust, remember what you say now you are bound in honour to say. You are not acting the part of an odious tell-tale, but of a witness whose evidence affects the welfare of your fellow-students. I ask you now,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

for your own sake, and for the sake of these two boys, to tell all you know of the fight, its cause, its beginning, and its ending.

Rust. Well, as I said before, I heerd a sort of fuss or rumpus, and, lookin round, I seed Henry Warden and Bill Glutson standin close together, and Henry's fis circulatin tolerably freely about Bill's face. They mout have been playin, but I thought I'd see the fun. When I got there, I put an end to it; and so the game's over, and I don't know who won.

M'Bride. Do you pretend to say there was no fight?

Rust (after musing a while). There *was* a little skrimmage, sir.

M'Bride. How often did Henry Warden strike the other?

Rust. Now, I don't *know* that he hit him ary time. I saw his fist travellin two or three times towards Bill's face, but whether it called or passed by I can't say. It's not unlikely it knocked for admission, as they say, at his mouth. He seemed to poke it into him faster than Bill could pack it away.

M'Bride. Do you know of any cause of quarrel between the two? Had any, thing happened just before the fight to irritate Henry Warden?

Rust. They say Bill Glutson struck Eddie Mayfield; but the others know more about that than I do.

Ben now had permission to resume his seat, which he did with great gravity, having first made a profound bow to the master. Warden was again called on, and again refused to tell what he knew. Having never been chided by parent or teacher, his sensibility wounded to the quick by his present position, mortified that he was even suspected of wrong, and desirous of not calling on Edith Mayfield, no persuasion could induce him to make a defence.

Henry, said M'Bride, at length, I have a painful duty to perform. You have been my best student, the pride of the school, and the boast of the neighbourhood. No one has ever before raised an accusing voice against you, but discipline must be enforced. By the testimony of others, and by your own mute confession, you are guilty of a heinous misdemeanour, and until you sincerely repent, you must be excluded, as unworthy, from my peaceful fold. With tears I blot your name

Hold! exclaimed Nathan Glutson; you are too severe, my worthy friend. If I might be allowed, continued he, rising with dignity, if I might be allowed to give my humble opinion, I would advise that the culprit be soundly whipped and forgiven for his recent offence. I am sure my son would be satisfied with this. The boy is giddy, and may have a touch of his father's infirmity; and Nathan paused and looked round for approbation. His good counsel was, however, thrown away; for something very much like disgust was visible in every face. As for the judge his burning soul flashing through his eyes with a dignity, it may even be said, with a grandeur of manner that impressed the whole assembly he declared that he never would survive such a chastisement as that recommended, at the hands of any but a parent.

The whip, he cried, is for the back of the sluggard and the mean-spirited. As for that man, he continued, gazing on Nathan Glutson with a sternness that discomposed his nerves, he is a hypocrite and a slanderer; the tyrant of the weak, and the slave of the strong! And now, said he, his great heart swelling within him, my teacher, the Glutsons, and the world may do its worst, for I shall ask pardon and mercy of none but God!

Thus spoke the descendant of a puritan, and the *protégé* of the famous Dr. Caldwell. He was mistaken, though, in thinking the world his enemy. That little part of it in which he was then acting the early hero loved and respected

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

him, and boys and girls clustered around him, endeavouring to soothe his chafed and wounded spirit. Even the parson and master exchanged secret glances of admiration; and the sympathies of Uncle Corny became so much excited that it would have been dangerous for any one to have attempted to lay rough hands on the judge. As for Nathan, he was, in vulgar phrase, greatly flurried and hurt in feeling, and was about to begin a speech, when he was stopped by the silver voice of Edith Mayfield. The girl, catching the feeling that animated Henry Warden, came forward, covered with blushes, and told her simple story. She was listened to in breathless silence, and her tale acquitted the judge in the hearts of all but the Glutsons. The representative and *pater-familias* of that ilk could now no longer restrain his indignation, which blazed in crimson glory over his sharp and ruddy face, flashed in consuming majesty from his small, round, gray eyes, and poured in torrents of perspiration over his square and narrow forehead.

Sir, Mr. M'Bride, and gentlemen, this is too bad! he exclaimed; is *my* son to be discredited, *my* counsel despised?

Suffer me to interrupt you, Mr. Glutson, interposed M'Bride; the trial is over, and Henry Warden is honourably acquitted.

What! thundered the enraged justice of the peace; is this the way justice is administered? Is this little jade, the sweetheart, no doubt

Silence! now thundered the master in his turn. Mr. Glutson, this is *my* school-house, and these are *my* students. I am here judge and jury, and my authority there is none to dispute. If I have permitted you to speak at all it was not because I wanted your opinion, but simply as a mark of respect to one of my worthy patrons. You are now taking unbecoming liberties with the character of my pupils, which is as dear to me as my own, and which I will defend with my life. God forbid that I should chastise a gallant boy for resenting and punishing a wanton insult to an innocent girl! Take your seat, sir, instantly, or leave the house!

This command was not to be disobeyed, and taking his children, William and Emily, Nathan slowly withdrew and shook off the dust of his feet against the school of Alamance. Children, teacher, and parents, seemed to breathe more freely after his departure, and the confections left in the morning were discussed with a lively animation. The roll was then called, and the Rev. Dr. Caldwell rose to make a few remarks. His discourse was short, simple, and sensible, and listened to with profound and respectful attention. The reverend gentleman was, without effort or ostentatious display, eloquent and pathetic, and brought tears from more than one ingenuous youth. In conclusion, he touched slightly upon the gathering dangers of the times, spoke of a coming crisis, and exhorted his young friends to emulate the example of their ancestors, who had sealed with their blood their devotion to civil and religious liberty. A fervent prayer was then offered to the Throne of Grace, and thus ended the ceremonies of the day.

A day, says the master in his memoranda, famous in the annals of Alamance, as on it the shadows of important coming events were clearly visible.

What these events were we shall see in the sequel; and, in the mean time, it is worthy of mention, that as Henry Warden took leave of Edith he dropped into her basket a note, which, when out of sight, she opened and read as follows:

Beware of the Glutsons; believe no prejudicial story about me, and remember I am your sincere friend forever. Whatever happens, or wherever I may happen to be, know that you are not forgotten.

The contents puzzled her no little, and so she went home pondering on them.

CHAPTER VII. A CHRISTMAS DINNER AT ALAMANCE.

EDDIE, my daughter, said Mr. Mayfield, on the night before Christmas, tomorrow there is to be a great party at Warden's, and I wish to give you some advice in relation to your conduct there. You are my only child and heir, the sole representative of my house, and in you its honour must be sustained.

Why do you talk so, father? replied the girl; have I ever disobeyed you in any thing?

Never, my darling, when you knew my wishes; and I am now going to explain them to you fully, so that you may know how to act in future. Come and kiss me, and I'll begin.

Edith, seating herself in her father's lap, and throwing her arms about his neck, fondly kissed him, when he thus proceeded:—

It's dangerous, daughter, to form early attachments, friendly or otherwise. We cannot tell when young, what is most for our interest; and I have known persons to be unsuccessful and hampered all their lives by intimacies they formed when young, and which they could not get over.

But, father, we ought not to choose our friends from interested motives, said Edith; and I thought attachments formed when we are children were the purest, because our hearts are then better than they are when we grow older.

It's an old and idle tale, answered Mayfield; and no sensible people believe it. It's a sickly sentiment, the mere cant of poets and visionaries.

What is a visionary? asked the daughter.

A visionary, child, is one whose imagination is stronger than his judgement, and who mistakes the whims and dreams of his fancy for the conclusions of reason. Henry Warden is a visionary, and has, I fear, been tutoring you.

Indeed he has not, father, answered Edith, with animation; he never taught me any thing but what was right, and he talks more sensibly than any one I ever heard.

So you may think now, rejoined the father; for you are yet unable to answer his sophisms, and to see the absurdity of his fine-spun theories. My love, you must not be so intimate with Henry. He is a good boy, generous, just, and brave; but he is, as I said, a visionary, and he may instil into your mind philosophy that is dangerous. Besides, people are beginning to think you and he are fond of each other; and that affair of to-day will make a great noise. If it is thought a girl is in love, it keeps off suitors and

I want no suitors, exclaimed Edith, rather pettishly, hiding her head in her father's bosom.

But you will want them some day, said the old man; and for this very reason you must not suffer them to come about you now. If you are too free with Henry Warden, you may never have any beau but him; and that will be a pretty tale to tell of the beautiful and accomplished daughter of the rich Isaiah Mayfield, Esq. I want you, some day, to be *the belle* of Alamance; and after a brilliant career, to marry worthy of yourself and of me. Tomorrow, therefore, you must be cautious and circumspect towards Henry Warden. Every body will be observing you and him; and you will be the general talk of the neighbourhood, if you don't take care.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Father, said Edith, with tears in her eyes, if it will please you, I will never speak to Henry again.

But it won't please me; that is the very thing I don't want you to do. You must not quarrel with him, nor show by your manners and conversation that you think enough of him to get into a pet about him or with him. When you speak *of* him, do it freely, lightly, and kindly; when you speak *to* him, do it with a formal politeness, a cold cordiality, a reserved respect. Talk to him familiarly, but not confidentially; do not smile, but laugh loud and carelessly; and when you look at him, gaze as earnestly as you please, but let there be no meaning or expression in your eyes. You may think this strange advice, but your father knows what is best for you, and his object is to do it. Poor Henry! I am sorry for him.

Edith was, too, but she did not say so; and, in fact, her commiseration arose from a very different reason from that which prompted her father's. The latter knew exactly the sum total of George Warden's debts; and though just, honourable, and honest,

He had a frugal mind.

He was one of those sedate, moral, and careful souls who, though they cheat nobody, have no real affection for any thing but money, and who, although respected by all, are loved by no one; who are noncommittal on everything but pounds, shillings, and pence; who risk nothing in behalf of their best friend but advice; and who graduate their esteem, and regulate their bows by the length of their neighbours' purses. They are kind, good people; so says every body: they are forms of uncompounded selfishness: animated statues of stone; walking and speaking automatons, whose negative virtues are often worse than positive vices; so thinks every body. They believe they were sent here for no other purpose than to take care of themselves; and leaving that fair sample of the fraternity, Isaiah Mayfield, fully absorbed in this judicious and pleasing occupation, we will proceed with our history.

The mansion of George Warden was considered in its day as a fine specimen of architectural beauty, and its great age evidenced the attachment felt for it by the descendants of the builder. It was, however, too long, too low, and too wide to suit the more polished modern taste; had too many sheds, porches, and passages; and had, withal, windows on the roof to light the garret. It was situated on the brow of a long hill, and surrounded by oaks and walnuts, whose brawny arms had buffeted with the storms of a century, and interspersed with which were catalbers, locusts, and cedars of a smaller growth. From the great gate in front, a lane led down the hill to the creek of Little Alamance, and on the right and left of the bridge crossing the creek were large and level meadows dotted over with an occasional elm or poplar. A row of old and stately sycamores lined each side of the lane from the gate to the creek, and broad and well-cultivated fields were everywhere in view. The great gate stands open to-day, and a troop of negro children are lounging about it, ready to clamour "Christmas-gift" to each new-comer, and to take his horse; a large log-fire is blazing in the hall, and servants are running to and fro in busy preparation.

Old black Ben, with a solemn and portentous look and an air of authority, is everywhere in general and nowhere in particular; now rectifying the fires, now watching the progress of the egg-beaters, and occasionally at the gate, scolding at the mischievous boys and looking wistfully down the lane. The quiet of the morning is soon disturbed by a great hubbub, and the guests come pouring in, till the hall is filled. George Warden is to-day unusually gay, and captivates his guests with that lively and witty discourse for which, in his happy moments, he was more remarkable than any man of his time. Every trace of pride has vanished from his handsome but aristocratic face, every drop of acid seems purged from his temper, and on all subjects, except the literature of the Greeks and Romans, he is a full match for the master and the parson. His ancient, drouthy, trusty crony, Corny Demijohn, listens with both his ears, and stares with both his eyes, his heart all the while dancing within him to the ravishing music of Warden's voice, and his thundering laugh exploding at regular intervals like signal-guns or salutes of artillery. Mrs. Warden is also cheerful; but slight lines of care are visible in her noble face, and her stately form has lost some of its majesty by the blight of premature age. She welcomes her guests, however, with a smile, and

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

sends a warm sunshine through every breast. Her three children are petted and caressed by every one. Henry sits surrounded by the old men, who find in him an attentive listener to their reminiscences of the men and events of by-gone times. Kate, the second child, is spoke for by all the young men, and incessantly kissed by all the old maids, while Wash, sturdy little Wash, a miniature hero, is the butt of all the sharp shooters, upon whom he occasionally turns the tables and creates roars of laughter by his witty sallies. Thus things were progressing within the hall, when shouts and boisterous laughter in the yard brought the crowd to the doors and windows. Emerging from one of the negro cabins, there came, in a sort of running dance, and surrounded by a rout of negroes, children, and barking dogs, two fantastic figures in shape and stature unlike any thing upon or under the surface of the earth. They were male and female, and as loving as a married couple during the honeymoon. The former bore some slight resemblance to an enormous monkey, walking erect, having on his face a mask to suit the character, and a black bearskin cap upon his head, while there trailed behind him a long and magnificent tail. The other had not the pendulous ornament that so graced her partner, nor were the Egyptian beauties of her face concealed. The graceful rotundity of a fat ankle peeped from under her short petticoats, a huge turban waved upon her head, and a vast promontory behind indicated the presence of an article of dress which has since become the glory of modern belles. Each was bedizened with party-coloured rags and strips of striped cloth that waved and fluttered in the breeze, and attached to which bunches of rusty nails kept up a low, jingling music.

Clear the way for John O'Cooner and his wife! some one cried; and on they came, singing as none but negroes can sing, old John O'Cooner's song.

A ring had been formed, and within it, while singing, John O'Cooner and his wife immortalized their legs by feats which would astonish Ellsler or Celeste. The gallant gentleman, without missing a step, made frequent efforts to kiss his spouse, while she, coy as a maiden of sweet sixteen and active as a roe, would baffle his attempts, and sidle, with mincing airs, towards grinning and bashful young negroes, whom, for his wife's partialities, John would send rolling on their backs in the dirt. Sometimes a sedate old bechelor among the white men would be the object of Dinah's favours, and then, while the gentleman blushed and ran, the crowd huzzaed and shouted. Uncle Corny seemed to be her greatest favourite, and from place to place she pursued that solemn bachelor, whose troubles excited little sympathy among his friends. Small bits of coin were showered on the hard ground and miraculously gathered in a pile between the dancers, and as miraculously disappeared. While, however, Dinah was annoying the timid gentlemen with her attentions, her spouse was prodigiously troubled to preserve his tail sacred from the rude touch of mischievous boys, until, at length, that glory of his hinder side having disappeared, old John and his partner retreated to the kitchen, there to enjoy, with their fellow-servants, their Christmas grog, and to divide the spoils one half of which went to John's mother, an aged and decrepit negress.

Shall we describe the sumptuous dinner prepared by Mrs. Warden for her guests, and how it was duly honoured? Need we describe the great bowl of egg-nogg which stood in the centre of the table, and from which the glasses of the old men were often filled, while those of the young were emptied only once? Need we tell that, after dinner, old Ben, with his pupil Ike, scraped more music from their fiddles than they had ever done before? that the young folks romped, tried their fortunes, and practised (the male ones) with their rifles; and that the old ones smoked, told long stories, and discussed the signs of the times? Can we relate the troubles of Uncle Corny with the frolic-loving girls, the antics of Rust, or the discussions of the parson and master, who fell into a furious dispute about the Greek particles, and each of whom would often appeal to Dixon Tubroot, who was listening with edifying attention, and who understood as much of the matter as Sancho's ass did of his master's conversation?

Lo! all these things, together with what befel sundry diffident lovers, are written in the Book of the Chronicles of Christmas at Alamance. It is, however, not recorded there that Nathan Glutson had the temerity to be present at this party, and that he was the mildest, the smoothest, and most sweet-tempered man in the assembly meekly apologized to Warden for the remark he had made concerning him the day before, and cultivated Henry with devoted assiduity. Nor do the Chronicles relate the unhappiness of Isaiah Mayfield during the day, and the anxiety with which he watched his daughter. It was not to be expected that Edith, young, artless, and ingenuous, could act the cunning worldling's part, and, at her first essay, she made a total failure. Recollecting her father's advice, and

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

endeavouring to conform to his wishes, she met Henry Warden with coldness and reserve, excited his suspicions by her conduct, and finally had a quarrel with him, after which they spoke no more to each other during the day. The judge never could catch Edith's eye, though he looked often towards her; Edith remarked, also, that she never met the glance of Henry, though her eyes were bent not unfrequently on his face. Edith's father however, saw with lively sorrow that she and Henry were both sad and abstracted: he saw that their eyes turned incessantly towards each other, and he observed that once, when their glances met for an instant, each seemed startled and confused. His speculations, painful and profound, on the incidents of the day were at last interrupted by the arrival of a stranger. The new-comer was a gentleman of at least thirty, tall, muscular, and richly dressed, and seemed, by his air and manner, to have been accustomed to the exercise of authority. His features were harsh and prominent, and his complexion swarthy, while a deep scar upon his left temple added to the severity of a face whose expression denoted a fierce and turbulent disposition. The stranger at once enquired for Nathan Glutson, to whom he handed a letter, and who, after its perusal, introduced him to the company as a Mr. Ross, a gentleman of character and consequence, from a distant part of the province. As soon as this ceremony was over, Glutson, with his new friend, departed for his residence, leaving the assembled crowd to speculate on the stranger's appearance and his business.

My friends, said the Rev. Dr. Caldwell, solemnly, the times are dangerous, and it becometh every man to be watchful. I grieve to say it, but the love of truth and of my country compels me to declare to you that I like not Nathan Glutson. I believe he is unfriendly to the righteous cause of the colonies, and I believe this new friend of his is an emissary from our present wicked governor. Great events are on the wing a mighty contest is approaching, and the sword alone can decide it. I will not conceal from you my full conviction that war is inevitable, and it will be a war of many horrors. Not only will we have to fight a great nation, a nation who hate us as rebels and traitors, but our friends and neighbours will lift their hands against us. Brother will be against brother houses will be divided against themselves, and kindred will shed the blood of their relations. A long, a fierce, a terrible conflict is before us sufferings and trials such as the early martyrs endured will be our portion. We must choose these, or we must choose slavery; we must surrender our lives, or our liberties and our religion. Who will, then, be for his country and his God? Who is prepared to survive or perish with the glorious cause? Let him stand up now, that I may see who will play the coward or the recreant at Alamance!

There was a momentary silence and hesitation; when Hector M'Bride sprung to his feet, and instantly followed Henry Warden and his father, Corny Demijohn, Rust, who got upon a chair, Black Ben, and then all, old and young, male and female, excepting only Isaiah Mayfield, whose painful doubts M'Bride solved by lifting him to his feet and holding him in that position. The evening gloaming was coming on, and the influence of that still and twilight hour was felt.

And now, continued the reverend patriot, slowly and impressively, we do here, in the presence of each other, and before Heaven's high clancery, pledge ourselves to stand by our country and by our rights, at every hazard, and at the risk of health, property, and life itself. Our vow is recorded in heaven, and may the God of battles be with us in the day of our trial!

Amen! responded many voices, and immediately there arose in the yard a strain of wild and plaintive melody that melted softly into the heart of every hearer. It was one of those simple and pathetic airs so common among the negroes of the South, and which, to those who have been accustomed to them in their youth, come like the music of Caryl, sweet but mournful to the soul, waking in their breasts in every clime, at every age, and in the midst of the busy pursuits of avarice and ambition, recollections, sad and tender, of the homes of their childhood and of their thousand hallowed associations, of scattered friends, of parental smiles, and of the merry and dear old times that are gone. Louder, richer, and more melodious swelled that strain now sung by the mellow voices of many sable minstrels, till many an aged cheek was moist with tears, and withered hands were locked in friendly embrace, in memory o' auld lang syne. As the last notes, more solemn, soft, and pathetic, died away, the Alamancers took a silent and affectionate leave of each other, the old full of reminiscences of the past, the young of bright anticipations for the future.

CHAPTER VIII. LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

HENRY WARDEN retired on Christmas night to a sleepless couch. The early beams of the morning had gladdened no happier heart than his; the shadows of the succeeding night summoned to rest no one more wretched. For the first time in his life he began to reflect on the strange anomalies in human nature, and, with emotions difficult to express, he read a new page in the book of life. He was affected by the conduct of Edith Mayfield more than he chose to acknowledge even to himself: and for a while giddy with the new train of thoughts which her conduct inspired, he gave himself up to the most gloomy reflections. The behaviour of Edith indicated a disposition that astonished him; and if, thought he, such be the character of the purest and best, what is woman? Alternations of light and darkness flitted through his mind, but the fitful gleams of hope seemed only to deepen the quick-succeeding gloom, even as the lucid interval in the fevered patient's dream serves only to enhance the frightful horrors of his perturbed fancy.

He ran over in his mind the whole history of his acquaintances with Edith, endeavouring to recollect all her kind words, looks, and actions, to satisfy himself that she once had liked him more than she did any other. He thought if she had formerly preferred him her recent conduct was caused by jealousy, or some private pique, and was not, therefore, so much to be regretted. As soon, however, as he persuaded himself into a belief of her attachment, the whole fabric of evidence would dissolve and melt away, and leave him bitterly lamenting that he had been the dupe of his own fancy. Then, the sooner he could forget her the better. So he reasoned; but as soon as he came to this conclusion he would be shocked at the idea of quitting the society and losing the friendship of one who, from childhood, had shared all his thoughts. The dissolution of ties thus formed would, he felt, sever every other that bound him to the world, and make him mistrust, if not actually hate, all his kind. Thus troubled, the night was far spent when he fell into an unquiet sleep. With the morning came fresher feelings and calmer counsels, and Henry was astonished at his misgivings and irresolution on the night before. His determination was quickly formed, and he was confident that he would soon come to a good understanding with Edith. That day, however, she did not come to school, nor the next, nor the next. Impatient at last to see her, he persuaded M'Bride to accompany him, on Saturday, to her father's. He there, to his great surprise, found William Glutson and Mr. Ross, the former of whom seemed to be on excellent terms with Squire Mayfield, while the latter was paying not unacceptable attentions to the daughter. Henry was greeted coldly by Edith, politely by her father, and warmly and kindly by Mrs. Mayfield, whose manner seemed more cordial to him than it had ever been before. The judge, usually slow and cautious in forming his opinions, was hasty, firm, and decided when his judgment was fixed, and threats and persuasions were alike unavailing to move him.

His determination was fixed the moment he saw Edith, and that was, to declare himself a lover, and know at once her opinion of him. For the first time he acknowledged to himself that he did love her, and as he gazed on her while in animated conversation with Ross, he wondered that he had never before known how enchantingly sweet were those smiles now lavished on another, nor remarked on the beauty of her face and the grace of her figure. In fact, he had seen before only her mind and her heart, and held communion with them; but now that these were estranged from him, he looked with admiration on the fair casket which contained the jewel now locked from his sight.

Edith had not reached her fifteenth year, but mind and body had been of rapid growth. Her figure, though slight, was beginning to round with full proportions, and she was in that delightful state where the traces of the girl are fading and the budding woman begins to appear. Her form, cast in a mould rather slender, was perfectly symmetrical, and her light, bounding step showed that, though delicate, her constitution was not frail. Her features, though not entirely regular, were of the Grecian cast, except her lips, which were rather of the pouting Egyptian order, and through which, when parted, were displayed two rows of diminutive teeth, which the nicest judge would have taken for pearl. Her complexion, which was a light brunette, looked whiter by its contrast with her dark, luxuriant hair, which fell over a round, smooth, and slender neck, and shaded the ever-fresh roses in her

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

velvet cheeks. The crowning glory of her face, however, was the expression, more intellectual than passionate, and more ethereal than intellectual, lent to it by her large and tender eyes. These were of a hazel colour, were very slightly convex, and gleamed with a perpetual sparkle, expressing more eloquently than words could do the bright fancies and the innocent thoughts of a heart stainless as her own marble brow; of a soul where dwelt truth, tenderness, and sensibility. It was impossible to look on such a creature without feeling an interest in her, and Henry Warden felt that he had rather not live at all than to live an exile from her society. Here was the sun of his soul, and only in its light could he be happy; and yet, with the whimsical caprice of those in his situation, when the subject of love was introduced, he ridiculed the passion as the offspring of weak minds and of distempered fancies. He was in a whirl of excitement, intoxicated with emotion, and scarcely knew what he said, and yet never had he been so witty or so eloquent.

And do you not believe that there is such a thing as love? asked Ross.

There is, answered the judge, a tender, refined, and sublime sentiment which proves the immortality of the soul in which it springs, for it is boundless and insatiable in its desires, and endless in duration. It is, in fact, the incense of an immortal spirit, a spark kindled from a celestial source, and marking the heart in which it burns as an altar sanctified by the Deity for the holiest offerings. Perhaps all of our race the male portion of it at least are capable of this sentiment. In some, however, the flame, when excited, burns feebly and dimly, and in others the latent heat is so smothered by the intense selfishness of their natures that it can never be developed. Fire is said to be an element existing to some extent in every substance; but who can strike sparks from ice, or kindle love in woman?

If she have a soul and I sometimes doubt it its higher attributes are, like her personal charms in a fashionable dress, entirely concealed and distorted by the freaks of a capricious fancy.

I must defend the ladies from your aspersions, replied Ross; I will not answer by arguments, but by facts facts which I know of my own knowledge. I have seen instances of attachment in women whose devotion was proved by the severest trials, and whose disinterestedness was shown by the unworthiness and cruelty of the objects of their love.

And that, said the judge, only proves my rule. Woman may love, for she is capable of the passion; but did a *gentleman* ever inspire it in her? Is she not a bundle of such singular absurdities that her love and her hatred are always alike misplaced? I sometimes think she is a sort of living phenomenon intended to represent all the passions a genuine Pandora's box a piece of patchwork made up of the odds and ends of all animals in creation a sort of menagerie in herself, where the dove and the kite, the serpent and the sparrow, the gilded butterfly and the unsightly bat, the gluttonous sloth and the air-feeding chameleon, are all exhibited. It is a free show, except in some cases, when a nuptial ring is necessary to gain admission behind the scenes where the wolf and virago play their pranks.

Now I know you are jesting, exclaimed Ross, for it is impossible that one so young, and with your face, can have a heart so bitter. You have, perhaps, been disappointed, and vent your spleen in charges, which you do not believe, on all the sex.

I may be wrong, replied Henry Warden, and, to tell you the truth, I hope I am. I have sometimes dreamed that I might yet find a creature, gentle, tender, and fair, with a bright, immortal soul, and a heart where pure, fervent, and eternal love will dwell, growing brighter and brighter amid the trials of life and the frowns of adversity. I once believed that such would be my fate, and sweet was that dream of my early boyhood! It was, I fear, a mere dream. The full fruition of such love would equal the joys of the primeval Eden, and we are told that a flaming sword forever guards that Paradise against the entrance of fallen and sinful mortals.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

As he spoke, his eye, for an instant, caught that of Edith, and there was a meaning in her glance and a slight glow upon her cheek. She immediately left the room, and, when she returned, her manner was again cold and formal towards her former friend. The judge could get no opportunity to carry out his purpose, and, resolving to write, he and M'Bride, after a rather dull and cheerless dinner, took the road to Warden's. On the way the judge opened his heart to the master, and declared his intention of writing to Edith.

Be guided by me, said the master, and do not be guilty of such folly. For the present, at least, your suit will be hopeless.

The Judge. Do you think, then, she is pleased with Ross?

The Master. By no means: but I know that he is pleased with her. My young friend, I wish you to listen attentively to what I say, and remember I speak for your good. Old Mayfield is a man of correct principles and honest purposes, but he has not the nerve, moral or physical, to pursue or defend the right, when there is the least opposition. He is devoted to policy, or, rather, if I may say so of a good man, to cunning, and squares his life by a few worldly maxims. Such a one may be successful and popular in the 'piping times of peace,' but becomes utterly contemptible in a crisis. A crisis has arrived, and our friend Mayfield begins to waver like a reed in the wind.

The Judge. But what is all this to the purpose?

The Master. Listen, and you will see. A war with England is inevitable a long, a bloody, and a trying war. It has already begun, and it will end only with the extermination of the patriots or the INDEPENDENCE of these colonies. Mayfield sees the coming storm, and he is beginning to trim and shift his sails to suit every wind. His heart is with us, but he wants, in the end, to be in favour with the winning side. Did you observe his conduct to Ross and to Ross's friend, Glutson, who struck Edith the other day?

The Judge. I did, and I was astonished.

The Master. I was not. This man, Ross, is from the Scotch settlements, and his business is to attend to the interests of the royalists. Nathan Glutson is, beyond all question, opposed to the patriots; he is, no doubt, known to the governor, and he is to give Ross such information as he may want. Glutson knows the character of Mayfield; he has made his son apologize for his conduct to Edith, and has sent Ross there to win the old man over. The Scotchman, I believe, has fallen in love, and is about to forget his business: and Mayfield, to whom he has talked, has observed his attachment and rejoices at it. He is undertaking a deep and heartless game he will himself cultivate the patriots, and he intends that his daughter shall conciliate the royalists.

The Judge, passionately. Then Edith is to be sacrificed!

The Master. By no means. Old Mayfield intends that this suit shall be in progress during the war. At its end, if we are successful, Ross's hopes are blasted; if we are defeated, Edith will have you, if she loves you. My friend, forget her, at least for the present.

The Judge. I cannot; I would not, if I could.

The Master. Remember your own conversation of this morning. One constituted as you are should never love, for it will lead you to unutterable misery. Your passion will not be requited it cannot be by any woman on earth.

The Judge. I would fain believe I was wrong this morning; and, indeed, I had rather be dead than to believe fully what I then said. Let me at least have faith and hope, for what would life be without them?

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The Master. The beginning of happiness such happiness as grows on this barren earth is skepticism. Credulity is the parent of love, and love is a delirium that injures all wrecks many. *See the world as it is and love nothing*, and you will then be really wise, and wisdom is peace.

The Judge. Sir, let me remain in ignorance forever, if such be the wretchedness of wisdom. But it cannot be so, else why did our Creator endow us with such capabilities?

The Master. Our Maker did not design that man's sublimest passion should be wasted on vain and perishable things. All must learn this at last. I have learned it by bitter experience, and it is on this account I obtrude my advice upon you. I wish to teach you what experience sooner or later will certainly teach you, that God, and the great and good works in which he delights, must engage those tender and lofty sentiments of which you are capable, and which you are offering now at the shrine of a dumb and senseless idol. In the infancy of the world the nations worshipped gods of wood and stone, the work of their own hands; even thus all men, when young, offer the pure adoration of their hearts upon the altar of deities blind as Baal and Dagon, and which their own distempered fancies have created and made divine. When, as they will at last, their eyes open, and the altar and the god sink together, the disappointed votary destroys himself, or returns to the true God and to his everlasting purposes, and finds an anchor for his soul. This Deity is now engaged in one of his mighty works, and to that you should wed your heart.

The Judge. Will this work fill the boundless measure of my love? Can it satisfy the cravings of the soul after the great, the grand, and beautiful?

The Master. It will! it will! It is the sublimest, the noblest cause that ever yet engaged the affections of men. It is the great cause of the human race, now about to burst its fetters and assert its high prerogative! Prometheus is about to break his bonds; MAN is going to claim his rights! I see before me, in the dim future, a glorious spectacle; I see a new earth, and a new people; a great, a noble, and a mighty race, whose faces shine with the majesty of freemen; and tyrants and their slaves lie buried in the wrecks of the past!

The Judge. Are you not dreaming? I suspect that even you are sometimes captivated by the creations of your own fancy.

The Master. Henry, I am not an enthusiast, I hope. I have had a varied experience, and the frosts of more than thirty-five winters have cooled the fires of fancy. I have seen much I have read much I have thought much. I have, too, enjoyed the friendship and listened to the conversation of one whose name will be a light and a glory to all future ages. I allude to Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, who, with me, believes that a new era is about to dawn. A great revolution is about to be achieved, and those who assist in effecting it will be revered through all coming time. In this glorious cause I wish you to enlist; I wish you to show what you are, kindred with the other mighty spirits that are blended in a union sublime. Will you dedicate yourself to the work?

The eyes of the judge filling with tears, he silently took the hand of his friend, and for a moment neither spoke.

I understand you, said the master at length; and now that your purpose is fixed, I will show you the importance of forgetting Edith by a chapter of my own experience. I will, if you will have the patience to listen, give you a sketch of my life; and you will see that, though it has been like that of others, 'of a mingled yarn, good and evil,' the love-touches have all been evil.

The judge, expressing great willingness, and even curiosity, to hear the adventures of his friend, the master thus proceeded:

CHAPTER IX. THE STORY OF HECTOR M'BRIDE.

My father was a canny Scot; my mother was also from the land o' cakes; and they were married in Scotland. Soon after this event, they emigrated, and settled in the village of , in the colony of Pennsylvania. My father had a few hundred pounds in ready cash, with which he, in a humble way, commenced business. By his prudence, frugality, and industry, the small store soon grew to be a large and fashionable dry-goods establishment; and at last he was reputed to be one of the wealthiest men in all that country. Of course, he was not sparing of pains or money in the education of the sole heir to his fortune and representative of his name; and I flatter myself, that although an only child, I was not altogether unworthy of this care. I take no credit to myself for not being a rowdy and vagabond, like other sole sons and heirs; I attribute it all to the manner in which I was raised. My mother, who is now a bright saint in heaven, was my first teacher; and under her tuition I remained until I was a lad some thirteen years old, my principles fixed, and my habits formed. Thence I was transferred to a select Latin school, kept by a clergyman in his own house, and who limited the number of his pupils to ten. From this worthy, exemplary, and pious man. I was taken at the age of seventeen, and carried to Philadelphia, where I was put under the charge of the Rev. Robert M'Guire, D.D., an old schoolmate of my father, a learned man, and famous divine. He was a bachelor, and his house was kept by an ancient maiden sister, Miss Kitty M'Guire, who was the exact counterpart of her brother, bating only the roughness of his manners and the extreme cultivation of his mind. Miss Kitty was as simple-hearted as a child; so was the doctor, her brother, and so was I. My preceptor and myself saw the world as it was reflected from the mirror in our own breasts; we studied human nature in books, learned from Plato the character of love, and believed all women to be Sapphos, Penelopes, and Lucretias. My final destination was the bar; and, as preparatory to this, my Rev. friend God rest his soul! plunged me into the bottomless sea of metaphysics and theologies. Here I floundered among an endless jargon of names, terms, sects, creeds, theories and systems, and grappled about with Catholicism, Socinianism, Arianism, Neologism, and a thousand other *isms*, at the bare recollection of which, even at this distant day, my temples throb and my brain aches. But my teacher was really a man of taste and learning; and so, after wading me through the dead seas of antiquity, he polished me off with the modern sciences and accomplishments; in short, I was what I thought every gentleman especially every legal gentleman ought to be: a thorough scholar. I was learned in Latin, Greek, and French; mathematics, physics, and metaphysics; well read in poetry, ancient and modern, and could make gentlemanly verses in several languages; could quote history *ad libitum*, talk learnedly with physicians and naturalists, and take a hand in the discussions of divines.

Such was the furniture with which my mind was equipped, and yet I was not happy; for I wanted food for the heart. In all my occupations, a feeling of loneliness would creep upon me a desire, a longing for something, I knew not what. I had an eye for all that was beautiful in nature and art; an ear for all that was melodious; and a heart that rung responsive to every touch of tenderness. Every change of the seasons the wild flowers, the solitary woods, the blue heavens, the clouds and stars, spoke to me and sang to me; but they spoke of the sympathy of a gentle being whose constellated soul they but reflected, and the burden of their song was love love pure as the first blossoms of Spring, tender as the poet's thoughts, bright as the sun, and lasting as eternity. Who was she, this fair and gentle being, whose smile lent all its beauty to Nature; whose tenderness was the light of the world? I took it for granted she was one of my female fellow-mortals, and so I went to look for her. I was what is called in the schools, verdant, and imagined every woman was like the fairest creations of a poet's fancy. My fortune, education, and connections gave me a passport to the first society in the city; and I was, so to speak, soon fairly afloat, an unarmed argosy on a pirate sea. Take notice, I was not hunting a wife: I was, in fact, determined not to marry for several years, and was only looking about me for my pleasure, about to try the reality of love. To my astonishment, I was everywhere received with kindness; and I thought all the ladies seemed to vie with each other in efforts to make me happy. I found every one poetical, literary, and sentimental; every one laughed with me at those gross mortals who were distressed with the marriage-mania, and every one believed in pure and disinterested love, for which, and for which only she intended to wed. What a delightful world is this! thought I; and in the mean time, as I fed on thoughts which voluntary move harmonious numbers, I began to pour out my

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

heart in rhymes, all of which were admired and quoted. To show you in what miserable follies my youth indulged, I will quote a few of my epigrams and shorter pieces, all of which were impromptu, and caused by some remark or action of my acquaintances. Miss Malvina Tinkerwhittle was often complaining of her name said it was unpoetical, and had never shone in verse or history. One day, hearing her so speak, I immediately sat down and wrote the following:

TO MISS MALVINA.

You say you do not like your name,
And wish you had a sweeter one:
That yours was never known to fame,
Nor in a poet's numbers shone.
If of the past these words be true,
The future surely shall be thine;
For Fame thy beauty soon shall woo,
And at thy feet shall be its shrine.
E'en now, there's one to whom its sound
Is sweeter far than any word
That is in any language found,
Or any note in music heard.
I've seen it writ a thousand times
I've seen it kissed from eve to morn
I've seen it in a hundred rhymes,
And know that near a heart its worn.
It follows, then, that all that's good
And fair must in the owner meet;
For none but a dear angel could
E'er make an ugly name so sweet!

Miss Malvina, who was much tickled at the piece, showed it to her friends; and the next time I saw Miss Sophronia Marryat she attacked me for having been more complimentary to others than to her. What could I do? I went home, and that night composed the following verses, which I sent to her next morning:

TO SOPHRONIA.

You say I never speak to you
In honeyed strains of compliment;
The charge, dear one, in part is true,
But not as broad as it was meant;
For if my lips refuse to pay
Just tribute to thy virtues rare,
My heart does homage, night and day,
And all thy worth is pictured there.
There's not a star in you clear skies
That has a light so sweet for me,
As that which beams from thy blue eyes,
So full of love and purity:
There's not a flower in all the field,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

That is to me so passing fair,
As thy dear face, when its frowns yield
To those sweet smiles more native there!
And now, while nature's locked in sleep,
And silence rules the witching hour,
While stars their quiet vigils keep,
And bind me with a mystic power,
While you bright queen, with glory crowned,
Lights earth and heaven with her soft smile,
Till night, beneath her sway spell-bound,
Seems softly sad and sweetly wild,
Dear thoughts of thee float through the mind,
Like moonbeams through the dusky air;
And hopes, in darkness long contined,
Now gleam with soft effulgence there.
Sweet lady then forgive the lay
That breathes my soul's long-cherished aim,
For smothered love will force its way,
And the heart's secret hopes proclaim.
Forgive this once, and never more
My heart shall force its silent cell,
But there, with darkness curtained o'er,
Will feed on thoughts I'll never tell.

A few days after the reception of these stanzas by the lady for whom they were written, the lines to Miss Malvina Tinkerwhittle were returned to me, sealed up in a blank envelope. I do not believe I am as vain as most men, yet I am mortal; and it is not to be expected that I can with indifference see my compositions scornfully treated. The offspring of the brain is dearer to the author than the suckling infant to the most tender mother: and this is true in all cases, whatever be the motive for writing. The father may himself think his progeny ungainly, misshapen, ill-featured, and even monstrous; still, he cannot endure for others to tell him so, and those whose trade it is to point out these blemishes to unfortunate parents are a generation of vipers, or, rather, may be compared to those filthy flies or insects who feed upon the sores in our flesh, and swarm about the butcher's shambles in search of putrid meat. I had written the effusion to Malvina to gratify her vanity, not my own, and yet when she sent my production back I was wounded to the quick. A sharp correspondence sprung up between us, and from pungent it got to be acrimonious, and finally ended in a bitter quarrel, in which I got worsted; for it was generally reported that I had made proposals of marriage and been rejected. I unfolded all my sorrows to the sympathetic Anastasia Grindeman, who agreed with me that Miss Malvina was very unreasonable, and who assured me that she herself knew how to treat the coinage of a poet's soul. I understood her at once, and, regretting that my muse had slighted so sweet a theme, I endeavoured to atone for past neglect, and wrote to her voluminously. Now I had, in the mean time, and at her request, put a ring on one of her fingers with a wish, and at her command I related the wish in rhyme. I will repeat it to you.

TO ANASTASIA A Wish.

We all were wishing t'other day,
And curious was the want of each:
Some wished for fortune, some would pray
For gifts beyond all mortal reach;
While others, with ambition tired,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

With princely power aspired to reign;
Some wished a wife, and some desired
Exemption from all earthly pain;
But what, sweet lady, would you guess
Was then, and is, chief wish with me?
One which I did not then express,
And do it now most fearfully.
You hardly will believe, I fear,
I wished I were the thousandth part
In *her* unsullied breast as dear
As she's long been within my heart;
For if I were, I'd then believe
She'd spend with me *one life* at least,
Since I could well *a thousand* live
With her, and be forever blest!

In the course of a few days this very innocent production returned to me, and on the margin were these words:

Miss Anastasie has duly considered the offer of Mr. M'Bride, and regrets that she cannot accept it. She esteems him as a friend, but it is impossible for her ever to feel for him a more tender sentiment. She will be obliged if he will forget his unhappy passion, and remember, only with esteem,

Anastasie.

Suppose the blue concave above us, which some believe a solid body, were to crack and fall, bringing with it sun, moon, and stars, crushing worlds together, and heaping the universe in one pile of ruins could you, unharmed, witness all this, you would not be more astonished, amazed, than I was at Anastasia's note. In the utter simplicity of my heart, I immediately wrote a letter to the lady in question, politely informing her that she was mistaken; to which she answered, briefly, that she was sorry I took her for an idiot. I replied sharply; a caustic rejoinder followed, and, finally, she became fiercely hostile, and endeavoured in every possible way to mortify and insult me, and injure my reputation. She accused me of falsehood, deceit, fickleness, and double-dealing; ridiculed me as wife-mad; and, among her female companions, made herself merry at my expense. My troubles were now thickening; my poetry began to return from all quarters of the compass, and every day there was a servant at my door with a bundle in his hand. On some pieces there were the words, "Your rhyming trash is returned;" some contained notes similar to that of Anastasia; and, in the course of one week, I received in this way fifteen refusals at least a dozen of them coming from ladies whom I had not seen or written to for a month previous.

As my unfortunate verses came showering upon me, I noticed a singular fact. The ladies, when aiming to be pleasing and sentimental, had a way of Frenchifying their names, and I never received a tender or a complimentary note but what it was signed Bettie, Sallie, Marie, Florindie, Peggie, Ruthie, Marthie, &c., &c. Such were the holyday signatures with which they shone on state occasions, or when fishing for admirers; but, when venting their indignation, their splenetic effusions came in the homely names of Elizabeth, Margaret, and Sarah, in full. Thus, I began to think, you keep your smiles and sweetness for the public; your frowns and claws for the unfortunate wights who call you wives; but this was a sentiment too dangerous to avow. Accidentally I acquired another rare piece of information, and I will detail it to you, that you may understand the true character of those creatures whom we absurdly take to be of a more celestial nature. Would you think it? I ascertained, from sources entitled to credit, that every handsome girl, as soon as she quits school, sets her brain to work in the composition of a pretty sentence, to be used on certain interesting and momentous occasions. Most of my acquaintances, as I understood, had spent weeks in this grave and improving

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

occupation, and, after finally suiting themselves, first recorded and then committed to memory the result of their labours. Thus all the suitors of each lady were rejected in precisely the same language, and thus it was the deceitful things were enabled to speak so prettily on such embarrassing occasions. *_

* NOTE BY THE EDITOR. The master, from whose papers might be compiled *The Curiosities of Woman*, preserved the formulæ alluded to. The writer of this note, believing that no such custom now prevails, hopes he will be gratifying the curious, and offending no one, by inserting here some of those sentences that in their day pierced many a lover's heart:

You have my friendship; ask me for no more.

I cannot love you; in friendship's name, I beg you, do not distress me so again.

If you are as truly my friend as I am yours, you will not again ask me for what I cannot give; for the will has no control over the heart.

See me no more, or see me only as a friend.

There is no charm to *win* the heart: its love is free.

My heart is free: *you* never can enslave it.

I thank you for the honour you have done me; I will be your friend, but my heart I cannot control.

The fates decide to us divide,
For still my little heart says nay;
I cannot be your bonny bride,
But for your happiness will pray.

This last was the formula of a nymph who weighed some thirteen stone neat *i. e.*, without her .

The spell is over, the charm is dissolved
I love thee no more

Was used by several coquettes; and the following is a specimen of the formula to be written to absent lovers:

Oh, never must we meet again,
Unless you come as but a friend!

About this same time, a tall, stout, and whiskered cousin of Sophronia Marryat called upon me; and, after a very dry salutation, he remarked, twirling his whiskers, that he had come to demand an explanation of my conduct. He was a gentleman with whom I had been intimate, and, more hurt than alarmed at his manner, I enquired what part of my conduct had given him offence at the same time assuring him that I had never to my knowledge desired to injure him in any way.

You have trifled with my cousin, sir, said he, fiercely, and you must fight. Here are two pistols; take your choice, and let us settle the business in this very room. The door is locked, sir, and the key in my pocket; and if

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

you do not choose to fight like a man, I shall cowhide you like a dog, and post you as a coward all over the city.

Now, I had been for some time past so much engaged with my many quarrels, that I had totally forgotten Sophronia and her poetry, and could not, for the life of me, understand to what my warlike enemy alluded. I disliked, therefore, to fight, as it were, in the dark, not knowing for what I was risking my life; but equally great was my dislike of the cowhide.

Sir, I am a schoolmaster, and it ill becomes me to preach against the use of the rod. There are cases that demand its application, but the ingenuous soul will never deserve and never permit such a degrading punishment. My back has never yet been striped by parent or teacher; and, peaceful as I am, and much as I fear God and desire to keep his commandments, I tell you that whoever lays a whip or a cowhide on me, in anger, must atone for it with his blood. I cannot help it; and I pray God to deliver me from the temptation.

I arose to my feet, and, taking up a chair, I informed Sophronia's cousin that I was opposed to the barbarous and murderous custom of duelling, not because I feared for the life of my body, but for the salvation of my soul. I told him, also, that I was not afraid of him, or any other man on earth, and that if he attempted to strike me with the emblem of infamy which he held in his hand, I should dash his brains out on the spot. And now, I continued, if you cannot act like a rational man, and specify your cause of grievance, you will please to leave my room, or I shall find a passage for your body, although the door is locked.

Before he had time to reply, my reverend friend and preceptor, Dr. M'Guire, was making a great fuss at the door, and my room-mate, who evidently began to be ashamed of himself, immediately admitted the parson. The old gentleman, suspecting the business we had been engaged in, roundly lectured us both; and when he concluded, Sophronia's cousin, who was a passionate but a frank and generous man, at once promised that the quarrel should end for the present, and, to satisfy the doctor and induce him to withdraw, he handed him all his weapons. I now learned that Miss Marryat had induced her cousin to believe that I had solemnly engaged myself to her, and that after this I had deserted her, and had been endeavouring to victimize others, until I was found out. I managed to satisfy the gentleman of his cousin's falsehood only to a near relation would I accuse any lady of falsehood I showed him a copy of the unfortunate verses I had given her, explained the circumstances under which they were written, and gave a full history of all my other scrapes. His indignation was now directed against her, and he would have gone immediately to her and have upbraided her for her treachery, but I would not let him. He, however, became my devoted friend, warmly espoused my cause, defended me on all occasions, and is to this day sincerely attached to me.

When he left me, I reflected on what I had heard, and fearing that Miss Marryat might consider herself in fault, I went immediately to her, and made proposals of marriage, which she, of course, rejected. I did not press the matter; and, knowing that a second offer would have been accepted, I was careful not to make it.

I now made a grand discovery; I ascertained, in the first place, that I had been a fool, and, in the second, that the ladies had been playing upon me. I found out, to my utter astonishment, that every one supposed me to be a wife-hunter, and that this was my sole occupation. I soon ascertained the cause of this opinion, for I found that the minds of women, long before they grow up, are totally absorbed by the subject of marriage, and that they think every time a gentleman pays them a visit he is looking about for a wife. There is no social intercourse between the unmarried people of different sexes in this country, and it is universally supposed that every man who has attained his majority is rabid to get married. Hence I was regarded by all as the Great Rejected as a man who had determined to marry, had tried every body, and been refused by every respectable lady of his acquaintance; and all this happened, too, before I had ever made up my mind to wed or been in love. I found, also, that women were educated for one purpose, lived for one end, thought of but one thing, to wit, to get husbands; that their simplicity was all art, their tenderness and sensibility all feigned, their love, to call it by its most polite name, all passion; that a husband, a mere man with a straight leg, a good estate, and a fine equipage, bounded all their wants, filled the full measure of their souls' desires, and that hence, because I was not a marrying man, I had got

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

into trouble with the sex. I therefore withdrew, to a great extent, from female society, giving way to a new star that about this time began to culminate. This was a medical student from Virginia, and a very unfair specimen of the cavaliers of that renowned old colony. He was of a low, squat figure, with a short, thick neck, a harsh, dissonant voice, and a face indicative of nothing but the most beastly sensuality, while he danced and walked like a drunken satyr. This form was the tenement of a weak and ignorant mind, and of a base and selfish heart. He was vain, pompous, and impudent as the devil himself; in all his feelings, conversation, and actions, there was never displayed the faintest spark of sensibility or honour, and, take him altogether, he was the purest and most unmixed compound of vulgarity and brutal passions I ever saw. He had brought to Philadelphia a letter from a gentleman resident in Virginia, but known all over the continent; and in this letter he was recommended to various families in the city as the only scion and heir of an illustrious and wealthy house in the colony from which he came. Notwithstanding his high descent, and his great pretensions, he was universally detested by the gentlemen, not a few of whom, disgusted with his effrontery and arrogant assumptions, denounced him in his presence, and some even went so far as to spit in his face and strike him publicly with whips and cowhides. He bore these things meekly among the men, and became a hero among the women, with whom he was extremely popular, and who permitted him to use very unbecoming familiarities. I have observed one singular peculiarity about the sex, and it is worthy of note they are governed by fashion, and they will all do what others do. Let Hyperion and Apollo come among them, and be supposed to be unpopular with the sex, and all womankind will hate them; and let Puck and Caliban appear at the same time as characters who have been successful, and all the sex dote upon them. Thus it was with the Virginia student. Possessed of a little cunning, he began with the vain and weak, and, succeeding with these, he came to be so irresistible that, in all cases, he saw and conquered. All fell before him, and with some he took unwonted freedoms; but, as I detest tales of scandal, I shall not repeat the many infamous reports that were current. As the popularity of this gentleman increased among the females, mine decreased; and I saw that multitudes of my old friends were making capital out of the imagined addresses which I had paid them. I ascertained this fact by a peculiar test, in a certain fashionable article of dress. You must know that ladies estimate their own importance according to the number of beaux which they have had the honour of turning off, and that these honours are evidenced, not like the degrees in our colleges and universities, by diplomas on parchment, but after the manner of certain oriental dignitaries. Thus we had, in Philadelphia, the pashaw of one tail, of two, and of three tails, or, what was the same thing, one tale as large as three, and some of our chief belles took so many degrees that their identity was lost, and they were completely swallowed up in the type of their glory. Now I observed that most of my acquaintances had taken a new degree, and supposing that they considered this accession to their honours as causing a corresponding diminution of my own, I avoided them, and mingled only with those who had not grown in importance, and who did not seem to fancy the Virginia student. These were the tests by which I and other gentlemen judged the merits of the ladies, and, judging by these tests, there was one who greatly won upon my esteem. She was a quiet and diffident creature, whom, in the days of my glory, I had scarcely observed, and who, perhaps, never would have attracted my attention but for an accident. I was with her once at a party, and, some one desiring to hear her sing, I was delighted with the sweetness and pathos of her voice, and by the words of her song. As I remember these latter even to this day, and as they have a peculiar relish for me, I will repeat them.

ROTHA'S SONG.

Some love the morn's pale, twilight gleams,
And some the evening's golden beams,
While others crave, with fond delight,
The deep'ning shadows of the night,
When the blue canopy above
Is lit with countless eyes of love.
Tho' every phase of nature's face
Still has for me a matchless grace,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Oh, give to me the noon-tide hour,
To lie in some fair rustic bower,
Where, wafted on the perfumed breeze,
The softened hum of distant bees
Falls on the ear in melody,
Like far-off spirit minstrelsy!
Sweet fancies, then, of brighter climes,
And mem'ries dear of by-gone times,
And the day-dreams of early youth,
When I knew naught but love and truth,
And this cold, thorny world of ours
Was blooming with celestial flowers,
And hopes and joys, forever fled,
And faces of the early dead,
From every taint of earth refined,
Float softly through the dreamy mind!
I've gazed upon all earthly toys,
I've tasted of all worldly joys,
I've bowed at Beauty's gilded shrines,
I've wept o'er Fiction's melting lines,
I've glowed with friendship's thankless flame;
I've felt the stings that follow fame,
I've laughed and roamed through festive hall,
I've drunk of love's most bitter gall,
And, for a short and fleeting hour,
Have worn the chains of wealth and power:
Yet vain these pleasures now all seem
As mocking phantoms of a dream,
And not a joy can this earth give,
For which my soul would deign to live;
But the sweet fancies of the mind,
And mem'ries dear 'o' auld lang syne.'
Then give to me the still noon-tide,
When through the soul soft visions glide
Of vanished hopes, and happier times,
Of holier love and brighter climes!

These words and the air, as I before said, made a deep impression on me; and, going to the lady, I was happy to find that this was her favourite song. We soon became intimate; I visited her often, and every time I saw her she took a deeper hold upon my feelings. She possessed a distinct individuality of character, a rare thing in a woman, for they are generally cut by the same pattern. She thought much for herself another rare thing and, to save you a long description, she was one of those precious gems, whose beauty and whose value are ever increasing as you examine them, and known only to the nicest judges. She was inclined also to be pensive, and finding that the cause was her father's fondness for the young Virginian, and that she detested him, I became still more interested, and soon I loved with all the fervour of my nature I loved her. Those who can say so, in plain words, to the object of their preference are strangers to the passion. My actions, my manners, my eyes, my verses, and my presents told her, in a thousand ways, and with a thousand tongues, that she was dear to me; and a similar language, in similar but softer ways, she spoke to me. Just at this time my father sent for me, and I found him a bankrupt. He had invested three-fourths of his estate in a speculation in Boston; his partner proved to be dishonest, and incompetent, and he not only lost all his capital, but the debts of the concern, to more than this amount, were coming on him in showers. I was informed that I must hereafter rely upon myself, and that I was now the only

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

prop of my parents in their declining years. I returned to Philadelphia for my books and clothes, and to declare my passion to Rotha.

This, you will say, was rash; but you must know that misfortunes subdue the heart, and press out its secrets. I now felt the need of sympathy and of affection to sustain me in my trials, and desired to know certainly that I was beloved; and then, full of the hope and energy of youth, I would strain every faculty of soul and body to prepare myself for a happy union with the sweet object to whom my soul was wedded. With tears in her eyes she had bade me farewell when I left the city; with a bright smile she welcomed my return. I at once declared my sentiments; and, as I pressed my suit with the eloquence which love alone can inspire, she wept and sobbed in my arms, and referred me to her father. To him I applied by letter a long, and as I then thought, a masterly production, vindicating my passion and my conduct, and pledging myself, on the honour of a gentleman, never to claim the prize if I did not, to the letter, fulfil any condition which he might impose. I asked him to name any possible thing I was to do, any particular time I was to wait, and besought him not, for mere worldly considerations of a temporary character, to consign to despair and endless misery two beings whom God had destined for each other. To this letter there was a polite answer from Rotha's father, informing me that at a particular hour he would wait upon me. The old man was rich, and his daughter was an only child; still he kindly but firmly opposed my suit because I was not ready to marry; and, having enriched me with many wise saws and modern instances, he left me. The next time I saw Rotha she received me with a formal courtesy, the next time she was even rude, and when I called again she was not to be seen. I had recourse to letters, and they were returned; I poured out my soul in poetry, and it, too, came back. At last I received an invitation to a small and select evening party at Rotha's father's, and went there to find, that on that night she was to be married to the Virginian student! I watched for her with the intensest interest, with feelings I shall not attempt to describe. I expected to see her approach the altar a pale, emaciated, and trembling victim; and lo! when the bridal party came out, she approached with a light, firm step, and a smiling face, and went through the responses without the least embarrassment. I caught her eye when the ceremony was over, and she smiled without confusion. With a heart beating wildly and a brain on fire, I approached her, and addressed her in a choked and husky voice.

Are you unwell, Mr. M'Bride? she asked, with the utmost indifference and simplicity.

No, I replied at least, my body is not sick; and, taking her hand, which was not affected by the tremulousness of my own, I asked her if she was happy. I gazed steadily and meaningly into her eyes, which steadily returned the gaze, as she answered, Perfectly so: why on earth do you ask such a silly question?

My heart was crushed life lost all its savour the whole earth seemed instantly changed, and I left Philadelphia to return no more. My father, after settling up his affairs, saved a small estate, enough to make him barely independent; but his anxieties and his misfortunes undermined his constitution, and he went the way of all flesh. My mother soon followed him; and thus I was left ALONE in the world, without kindred or family. I built a monument over the graves of my parents, and engraved their virtues on it, sold for cash my small inheritance, and have since been a solitary wanderer, to whom all the world is a highway, and whose only home is the public inn. Still it is true, as Shenstone says,

Who'er has travelled earth's dull round,
Where'er his footsteps may have been,
Will sigh to think he still has found
His warmest welcome at an inn.

Yet I sometimes think others have a better and a warmer home, and a feeling of utter desolation steals upon me. I sit in the social circle, tell merry tales, laugh, and sometimes romp with the little ones; but when I retire to my chamber I feel an oppressive burden on my heart; the memories of the past, all clad in mourning, stalk before me, and look sadly on me. I go to my window and look out upon the broad, blue expanse of heaven, glowing with its

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

myriads of tender eyes that speak of love, of softly-whispered sympathies, of dear, watching ones, whose affections cluster round as at home; and then I remember that I have no home, and sigh, till my wearied soul, soaring above the earth its petty joys and sorrows above the clouds, and above the starry canopy, bathes itself in the light of God's eternal love, and is at rest!

It remains only to be said that my successful rival was a cheat, a base impostor who had forged the letter which introduced him into fashionable society. The gentleman from whom it purported to be came to Philadelphia in time to be a week too late. Rotha's father went mad and died broken-hearted, and his son-in-law, soon spending all his estate in the wildest extravagance, took his miserable wife and only child, and ran off to avoid his creditors. I have never heard of him since; and, may God forgive me for it, I was almost rejoiced at the woful discovery made by his wretched bride. I can now, however, and do regret it; and, if in my wanderings I ever find her, I shall endeavour to relieve her wants.

Now take my advice, LOVE NOT: it is the forbidden fruit that will entail wretchedness on you here, and may wreck your soul's salvation hereafter.

CHAPTER X.

Then there must be delusion. CAIN.

EDITH MAYFIELD came no more to the school of Alamance during the remainder of the session. Henry Warden wondered at her absence; but, fortified by the counsels of the master, and absorbed in the study of military science, he began to imagine that she had passed from his thoughts. He soon, however, found that he was mistaken; for a report that she was to be married to Ross getting into circulation, he became nearly maddened. Suspense being intolerable, he determined to ascertain his own fate by letter; and so, after several days of study and composition, the epistle was completed, and committed to the charge of Ben. Notwithstanding the report about Ross, the judge felt that Edith, in public estimation, was too young to be addressed, and he was apprehensive that even she might think so herself. Yet what else could he do? He could not see her alone; she was evidently peculiarly affected towards him, and she was surrounded by his enemies. Besides, Henry Warden had a theory of his own in regard to marriages and this he fully developed and defended in his letter. He believed in long engagements and in early marriages, and sustained his notions with considerable show of reason.

Many parents think, said he, that it is proper their daughters should not engage themselves until some time after they have finished their education, and had an opportunity to look around them. This doctrine is a manifest absurdity: 1st. Because it is well known that woman, at all times, forms her conclusions more from instinct and the impulses of the heart than from the reflections of the mind. Man reasons; woman feels: Thus, then, as her heart decides the matter at last, why not let it do it when its feelings are purest, its thoughts most innocent, and its impulses most generous? 2d. As a general rule, females depreciate daily from the hour they finish their education till the hour they are married. This is obliged to be so. They do not read to any extent; indeed, they quit books when they quit school. They are not learning household matters; for no one understands these until she marries, and then she learns almost by intuition. How, then, is she engaged? In entertaining visitors; in being courted and flirted with, forming *penchants*, thinking about this man and about that; and in being flattered, petted, and perhaps having her hand squeezed every day of her life. Can she be surrounded continually by a troop of amorous, sighing, caressing gallants, passionately teasing and extravagantly complimenting her, and still remain unchanged for the worse? Will not the breath of passion, so continuously and so hotly breathed around her, stain at last the spotless purity of her virgin heart? In addition to this, is she not daily learning the coquette's arts? becoming more and more deceitful, and more and more fond of attentions, displays, parties, balls, and public entertainments? Is a constant attendance at such places at all necessary to fit her for that quiet, retired, and modest life of devotion to a

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

single object, which she should lead when married? I am not afraid, dear Edith, that you will or ever can change for the worse; I am only defending my general proposition.

He then went on to show the importance of long engagements.

The great thing necessary to ensure future excellence or eminence, he continued, is to have our aims early fixed on some certain and worthy object, no matter what. How many middle-aged and old persons have we heard lamenting that the best and most important portions of their lives were wasted in aimless, trifling, desultory amusements and studies! But how are the purposes of a very youthful mind to be fixed? I answer, only through the heart. Let, then, two very young persons love each other, and seriously engage themselves, and what will be the result? Each having a single, certain end in view, neither will have any time to spend in visionary schemes, in idle thoughts, in wild habits, or in vain experiments. They would have ample opportunities for studying each other's character; for assimilating in tastes, manners, and feelings; for learning how to bear and forbear, what foibles to make allowances for, what infirmities to humour. When two persons are wedded together, they are pronounced one flesh; and yet this entire assimilation of different minds, hearts, and bodies must be effected after, perhaps, a week's acquaintance! It cannot be possible; it would be a miracle. No; let us now, while our hearts are fresh and pure, dedicate ourselves to each other; and, if the mere engagement becomes burdensome, then we will happily escape from a more intimate union which would make us wretched. Let us, before Heaven, solemnly contract ourselves to each other; and then, after years of trial, with hearts as pure and fervent as they now are, with chastened desires, with tempers tried, extravagant expectations discarded, with kindred and harmonious tastes, sympathies, and feelings, and with a perfect knowledge of ourselves and of each other, and a proper estimate of the responsibilities and duties of our new relations to each other, we will consummate that union, whose yoke will be easy and whose burden light a union from which will flow a sweet serenity, a quiet contentment, an entire and unspeakable felicity, to which grosser mortals are and ever will be strangers!

The letter then concluded with an urgent request that Edith would show it to her parents, and return an early answer.

Black Ben, on Saturday night, delivered it to her maid, and from her learned the very satisfactory intelligence that Ross had made proposals of marriage to her young mistress, and been rejected. Edith, after perusing the epistle carefully some six or seven times, handed it to her father, whom it filled with measureless astonishment. In fact, that worthy old gentleman, notwithstanding his very moderate estimate of Henry Warden's practical or common sense, was completely astounded, and very charitably concluded that love, or some other powerful excitant, had totally deranged his young friend's intellects. He suspected also that Ross loved his daughter, and, although he did not know that he had addressed her in a formal way, he supposed that he had or would do it soon; but he also supposed that his object was to marry her immediately. The proposition of Henry Warden, and the sublimated reasoning by which it was sustained, were utterly beyond his comprehension; and, being a prudent and well-disposed gentleman, he secretly resolved to keep from the knowledge of the world the mental affliction which had visited the author.

On the next day, Mayfield was early at the church, and meeting, as he had expected, Henry Warden, he proposed to him that they should take a walk into the woods.

Mr. Warden, said he, when they were beyond the reach of interruption, my daughter Eddie requested me to hand you this letter;" and so saying, he returned to the judge his own epistle.

Henry, hastily glancing over it, saw that not a sentence or a word had been written by Edith; and, after a rather painful silence, asked timidly, if any one was offended.

No one is offended, answered Edith's father; but my daughter was surprised, and requested me to say that she would be pleased if you would not write again. She is but a child, and it is very improper to be writing love to her

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

now.

I am sorry I wrote, said Henry; but if you will permit me, I will make an explanation which will satisfy you of the propriety of my conduct.

It's a delicate subject, interposed Mayfield, dryly, and it is not proper for a father to converse upon it. Let us return.

The old gentleman's manner prevented the judge from again alluding to the subject; but he could not but wonder how it was proper for a father to carry a letter from his daughter, and yet be improper for him to speak of its contents; and still more strange did it seem to him, that what was commendable in the conduct of Ross should be censurable in his own. It is needless to undertake to describe Henry Warden's feelings; every reader who has been a rejected lover will understand them, and those who have not gone through the experience can form no conception of it. It is said to be a crushing, sickening sensation, that suddenly comes on a man with overwhelming force, destroying the vitality of the heart, and causing one to feel not only mean and wretched, but utterly indifferent towards the pursuits of pleasure and gain, and the prospect of suffering and death. Thus the judge was becalmed; nothing for a while could excite, interest, or amuse him. By degrees, however, his elastic feelings began to revive; and after much perplexing deliberation, he satisfied himself Edith's father was labouring under a mistake, and that this was the cause of his (the judge's) misfortunes. Would not she, if left to herself at least, return an explicit and satisfactory answer? He supposed she would, and wondered why he had not thought of a matter so obvious. He suspected that, restrained by motives of delicacy, she had not exhibited his letter, which was sealed in an envelope when he received it back; and hence he concluded that the old people, thinking he wished to marry now, had become offended. Every thing now seemed explicable; and, again resorting to his pen, he wrote a short and polite letter to Mayfield, informing him that he had not made propositions of marriage to his daughter, but had only wished to engage himself to her; a proceeding which, he said, he supposed could give no offence to her parents. He further remarked, that if there was any thing about his conduct which he (Mayfield) objected to, or could not understand, he hoped it would be candidly mentioned, and an opportunity given to have it explained.

Let there be no shadow between us, wrote the judge; and that there may not be, let us freely unfold our hearts.

Now it so happened that Mayfield had no heart to unfold, while the shadow to which Warden alluded was to the old man an Egyptian darkness, which even a meridian sun could not disperse. He was fully confirmed in his belief of Henry's mental aberration, and, like all men who properly appreciate the gifts of wisdom and intellectual health, he treated his neighbour's malady with the greatest tenderness. He wrote to him a polite answer, in which he declared that he was not offended, that he fully understood the whole of the judge's conduct, and remarked that he would take the liberty of advising his young friend, with great respect, to abandon his purpose. When you get older, concluded the old gentleman, you will see the folly of your present course, and will not blame me for having kindly, but firmly, admonished you to cease your fruitless efforts for my daughter. Your conduct is embarrassing and unpleasant to us all.

Embarrassing and unpleasant to us *all!* ejaculated Henry Warden to himself; then Edith is, of course, displeased.

It is said that drowning men will catch at straws; but, whether this be true or false, it is very certain that young gentlemen desperately in love give up all hope with extreme reluctance. While fortune blows fairly and their mistresses smile sweetly they are sensitive, captious, and easily give themselves up to incredulity and despondency; when they are blown up, utterly rejected, they are more than ever disposed to believe that they are beloved, and will build immense expectations upon the most trivial and unmeaning words and looks. The judge strangely convinced himself that Edith must have tender feelings for him, and being now, in vulgar phrase, at the

end of his row, he again had recourse to the advice of the master. In the mean time his conduct excited no little gossip among his friends.

They *did* gossip, even at Alamance, says the master; and where, I should like to be informed, is the place on the whole earth, *tole orbe terrarum*, where there are no gossips? Yes, they did gossip at Alamance, and they did have there post-riders, who brought news in advance of the mails. How they got it was a mystery; for Henry Warden and the master, and Edith Mayfield and her parents, were the only persons in the secret, and they strictly held their peace. Nevertheless, information of what had taken place, with numberless embellishments and additions, got abroad, and, for two whole weeks, the names of the judge and of Edith were constantly in the mouths of every body. They had expected it the wise, shrewd, knowing old ones had expected a blow out, for they had observed that Henry Warden was somewhat daft. The young men and boys had not expected it, nor would they then believe that, as they had heard, their friend had first tried to marry a girl clandestinely, and afterwards, when her father found it out, threatened to shoot him if he did not give up his daughter. As to the old maids, they were entirely satisfied that Warden had been properly punished; and thus, wished they, may it happen to every fool who has the bad taste to prefer giddy and wayward young children to more sensible, affectionate, and riper beauties. Henry's sensibilities were too delicate to permit him to talk upon the subject; indeed, he was too proud and contemptuous of the world's opinion to make any explanations, and so the public was left to fabricate its own intelligence, and to discuss it at its leisure. The old censured, the young men warmly defended him, and the girls tittered, and began to regard him as a monster; and thus his popularity was not a little shaken.

CHAPTER XI. A SAGE CONVERSATION AND A SAGE CONCLUSION.

THE man who wins our admiration in one respect is endowed by us with every great and agreeable attribute. Thus Hector M'Bride, to whom every woman's heart was a Cretan labyrinth, and who never found the Ariadne clue to any, was consulted by Henry Warden, and considered by him as his wisest counsellor in regard to his present straits. The master, though not a misogynist, was certainly not a lover of the diviner sex, and could not be supposed to look with patience, or even tolerance, on the foolery of love-making. Still his was a heart that melted at every tale of wretchedness, and that abhorred every species of injustice. He was convinced that Henry Warden had been wronged; he was touched with his sorrows, and he was, withal, a little curious to see the progress and conclusion of a suit which had so strange a beginning. He was mortal and a bachelor, and was, if not delighted, at least secretly pleased when his friend, the judge, on the first convenient opportunity, disclosed all the particulars connected with his case, and asked advice.

Woman is a strange anomaly, said the master, and the more I see of her the more am I puzzled by her character. I have in my time mastered difficult studies; I have even gained a reputation for skill in abstruse sciences, and yet, although from my youth up I have applied myself with great diligence to the examination of woman's psychology, I know less of it now than I do of the Eleusinian mysteries.

Edith Mayfield, replied the judge, always seemed to me to be remarkably candid, artless, and easy to be understood. I used to think one might tell by glancing at her face the very thoughts that were passing in her mind.

That is the way in which they all deceive us, returned the master; if their faces were not so demure and innocent-looking we would not be so completely taken in. We read in their eyes faith, simplicity, and tenderness; we see in their conduct, deceit, distrust, and heartlessness. Is there any living thing so deaf to the calls of mercy as a lady who has a whim to gratify? Let her but set her heart, if she has one, on a trifle, she would see cities desolated and the world wrapped in flames before she would abandon her purpose. Recollect that Eve, the best and purest of the sex, could not forego the tasting of an apple, although she knew, from Almighty God himself, that that simple act would damn millions of her posterity to wretchedness here and eternal perdition hereafter.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Eve was cunningly tempted, answered Warden, and overcome in a thoughtless hour. You must remember that the father of lies, the archfiend himself, worked upon her heart.

And does not the archfiend work upon the hearts of all her daughters? asked the master. I have thought much about the matter, and have nearly come deliberately to the conclusion that woman is a general nuisance. It is through her that the devil assaults our race, for she forms the most assailable point through which to attack the soul of man. We would be less vulnerable if there were no such thing.

That was more harshly said than meant, exclaimed the judge; for I know you think better of the sex. But we are rambling from the subject. The question now is, what am I to do? I desire only the simplest and the easiest thing on earth; I want only to know what Edith Mayfield thinks of me. Is it not strange that she and her father should attempt so to mystify me?

Not in the least, was the master's answer; this would not be the world it is if every body was not trying to mystify every body else. Suppose every one should expose his heart I do not, of course, speak of the wicked and the evil—designing but suppose all those whose intentions are good should take pains to make those intentions known, how many heart—burnings, quarrels, feuds, and even wars, might be prevented! When man first offended the Maker the worst part of his punishment was not that he fell to a state of sin and misery. These are but the results of that eternal fatuity with which he was cursed. The world I use the thing for that which it contains the world is an ass, and it is my settled conviction that it will always remain one. I must write a book.

And in the mean time, said the judge, will you be pleased to tell me what I am to do; for I am incapable of judging for myself. I have exposed my heart to Edith and her father; what interest can they possibly have in keeping me in the dark?

That question displays your simplicity, replied the master; you may as well ask what interest Mayfield has in being a *grossum caput*, a dunderhead, as Swinburne has it; and what does it profit a woman to play the fool. Nevertheless, something must be done, and this is my opinion. Every body supposes that every body else is trying to deceive him or her, and hence, when you are exposing your heart, and acting with the most perfect candour, you create alarm and excite suspicions. It is folly, therefore, to be ingenuous, and you must have recourse to deceit and artifice. Now, if you can in some way astonish Edith, and let me be present at the time, I flatter myself that I can form a correct opinion as to her sentiments concerning you.

How would it do, enquired Warden, to let her know that I am going to leave Alamance soon, and not return for years, if ever?

Very well, indeed, answered the master; and if you can insinuate this information in a delicate way so much the better. You should do it in such a way that she would not suspect your object, and would believe that you were simply taking leave of her bidding her farewell in such a way as to represent yourself as being extremely sorry, without appearing to be a lover. Now this can only be done by poetry; and my advice is, that you write her a farewell piece, and that you touch upon the most delicate sentimentality, and yet say nothing about a broken heart, blighted affection, or eternal love. You understand me.

I think I do, said the judge, and although it is hard for me to rhyme, I will try my hand.

Accordingly, he set himself to work, and, while the master was fast asleep, he composed the following piece:

TO EDITH.

ON HER QUITTING SCHOOL.

'Out of sight, out of mind.'

None but a gross and fickle soul
Could such a sentence e'er have penned,
For there are those of finer mould
Whose boundless friendship knows no end;
And when the loved are 'out of sight,'
And distance throws its pall between,
How tender, then, in mem'ry's light,
In every hour they still are seen!
Each place where the dear one has been,
The starry night, the forest lone,
And every fair and quiet scene,
Reminds us of the loved and gone.
The loved and gone! oh ne'er shall fade
The mem'ry of that gentle one,
Till mouldering in the earth is laid,
The heart where she's the only sun!
The circling seasons still may bring
Their changes in Time's wasting race,
From summer skies and flowers of spring,
Will smile on me thy changeless face;
While autumn's pale and withered leaves,
And snowy lawn and ice-clad tree,
And every sigh that winter heaves,
Shall whisper sad, sweet thoughts of thee.
I'll think of thee as on the dead
Who left me in my early years,
O'er whom unbought affection shed
Its saddest and its holiest tears:
I'll think of thee as on the dreams,
The happy dreams of by-gone times,
Those ne'er forgotten, hallowed gleams
From fairer worlds and brighter climes
In youth, in manhood, and in age,
In all the lights and shades of life,
When fortune smiles, when tempests rage,
In festive hall, in battle's strife;
At morn at noon, at day's still close,
When dewy eve weeps o'er the lea,
And during night's profound repose,
Oh then I'll still remember thee!
And as I close my fading eyes,
When life's last mortal sands are run,
With visions of the upper skies,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Shall mingle thoughts of thee, sweet one!

Now, said the master, rubbing his eyes and taking charge of the above production, you will see how I can map out an unknown continent. To-morrow night I will bring you a chart of her mind, delineated with as much accuracy as any geographical picture of the moon taken by the sharpest astronomer.

When M'Bride found himself upon the road to Mayfield's, with Warden's poetry in his pocket, he began to reflect upon his situation. This is a pretty business, thought he, for a grave man and a school-master. What would the world think, if it could see me acting as a go-between for star-gazing lovers? me, Hector M'Bride, who set out to reform the abuses of the world, engaged with sober interest in sounding the shallows of a giddy little maiden's heart. To what base uses may we return! Still, this matter is not altogether beneath the notice of the philosopher; every man's heart is a little world in itself every woman's an unknown sea on which the most skilful mariners have been lost. It is worth the while to try this ocean farther; for, though many an adventurous sailor has been wrecked on bleak and barren shores, who knows but what some one, more fortunate than the rest, may yet reach those fabled islands those gardens of the Hespérides, where man may dwell in a state of beatitude, inhaling the fragrance of perennial blossoms! The consentient opinions of all mankind agree that there is such a place in woman's heart, though it has never yet been found. If I should make the discovery, what a figure it will cut in my book! I will become more famous than Columbus, Cabot, or Americus, for I'll lead the way to a Paradise!

CHAPTER XII. THE CHART.

I AM almost afraid to ask you what took place, said Henry Warden to the master; but any known calamity is better than a state of doubt. Out with it, therefore, and let me know the worst.

I promised to make a chart, answered M'Bride to prepare a full and accurate map of her heart and I have done it. Perhaps a careful examination of it will enlighten you more than any thing I can say. Will you look at it?

Not till I hear what became of the poetry, replied the judge. did she read it in your presence? How did she look? What did she say and do?

She did not read or see the poetry in my presence or in my absence, said the master.

Then what did you do with it? asked the judge.

I did nothing. Old May field remained with us in the room; and finding that I should get no opportunity of speaking privately to his daughter, I took my pencil and wrote on the back of a letter that I had something of importance to deliver to her, and asked her how I should manage to get it to her. I then handed her the letter, saying aloud as I did so, that there was a Latin sentence which had puzzled the best scholars in my school.

If I were to try my had at it I should certainly fail, she replied, and gave me back the letter.

Hereat her father, who knows not a word of any language except his mother tongue, became curious to hear the sentence.

Ad solum defunctum conglomerato in nubibus, I answered; and the old man made his daughter take down the words, the sound of which tickled him prodigiously. He insisted that his daughter, unassisted by me or Ross, should make an effort, and was satisfied that she could render the sentence into English, and thereby enhance her already fair reputation for learning and acuteness. This modern Solomon, in whose head all the wisdom of the earth is garnered up, even took a copy of the words himself, being determined, he said, to take Edith's lexicon and

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

try his hand. He has an opinion that the rays of his mind can illumine the darkest subjects, and for weeks he will bruise his brains over the sentence I gave him, and will at least see as far into its meaning as he can into a mill-stone; or, what is just as hard to him, into the philosophy of any thing. Here is your poetry, sir.

Alas! what shall I do? asked the judge, with the most dejected manner.

Look at this map, my friend, said the master, and it may comfort you. It is carefully collated from the most authentic sources, and I'll vouch for its perfect accuracy.

What sort of a map do you call this? asked the judge. I see nothing here but a blank piece of paper, with the words '*terra incognita et fabulosa*,' written in the centre, and round them, in large letters, 'Vanity, an impassable gulf.'

That, answered the master, is the most satisfactory description which can be given of any woman's heart. That there is such a thing, we learn from tradition, and the speculations of psychologists; but its character and its uses have been, and ever will be, shrouded in mystery.

Alas! exclaimed the judge, what shall I do? Every thing and every body is against me, and yet I have never wished injury to any one. What would I not give to know how I stand with Edith? What, Mr. M Bride, shall I do?

Do!' cried the master: do your duty to your God and your country, and let things take their course. Do you suppose you can mend matters by whining like a whipped school-boy, who bellows as loud as he can, to excite a general sympathy? If you do, you are much mistaken; and I am astonished that you will permit the whims and freaks of an idle-brained and silly-hearted girl to so unman you.

Sir! said Henry Warden, pacing the room in great excitement, its easy to talk and give advice, and bear with fortitude the misfortunes of others. It's still easier to prate about our duties to our God and to our country; but those who are most ready thus to prate are the most childish when misfortune overtakes them. For myself, I profess not to be one of those stoics who look on pain and pleasure as mere ideas of the mind, and easily to be avoided by a simple volition of the will. There *are* many ills that flesh is heir to, and not the least of them, talk as you will, are the pangs of despised love. What do we live for? To be happy; and the enlightened and generous soul in pursuit of this object will despise many things that the vulgar and ignorant regard as the most substantial good. You may prate as you will about solid studies, grave pursuits, important occupations, great desires, and all such sickly stuff. What does it amount to? Those who cant most about such things are themselves, with solemn concern, grasping at bubbles and chasing shadows. No one can or need desire more than his own happiness; and where can the good, refined, and ingenuous man find it except in the full fruition of love, the highest attribute of immortal beings? I leave to others to break their bones and rob their nights of rest in the vain and sensual pursuits of avarice, ambition, malice, and the animal enjoyments of the table and the bottle; for me, I want only to spend my days on earth with a being kindred with those whose society will be one of the chief delights of heaven. She *is* good; Edith Mayfield *is* as pure, as amiable, as tender, refined, and generous as she is fascinating and beautiful, and I shall no longer hear with patience reflections on her character. She is dearer to me a thousand times than all the rest of the world put together; and I will have you to know, that by making you my confidant in my troubles, I do not give you licence to use her name so lightly. I respect you more than I do any man except my father; but I will not permit even you to abuse Edith Mayfield in my presence.

The satirical expression of the master's face instantly vanished, and, with his kind heart beaming in his eyes, he said, in his most gentle tones, If I have offended you, Henry, I sincerely lament it; for God knows I would not designedly hurt your feelings for any consideration. Do you not see that I talk at random? Do you not see that my indifference is feigned that my mock appearance of unconcern, and my vain attempts to ridicule and make myself merry at the expense of the sex, are like the convulsive laughter of a man in fever? My dear friend, I feel

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

for you more than I care to say; there is a rankling sting at my heart, which I would fain forget, and which your grief revives. My humour is an unnatural excitement; you must forgive me, for I have a canker here.

With all my heart I forgive you, replied the judge, and sincerely ask pardon myself, for I have been too hasty. For Heaven's sake forget the harshness of my words and manners, for I am not myself.

Your warmth was natural and excusable, replied the master, and it is impossible for you to be otherwise than sad. Your case is a hard one, but a remedy may be found in your own mind. It will soon be itself again; reason will soon triumph over the passions of the heart, though the battle will be a fierce one, and the victory will cost the lives of some of the dearest hopes and sweetest charities and affections of your nature. I leave with you the map; when you are by yourself, look on it, and it will be of service to you.

With this the friends parted; M'Bride to attend to matters connected with his profession, and Warden to seek out Uncle Corny, of whom he had already resolved to make a confidant and an agent.

As he approached the residence of the Demijohns, his ears were saluted by the sound of a fife blown with lively animation and villainous disregard of tune or harmony, while at intervals he heard a hoarse and martial voice that seemed to be giving commands to a regiment of soldiers on parade. Aware of Corny's fondness for the art military, and curious to know in what manner he was now exercising his talents, he advanced to a position whence he could see, unobserved, the proceedings in the back yard. The old lady, Demijohn's mother, sat in her arm-chair in the doorway, smoking a short-stemmed pipe, and watching with a complacent countenance the actions of her son. He, arrayed in the small and faded uniform of his father, and with a naked sword in his hand, was drilling a squad of ragged negroes of all ages and sizes, the most venerable-looking one of whom stood at their head leaning to his music, blowing with all the force of his lungs, and with the most solemn sincerity of manner.

Massa Corny, at length said the musician, pausing in his labours, spose you let me take de fiddle; I can't blow any music out ob dis consarn, for it haint got none in it.

Fiddles are never used in the army, Cæsar, answered Demijohn, and it would be against all the rules of war to march by them. Attention, company! Forwards! March! Music in front!

At this instant the judge made his appearance, and the soldiers would have dispersed incontinently; but their commander was too good an officer to be taken by surprise. He halted his men, called over their names, and, regularly dismissing them, then for the first time seemed to be aware of the presence of Warden. After some brief conversation upon the subject of war, Uncle Corny's visiter took him aside, and at once unfolded his business. The soldier listened with serious gravity, and indicated, by his manner and his conversation, that he duly appreciated the momentous importance of the precious secret committed to his keeping.

If I can serve you in any way, said he, you may command me. I shall stand by you to the death.

You can serve me, replied Warden, and in this way. I wish you to manage to have Edith at your house. Suppose, for instance, you give a party, and invite all the young people of the neighbourhood. You can then get an opportunity of conversing privately with her; and, if you do, I wish you, in a delicate manner, and without appearing to be acting by my authority, to ascertain, if possible, why she treats me so rudely. Finally, you must give her this poetry; and, if you cannot succeed in drawing out, indirectly, the cause of her conduct. you may advance boldly to the charge tell her I am the most miserable man on earth, that I never breathed a harmful word against her, and that I am completely confounded at her conduct. You must take care also to let her know that I regard her name as too sacred to make a public use of it, and that what you know I told you in strict confidence, you being a friend to both.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I understand you, Henry, answered Uncle Corny, and your wishes shall be strictly carried out to be sure they shall. And, to make sure of her and keep off Ross, I'll go for her myself I will, by Jupiter and wo to the man that interferes with me! I'll consult mother about the day, and send you your invitation this evening. Won't you walk in and take a glass of brandy? I feel, myself, as if I could enjoy one.

I thank you, said Henry, I am in haste and in low spirits, and must be gone. Let the day be as early as possible.

It shall be, and I know all things will come right. I'll conquer or die.

CHAPTER XIII. CHARACTER IN WHOM ALL OUR READRRS WILL RECOGNIZE AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

In those days there flourished at Alamance a gentleman by the name of Philemon Blister, who, having no business of his own to attend to, gave his attention to the affairs of the public. His family, all of whom were dead, had been respectable, and he possessed a small but comfortable estate; but being a heterogeneous sort of man, he failed to obtain what he most desired, a wife; and in process of time the pursuit of one became with him a matter of absorbing interest and his sole occupation. He was one of those men who are permitted to take liberties with every one, and whom every one treats in the most free and familiar manner, never addressing them in a formal way, and always calling them by their Christian names in an abbreviated form. Thus Mr. Philemon Blister was universally called Phil; and the name of Phil, and his sayings and doings, were in every body's mouth. At an early age he gave favourable indications of genius for prying into the secrets of others; and by the time he was grown up to man's estate his capacity in this respect was so fully developed that there was not, at any time, any thing said or done in any corner of Alamance which Phil did not immediately hear of. Equally great was his ability for reporting what he heard, or, rather, what he did not hear; for it was impossible for him to repeat a story without embellishing it with so many and such extraordinary additions that the original author, hearing it from his lips, would not have recognized it. He, being a bachelor, devoted himself particularly to the gallantries and courtships of the community was always the first person who knew of a projected wedding, and was, for many years, one of the standing groomsmen of Alamance. His means were not extensive or abundant; but with what he had he was close, and, although universally regarded as a good-fellow, he had become somewhat selfish. Indeed, like all men who are sensible enough to know they are not smart, Phil was not deficient in a sort of cunning; and, looking on this life as a state militant, and every body as his secret foe, he shielded himself with the armour of deception. In fact, after much study, and no little experience, he at last obtained what he was wont to call the points of this world; in other words, he came to the conclusion that any one could get along who could deceive all his friends as to his intentions. And thus, though he was a leaky vessel for the secrets of others, he kept his own counsels, and never permitted even his nearest and best friends to know his real views and aims about any thing. For instance, while with gentlemen, he was, in his language about the ladies, free, vulgar, and licentious, in a confidential way, however; and then, in the same strict confidence, he would tell the ladies of all the offensive remarks his friends had made about them. He was the sworn friend of every one, bound every one to secrecy, and told every one what he had heard every body else say. Thus, while others were exposing their secrets, and he was briskly circulating them over the community, his own intention and feelings were a mystery.

As before intimated, Phil had no particular home; for his house, being desolate, and his kindred, at least all his near kindred, being dead, he became a rover, and as ten thousand reports travelled with him, he might aptly be compared to Rumour, with her thousand tongues. As he was powerless, even when he tried for good, and omnipotent when he didn't try for mischief, Henry Warden dreaded him. That young man had seen Phil often whispering to Edith, and he shuddered at the consequences. It was Phil's habit to see every lady who had been visited by a gentleman, and tell her confidentially that it was generally reported that she was engaged to be married. Hereupon the lady, especially if young and timorous, would become alarmed and indignant, and would,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

the next time she saw the gentleman in question, treat him so cavalierly that a quarrel was inevitable. To avoid, therefore, the consequences of Phil's unhappy blunders the judge was studiously reserved in his presence, and hence Phil began to cultivate Uncle Corny. This last-named, warned by the judge, was still more costive than his friend, and thus, as Mr. Blister could ascertain from neither the object of the approaching party, he scoured the neighbourhood in search of news. He was full of cant phrases and buffoon wit, and every man he met, at the time alluded to, he would quiz with some mysterious expression about the approaching entertainment, and set his curiosity agog. Phil himself revealed nothing directly; but there was a world of unknown meaning in his questions, and he could startle a man even with the simple query, Have you heard the news?

The answer generally given was, I understand Uncle Corny Demijohn is going to give a great party.

Whereupon Phil Blister, assuming a knowing and portentous look, would reply that it would be a party which *some* folks would long remember. Thus, one morning, he met with Miss Whimididdle, a maiden lady of considerable experience, and, after the usual salutations, he asked her if she intended to honour the approaching party with her presence.

If I were to consult my own wishes, I should not go, answered Miss Whimididdle; for I have no fondness for such things. Father and mother, however, insist on my attending, as a mark of respect to the Demijohns, and I suppose I will have to go.

Of course, you must go, said Phil; for you'll see something you little expect.

Indeed! And what is to happen? asked Miss Whimididdle.

I'm mum, replied Phil Blister, and can only say that I shouldn't be surprised if *somebody* is married shortly.

You surely don't mean old Mother Demijohn?

Not exactly, I should think.

Then, said Miss W., it must be Uncle Corny. I have heard some rumours about him and the widow Fuller, whom, as you know, he has visited twice a month for the last two years. Well, well, and Uncle Corny is to be married at last! I hope he'll be happy, though I should not covet the place of his bride.

Younger folks than Uncle Corny sometimes get married, returned Phil.

And so they do, answered Miss W.; some folks that *I* think had better be at school, or with their mammas, a precious sight. It's shocking to think what the world is coming to, when every little boy and girl must have a sweetheart, and want to get married as soon as they reach their teens.

Do you think Edith Mayfield is old enough to run off to get married? asked Phil.

Edith Mayfield want to run off! exclaimed Miss Whimididdle, Edith Mayfield want to get married! however, it's her business, not mine. Who in the world is silly enough to have such a young, giggling tomboy? It must be Henry Warden.

You forget Ross, said Phil.

To be sure, I forgot him. Well, is he, in fact, going to run away with Edith Mayfield? I always took him for a lunatic. Some people think he is a spy and a dangerous man, but I always told them he was too big a fool to find the way back to where he came from.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I don't know who's a fool and who aint, replied Phil; 'and, therefore, I say unto you, as I say unto all, watch.' It may be Ross, and it may be Henry Warden; it may be Uncle Corny, and it may be old Mother Demijohn. Mind you, I don't say who it is; only keep a sharp look-out, and you'll see fun.

Hereupon Phil Blister took leave, and intimated to all whom he afterwards saw that, as he had heard from Miss Whimididdle, Uncle Corny or his mother was to be married on the day of the anxiously-expected party. Miss Whimididdle, on her part, met with at least half a dozen during that day, to all of whom she communicated, as a profound secret, the fact that Henry Warden or Ross was to run away with Edith Mayfield. As Phil Blister had bound her to secrecy, she could not give her author; but she related it as certain that Edith was to marry one of the two named, and that against the will of her parents. Other gossips took up the story where Miss Whimididdle left off, and, adding improvements of their own, the whole plan of escape, in all its minutest particulars, became known, and was discussed at length at Alamance. The community was thrown into a feverish excitement, some censuring and some defending Edith; a thousand rumours got afloat, and all these rumours travelled about until they were received as settled facts. These reports, finally, became so general, and so authentic, and so untraceable, that Phil Blister, mounting his horse, kept them in brisk circulation, repeating them everywhere as undoubted truths, settled by the authority of various persons. They reached, at last, the ears of the Glutsons, and were by them communicated to Ross. This mysterious individual was still hovering about Alamance, making his headquarters at Nathan Glutson's, and visiting very little except at the house of Edith Mayfield's father. Being a suspected character and but slightly acquainted with the Demijohns, he was not invited to the entertainment to be shortly given. He knew, of course, that he was not going to marry Edith; but his ardent and jealous heart told him that Henry Warden would. The more he reflected on what he heard, and on what he himself had recently seen, the more was he satisfied that his youthful rival was about to carry off the prize for which both were eagerly contending, and all the fierce passions of his turbulent nature were instantly aroused to a fearful intensity. He was a gentleman by birth, by education, and association, and had ever been taught to prize his honour more dearly than his life; but, then, he was also a lover a fiery, impetuous lover and to what follies and meanness will not the mania of love drive its votaries? That's a question gravely put by the master; and, without stopping to quote his answer, we will simply add, that Ross was not proof against the powerful temptation. He convinced himself that a dire misfortune was about to happen to him; and when he saw, early in the morning of the eventful day which was to ruin him, Edith Mayfield conducted by Uncle Corny to the latter's house, his wavering resolution was fixed at once. What that resolution was, and what were its immediate and remote results, will in due time appear.

CHAPTER XIV. THE FISH-FRY A KETTLE OF FISH.

FISH-FRY is a technical term, used in the South to designate a pleasant sort of country-party. A person, having on his premises a stream or pond abounding in fish, invites his friends and neighbours to an entertainment, which is given in the green woods and near the water. A handsome collation of cold provisions, and sometimes of wines and liquors is brought to the place by the servants; and here, also, the fish are prepared and cooked immediately after they are caught. Thus, at such parties, the amusements are varied, and partake of that zest and freshness which Nature ever has for her lovers. All persons, old and young, freed from the restraints and conventional forms imposed in parlours and saloons, surrounded by delightful scenes, inhaling the fragrance of buds and blossoms, and listening to the songs of birds and the hum of bees, enjoy themselves with a peculiar relish; and with minds improved, hearts bettered, and health invigorated, return again to their respective homes.

Thus the master writes of fish-fries generally; and, after some grave and moral reflections, inspired by the subject, describes, with great particularity, the famous one given by his friend Cornelius Demijohn, near the latter's mill, on the creek of Alamance. A large number of young and unmarried people honoured the festival with their presence; and, as it was a balmy day, the ladies, in their Spring costumes, looked like personifications of purity and simplicity. The woods echoed with the laughter of these gay and innocent maidens, and for a while there was little progress made in the business of catching fish, for all were in a joyous humour; and those arch

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

anglers, the frolicsome girls, were, without being conscious of it, entangling each a string of lovers. In the language of the master, many a gudgeon was hooked eagerly snapping at the deceptive bait, and quietly suffering himself to be drawn up and prepared for the process of being fried and roasted. As the sun advanced up the clear heavens, and his beams became warmer, the young people ceased their wild pranks, and, pairing off, sought, in companies of two, the most shady nooks on the banks of the pond, and seriously began the business of the day to wit, making love, and angling for fish. The judge, however, was an exception to this rule. He scarcely dared to speak to or look at Edith Mayfield, who, in her simple dress, shone with such surpassing beauty and sweetness, that she seemed a half-divine Dryad of the woods, in whom there was so little of the mortal, that even the boldest gallants regarded her with a timid and sacred reverence. Henry Warden, more than ever in love, his fears and despondency increasing with his passion, wandered about, solitary and abstracted, and so absorbed with his thoughts that his fishing-pole might have been jerked out of his hand without his being conscious of the fact. Equally unsuccessful, but for a different reason, was Hector M'Bride. Having attached himself to his unlettered and taciturn friend, Tubroot, he became extremely talkative, bobbing his line up and down in the water with such an incessant motion, that the most hungry roach or boldest catfish would not approach his hook. He entertained and enlightened his silent and staring companion with a learned dissertation on the habits of fish, gave an account of the celebrated supper of Vitellius, as related by Suetonius, and did not forget his friend Walton, of whose life and character he spoke at length. Tubroot was prodigiously astonished at the extravagance of the man who purchased two thousand fish for one entertainment, and had galleys built for the purpose of conveying them all the way from the Straits of Gibraltar. He was still more astonished at other stories of Roman gluttony and magnificence: but he held his peace, like a prudent man, and became utterly bewildered as the master severely criticised the piscatory eclogues of Sannazarius, from which he made frequent and copious quotations in the original.

During this time, Uncle Corny, mindful of the sacred trust committed to his care, and forgetful of every thing else, was revolving in his mind various plans for the execution of his commission. Of course, he became very silent and unusually grave; and as he attached himself to Edith, and carried her to a great distance from the company, she hardly knew what to think of him. She was aware, however, of his eccentric character, felt obliged to him for his delicate attentions, and, with the expectation of some rare sport at his expense, she readily consented to go with him. They found at last a cool, pleasant, and retired place, and there they sat down, attracting the gaze of all the company, and causing many amusing remarks and comparisons, the most original of which was that of the master, who said they reminded him of a violet peeping up by the side of a huge mushroom. After they had sat some time in silence, Uncle Corny began to blow as if each breath were to be his last, and with eyes rolling wildly, and a husky voice, essayed to speak.

Miss Edith, said he.

Uncle Corny! answered Edith, looking him straight in the face.

Miss Edith, continued Corny, I'm a poor diplomatist, and therefore will come to the point at once. Why do you hate my friend Henry Warden?

I don't hate him, Uncle Corny.

Then why do you treat him so cruelly? He is nearly distracted; but still he adores you.

Edith blushed and hung her head, and having nothing to say, held her peace.

He would give seventeen worlds, resumed Corny, to know what you mean by sending back his letter. Poor fellow! how happy he would be if he were only allowed to speak to you as I do!

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

That he is not allowed to speak to me, replied Edith, is his own fault. He has not come near me to-day, and seems very much disposed to cut my acquaintance.

How can he speak to you after what has happened? asked Demijohn. Real love, they say, makes people fearful and suspicious; and I know that he is afraid to approach you, for he thinks it would be disagreeable to you. A thousand stories have been told on him, every one of which, I say, on my own responsibility, is an infernal lie, and the author a dastardly scoundrel.

Why, Uncle Corny!

Excuse me, Miss Edith, my blood is up. Was there ever a more gentle, a more noble-hearted, brave, and intelligent youth than Henry Warden? His soul is as bright as the sun above us his heart is the home of every thing that is honourable, just, generous, and tender; and yet these malignant tattlers have slandered him till you, even you, who are so much like him, are ashamed to speak to him. Nor would you treat my friend so badly if you knew how unjustly and cruelly you are acting. Just think of it: here is your old playmate, confident, and defender, your best friend, your most pleasant companion who would at any moment be glad to die for you; here is this frank, manly, and brave young man, who is going to the wars, and who does not dare to say farewell to you! Upon my soul I can hardly keep from crying myself, and yet, though he may be slain, and will die thinking of you to the very last, you cannot afford to give him a kind good-by!

Did you say he is going to the wars, Uncle Corny? asked Edith, turning pale, and plainly exhibiting her emotion.

He is: he is going to draw his sword for his country; and though he is but a boy he has a heart as big as that of Mars. He will be among the foremost in the noble cause; he will, I know, rush into the thickest of the fight, and his fair and youthful form will lie stiff, and cold, and mangled on some bloody field. It is what he wants; to run a short and bright career, and die a soldier's death, where he will sleep quietly with kindred spirits, far away from that home where his young heart was steeped in bitterness.

During this speech Uncle Corny was himself too much affected to notice the actions of Edith, who was searching for violets that did not exist, and who could not have distinguished one from a mushroom, so blinded was she by the burning tears that suffused her eyes, and fell, like liquid pearls, on the leaves around her.

Both were silent for some minutes, when Edith, after a struggle, asked, with a choked and tremulous voice, When is Mr. Warden going to leave us?

Very soon, answered Uncle Corny, as soon as he can be allowed to bid you farewell. He is afraid to attempt it in person, and so has requested me to say, as his last words to you, 'May God bless you,' and to hand you these verses.

While speaking, Demijohn rose to his feet, and, in the agitation and confusion of the moment, stepped backwards, and fell with a loud splash into the water. The waves swelled and rolled, as if a storm were blowing, and the whole pond was agitated from end to end. The plunge and the screams of Edith Mayfield attracted the attention of the company, who, with more astonishment than fear, saw Demijohn midway between the two shores and bareheaded, making a successful, but awkward and energetic effort at swimming, splashing the water about him like a chafed sea-horse or furious whale. He landed safely, having sustained no damage but the loss of his hat, and flooding the land wherever he went with the moisture that streamed from his clothes. It became necessary for him to return to the house; and, as Edith's dress was damp from the spray caused by Corny's plunge, she started with him. They had walked but a short distance, when Isaiah Mayfield, accompanied by Ross and William Glutson, came dashing up at the full speed of their horses, old Mayfield being ahead.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

God be praised, she's yet safe! exclaimed the old man, dismounting and seizing Edith in his arms; my child, my Eddie is yet safe! Oh, daughter! how could you have the heart to serve your father so! But never mind, don't weep; for I know you are innocent, and were misled by that visionary and unhappy youth. I forgive you, continued he, crying all the time; I forgive you before you ask me. Come, darling, return again to your heart-broken mother.

During this scene Corny Demijohn, bareheaded and in his dripping clothes, stood staring and stupefied with wonder, while he excited equal astonishment in the minds of Ross and Glutson. Edith, covered with confusion at the strange conduct of her father, and unwilling to see him expose himself longer before his neighbours, said not a word, and quietly and silently suffered her father to carry her away. She knew his character too well not to suspect that he was labouring under some absurd delusion, but she thought it best not to seek for or to make any explanations until she was alone with him. The old gentleman, overcome by his emotions, and loving his daughter too well to chide her in public, also became silent, and the party on horseback thus started back without saying another word.

The judge witnessed the whole scene, and fearing some mistake, and anxious to come to a full understanding with Edith's father, hurried off to overtake him, when he was arrested by Demijohn, who stood in his path.

Let me go, Uncle Corny, said Henry, struggling to release himself; let me go, for I'm not in a humour to be trifled with.

I'll let you go when you are in a condition to go, quietly returned Uncle Corny; yes, of course, I will. For the present you are my prisoner.

If you are deranged, or drunk, exclaimed the judge, greatly excited, I must tell you that you must play your foolish pranks on some other person. Let me loose, Mr. Demijohn, or by Heaven you shall rue it!

At which words he was firmly grappled in the arms of his keeper, and became as helpless as a child. He threatened, abused, and entreated to no purpose, and seemed at last about to weep, when Corny said, in his kindest tones

Henry, my son, it's useless to talk to me now. I know what is best for you, and I intend to do it to be sure I do and therefore I shall not get angry. Curse away my lad, I'll not remember a word you say.

I have not cursed you, sir, replied Warden, and you know I never swear. I care not whether you get angry or not; I don't care who may get mad, for I'm done with the world and all that's in it. As you can have no reason for holding me longer, I'll thank you, sir, to release me, and not keep me here to be gazed at, and laughed at by the whole company.

Who's gazing, who's laughing? thundered out Uncle Corny; let me catch a mother's son of them at it and I'll instantly cut his throat I will, by Jove! I'm your *friend*, sir, I'll stand by you to the death. Heavens and earth! Aint I, Cornelius Demijohn, here at your side, prepared to draw my sword against the world, the flesh, and the devil, in your behalf!

Demijohn was himself, as his speech shows, becoming excited, and, working himself at last into a perfect fury, he released the judge, grasped at his side for the hilt of an imaginary sword, and flourished his arms about him, when Hector M'Bride and Ben Rust came up.

Stand off! exclaimed Uncle Corny, planting himself in a defensive position, and raising his sword-arm; stand off, you wretches, or, by Jove, I'll split you to the waist! Who dares approach here while I stand in the front rank?

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Angels and ministers of grace defend us! exclaimed the master; are we in Bedlam, or is all the world crazy?

Let all Bedlam and all the world dare touch as much as a hair of his head, replied Corny. if they want to be knocked into a cocked hat. I'm Cornelius Demijohn, sirs, and this is my friend; so approach not!

Uncle Corny's a little soaky, said Rust, and I'll bet there's an empty tickler in his pocket. Let's examine.

This remark at once threw a flood of light on the whole affair, and it was soon ascertained that Demijohn, to counteract the effects of the external application of liquids, had copiously moistened his inner man with a stronger fluid. He acknowledged, himself, that his brain was a little giddy from his potations; and, begging the master to return to his guests and apologize for his absence, he, followed by Rust and Warden, started again towards his house, planting his feet at every step as if he would drive them into the ground. His head would reel, notwithstanding all his efforts, and, taking hold of Rust's arm, he said, hiccuping:

Benjamin, my son, I do believe I'm tipsy. Yes to be sure I'm drunk. That last drink did the business; it was too much, sir too much. My friend, you must cure me you *must*, before the old lady sees me.

Now, Ben was an excellent physician in such cases, having before attended Uncle Corny, when afflicted with his chronic complaint, administering to him with skill and success. He now trotted him briskly through the woods, frequently tripped him up, and so heated and worried him with hard exercise, that, by the time he arrived at his mother's, he was tolerably sober. Dry clothes, and a thorough ablution of his head in cold spring water, brought him entirely to himself, and prepared him to sit with Rust in council on the judge's case. The latter was moody and sad, and seemed little disposed to speak of his difficulties to any one. He could not but see, however, that he was in the presence of faithful friends; and his heart, gradually yielding to the influence of kind words and looks, at length fully opened itself, and all its secrets and its sorrows were exposed.

It's my decided opinion, said Uncle Corny, that the wicked little angel loves you I believe I know she does and is only trying the strength of your attachment.

In proof of this he recited what had taken place between himself and her in the morning; strongly painted her emotion, which he had witnessed; and wound up with an indirect compliment to his own ingenuity.

One would hardly think you so cunning, said Warden, becoming pleased and interested.

Folks don't know me, replied Corny. They say Uncle Corny's honest, and he's brave, and good-natured, but he's not a Solomon. I am not a Solomon; to be sure I am not. But could he have done better than I did? Would he have thought of jumping into the water, just as he handed Edith the poetry, to prevent her from returning it? She's got it now in her bosom.

Is it possible you fell into the water by design? asked the judge.

Possible, indeed! it's a fact no doubt of it.

Uncle Corny, exclaimed Henry Warden, rising, here's my hand, and with it goes my heart. Forgive me for my harshness forgive me, I entreat you; for from this day I will look on you as one of my best friends, and, what I always thought you, a noble-hearted gentleman. I was deranged, mad, and knew not what I was about.

I've forgotten every thing you said, replied Corny; on my soul I have, and whoever reminds me of it shall taste the edge of my sword he shall, by Jupiter!

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Proximus, the next, said Rust, getting on his feet; its my turn now to speak, and I'll jist give my opinion of the whole matter. I'll do like the parson take a text, and divide my discourse into several heads. I would, then, my Christin friends, continued he in a drawling tone, direct your attention for a few minutes to the first verse of the forty-second chapter of the Scriptur of Common Sense. It is in these words: '*Man is man, and woman is woman.*' Now, by these words we are to understand two things: first, that man aint woman; and, secondly, that woman aint man. Man is one kind of human crittur; woman is another kind. Man was born with one kind of natur, and woman with another; and whoever will jist recollect that fact will know more about females than old Proximus has larned by twenty years of hard study. Man loves war, power, books, paintins, music, and natur; woman likes show, dress, flowers, and flirtation. Man judges you by the colour of your principles and the cut of your character; woman by the colour of your coat and the cut of your breeches. Now, natur has done all this, and what's the use of grumblin about it? It's all a matter of opinion; and, while you are findin fault with a gal for bein deceitful and havin no taste for books and larnin, haint she got as much right to despise you because your back is crooked and your legs aint straight? The men look with contempt on women because they've got no minds and never read Shakspur; the women scorn the men what haven't got whiskers and never killed no one in a duel. Who's right and who's wrong is not the question now. Woman, bein what she is, must be treated accordin to her natur, and must be expected to act accordin to her natur. To undertake to influence her in the same way that you would influence a man is as silly as to bait your fish—hook with a quotation from Shakspur, or a batch of sentimental poetry. You must use the right bait and what is that? The judge has fished long enough with love, wit, larnin, affection, goodness, and honour; and if these haint done any good its no use tryin them any longer. Let him go to the wars, kill a dozen or two of Britishers, and come home with fierce whiskers on his face, flamin buttons on his coat, and red blood on his sword, and, Lord! how the gals will shoal around him! Now for the second grand division of my discourse. I don't believe Edith is like some gals; I know she aint. I will say now what I never said before, but what I've always knowed; she loves Henry Warden, she has loved him from a child, and she always will love him while she lives. I've got two eyes and a pair of ears, and I know what I know. As old Proximus says, I'm 'not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet;' but I'll prophesy one thing: Edith will be a woman, as a woman ought to be; and in the very toughest times, in the very hardest trials, she'll shine out like a rainbow in a storm. But, thirdly and lastly, there's a third kind of folks the betweenity race who have no natur at all, and who I call man—grannies. Old Mayfield is one of these, and it aint no use to talk to him at all. He haint got the reason of man, nor the feelin of woman; and how are you goin to touch him? He's opposed to the judge, and he's got a notion that Henry and Edith want to marry each other right off; and you may work on him till the day of judgment, and you'd never beat that notion out of his head. He hates and fears every body who aint like himself. Because the judge is open-hearted, smart, and brave, he looks on him as somethin terrible, and thinks he's always tryin to sarcumvent, undermine, and blow him up. He's got these idees into his head, and the more honourable Henry acts, and the more he tries to explain himself, the more skeery does old Squattlebrain git. He's in an awful fright now, and it'll grow on him till the day of his death. What's to be done? Why, *jest wait and watch*, and leave the rest to Providence and to Edith. I'll swear by her; for I believe in her, and know she will bring all things to rights. Them's my sentiments.

The sound sense displayed in some of these remarks, coarse and homely as they were, struck both Corny and the judge, though the latter secretly felt a disinclination to wait. He, however, held his peace, and Demijohn assenting to the advice of Rust, the council adjourned.

CHAPTER XV. A LADY CONFIDENT AND A SENTIMENTAL LADY.

IMPATIENCE that cannot brook delay and a disposition to make confidants, are the curses of lovers. On each of these rocks many a gallant bark, freighted with tender hopes, has been wrecked; and yet wooers, like statesmen, however much they may study and descant on the disastrous experiments of the past, will still, when their own time comes to act, follow in the beaten track. Thus it was with Henry Warden. The night after his consultation with Rust and Demijohn, he spent in profound meditation, studying not what was best for him, but how he should be able immediately to ascertain the feelings of Edith Mayfield towards him. He could not wait for the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

developments and the just arbitrament of Time, who is, at last, the safest friend of the persecuted, the great vindicator of Truth. The judge, notwithstanding his late experience, still secretly believed in the integrity, the kindness, and just discrimination of the sex; and who that has been raised by a mother, cannot so confide? He resolved to make a female confidant, believing that such a one would be the most cautious and safe adviser, and would also have the most favourable opportunities of sounding the sentiments of Edith. Now, there was staying at Alamance a Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes, a northern lady, and sister to the wife of a Presbyterian clergyman who was travelling through the country. She was at that ripe age when the tender virtues of the maiden-lady are most conspicuous, and every tongue was eloquent in praise of her amiable and obliging disposition. She lent a patient and attentive ear to the complaints of every one, and every sorrowing heart found in her an active sympathizer, and a friend ready to do as well as to advise. She seemed to be herself so nicely strung, that the lightest touch of sentiment thrilled some chord in her gentle breast; and she was withal of a highly romantic turn. She detested the dull common-places of every-day life, was fond of strange dilemmas and unnatural adventures, and was one of those rare creatures who know how to appreciate those persecuted beings whom the world does not understand, and who do not understand themselves; in a word, she was one of those diviner few who are born in a world of their own, and who breathe, and move, and have their being in a sublimated and rarefied atmosphere, where grosser mortals can no more exist than a rat in an exhausted receiver. She was literary and sentimental; and while the gentlemen all called her interesting, the ladies generally agreed that she was very handsome. True, her complexion was a little sallow, and the nicely-braided curls which shaded it, and the eyes which lighted it, were of an undefinable colour; but then her teeth were very white, her waist very slender, and her hand and her foot of the smallest possible dimensions. To the master and the judge she had been extremely kind and complaisant, the former finding in her a flattering and untiring listener, who echoed all his sentiments, and the latter an agreeable companion, of a tenderly pensive disposition, who loved to discourse of unrequited love, mysterious communion of souls, flowers, poetry, and broken hearts. To her, the thoughts of Henry Warden now recurred, and he paid her a visit. She received him very graciously, and seeming to divine his intentions, wore a look of sad and affectionate interest. He was at first much embarrassed, but she kindly helped him on with his story until he was able to finish it himself. She heaved a sigh, and, after musing a while, said, in her softest tones,

You have been, indeed, unfortunate, but such is the way of the world. Such people as you are must not expect to be understood by mankind, whose persecutions are the tax we have to pay for those peculiar enjoyments which are all our own.

Yes; but Edith can understand me, replied Warden, if she knew me, and this is all I ask. She must have been misled.

It is quite possible, returned Miss Thrillingpipes; for there are gossips every where. She is a very pretty and amiable girl, and I do not blame you, Mr. Warden, for taking an interest in this matter. If I can serve you in any way, I should be most happy to do it.

What I want you to do is this, said the judge: I wish you to see her; to tell her my views, and all that I have written and done, and let her say candidly what she thinks of my conduct. Ask her if she read my letters, and if she did, what she meant by returning them. It is easy for you, being a lady, to ascertain these things; and be assured, that if you will do me this favour, you will find in me a true friend while you live.

My own heart shall reward me, answered Miss Artemesia; and though the task is more difficult than you imagine, I will do my best for you. I will stay with her to-night, and to-morrow morning, if you have leisure to call on me, I will let you know the result.

I can always find leisure to call on one so generous, exclaimed the judge, and hope that I will yet be able to show the gratitude of my heart. I cannot say much to my friends, but *I think and I remember*.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

You are a flatterer, Mr. Warden, replied Miss Artemesia, with a desperate effort to muster a faint blush; for I know no one can remember me. Indeed, how can I interest a gentleman so intellectual as yourself?

He is not a gentleman, nor intellectual, said the gallant judge, who knows you and takes no interest in you. Excuse me for my bluntness, for my heart is touched.

I'll excuse you for this time, said Miss Artemesia, laughing; but for fear you commit a more unpardonable sin, I'll turn the subject.

Hereupon, Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes got upon books and romances; and after some not very intelligible discourse, the judge took his leave, impressed with the belief that Miss Artemesia had a good heart and an enquiring mind, but that her education had been irregular, and her reading somewhat desultory. It is all the fault of the schools, thought he, for she is capable of the highest polish.

CHAPTER XVI. A SCENE BEHIND THE CURTAIN, AND ONE IN FRONT.

AND you think him handsome? asked Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes.

I did not say that, answered Edith, blushing; I said he was not such as you represented him, nor is he.

There is no accounting for tastes, returned Miss Arty, and, therefore, we'll not quarrel about the matter. Indeed, he is hardly worth a quarrel. Edith was silent, and Miss Artemesia resumed: I had heard that he was visionary, but I was hardly prepared to meet with one so absurd and wild in his notions. He is particularly deranged on the subject of love, and I do not blame you for having forbid him to speak to you.

Who says that I have forbid him to speak to me? asked Edith, raising herself in the bed; it's astonishing how many stories can get in circulation!

If I have told a story, Miss Edith, I have good authority for it. I should suppose Mr. Warden himself is good authority.

Henry Warden never tells a lie, replied Edith.

Then, I suppose, you don't believe he said so?

If he did he was deceived by some things that have happened, for I know he would not tell a story on any one.

Men are very deceiving, said Miss Thrillingpipes, and, for my part, I don't trust any of them.

But I do trust in Henry Warden, answered Edith; and all the world could not make me believe he is deceitful, or would do a mean thing. As for his being absurd in his notions, people may differ in opinion. I have mine, and I shall never change it.

Take care, Edith, you may rue the day you have been so confiding. You may yet be deceived and betrayed.

If I am it will not be by Mr. Warden. I could trust my life and my honour in his hands, and feel as safe as if my own father was watching over me.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Out at last! exclaimed Miss Artemesia: I knew you loved him. The beating of this little heart tells me so. Am I not right, sweet child?

Edith was confused and disgusted at the familiarities of her new friend; but, shocked as her sensibilities were, she was too amiable and too regardful of Miss Artemesia's feelings to show her displeasure. She therefore covered her head and said nothing; when her companion proceeded:

Why do you not make a confidant of me, Edith? I love you as if you were my sister, and I'm sure I'd keep your secret as sacred as if it were my own. You need not fear me, for every one trusts me with their love affairs.

Please let's go to sleep, said Edith, for I'm very tired. Would you believe it? I have walked six miles to-day, and done a great many other things besides. Father has a negro quarter about two miles from here, and I have been there to carry some medicines and sweet things to Aunt Hannah, who is very old and sickly; then I went to see old Mother Johnson, whom I visit once a-week, and who calls me her chatterbox; then I went to see if the Causeys, who are very poor, needed any thing, and from there I came home. Six miles did I say? It's more than that, for it's two to father's quarter, two from there to Mother Johnson's

Edith, said Miss Thrillingpipes, interrupting her calculation, never mind about the number of miles. I have a secret of great importance to communicate to you, and it deeply concerns you as well as me. Will you swear to me never to tell to any one what I am going to relate to you?

I would not swear to save my life, answered Edith; but I'll promise.

Will you also be as candid with me as I am with you? We are both interested in this matter.

I will not tell you a story, said Edith.

You must know, then, resumed Miss Artemesia, that I had good reasons for speaking to you as I have about Henry Warden. He has actually had the impudence to make love to me lie still, my dear, and hear me out. He has made love to me don't be so fidgety and has tried to make me believe that he never addressed you, and never loved you I'll get up if you can't be more quiet. He said it was all a story about his being fond of you: that you and he had been friendly and intimate, and that all at once you got mad at him, abused and insulted him, and tried to show your spite in various ways. He acknowledged that he had written to you, but he declared most solemnly that he did it only because he respected your father, and did not wish to be at enmity with the daughter of a man he esteemed so much. I did not believe him, but he was so earnest that I thought I would consult you before I gave him an answer. He is too much of a boy for me, any how; but I thought I would find him out before I discarded him, and give him such an answer as he deserves. Are you asleep? Edith, child, what ails you? Can't you speak to me?

I don't want to talk, answered Edith, with a voice that sounded as if it were in fact difficult for her to articulate a word.

My dear, sweet child, said Miss Arty, I am almost sorry I told you of Henry Warden's duplicity; but it is better for you to hear of it now than hereafter. What a base heart he must have so to deceive an innocent and confiding girl; and *me*, yes, *me* too, he has tried to injure! But it's not too late to punish him, and we will do it. I feel exceedingly indignant at his attempted tricks, for now I know that he has been tampering with you, and told me a falsehood. Come, child, don't weep so; why, you sob as if your heart were breaking. Dry your tears, and let us consult how we shall take revenge.

He hasn't injured me, replied Edith Mayfield, sobbing convulsively; and, if he had, I don't want to hurt him. It's all my fault, and God knows I am paying dearly for it. Please don't talk to me any more.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Miss Artemesia slept soundly, and dreamed sweetly that night; but her young companion did not close her eyes; and never did a fevered patient look more impatiently for the dawn.

At early light the latter was up; and, for the first time in her life, she surveyed with some attention the reflection of her charms in the mirror. She did not believe she was very handsome, but she could not but contrast the fresh roses of her cheeks, the starry lustre of her eyes, and the delicate symmetry of her form with the angular person, the dry and yellow skin, and the frightful looks of her who was just rising from her couch. They say, thought Edith, that Henry is a visionary, and sees strange things that other folks cannot see; it must be so if he loves that horrid woman. He can't love her; he don't love her; and therefore she must have told me a lie. But would a young lady commit such a sin? When she asked herself this question she looked again at her late bed-mate, and she became satisfied that Miss Artemesia would be more likely to tell a lie than Henry Warden. Nevertheless, she was still troubled with anxious doubts, and as soon as her visiter left, she hurried to her father's quarter to see the faithful old Hannah.

On the same morning, Henry Warden, according to promise, called on Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes, and was welcomed in such a benignant manner that he almost believed he would hear favourable news.

Tell me at once, Miss Arty, said he; for I can talk about nothing else till I know the success of your errand.

Edith is very pretty, answered Miss Thrillingpipes.

She's beautiful, rejoined the judge with animation; and that is not all, she's as good as she's beautiful.

Good, replied Miss Arty, is a word used with various meanings. That Edith is a good sort of a girl, in the common sense of the word, I have no doubt; for she seems amiable enough. It is not, however, for such as you to call her good, Mr. Warden.

What do you mean? asked the judge; I don't understand you.

I mean that no one is good who cannot appreciate a gentleman like you. Poor Edith is a giddy young girl, with a head filled with novelties. She thinks only of beaux, dresses, the latest fashions, the latest gossip, and all such trifles. I could make nothing out of her.

That was because you were somewhat of a stranger to her, said Henry Warden, and she was afraid to confide in you. When you know her better, you will find her totally different from what you now think her.

Perhaps I may, returned Miss Arty; but I flatter myself I am a pretty good judge of character. I can tell from the bud what the flower will be.

What did she say about me? asked Warden: Why did she return my letters? What does she think of me?

All I could get out of her, answered Miss Thrillingpipes, was that she hoped Mr. Warden would pester her no more. Those were her very words. She said she believed you were half-cracked, and made herself merry over some of the most beautiful passages in your letters. I am astonished that a gentleman of your sagacity should have been so deceived in her. Still, when I get better acquainted, I may find her different.

She surely didn't repeat any passages from my letters, and laugh at them, did she?

I don't think she recollected the words; it was only the sentiment she ridiculed.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Never, never shall I like woman again! exclaimed Warden, passionately. Henceforth I am done with the sex forever!

Shame, shame on you, Mr. Warden, for permitting the silly fancies of one giddy girl to make you so ungallant. All ladies are not alike; for I *know* there are some who can appreciate the tender sensibility of a heart like yours.

And here Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes put on her most intellectually pensive looks, while her eyes gleamed with immortal and inexpressible tenderness.

If Edith Mayfield is what you say she is, I care not what the others are, said the judge; and never shall care to know. I had rather believe she is an angel than to know others really are.

I forgive you for the left-handed compliment, replied Miss Artemesia, seriously; for I know you will some day find out who can and does understand you.

I know now that you are my friend, replied Henry, rising and holding out his hand; and cold will be my heart when I forget your kindness. Farewell!

Miss Thrillingpipes softly pressed his hand, and gave him a look whose frightful pathos would have deranged his delicate nerves had he not been in a condition to notice nothing. On the road he overtook old Hannah, who was hobbling towards his father's, and who handed him a sealed paper. He opened it, and found only his farewell verses; and in regard to the return of which Hannah could make no explanations, except that Miss Eddie told her to give the paper to Master Henry.

For once in his life the judge made a safe confidant. Struck with the honest and intelligent face of the old negress, he explained to her the character and object of the verses, told her of the mission of Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes, and of its result, and declared that every effort he made to find out the sentiments of Edith only involved him in deeper mystery. He had hopes of gleanings something from Hannah; but the slave, from ignorance or fidelity, could give him no satisfactory information, and he returned home to pass a night as wretched as the last one had been to Edith.

CHAPTER XVII.

I'd rather meet
A witch far north than a fine fool in love. *THOS. MIDDLETON.*

PHIL BLISTER, also, to his great joy, found a sincere friend in Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes. The truth is, things had come to such a pass with Phil, and his matrimonial prospects were so dull, that the main question with him was not 'whom shall I marry?' but 'whom can I get?' Such a character (I mean the wife-hunter) is of all others the most disagreeable to me, excepting only the woman who is rabid for a husband.

These remarks are taken from the master's notes, and are prefatory to some interesting incidents connected with the subjects of love and romance. That devotee of both, Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes, won daily on the confidence of Henry Warden, whom she fed with vain hopes of hearing something definite from Edith Mayfield.

Now, Phil Blister noticed the frequent visits of the judge, and, inflamed with jealousy, and satisfied that the lady of his heart was an object of interest to every one, he briskly pushed on his suit. Miss Artemesia, believing that she had three strings to her bow, and having mentally arranged her suitors into a sort of sliding-scale, at the top of

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

which was the judge, and at the bottom Phil Blister, was not in a hurry to make up her mind in regard to the latter's proposals. Thus was Phil in great mental agony for several weeks, and, putting all his wits to work, and riding day and night, he fairly deluged the neighbourhood with lies. He gave no credit to the solemn asseverations of the master and the judge, that they had no designs on the susceptible heart of Miss Artemesia, and even thought Uncle Corny was also smitten. So convinced was he that his mistress was a universal belle, reigning in the hearts of all, that there is no telling what might have happened had not a fortunate accident intervened. Miss Artemesia's brother found it necessary, in the prosecution of the business of his mission, to pay a short visit to Virginia, and his wife and her sister accompanied him thither. The last-named, before she left, promised to correspond with the judge, and was to write the first letter in order to let him know where to direct his. She was not long in redeeming her promise; and as the letter was followed by important consequences, and is in itself a curiosity, as a specimen of the epistolary abilities of a literary and sentimental lady, we give it entire, leaving out only the data and the name of the place where it was composed. The master preserved it with great care, as a most precious document; and as we therefore copy from the original, which can be inspected by any one, we hope we will not be accused of having added to or taken from this rare production.

Miss Artemesia to Henry Warden.

I hope you will not think, Mr. Warden, that, because I have not written sooner, I have forgotten you or the dear scenes we have passed together at Alamance. Oh, no! I never can forget you, and have not ceased to think of you every moment since we parted; but the truth is, I have been much pestered by the calls of gentlemen, and by invitations to parties. I am compelled, out of politeness, to go to these places, though I never had much fancy for them, being always of a retiring disposition. I often think when the silly dandies are crowding round me, and teasing me with their disgusting flattery, of the lines of my favourite poet Crusoe:

'O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless ambiguity of shade!'

And I may add

Where ladies are not fond of dress,
And no compliments are paid.

Thus, you will perceive, I am a sort of poetess myself, though it is very hard for me to write my bounding and cerulean thoughts. I often *feel* poetical indeed, especially in the dim silence of the night, when all are locked in the arms of Orpheus, and my eyes only are watching the desultory stars in the void expanse above; but I never yet could acquire any docility for making rhymes. And, by the way, speaking of poetry, reminds me of a scene in one of Shakspeare's plays I think it is in the Prince of Hamlet, where Othello says

'I had rather be a cat, and cry mew, than a poet.'

Now, will you not agree with me that these were not the author's own sentiments; for was he not a great and extraneous poet himself And were not Sallust, Cato, and Mark Anthony poets among the ancients? And were not Milton, Plutarch, Hudibras, and Cromwell poets among the moderns? And yet who was greater than these? I am a lover of poets and poetry, and I think it the most pleasant reading in the world. With what pleasure have I devoured 'the Crusades,' by Julius Cæsar, and the romantic wars between the Dutch and Trojans in the fifteenth century! How have I melted at the tale of the forlorn Dido, whose heart was broken by Henry the Eighth on his return from the Holy Land, and kindled at the strains of the immortal Avon! I love, too, to read of Richard the Black Prince, who drove the Moors out of Africa. But my favourite hero is Falstaff, who overthrew the Pyramids in a pitched battle, and routed the Troubadours on the plains of Salamanca, where he left seventy-five thousand

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

dead Saracens on the field. O that I had some one to talk to about these things! some kindred spirit, like your own, to laugh with me over the humour of the immortal Coke, and weep at the mournful fall of the gallant Goths in Constantinople! to tread the flowery fields of Bacon's fancy, and wander, in imagination, through the now deserted streets of Carthage, where Virgil's song is heard no more, and merry Æsop's tavern lies in ruins! But I am out of place; I am among a people who do not understand me, and between whom and myself there is no communion of soul. To show you what sort of gentlemen we have, I will describe to you the belles whom they most admire. Miss Squizzleborough is thought to sing divinely, and yet I had as soon hear a pig in the last agonies of death, or the screaming of a hundred and fifty cats all at once. Miss Saddletree is admired for her smartness, and, would you believe me, she cannot tell whether Alexander the Great or the Duke of Marlborough gained the great battle of Charlemagne, and did not know, until I informed her, that the Prince of Wales is the Governor of Gibraltar, and the chancellor of the woolsack the chief of the Highland Clans. When I told her that the wild Irish were caught in Patagonia, and that the pensioned poets of England generally resided on the Peak of Teneriffe, she seemed as much astonished as if she had heard some new and startling intelligence. The other two fashionable toasts, Miss Pendergrass and Miss Riggles, are famous the one for her beauty, and the other for her dancing. The *beautiful* lady has carrotty hair, eyes more like a New-England fog than any thing else I can think of just now, and is good for nothing but to ogle and show her teeth; while the celebrated dancer bounces through the room like a showman on a spring-board. I am not envious; gracious knows, I have attentions enough paid to me, without wishing any more from the rustic gentlemen of the place, not one of whom has ever read Pluto, or resembles Jupiter, Syphax, or Don Quixote, or any of the other heroes of Shakspeare's tragedies. When I think, my friend, how few are like you when I reflect, as I often do, on my lonely and desolated situation, I feel half disposed to turn Pope, and retire into a monastery where I can spend my life in meditation, and in the perusal of such romances as the sweet and touching loves of Sancho Panza and Rosa Nautz. If I do, I shall still remember you, and shall constantly pray that you may find some one who can depreciate as she ought the sensibility of a heart like yours, and who will regard you with that fraternal composure which shall forever burn in my kindred breast for you. Don't forget to write soon, and at length. I shall devour your letter, and hope you will dilate at large, with that kindling sophistry—with which you are so eloquent, and which I so much delight to hear. Brother and sister send their love, and I my respects and my sincere wishes for your utter and total felicity here and hereafter. Adieu!

ARTEMESIE.

P. S. Just before I left Alamance, I heard Edith speak very lightly of you. I hope you have forgotten your unhappy passion for that giddy girl. You will never be yourself until you tear her from your heart, of which she is so totally unworthy.

The master, to whom Henry Warden exhibited this extraordinary epistle, perused it over and over again, first silently and then aloud, falling, at each time, into convulsions of laughter. He finally read it sentence by sentence, with a running and extempore commentary on each, and for an hour at least he and the judge were so merry that they forgot all their earthly cares and sorrows. Many of the remarks of M'Bride are preserved in his notes; but as they are extremely caustic and unmercifully humorous, and as some of the relatives and friends of Miss Thrillingpipes are still in existence, and may read these pages, we feel disposed to save their feelings even by withholding what might be highly acceptable to others. The two friends understood at once the character and designs of the writer; and the master, for the sake of fun, was for keeping up the correspondence. The judge, however, was already sick of the game, and immediately composed the following answer:

ALAMANCE, 17

Mr. Henry Warden offers his grateful acknowledgments to Miss Thrillingpipes for the high opinion she has expressed of him in her letter of the , and desires, by this note, to close the correspondence. He is of opinion that false impressions might be produced by farther intimacy, and as Mr. Philemon Blister is already jealous of him, he avails himself of the occasion to say that he is not and expects not to be that gentleman's rival. Mr. W. will

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

remember Miss Artemesia for the kind and faithful manner in which she complied with his request to bring about a reconciliation between himself and his friend Miss E.

H. W.

Hector M'Bride was perfectly enraptured with this note, and immediately carried it and Miss Artemesia's to Edith Mayfield, to whom he handed them to read, and who, after their perusal felt her innocent heart fairly dance within her. To prevent her father from observing her emotion, she hastened to her own chamber, and there, falling on her knees, poured out the grateful offerings of her sinless breast to Heaven: and then, throwing herself on her bed, wept for hours in an ecstasy of pleasure. The master returned with information of what he had done, and of Edith's abrupt departure from the room, and was tolerably certain that he saw several tears drop from her eyes as she ran. Warden's note was duly despatched, and as we are now on the subject, we will extract from the master's notes the conclusion of Phil Blister's history.

I may as well, writes he, make a finish of these characters at once, without awaiting the order of events or stopping now to record previous and more important matters. Philemon Blister and Henry Warden's note reached Miss Thrillingpipes about the same time; and if the coldness of the latter threw her into convulsions of rage, the warmth of the former acted as an extremely soothing balm to her wounded heart. Although I am confident that Phil never read a book through in his life, and had about as intelligible an idea of sentiment as a man born blind has of colours, he found little difficulty in engaging himself to the romantic and accomplished Artemesia Thrillingpipes. She now, no doubt to enhance her value in her lover's eyes, informed him that Henry Warden and myself had been at her feet, and that Uncle Corny had long been desirous of offering himself as a candidate for her hand, but she never could endure his presence. Twice, she said, she had rejected my proposals, and thrice those of the judge, and intimated, in terms by no means ambiguous, that she had fled to Virginia to get rid of our importunities. Was not Phil happy at this information? Did he not feel like Tam O'Shanter,

'O'er all the ills of life victorious?'

As my friend, Cornelius Demijohn would say, to be sure he did. He forthwith had the blooming and blushing Thrillingpipes united indissolubly to himself, he and his friends regarding the achievement as having no parallel except the abduction of Helen and the fall of Troy, since the general deluge. His nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and rejoicings at Alamance, and indeed the whole community felt relieved at his marriage. As for Phil himself, satisfied that he had done what was beyond the powers of any other mortal man, he shed his buffoon character, strode about with a consequential air, and became a man 'of settled visage and deliberate speech.' His thrice happy bride seemed to pity the bachelor condition of the judge and myself, rallied us with playful spite on our inability to get us wives, and exhorted us to keep trying, as no doubt we might yet find some one who would have us. Thus have I followed the fortunes of Philemon Blister and Miss Artemesia Thrillingpipes to the beginning of their matrimonial career, and here I take leave of them forever. It is usual, in novels, tales, and histories, to conduct the characters to their exit from the world, and there bid them adieu. I have done more than this towards Phil and his wife; I have recorded their lives up to what is called in law the civil death of the female, and have dared to go still farther, and see them each landed in what proved to be the worst of purgatories to both, the society of each other.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE EXHIBITION.

MOST of the incidents recorded in the last few chapters occurred within a short space of time. They happened without impeding the regular course of things at Alamance, where the master still busied—himself with the affairs

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

of his little kingdom, and where the judge and his schoolmates still prosecuted their studies. In fact, the end of the session was near at hand, and as it approached, the exhibition became the absorbing topic of conversation with old and young. It was similar to our modern commencements, being a grand gala day, when there were public exercises by the students, and which were witnessed by the parents of the scholars, and all others who took an interest in the cause of education. Great preparations were, of course, made, and for weeks previous the boys daily rehearsed before the master, and in the presence of each other, speeches, plays, and dialogues; the grounds around the school-house were cleanly swept, and decorated by the girls with the nicest care, and workmen were engaged in preparing seats. All, from the master down to the smallest scholar, got new suits of clothes for this occasion, which many regarded as the most important era in their lives.

The day, the eventful day, so anxiously expected, come at last. It was in the month of April, just after the vacant throne of Winter had been occupied by her more gentle sister, Spring, whose advent was merrily hailed by her unnumbered choirs of gay and feathered minstrels, and whose smile awoke a fresh bloom on the wan and faded cheek of Nature, now crowned with buds and blossoms, and shining in the green robes of her early youth. At an early hour the seats were filled by the ladies; and the boys, awkwardly wearing their fine new clothes, were shivering in the house, looking wistfully at the gathering crowd, and feeling like culprits who were that day to be led out to execution. All the patrons of the school, and all their relations all Alamance, with a sprinkling of gallants from distant parts, were there. We said *all* Alamance, but we should have excepted the Glutsons and George Warden and his wife, the latter two of whom were absent because their son was to be one of the speakers. At ten o'clock in the morning the curtain rose, and Corny Demijohn, marshal for the day, and arrayed in a suit of faded uniform, stepped out upon the stage. On his head sat a fierce three-cornered cap, a huge red sash glittered round his waist, and his coat being buttoned to the chin, its long and slender skirts stood widely and stiffly apart, as if too proud to touch each other. Next after Marshal Corny came two negro fiddlers, then the students, ranged two abreast, and, lastly, the clowns or fools in masks and comic dresses, and acting as lieutenants. Uncle Corny, conscious that every eye was bent on him, with his gaze fixed sternly on a point in the distant horizon, his head thrown back, and the point of his sword resting on his shoulder, strode off with the step of an ancient Titan; the fiddlers, feeling as Uncle Corny did, scraped away as if they were performing the grand finale of all mortal fiddling; the clowns, believing they were the objects of general attraction, acted accordingly, and each student, thinking that he himself fixed every gaze, felt his heart throb within him, and envied the courage and coolness of fiddlers and commanders. In this way the column marched off to the spring, and performing a circuit, wheeled, and started to the house. The military pride of the commander-in-chief, how getting the mastery over his judgment, and forgetting every thing else except the happy opportunity of displaying his skill, he undertook to carry his men through certain difficult evolutions. Of course his soldiers were raw at the business, and hence, by the assistance of his frisky lieutenants, who perverted all the commands, he had some wheeling to the right and some to the left, some facing north and some facing south, some whirling round and some deploying into squads, till the whole were brought to a dead halt in a confused and solid mass. Forward, by one, march! cried Marshal Corny, in a fury of passion. To the right, by platoons, wheel; rear fronting flank, and flank crosswise! shouted one lieutenant; Front ranks face backwards, and centre wheel towards Sunday! shouted the other. Thus they had it, all three of the commanders talking at once; the fiddlers playing different tunes, and the boys running against and falling over each other, till Uncle Corny, overcome by rage, applied his foot so fiercely to his lieutenants, that they gave a respectful attention to his commands. He thus finally got his men into a line, made them fire several rounds with their horsemen's pistols, and got them all safely back into the house without any other accident except one which befel himself. As he strode up the steps of the stage, one of the clowns tripped his legs from under him, and sent him with an accelerated velocity into the lap of a fat widow who sat near. She, in her turn, went over, seizing, as she went, the lame leg of an old gentleman, and sending him some distance forward, his spectacled face striking furiously against the bare head of a screaming urchin.

Thus they tumbled, one upon another, the crowd in great excitement rushing towards them, some shouting fire, and some crying murder, and many of them falling over those already down, until Uncle Corny and the widow formed the base of a circular pyramid of prostrate bodies, and were nearly suffocated in each other's embraces. It was well for the clown that the widow was one of those chiefly affected by his trick, for her influence only could

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

restrain Demijohn from running his sword through the body of the author of the accident. Order was at last restored, and at the sound of a bell the curtain again rose, when a white-haired boy, with his shirtcollar sawing his ears, his eyes starting from their sockets, and fingers twitching nervously at his pantaloons, advanced a few paces, and halting, dipped his head forwards as if he would pitch it at the audience. Every body knows how boys speak in public on the stage, and the Alamance boys were not an exception to the general rule.

After the eloquent efforts of two or three of the smaller scholars, and after the playing of two or three animated tunes by the fiddlers, the rising of the curtain disclosed Ben Rust, who, with a series of low bows to those in front and at his sides, advanced to the edge of the stage. Here he halted, made another profound and oriental salaam, and smiling on the crowd generally, and winking specially at two or three of his friends, the loud tones of his stentorian voice suddenly burst on the astonished audience like a clap of thunder, and Ben was soon some distance in the oration of Cicero against Verres. He stood with his arms hanging at his sides, his mouth stretched to its widest limit, and his voice at its very highest pitch, paying no attention to stops and periods, and often halting in the middle of a sentence. At these occasional pauses, made at regular intervals, and without reference to the sense of his speech, he would violently flourish his arms through the air at imaginary foes before and around him, by way of performing, at these intervals, the necessary amount of gesticulation for that part of his oration last gone over. Now it happened that one of Rust's friends was perched upon a tree near by, and this worthy, being carried away by the stormy eloquence of his crony, forgot himself, and in his excitement shouting whoorah for Ben! the limb on which he sat broke, and he came with a crash to the ground, finishing the sentence as he fell. Ben's attention was arrested by the scene, and his ideas began to swim into each other. At a loss for words, he changed his position, bowed, and gesticulated. Still, not being able to remember where he had left off, he again bowed, boxed furiously at a circle of ideal antagonists, and took a new position. The master, whose prompting from within Rust could not hear, now started on the stage; but Ben waved him back with his hand, and on a new key commenced a new discourse, reciting, without pause, emphasis, or varied tone,

The starry firmament on high.

And now, my Christin friends and feller sinners, said he, my spoutin's over for the day. Our old friend Proximus made us all git two speeches, one for the mornin and one for the evenin, but I thought while my hand was in I mout as well make a lumpin job of the whole consarn, and, as the sayin is, kill two birds with one stone. I never was good at the oratories no how, and when you put me on a discourse of an old heathen Greek or Tartar I'm sure to make a mess of it; but if any body will jist give me a speech on liberty I guess I'd shew you how to make the fur fly some. Thank you for your attention.

Notwithstanding the admirable grace with which Ben thus redeemed his failure, the master was greatly mortified, and determined to play his best card next. Henry Warden, by his assistance, had composed an original address on the wrongs of the American Colonies, and this, according to the first design, was to conclude the exercises of the day. M'Bride, however, altered the arrangement, and ordered the music to strike up and the curtain to be let down, and when it rose again, the judge, pale and agitated, came forward. After pausing a few moments to master his emotion, he commenced with a low and tremulous voice, which could be heard only by those on the front seats. Gathering confidence as he advanced, his manner became more easy, natural, and bold, his voice swelled louder, firmer, and richer, and his eye flashed with contagious animation. He was soon master of himself and of the hearts of all his excited and delighted auditors, when suddenly, and in the midst of the crowd, a voice exclaimed, stop the traitor! It was a single and an unknown voice, but it struck solemnly on every ear, and instantly there was a profound and painful silence. The cry of treason was even then a fearful sound, and the assembly sat in hushed and breathless expectation, each one gazing anxiously and enquiringly at his neighbour. As the judge looked round for the author of the alarm, his gaze met that of Edith Mayfield. Her cheeks were tinged with a hectic glow, her large, deep, dark eyes beamed with unearthly light, and her whole face was lit up with the fervid feelings and unutterable thoughts that were burning in her heaving breast. Slowly, earnestly, and solemnly the young orator resumed his speech, steadily watching the impression made on his hearers, and strongly emphasizing every bold

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

and startling passage. As for me, said he in conclusion, my first and fiercest hatred was for the tyrant, my first impressions of history were caught from the simple yet glowing page that records his atrocities, my first, most ardent, and most lasting love was the love of liberty liberty of conscience, liberty of speech, and liberty of action. And by the favor of Heaven, though all other blessings be denied me though fortune prove false and friends forsake me, and envy, malice, and detraction pursue and dog me yea, even though death itself, in all its horrors, frown before me, while I tread this green earth I shall walk it with the erect soul of a freeman, living as I was born and dying as I have lived, unfettered by any chains that man can forge, and owning no master but God my maker! A few moments after he had finished, and while he was yet on the stage blushing at the buzz of approbation that ran through the crowd, and the encomiums of the master, who held him by the hand, Arrest him in the king's name! startled every one, and Ross, with William Glutson and a few others were seen ascending the stage. To the rescue! to the rescue! shouted Uncle Corny, brandishing his sword in his hand, and trampling over the crowd that stood in his way. To the rescue! echoed and reechoed others, and immediately the stage was covered with men, and the royalist party flung headlong from it. They fell among an infuriated multitude, and amid the shrieks and screams of women were heard the stern threats for vengeance and calls for blood, and loud and defiant shouts for Congress and for George the Third. Oaths were mingled with entreaties and expostulations, dirks were drawn, pistols fired, and rocks went whizzing through the air, till at length the authority of the more moderate ones prevailed and peace was restored. The royalists, smothering their resentment and covered with blood and dust, drew moodily off, and while they were yet in sight, Ben Rust, who was frantic with pleasurable excitement, bounced upon the stage and called for three cheers for Henry Warden and Liberty. Three wild cheers rang through those old woods, and hats, caps, and it is even said bonnets flew thick through the air, not a few of them falling and lodging on the roof of the house. Three cheers for Uncle Corny were called for and given; three for the master, and three for the parson, whereupon this last, carried away by his enthusiasm, rushed upon the platform, and waving his handkerchief above his head, called out, And now my hearties, three times three glorious cheers for liberty and INDEPENDENCE! Loud, wild, and hearty were those cheers indeed, but they were fearful sounds to some in that assembly. Among these was Isaiah Mayfield, whose heart quaked at every shout, and who, that he might not be compromised by the proceedings of the now stormy multitude, hastily prepared to leave. After searching long for his daughter, he found her at last in a remote part of the crowd, and in the act of receiving a slip of paper from Henry Warden. Daughter, daughter! exclaimed the old man, mad with alarm; and Edith dropped the paper from her trembling fingers, while the tears glistened in her eyes as she gave one last, sad look to the judge, and took her father's arm. Henry would have explained, but the cautious and discreet Mayfield never could endure an explanation, always clinging with the tenacity of death to his first opinions and impressions, while his suspicions, however aroused, still grew darker and darker. As he went off, almost dragging his weeping daughter, there was some disposition to hiss him; but the master was now on the stage and called for silence. Let them go in peace, said he, let them go who have no stomach for the fight. As we are about to take a great step and assume a mighty responsibility, I will say to you all, my friends, as the Lord said to Gideon on Mount Gilead, 'whoever is fearful and afraid let him return and depart early,' for we want no timid souls among our host. My friends, 'Othello's occupation's gone,' the schoolmaster's vocation is over for the present, and God knows when it will be resumed. It is said that *inter arma silent leges*, and I may say the same of letters, for I cannot teach while 'grimvisaged war' still shows his 'wrinkled front.' Yes, my friends and countrymen, the terrible blast of war has sounded through our peaceful borders; a struggle has commenced, and it must end in our slavery or in our glorious emancipation. I, for one, have no fears; I, for one, believe that the Great Ruler of nations is now about to effect one of his grandest purposes. The *magnus ordo sæclorumis* about to begin: a new era is dawning; man is about to be redeemed from bondage. I cannot sit idle while this struggle is going on; I must exchange the rod for the sword, and act my part. And you, my beloved scholars, you, my respected patrons, neighbours, and countrymen, where will you be? Oh! will you go with me? Will you join, with one heart and one hand, in this glorious work? A loud shout of, We will! we will to the death! answered this question. Then, continued the master, let us record our vow, let us all sign this solemn pledge, which I will read: 'We whose names are hereto affixed, actuated by love for our common country, and an unconquerable attachment to liberty, do hereby pledge ourselves to devote our time, our property, and our lives to the redemption of that country from British oppression, and to the establishment of that liberty on secure foundation.' When the contest is over, and

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

'Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,
Our stern alarms changed to merry meetings,'

the roll of names attached to this scroll shall be called again. Those who have fallen in the strife shall be embalmed for ever in the grateful memories of freemen; those who have deserted the cause shall be marked for everlasting execration. My name is already to the paper; come up, all you that wish to follow my example.

There was immediately a tremendous rush to obey this summons, and soon several sheets of paper were covered with names. As this remarkable document was preserved by the master, and is now in possession of the editor, and as it cannot be inspected by all the curious, we will mention some interesting particulars in regard to it. The name of David Caldwell stands second on the list. There are a great number of female signatures; and there are some which appear to have been afterwards affixed. All ages are here represented; for you can see the tremulous hand of the octogenarian, and the rough and angular autograph of the school-boy. We observe the Demijohn is spelled with two *m*'s, and the name of Ben Rust is written in capital letters, each one of which leans off in a different direction from its neighbour. The only other thing worthy of mention is the following signature at the bottom of one of the lists,

Warden's, [his mark +] Ben, witness Ben Rust.

The signing of this paper and a fervent prayer from the Rev. Dr. Caldwell ended the ceremonies of the day. The people were not in a humour to hear other speeches and dialogues; the master and his scholars were absorbed with a new train of thoughts, and so all quietly dispersed, soberly discussing among themselves the incidents of the day. The judge had, to a great extent, regained his reputation, and, occupied with serious preparations for another mode of life, he forgot, in a measure, his recent grief, and busily prepared for the grave theatre of action on which he was about to enter.

CHAPTER XIX. WAR.

A FEW years made a great change in the appearance of things at Alamance. When we last closed our narrative, a cloud hung in the political skies; before the time at which we resume this history the storm had burst, and war, with its grandeur and its horrors, had been raging in every part of the country. The schoolmaster's vocation was indeed gone, and so was that of every other teacher of the arts of peace; for the Genius of Destruction was now at work, laying in ruins the labour of many years, that mankind might take a new start where they had begun a century before. There must be wars; such is the doom of the world; for the course of things here is like the stone of Sisyphus, ever aiming at, but never reaching a certain end a downward progress, invariably beginning just before the desired elevation is attained.

The earth looked worn and wasted; social intercourse and social harmony were destroyed; all improvements, moral, artistical, and agricultural, were arrested, and for the cheerful sounds of thrifty industry were now heard the tramp of marching troops, the hoarse rattle of the drum, and the ear-piercing fife. Every place was drained of its resources, every family was mourning the loss of some valued member, and all the evils attendant on a protracted contest of arms, unbridled licentiousness, depraved morals, drunkenness, famine, and pestilence, were let loose on the land. Many still adhering to the royal cause, the controversy assumed the cruel and murderous character of a civil war, and women and children were not exempted from its injuries. This was more particularly the case in North Carolina, where a large body of citizens still remained faithful in their allegiance to the English crown. The southern part of the State had been settled by families from the Highlands of Scotland, whence they had emigrated in consequence of the odium into which they had grown with the reigning family, on account of their former

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

attachment to the Stuarts. To avoid vexatious exactions and persecutions from the royal governor of North Carolina, and to display their loyalty to the now firmly-established Guelphs, they early espoused the side of England in her disputes with her colonies, and served George the Third with zeal and fidelity. These were honourable and honest men, and brave soldiers; and, devoted to their cause, they sometimes encouraged and protected another class of royalists who were scattered over the state, and whom they doubtless believed to be true subjects, but between whom and themselves there was, in fact, the same difference that there is between the pirate and the sailor who fights under the flag of his country. This other class, the regular Tories, were lawless marauders, who made use of the occasion to gratify their thieving and malicious propensities. They were, in fact, robbers and assassins, more detestable than any race of men of whom Time's records speak. The Moss-troopers of Germany, and the banditti of Italy and of Spain, and even the Leperos and Rancheros of modern Mexico, rarely joined the external enemies of their countries, and therefore are not to be compared to the American Tories, for whom was reserved the unenviable distinction of combining pillage and patricide, theft and murder, without the palliation of necessity or the decent pretext of patriotism. They lurked in every part of the state; and, in those, neighbourhoods which were unprotected by organized forces, they would swoop down with fire and sword, carrying off and burning the property of patriot families, and sparing neither age nor sex in the gratification of their base lusts and sanguinary passions.

CHAPTER XX. THE HEROINES OF ALAMANCE.

AT the time alluded to in the last chapter, the Tories were a terror at Alamance. Many of the Whigs were absent in the service of their country, and their murderous enemies overran the neighbourhood, beating women, burning barus, robbing houses, and carrying off cattle and slaves. Such, for a considerable period, was the state of things; the few remaining Whigs, consisting of old men and invalids, having been driven from their homes and families, and compelled to hide in swamps and thickets, where they subsisted chiefly on fruits and berries. To add to the horrors of the times, a malignant and fatal epidemic broke out in the community, and scourged nearly every family. The Rev. Dr. Caldwell, the regular physician, was hunted from place to place with untiring ferocity; medicines were scarce, and even the common comforts necessary for the sick were wanting. It was a time that tried the souls of men, and of women, too; and these latter, as well as the former, were found equal to the occasion. With a pure and heroic devotion to a forlorn but noble cause, the females of Alamance shone with a brighter and serener lustre than ever did the savage Spartan mothers, or the haughty dames and military damsels of feudal times. They formed an association for their mutual protection; laboured day and night in the manufacture of clothing for the soldiers; and braved the terrors of the pestilence and the dangers of darkness and the elements, to tend and nurse the sick, and to carry food to their exiled friends, husbands, and brothers. From the smallest girl to the most aged matron, all were taught to consider themselves and all they had as belonging to their country, of whose cause they never despaired, and whose defenders they encouraged to persevere in their glorious undertaking. The master's notes are full of instances of individual heroism, virtue, and devotion; but, as these incidents would fill a volume, we will but briefly notice a few of the most prominent and active characters, who are more worthy of notice only because they were more generally known than others.

Esther Bell, whose husband and whose sons were in the service, was a woman of a strong mind and a masculine character active, brave, and untiring. Her husband was rich; and all his negro men being good Whigs, and trained by Big Dan, one of their number, to the use of arms, they protected their mistress, and formed an efficient guard to the plantation. Esther Bell herself, more commonly known as Dr. Bell, was somewhat skilled in medicines, and, with pistols at her saddle-bow, rode day and night, visiting and prescribing for the sick. Polly Rust, the mother of Ben, was called, by the Tories, Major Poll. and, with a rifle on her shoulder and a dirk and pistols at her girdle, patrolled the neighbourhood. She was a plain, stout woman, perfectly fearless, and was considered as the military chief of the community, every part of which felt her protection. Mother Demijohn. like Polly Rust, was also a widow, and her only son Corny was generally absent in the war. She was very old, with a venerable appearance, and a head as white as cotton; and yet, attended only by a single female servant, she was constantly

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

on the road. She was devoutly pious, knew the whole Scriptures by heart, and well deserved her name of Parson. Better known and more generally employed, and yet more tender than any of these, was Edith Mayfield, who was now grown, and whose charms of mind and person were wearing their richest bloom. Modest, diffident, and retiring in her disposition in peaceful times, and shrinking with painful timidity from the admiring gaze which her beauty won, she was brave, constant, and firm in the hour of trial, facing danger with a serene countenance and steady eye, and lighting with her perpetual smile the gloom of those dark and troublous times. Her long-cherished aspirations were now realized; for she now found herself usefully employed in one of those mighty and glorious causes that had often floated in misty grandeur before her young imagination, and which, from the very days of her childhood, had occupied her thoughts and dreams. It is not often that the good and pure and great in soul find in this world such work as they would like to be engaged in; and therefore it is that they have recourse to fancy, and live in an ideal world, where they are ever carrying out the noble and grand purposes of their generous hearts. Thus it had been with Edith, and thus it was with Henry Warden, than whom, in all her imaginary kingdoms, she could not find a more perfect hero. His character was now proving to be precisely what she thought it; for in that great revolution going on the greatest in her and his estimation of which this earth had ever been the theatre he was acting a conspicuous part. Hers, which she well understood, was less notorious, but not less important; and she entered on the discharge of her duties with cheerful enthusiasm and untiring zeal. Her throne was by the bed of the sick, and haggard disease lost half its terrors at her coming. To the young and to the aged, to the helpless and the suffering, she was a ministering spirit of good; imparting peace to the souls of the dying, and irradiating with the mild beams of hope the hearts of the living. Fearless alike of the Tories and of the pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noon-day, she was always on the wing, always present where most needed; the well-known sound of her footsteps falling cheerfully on the ears of the wretched, while pain and despondency fled before the light of her sweetly-beaming face as she crossed the threshold.

CHAPTER XXI. WAR AT HOME.

LITTLE WASH, Mrs. Warden's youngest son, fell dangerously ill with the prevailing epidemic, and called daily for his brother, whom he had not lately seen. At his earnest request Mrs. W. had written to Henry a letter, to be carried by Ben; and Esther Bell was sent for, that her skill might save the little patient's life, or prolong his days, until he could see his father and brother. The good woman started in the night, and without an attendant, but had not gone far before the bridle of her horse was seized, while two ruffians dragged her to the ground and commenced beating her with clubs. She would soon have been horridly mangled, but for her presence of mind, which never deserted her. Looking up the road, she uttered a joyful exclamation, and called on Dan to hurry on with his men, as the Tories were now in his power. She was instantly released, and, mounting her horse, she put him to his full speed, until she arrived at Wardens'. Here the Tories were also in force; for she had scarcely finished the narrative of her adventure when the house was violently entered by an armed party, some of whom, presenting their guns to the breast of Mrs. Warden, commanded her, on pain of instant death, to reveal the hiding-place of her husband.

He is hid in the strength of the Lord, and defies your power, answered Esther Bell for her neighbour.

Woman! exclaimed the leader of the band, tell us where that rebel, George Warden is, or by G ,I'll blow you brains out on the spot. Will you speak?

I will, replied Mrs. Warden; I will speak to you, though you are as deaf to the calls of mercy as a famished wolf. You call my husband a rebel, and you desire to put him to death, because, as you allege, he has been guilty of treason to his royal master. Were his obligations to the English king as sacred and binding as those of a wife to her husband? You may kill or torture me, but I will NEVER betray him. Yet, for mercy's sake, do not murder me here; carry me beyond the sight and hearing of my poor child, who lies there at the point of death.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Whatever may have been the wishes of the captain of the robbers, he was compelled to obey the wishes of his associates, and for the present ordered the ladies to be tied and carried into one of the kitchens. The little patient, Wash, who was lying on a pallet by the fire, feeble, sick, and helpless as he was, could not brook the indignities offered to his mother. For a moment his failing energies seemed to rally, and nerve him with unnatural strength, and, rushing against the man who had seized his mother, he endeavoured to push him off. The Tory struck the young hero on the head, and he fell, clinging to his mother's clothes. As she stooped over him to gather him up, he put his arms about her neck and said, with a faint smile,

Give my love to brother Henry, and tell him farewell. All of you meet me in heaven. Now kiss me, mother.

She put her lips to his; but ere she withdrew them the seal of death was on his serene and manly face, and his heroic young spirit no longer animated its frail tenement of clay.

Oh God! oh merciful God, thy will be done! exclaimed the agonized mother, as she pressed the lifeless form of her son to her bosom.

The robbers, somewhat touched by the grief of the women, left them with the corpse, and commenced pillaging the house. One of the first rooms which they entered was the chamber of Kate, who, awakened by the noise, and hearing shrieks and cries in the adjoining room, where her brother was, and seeing strange and horrid-looking men in her own room, was dreadfully frightened. She screamed and started from her bed, when several bayonets were placed against her throat, and she was ordered to be still. The poor girl, half dead with fear, and believing her mother and brother had been murdered, lay trembling in bed, and saw all the valuables in the room destroyed or carried away. Every part of the house was ransacked; doors were broken open, bureaus and sideboards smashed to pieces, the beds ripped open, chairs, tables, and bed-clothes flung into the yard; and money, papers, dresses, and every portable article of value carried off. While these outrages were being committed in the house, a singular incident occurred in the yard. The kitchen doors had been cautiously fastened, and a sentinel left at each to prevent any of the servants from escaping to alarm the neighbourhood, or from making resistance to the plundering of the house. Old Ben, whose wits had been much exercised of late, awoke while these preparations were going on, and heard the conversation of the Tories. Raising a plank from the floor of his cabin, he cautiously crept out under the house, and was stealing off with stealthy pace, when he was heard and discovered.

Shoot the d d scoundrel! shouted one of the company; but as soon as the word was given Ben shed his single garment and disappeared in the darkness. His shirt was instantly riddled with balls, but the owner had escaped. Having glutted themselves with plunder, the banditti withdrew, and took the road to Glutson's, upon which they came to a small fire, around which several of their comrades were seated, waiting for them.

Where is George Warden? hastily demanded one of those by the fire a man who, from his dress, seemed to be an officer and a gentleman.

Can't tell, captain, answered the leader of the robbing party; I know as little of his whereabouts as you do.

You found the whereabouts of the plunder, though, said the other, with a sneer; and while your eyes were glued to that you could not have seen George Washington and the whole rebel army.

That may be so, captain, replied the robber, laughing; for when I see the yaller boys I'm charmed. Howsever, if I'd a--had my way I would have found George Warden, or sent his wife to wait and pray for his speedy arrival in kingdom come. But my men were women, and the women were she--devils.

The British officer replied to this speech by remarking, as if talking to himself Not at home he must have been there to--night. Men, continued he, in a louder tone, listen to me, and see that you obey me. We will go to a place where you can sell or deposit your cursed plunder, and then I have other work for you to do. Let no man

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

straggle off, or drink a drop of spirits, for you are to be engaged in a most important matter. You must ask me no questions, and do only as I bid you; and remember! it is in my power to reward you well, or have you hanged.

In a neighbouring thicket there were watchful eyes marking these proceedings.

Good! quietly observed a hidden spectator; now that we've got your secrets we'll use the privilege of presentin you with a little lead, accompanied with our respects, *viva voce*.

The sharp crack of rifles rung keenly through the woods, and the chief of the robbers and another bounced from their feet, and fell dead in the road, and silence again reigned around. The astonished and terrified Tories dropped their plunder, and were about to disperse, when the officer rallied them, and ordered them to extinguish the fire. As they were scattering the coals, a rifle was again heard, and a third man rolled lifeless on the earth.

That's proximus and the last, said one of the concealed enemy; and, with the fleetness of deer, he and his companion plunged farther into the forest.

CHAPTER XXII. A BURIAL AT ALAMANCE.

ON the next evening after the events related in the last chapter, there were mourners in the grave-yard of Alamance. Mrs. Warden, with a large concourse of her female neighbours and a few men, followed to that last resting-place the remains of her youngest son. Such scenes were so common that there was little weeping except by the sister and mother, the former of whom clung widly to the coffin; and the latter, unsustained by the presence of her husband, lost all control over her feelings, and was herself as helpless as a child. As the body was lowered into the pit, the venerable mother of Alamance approached to the head of the grave, and, raising her eyes upward, cried out, 'In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning. Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not.' Yet, my friends, why do you weep? Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days also like the days of an hireling? Man that is born of a woman is of short continuance and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not. He is taken from the evil days to come; his young spirit has returned to God who gave it, pure and holy as it was when it first animated his little body. He has left us but for a season; and father and mother, brother and sister, and friends shall meet him again beyond the shores of that stormy Jordan, which he has already passed. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my death worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Such is the hope of the righteous, and may our last end be like his! Let us pray. It was a simple, solemn, and pathetic prayer, and her words fell on the heart of Mrs. Warden like the dews of heaven on the withered flower. Dust was now committed to dust, and, when the burial was completed, Nathan Glutson, who had officiously assisted in the ceremonies of the occasion, rose devoutly to his feet, uncovered his head, and asked the company to remain until he could make some remarks.

My friends, said he, the Good Book tells us that misfortunes never come single. We have just buried one sweet and promising youth, and it is my painful duty here he again wiped his eyes it is my sad duty to inform you that another sweet blossom of Alamance has been withered. There is a Providence that tempers the wind to the shorn lamb so says that great divine, Shakspeare, and it is our duty to submit. This, I hope, my esteemed friends, Isaiah Mayfield and his lady will do: their daughter is no more. She has gone, with little Wash, to heaven!

The announcement sounded like the crack of doom to the meek and pious Mrs. Mayfield, and her senses reeling for a moment, she fainted away, and recovered only to faint again and again, till her friends began to fear for her life. Her husband seemed to be totally unconscious of her situation, and of everything around him, and gave

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

strong indications of mental aberration.

Dead, is she? said the old man, dead, dead, dead! Well, that's strange! Why don't every body die? Dead! what a silly joke, as if my beautiful and warm hearted child could lie down in the cold ground and rot! Yes, continued he, somewhat recovering, I thought it was all a dream. Mr. Glutson, I've had the vertigo, and as my brain turned I imagined that you spoke of my daughter's death: is it so?

I am sorry to say it is so, answered Glutson; and, after a hundred questions as to the cause, the manner, and time of her death, Nathan asked for silence, and related the particulars. His own daughter Emily had been taken sick was even considered as dangerously ill. Emily, as they all knew, was a great favourite with Eddie a sisterly affection existed between them. When, therefore, my daughter was attacked, I went yesterday after Edith, as my friend Mayfield will recollect.

Certainly I do, interposed the old man, I know you came after her. When will she return? Did you say your daughter was dead?

Not mine, my friend, but yours. Please do not interrupt me for I am hardly able at best to tell the sorrowful story. I went after Edith, and she started with me home. The creeks, as you all know, were swollen with the late rains, and Edith, you also know, was fearless and frolicsome. She was some distance ahead of me when she came to Little Alamance, merrily singing and calling to me to hasten on. The footbridge, as you know, has no railing, and before she got halfway over it, her head began to reel, and she looked round to me and started to run back. I hurried towards her; but before I got near the creek she had fallen off and was washed down the stream. I ran down the creek, but saw her rise but once but once and after that she disappeared entirely. I went several miles down the stream, but the only trace of her I found was this handkerchief, which had caught on a bush. My daughter whom the news nearly killed desired to keep the handkerchief as a relic of her dear friend; but I thought I would first ask permission of Eddie's parents.

Give me the handkerchief, cried old Mayfield, I'll strangle your daughter with it! A pretty story, indeed, that my Eddie is drowned that water can put out her bright eyes! She's just in fun don't cry Mr. Glutson. Why, man, you're silly! I know Eddie's pranks well, and, may be, I won't give her a round lecture for scaring us so. I know the place well. I know where she's hid, the little baggage; and then, when I go to scold her, she'll bounce into my lap, throw her arms round my neck, and kiss me so sweetly that I can't say a word . . . Drowned, did you say? Who's drowned? let's go and drag the creek.

The creek was dragged next day by some of the neighbours, and the body, not of Edith, but of Isaiah Mayfield, was found. The old man, as it appeared on subsequent enquiry, had left home but a short time before his dead body was found, and had, doubtless, thrown himself into the water where he supposed his daughter to be.

The story of Edith's fate spread far and wide, and even in those gloomy times excited a new and universal sorrow. All now recollected her beauty and her virtues, and all remembered that they had predicted her early death because she was too good for earth. They looked on her as a transient visiter from above, sent here for a special purpose as a celestial flower that blossomed for a moment on the tree of life, to give the world a glimpse of the original purity and brightness of our now fallen and corrupted nature.

CHAPTER XXIII. WAR ON THE EMBATTLED FIELD.

THE history of the battle of Camden is too well known to require a description from us. It occurred about the time of the events related in the last few chapters; and while it reflects shame on some, it covered with glory many of those engaged on the American side. The Virginia and the North Carolina militia, as is well known, fled early in

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

the engagement; and while General Gates, the commander-in-chief, was endeavouring to rally them, the venerable De Kalb, at the head of the continentals, was left without orders and nearly surrounded by overwhelming numbers. These, the continentals, preferring death to retreat, stood their ground against fearful odds, and maintained the fierce conflict until the fall of their gallant leader, and until every corps was broken. We extract the following account of part of the engagement from the journal of M'Bride: When the militia fled, our captain (Cornelius Demijohn) made a desperate but vain effort to rally his company, threatening all sorts of punishments, and promising the most extravagant rewards. He got himself well-nigh out of breath with swearing and with running to and fro; and after all his ado, he was able only to retain those of us who were from Alamance, and who numbered eight, including the captain. Our commander, who was sweating and panting prodigiously, from his efforts, now drew out the little bottle which he always carried about him, and offered us a drink. A few of the men helped themselves to a small draught, after which our captain took a long and affectionate embrace, and, with a thundering shout, led us into the middle of the fight. It seemed to me that all engaged looked upon their own fate, and that of the American cause, as sealed, and so they were determined to sell their lives as dear as possible, and to build a monument of dead Englishmen over their own graves. Bidding adieu to time and its vanities, we set ourselves to work with the stern courage of desperation; and I saw many refusing to surrender or ask for quarter after they had fallen, covered with wounds, but on their knees and on their backs still fought as long as they could raise an arm. Several times I was covered with brains, scattered from the heads of those near by me, and the ground became so slippery with blood we could hardly keep our feet. I trod upon the shattered skulls of friends and foes, and several times stumbled and fell over heaps of gory and mangled bodies. Sometimes I saw an arm taken off, or a leg shivered, and heard the poor creature scream with pain, but none attended to his calls; and often, when our nearest and best friends would fall, and plead for help in the name of ancient friendship, we would have to leave them to their fate, not even having time to cool their parched lips with water. Never shall I forget that horrid comminglement of sounds, where, amid the perpetual roll of firearms and the din and clash of swords, were heard oaths and prayers, screams, groans, and pitiful entreaties some cursing their Maker, and some uttering, with feeble voices, the names of their mothers, wives, and children! At length our noble leader, the Baron de Kalb, fell, with a crash like a mighty oak beneath the repeated strokes of his adversaries; and, being scattered about the field, the Americans sought safety, every man for himself. Our captain and myself had kept our eyes on Major Warden, who was ever in the thickest of the fight, and who was by the side of his gallant general when the latter fell. Never did I see, in one so young, such cool courage, such a knightly bearing. Early in the action he threw the scabbard of his sword away, and several times he sought out and was engaged, hand to hand, with British officers, more than one of whom he vanquished. When the old baron fell, young Warden rushed among the foe, who formed a ring around him, and were giving him wound after wound, he still refusing to surrender. It was a critical period with our young friend; and Captain Demijohn, blowing like a chafed rhinoceros, and glowing like a ball of fire, rushed in with his Alamancers, who, hewing their way through the serried ranks of the adversary, caught the major as he was falling, and carried him safely beyond the reach of danger.

When the Alamancers, as M'Bride relates, carried Warden off the field, they found him to be in a state of insensibility, from exhaustion and the loss of blood. No time, however, was to be lost, and after stanching his wounds, they hastily constructed a hand-litter, and, placing him in it, fled as rapidly as they could till darkness overtook them. They were now at the house of a poor widow woman, friendly to the cause, and who joyfully relieved all their wants. Henry Warden was placed on the best bed in the house, and, falling into a refreshing sleep, he remained unconscious until near the break of day. He awoke at last much bewildered, and for a moment imagined that he was in his tent in the army. At length, recollecting the scenes of the preceding day, and being unable to account for his present position, he called out to know if any one was near him.

Certainly, major, certainly, answered a hoarse voice; I'm here, and other good friends besides.

And who are you? enquired Warden; I cannot see you; but it seems to me I ought to know your voice.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

See me! no, certainly, you can't; you could hardly see a candle this dark night, or, what is brighter, the eyes of this fair lady. As to my voice, you ought to know it to be sure you ought, if I had not spoiled the finest one in all the country in cursing George the Third, d n him!

But who are you? again asked Warden.

Demijohn, Cornelius Demijohn, captain of militia in

Uncle Corny! exclaimed Warden, endeavouring to rise; am I dreaming, or is it really you? I thought I saw you yesterday.

To be sure you did, said Demijohn, giving his hand to Warden to be sure you saw me that is, I saw you; but it was no time for friends to pass compliments, major.

It was not, indeed, Uncle Corny; but why do you call me major? Such ceremony between old friends, who have been long parted, is foolish. Call me as you used to do, and sit down here, and tell me all about Alamance. When did you leave there? how is my father's family, and Hector M'Bride? Tell me every thing that has occurred.

Not now, not now, answered the captain; you must sleep to be sure you must. This good lady thinks so, and I think so too. To-morrow morning I will that is to say, Hector M'Bride will tell you every thing.

Is *he* here, the master here? exclaimed Warden, again trying to rise; is Hector M'Bride here? Bring him to me this instant. Where is he? I must see him immediately for all the opiates in the world could not make me sleep now. Bring him in, Uncle Corny!

Well, well, said the latter, you must be obeyed; you are my superior in rank to be sure you are and the rules of war give you command. Old Hector is asleep now, continued he, as he went out, and dreaming that he's whipping a boy in the school of Alamance; but I'll wake him if I have to fire a ten-pounder over his head.

CHAPTER XXIV. RETROSPECTIONS.

EARLY in the morning the conversation of the master and his former scholar was interrupted by the entrance of the other Alamancers, led in by Captain Demijohn with military order and precision. The captain's men, however, broke ranks as soon as they saw their old friend and play-mate, whom they affectionately embraced. Warden and his friends gazed on each other with kind curiosity, and, though time had wrought its usual changes in the faces of all, each heart was as warm, as true, as generous, and as simple, as when they had played their last grand game of town-ball. Henry Warden, who had long been in the service, and who had not for some time past had an opportunity of visiting home, related the chief particulars of his career as a soldier, with which dry details of marches and of battles we will not trouble the reader. Suffice it to say that, in answer to their frequent questions, he alluded modestly to his own standing in the army among officers and men; told how and why he had been promoted, and satisfied their curiosity by exhibiting high testimonials for probity, courage, and conduct from the first officers in the service of the United States. As to the previous adventures of the master and of Demijohn, it is our purpose to say but little. The latter had enlisted for short periods several times, while the former had served as a volunteer in various places, going wherever he thought he could be most useful. When Gates marched the South, Demijohn raised a company and received the commission of captain in the militia. He and his men had joined the main army just before the battle of Camden, and Warden, who, till the engagement, had been detailed on duty in the surrounding country, had not an opportunity of seeing his friends till after the battle. Immediately after sunrise the party were again *en route*, aiming for the mountains of North Carolina, the militia captain remaining some time with the widow to enquire minutely about the roads. Her information must have been very

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

confused and contradictory, for Corny was perpetually at a loss. That good knight had ever been of a grave and taciturn humour, while the martial air of his step, the erect posture of his head, and the upward and stiff projection of his full red face caused by the immense breadth of his girdle, added much to the solemnity and dignity of his presence. He spoke but seldom, and seldom laughed; but, when he did give way, no premonitory smile played along and relaxed his features, which would suddenly convulse with cachinatory thunder and then as suddenly collapse into their stern rigidity. He was now even more than usually silent, breathed harder than common, and listened to the conversation of his friends with a vacant stare. His situation excited much speculation in the master, who was curious about such things, and who concluded that one of the arrows of the Little Archer had at length pierced through his seven fingers of lard and touched his heart.

At night the Alamancers had the good fortune of finding comfortable quarters at the house of a Whig, and M'Bride and Warden, being put in a room to themselves, had an opportunity of conversing on subjects in regard to which each was anxious to speak.

Now, said Warden, when they were alone, tell me all about Edith Mayfield.

Ah, my friend, replied the master, I see the embers are yet burning the *veteris vestigia flammæ* still remain. I thought you had forgotten that unhappy passion.

Warden. I have tried, but I cannot. Indeed, when I forget that, I shall forget the happiest as well as the bitterest portion of my life. But, come, tell how Edith is. How does she look? Who is courting her? Where is Ross? What does she say of me?

M'Bride. A genuine lover! forty questions in a breath! Well, to make a long story short, Edith has grown to be a full, ripe woman, and is as beautiful as an angel. I have at times taught privately in her and your father's families, and I found that Eddie and your sister Kate were sworn sisters, always together. It is said that she is subject to fits of melancholy, but when I was with her she was always apparently happy, singing like a nightingale and laughing like a siren. I could never hear her speak much of you, but she always man-aged to know when your mother heard from the army, and would go over to get the news. As to Ross, he haunts still about Alamance, and is often at Glutson's, though secretly. He sees Edith frequently, I doubt not, and I am inclined to believe she has often refused him. What will be the end of it no one can tell; for you may as well undertake to predict from what point the wind will blow this day sixty years hence as to cast the horoscope of a woman's mind for four-and-twenty hours. Glutson, by the way, is a villain, and I hope yet to see him hanged. He keeps smooth with the Whigs, but he is too much respected by the Tories. Strange stories are whispered about in regard to father and son; and if one half of them be true, the world never saw two more finished scoundrels.

Warden. But as to Mayfield: what thinks he of me now?

The Master. What does the owl think, as he sits perched on a tree, gazing with wisely-solemn looks upon the moon and stars? Nobody can divine old Mayfield's thoughts; and if he knows them himself, I'm much mistaken. At ordinary times, and among ordinary people, he might be thought to be a man of profound policy; but the breath of the storm agitates his mind so that a child can see the muddy bottom of that shallow stream he thought so deep. He is a miserable imbecile, the constant prey of his own fears, and perpetually seeking by stratagem to overcome the shadows of his own diseased imagination. The Tories laugh at him and levy black mail from him; the Whigs pity and despise him. He has got to be so timid, so wary, and so non-committal, that he will not give you a direct opinion on the weather, and instructs negroes about their daily work as if in the character of ambassador he was negotiating a treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States. He speaks of you, of course; he speaks respectfully, and even kindly, but what does he think? You will be taxing your brain to a poor purpose to know. You ought patiently to await the course of things; and if Edith ever loved you, and is worth having, you will get her yet. But *you* ought not to love *her*: discard that feeling from your heart.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Warden. If you had said from my breast, then, with loss of life, it had been possible; as for my heart, it and Edith can never be divided. I will speak to you candidly and, I trust, with some show of reason. When I first listened to your advice about love I was young, ardent, and inexperienced. I embraced with zeal the cause of my country; patriotism was my mistress, and she I expected forever to absorb my soul. I was mistaken you were mistaken. I love my country as much as any one can; I am devoted to liberty, and have shown my attachment by more than words. Yet, in all employments on the long and painful march in the duties of the camp in the very rush of battle, and in the hour of victory and defeat, my thoughts were not fully occupied with what was around me: my mind would turn to Edith Mayfield. Selfishness is the great spring of action in us all, for we are all seeking our own happiness. The miser finds it in piling up heaps of gold; the ambitious in the momentary applause of the changeful multitude; the vindictive in scenes of blood and wretchedness, and the good and intellectual in the exercise of the affections. I long as much as you to see a republic established, and when it is established I wish to be a happy citizen under it, loving and being loved. You recollect what is said in *Cicero de Amicitia*.

The Master. I agree with you in your principles, but not in their application. We all seek happiness; and cannot a refined nature find it in the cultivation of letters, the pursuits of philosophy, and in the consciousness of being a benefactor of his kind? I tell you that though we all seek happiness, some of us do not expect to find it here. There *are* martyrs to principle men who, from a sublime conception of their duties look,

'Beyond this visible diurnal sphere'

for the reward of their deeds, at least beyond the period of their own lives. What rewards temporal seek I? What rewards seek Lafayette? What ones did that venerable leader seek, who yesterday offered himself a sacrifice for liberty? Oh, how my heart swelled within me as I saw that noble and stalwart form towering in the thickest of the fight, and heard his clarion voice cheering on his followers to deeds that must live while valour has a name! Even in the hottest of the strife I wept like a child as I saw him with his white hairs streaming in the wind, yield at last to the blows that fell upon him like winter hail, and fall with his face to the foe! There, on that ensanguined field, far from the home of his youth and the graves of his kindred there, in the cause of strangers, and at the head of a forlorn hope, in a green old age, fell one who had dwelt in palaces, who was himself the mirror of knighthood, the flower of modern chivalry! And was he not happy! The consciousness that we are acting a noble part, even in tragedy, is the very ecstasy of happiness; and that old hero, when he fell in his martial harness felt a proud swelling of his soul within him, and his fading eyes beamed with unearthly light, for he knew that he was performing, before the world and before posterity, the last great act in a glorious drama, and that his memory would live fresh and green in the hearts of the brave and free forever! If you must love if you must sympathize with kindred spirits hold communion with the mighty ones of the past and present. Sympathize with them in their great, heroic, and magnanimous thoughts; walk with them over the flowery and sequestered vales of poetry, or soar through the boundless universe, and explore the arcana of nature, the causes of things. Do not waste your most precious thoughts on a creature whose highest ambition is to have the finest equipage, and who is more impressed by the colour of your coat, the curve of your leg, and the cut of your whiskers, than by the beauties of your mind and the wealth of your heart. Take notice, I do not charge Edith as being worse in this respect than others: she may not be as bad, though it is no recommendation that she is the daughter of one who is a Machiavel on trifles and a palterer and piddler on important matters. As to your quotation from Cicero, that was intended to apply more to friendship than to love, of which, in its purity, as I opine, the old Roman knew but little. Besides, it is met by one from a man equally great. Lord Bacon says that 'great minds and great occasions do keep out this weak passion;' and farther, 'that love is more beholden to the stage than to real life,' as in the former it appears both in tragedy and comedy, while in the latter it acts only in tragedy. There is a volume in this sentence, and I commend it to your serious consideration.

Warden. As you are in the mood for quotations, I will give you one from the highest of all authorities. 'It is not good for man to be alone,' was said by the Creator, who made him to love. It is a fixed law of our being, and we must obey it. Some there are you may be one whose affections are blighted for wise purposes. In this way God

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

prepares instruments to work out his ends; and when I see men whose love has been turned to bitterness, I regard them as branded like Cain for some early sin, or as the high priests, the sanctified vessels of Deity, consecrated by him for some special use. But let us turn the subject, for I love Edith so well, and you dislike the sex so much, something offensive may be said.

Agreed, said the master, and to shàrpen our wits as well as refresh our bodies, I move we take a short excursion to the land of Nod.

CHAPTER XXV. A MOUNTAIN HOME IN NORTH CAROLINA.

ON the next morning, at early light, the Alamancers were again on the road, Warden, whose wounds were not dangerous, being now able to ride the horse brought on for his use. The others were on foot; and Captain Demijohn, returning to a sense of his duties, enforced a rigorous discipline and manoeuvred his men over broken ground, through cornfields and swamps, and eluded the foe, who were scouring the country, with consummate skill and ability. The march, however, though displaying great military capacity and eminent strategic power, will hardly justify the parallel which the master insinuates might be drawn between it and the retreat of the immortal ten thousand from the plains of Cunaxa; and though the reader of his memoirs might find a Xenophon in M'Bride, he would scarcely recognize a Clearchus or even a Proxenus in the bulky captain of militia. There is, nevertheless, some analogy between the feelings of the Greeks when the joyful cry of, *The sea the sea!* burst through their ranks and those of Uncle Corny's men, as they beheld the blue summits of the distant mountains. Our travellers were soon among them, and felt awed as they entered what seemed to be the mighty workshops of nature, where her terrible energies are most conspicuous, yet most noiseless. Night found them in these solitudes, still clambering over mountains, and winding along defiles that led only against jutting rocks and overhanging precipices. Warden being yet too feeble to sleep in the sharp mountain air, the Alamancers continued to grope their way, some of them leading the horse of their wounded friend, and others acting as pioneers, running sometimes against a jutting rock, and then splashing in the water. Captain Demijohn, accompanied by his faithful lieutenant, Hector M'Bride, like all good officers, led the way; and the latter, remarking upon the mishaps of the two, declares that they concluded between themselves they would be devoutly thankful if the morning found them with one whole rib a-piece. As for the master, his falls were not so dangerous, while those of Uncle Corny threatened destruction to himself and all who were in his path. On one occasion particularly, the captain, losing his foothold, went down the side of a steep hill with a crash like that of a landslide or mountain avalanche, scattering rocks and pebbles, and crackling over brush and bushes, till he landed in a creek. As he rolled along with an increasing velocity, starting as he went a huge mass of stones and logs, he was heard to ejaculate, with broken accents, *Gi-gi-g-i-v-e my lo-love to the wi-wid-id-id-O Powell.* Ugh! His accident, which did not injure him seriously, turned out to be of great importance, for he could see far down the narrow gorge, in which was the faint glimmer of lights. He and his company, following the creek under jutting rocks and between steep mountains that seemed to have been split from each other by some convulsion of nature, emerged at last into a broader valley, and came to a very neat but unostentatious dwelling. There were five or six negro cabins scattered about the yard, and, as far as the travellers could judge in the dark, the appearance of things indicated very comfortable quarters. Demijohn, who observed all the rules of war, ordered M'Bride, with a white flag, to hold a conference with the commandant of the post; in other words, to approach the place in a pacific manner, and ascertain the disposition of the owner, and the state of things within. The master was met at the door by an old man, who enquired his business there at that late hour of the night.

We are belated travellers, answered M'Bride, and have with us a sick friend who cannot sleep in the open air. We ask only a bed and shelter for the sick, provender for his horse, and food for ourselves, for all of which we will pay you a fair equivalent. As to our politics, continued he, with his usual frankness, we are Whigs; but we'll disturb no one provided we are not attacked ourselves.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Wounded, lost, and belated, said the old man, is enough to say to me, although it is not my business to entertain strangers, and there is a tavern—house a few miles distant. You have a further claim on me in being Whigs, and my roof and board are at your service as long as you are desirous of staying. Where is your sick friend, and where are your horses?

The wounded officer and our only horse are at the gate, as are also the rest of the company.

Bring them all in, while I give some orders about the horse.

The master reported what he saw and heard, and Demijohn, with fife playing and colours flying (for he had preserved his company's colours), marched his men into the house and ordered them to stack their arms in a corner of the room. He then called his roll, and dismissed his men for the day, the whole proceeding annoying Warden no little, and exciting an immense sensation on the premises. The Alamancers, seated round a large fire in a small but tidy parlour, cast curious glances round the room, observing that the furniture, though not rich, indicated that they were in the abode of thrifty ease and intelligence. There was a book—case filled with books and pamphlets, which attracted the attention of Warden and M'Bride, and they were particularly surprised to find a well—thumbed copy of *Paradise Lost* lying on the candle—stand, and appearing to have been recently, and hastily laid down. The eyes of Demijohn rested, with a cheerful and affectionate expression, on an old-fashioned sideboard, the top of which was well garnished with glasses and decanters, while his companions in arms listened, *erectis auribus*, to the creaking of smoke—house doors and the cackle of hens in trouble. They were thus occupied when their host entered and fixed the gaze of every eye. He was a tall, erect, and muscular man, with a dignified air and manner, a broad, high forehead, a mild, intelligent, and kindly eye, and a face expressive of great serenity of temper and of a virtuous and benevolent heart. His head was as white as cotton, and, although he looked hale and hearty, it was evident that he had touched the grand climacteric in the age of man, the three—score years and ten. Such a host could not be long a stranger to such guests as his were, and, on making known his name, which was Abraham Neal, he was introduced by M'Bride to each of his friends, and informed of their business, their place of residence, and the rank and title of each.

After supper, said Neal, I will get you to relate the particulars of that unhappy battle to my family. It was a sad blow to our cause, and I had heard rumours of it before but, bless me! I had nearly forgotten the brandy. Here, Peggy, bring me the keys!

At these words there came bustling out from an adjoining room a little prim old lady, with a basket of keys on her arm, a very white cap on her head, and a very kind smile playing on her once handsome but diminutive features.

My wife, said Neal, and he made her acquainted with each of his guests. From the sideboard they adjourned to the suppertable, where Mrs. Neal presided, showing by her looks that she was entirely happy as long as her guests continued to eat. When the company were again seated by the parlour fire, there glided in by the side of Mrs. Neal another member of the family.

This is my daughter Lucy, said the old man, rising and making known to her the names of his new friends, on each of whom she shed a sunny smile.

These men, daughter, continued Neal, are soldiers, good Whig soldiers, and you will now have an opportunity of hearing of battles from men who helped to fight them. Mr. M'Bride, you will please to tell us all about the battle of Camden, and remember that we are country folk, and want to hear all the little particulars, such as how the officers looked and acted, and what they said, and what you yourselves did, and how you felt, and how the battle began, and how it ended.

The master, in no way loath to fight his battles o'er again in such a peaceful way, gratified his hearers with a long and minute detail, spicing his narrative with frequent quotations in the original languages, from the lives of

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Plutarch and history of Livy, and not forgetting the valorous achievements of Corny Demijohn and the gallantry of his young friend Warden. This latter was unable to pay a very respectful attention to the narrator, being entirely absorbed in the contemplation of Lucy Neal, and the thoughts and conjectures which she awakened. She sat by her mother in the corner opposite to Warden, and so near the candle that the charms of her face and person were fully developed. As soon as she was seated, Warden caught her eye, and the look of each indicated that by that glance they became better acquainted. Warden looked again, and she looked again, each gazing longer and more familiarly at the other, and becoming more communicative and intimate: they looked again, and they were old and confidential friends. While M'Bride, therefore, was entertaining the others, Henry Warden and Lucy Neal were silently interchanging thoughts, unfolding their minds and disclosing their hearts to each other. But when the master touched upon that part of his history relating particularly to her new acquaintance, the bright-eyed girl lost not a single word, and, at its conclusion glanced upon its subject a look full of sympathy and admiration, and which seemed to say, I knew you were such a man. The old people now pressed Warden for an account of his adventures during the war, and he, yielding to their kind entreaties, sketched briefly the most prominent events in his career. Lucy listened in rapt attention, and more than once a bright tear glistened in her eyes. At the conclusion of the narrative, a hint, given in no gentle terms from the nostrils of Demijohn, announced that the hour for rest had arrived. The host, taking the hint, began to call the servants and give orders about the quarters of his guests; but Corny, in the mean time awaking, declared that it was yet quite early.

Never mind, my good friend, said he, it is quite early yet. My fatigues and my supper made me drowsy, but I'm now wide awake and would be glad to hear more about the widow Powell.

A burst of laughter followed this speech, and Corny, rubbing his eyes, seemed much confused. Neal, informing his guests that it was his wont to hold prayers every night, read a chapter in the Bible, and then all knelt at the throne of grace. When the old man had finished, and all were again on their feet, the huge form of the militia captain, propped against the wall, was still bending in a most prayerful posture. Neal, thinking him very devout, would not permit his devotions to be disturbed, until he began to mutter

It's all as I tell you, to be sure it is, my duck, my dear duck. As the poet says, you shall be adorned with equity and made a silver queen.

The slumbering knight was waked from his dream of love, and all retired to their respective places of rest, Lucy bidding Warden good-night with a manner, and casting on him a look, that dwelt in his mind like the parting beams of the setting sun, for some time after he was in bed.

CHAPTER XXVI. ADVENTURES IN THE MOUNTAINS.

M'BRIDE, at an early hour next morning, was aroused by Captain Demijohn, and desired to walk with him to the woods. After the friends had advanced some distance from the house in silence, the master, curious to know what revelations his companion had to make, intimated that they had gone far enough.

Mr. M'Bride, said Uncle Corny, I have important business with you. and it must be secret yes, it *must* be secret. So please to walk on.

And on they went, the master much concerned to know the object of the excursion, and running over in his mind the various incidents of their late march. He did not know but what he might have offended Corny, whose extremely hard breathing, solemnity of manner, and mysterious looks excited some apprehensions of an unpleasant altercation. They were now far in the woods, when the master again suggested that it was time to return, as breakfast might be waiting. Uncle Corny, halting suddenly, gazed seriously and rather sternly in the face of his friend for at least a minute, and then remarked that there was a secret recess beneath the cliff before them,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

and that they could there do their business. At this they soon arrived a deep niche in the side of a mountain, and which was overhung by huge rocks and darkened by the foliage of trees and a web of luxuriant and tangled vines.

Now, said the captain, with a tragical manner, to the agitated master, now we will settle the affair. I wish to know of you what you think of the widow Powell.

If you mean the good woman at whose house we tarried after the battle, answered M'Bride, I think her handsome and clever. She was kind to us, and I remember her with gratitude.

I think her handsome and clever too, resumed UNcle Corny; and as you may have observed yes, to be sure you *did* observe, that I was pleased with her. I was of course I was, and if any man has any thing to say against her, he must fight Cornelius Demijohn; he must, by Mars!

I'm sure, captain, answered the master, that I have nothing to say against her: indeed, I profess to be a friend of hers.

You *profess* to be! What are you in reality?

A friend; a good, true, and staunch friend.

Beware how you speak, exclaimed Corny; tell me truly, do you wish her well?

With all my heart.

Then, sir, continued Demijohn, running his hand in his pocket, and speaking with a husky and tremulous voice, then, sir, I wish to inform you that I have brought you here to show you this lock of hair. It's genuine, sir; I cut it myself from her beautiful head.

Well, Uncle Corny, replied M'Bride, much relieved, I should be pleased to know what object you have in showing it to me?

To be sure you would; that is very true, I know you would, and I'll tell you. Here is a lock of mine I've picked the gray hairs out here's a lock I wish you to preserve. I did not think to give it to her when I saw her, and last night brought my negligence to mind. I could have died satisfied when I rolled down that cursed hill if she had had this lock. I may get killed you understand some accident may happen to me; and, if it does, send her that relic.

The master promising faithful obedience, and receiving many injunctions to be secret in regard to the sacred treasure given by the widow to Uncle Corny, the two friends returned to the house and found breakfast waiting.

The captain and his little band now learned with pleasure that an enterprise was on foot in the mountains, and immediately determined to join it. A guide was procured, after breakfast, who was to conduct them to the rendezvous, and they took an affectionate leave of Warden, who was to remain where he was, and of Neal and his family.

We'll meet again, said the master.

I hope so, replied Warden, and, if we do not, die worthy of Alamance, and remember my heart is with you.

Be valiant, said Neal, and God go with you and prosper you!

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

At length the adieus were all spoken, the parting over, and the Alamancers on the road. Warden stood watching them till the last man had faded from his sight, and then an oppressive sadness came over him. His recent parting from the friends of his youth seemed like separating him again from the home of his boyhood: he was again in the wide world and far from the sweet object around which the tendrils of his heart had grown from the time he was a child. Left by his discriminating friends to indulge alone his tender melancholy, he strolled off to gaze on the face of Nature and chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancy.

The house of Neal, as we have said, was planted in a valley, a green and level natural meadow hemmed in on each side by a succession or ridge of mountains. Most of these rose steep and precipitous from the plain, their bold heads shooting straight up from the vale below, and like two rows of hostile Titans sternly and proudly confronting each other with silent and aweinspiring gaze. They seemed as if, in some older time, two armies of earth-born giants, with their mightiest men in front, had marched against each other in hostile array until the foremost ranks had nearly met in terrible collision, when, by the fiat of Omnipotence, they were instantly arrested and changed to earth, there to stand forever, their huge javelins of rock still clinging in their nerveless grasp. On one side of the plain between them ran a creek some twenty yards broad, the speckled trout being clearly visible as they glanced through the silver waters. The stream babbled along over its bed of pebbles, its volume being constantly increased by a succession of fountains that gushed, bright and rapid, from the sides and bases of the mountains, until, within a short distance from its source, it became a river. Warden, with the feeling of one imprisoned, was glad to find a foot-bridge over this creek, and a path winding from it up a sloping acclivity until it reached the summit of the ridge. Following this path and clambering along as well as he could in his enfeebled state, he arrived, by a tortuous route, at an elevation whence he could look beyond the walls of his castellated prison. On one side, as far as the eye could see, blue peaks on peaks arose into mid air, varying in shape, size, and colour, like the stupendous domes, minarets and cupolas of an endless and magnificent city in fairy-land, or, to use a figure perhaps more appropriate, like the vast tents of a countless host of genii, while the mists of the morning that were gathering in fleecy clouds around their summits might be taken for the banners, streamers, and pennons of the chiefs. On the other side these mighty barriers of Nature were gradually dwarfed till they dwindled into hills, and finally disappeared in the illimitable and undulating plain far below. The forests were clad in the russet and yellow-tinted livery of early autumn, and the slanting rays of the sun lit up the landscape with a thousand different hues, the distant plantations gleaming like spangles or lustrous specks in the wide and varied scene.

The air was cool, bracing, and elastic; the heavens were of a deep, stainless, and enchanting blue; the clouds were light, ethereal, and transparent. Warden, who had an eye for the beautiful and grand, and whose jaded constitution began to feel the influence of the delightful climate, became animated with new hopes, fresher feelings, and brighter fancies. Inspired by the majesty and novelty of the scenes around him, his despondency vanished, and his mind, quickened in its energies, expanded with great and teeming thoughts and high resolves. Still, all his meditations and all his purposes would connect themselves with Edith Mayfield, and in all the castles in the air which his imagination built she was the irradiating sun, the central object of attraction. He had stood some time musing in a rapt mood, and was just beginning to contemplate the dark side of the picture which his fancy drew, when he was startled by a light step behind him. He turned and met the gaze of Lucy Neal, whom, if he had not seen her before, he might well have taken for the genius of the place, the blue-eyed goddess of liberty. Her large, full eyes were indeed blue blue, soft, and serene as the azure skies above them; her light-coloured, loose hair, scarcely reaching to her shoulders, was parted on her forehead of the purest white, and thrown back so as to expose in full relief the chaste symmetry of a small, full face that looked like a Grecian model chiselled from stainless alabaster, and in whose expression were blended the most perfect and artless innocence, tenderness, and intelligence. A small foot and a slender ankle were plainly visible beneath a simple dress that displayed in all its gracefully-rounded proportions a form that was the handiwork of Nature only.

When Warden saw her advancing towards him with her sun-bonnet in one hand and some faded flowers in the other, she seemed not the least confused, and was the first to speak, remarking, with a smile that sparkled in her eyes, that she had found the lost sooner than she expected.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

And what lost one were you seeking, my sweet friend! asked Warden.

Who else should it be, replied the girl, but the stranger who was so silly as to stray off by himself, and sick at that, among these mountains? You are the very person I was looking for, and father will call me a witch for finding you so soon. See, I've gathered some flowers for you; but they have all been nipped by the frost, though they are very sweet. Shall I pin them on your coat?

Certainly, answered Warden, and I'll wear them there in memory of the giver when we are far apart.

Which won't be soon, said Lucy, fastening the flowers to the collar of his coat, and looking up into his face with a smile that tempted him strongly to touch his lips to hers. But he was not yet, in the fashionable sense of the word, a gallant, and though sadder and wiser, he was as simple and modest as the trusting child of Nature who stood by his side. Thanking her with few but kind and sincere expressions for her solicitude in his behalf he learned from her that his melancholy in the morning had not been unobserved, and that as he was seen, in a sad and abstracted mood, to ascend the mountains alone, fears were entertained that in his feeble state he might over-exert himself, or meet with an accident among the precipices which lined his path. Lucy, hearing her father express such fears, had at once, and unattended, started in pursuit of the wanderer.

Are you not afraid, asked Warden, to be alone in these wilds with a stranger and a soldier like me? You are, I fear, too unsuspecting for such a world as this.

Why should I be afraid? replied she; I know you are not a bad man, like some I have read of.

And how do you know it? I am a total stranger to you.

No, you are not a stranger, she answered quickly; I know you as well as I know my father.

Know me! exclaimed the officer; when did you ever see or hear of me before?

I never saw you, or heard of you either, till last night. It may seem curious to you, but when I first saw you, you looked like an old acquaintance and friend, or brother, I had known all my life. I know from your looks what sort of a man you are.

Warden, much impressed by her language, replied,

There is more philosophy in your language than you are aware of, Lucy, if you will allow me to call you so.

Please don't call me by any other name, said she, interrupting him.

I will not, and I am proud of the privilege, for I despise to have to *Miss* my female friends. As I was going to say, you hardly know the full truth of your words. The face is the best index to character; and on it our Maker has stamped our hearts. We may, by our acts and by our words, create false impressions; our births, fortunes, and positions in society become identified, in the mind of the worldling, with our natures, and elevate and depress us above and below our proper level. But children and intelligent brutes, on whom our positions in society and our worldly means have no influence, read in our countenances our genuine worth, and rank us as we deserve. Rank, wealth and influence are unknown to them, and they see the true heart and soul beaming in the face the real man or woman. Thus you have seen me; thus, too, have I seen you; and I feel towards you as if I had known you all my life. We were friends before we had spoken a word to each other, and such let us ever be, reading and judging each other as God judges us, by the heart.

Thus conversing, in the most free and confidential manner, and on various subjects men, books, and society they returned to the house, Lucy pointing out, on the way, the most beautiful and interesting scenes and localities, with all of which she connected a legend; and Warden being astonished and delighted at finding a friend and companion so simple and so cultivated, so refined in sensibility, so rich in fancy, and so good at heart.

CHAPTER XXVII. LUCY NEAL.

THE character of Lucy Neal daily and hourly developed itself daily and hourly exhibited a new beauty for the admiration of Henry Warden. She grew constantly into his feelings, and her society and conversation became indispensable to him at least while he was away from home. There were a truthfulness and simplicity in all her words and actions; an originality, brightness, and innocence in all her thoughts that struck him with as much astonishment as did her familiar acquaintance with the old English classics, her just conception of things, her total want of deception, and her entire ignorance of the world. Cradled amid scenes of the highest beauty and grandeur, and nurtured at the breasts of Nature herself, she was the pure reflection of her mother, untainted by the gloss of art, fair, chaste, and tender as the first blossoms of spring that, on the untrodden prairie, or by the rugged mountain's side, open their soft bosoms to the light dews of April.

From sunrise till late at night she and Warden were inseparable, reading to each other, visiting together caves, and springs, and noted places, and admiring together the shifting scenery of the country. Can a man love two objects at once? He may at least love one and revere the memory of another. Henry Warden, for years accustomed to think on Edith Mayfield, had come to regard her as a fanciful creation, a consecrated idea throned apart among the recollections of the past. He never for a moment forgot her; but, divested now of all mortal attributes, and existing only in memory, she could no more fetter his affections than an angel or a departed spirit. Thus the sacredness of his feelings to-wards her was not abated, though Lucy began now to mingle more practically with his thoughts and his plans of life. Indeed, he was now without plans, and so was she; and, knowing only that they were happy, they thought not of the future.

Dreams often affect us more powerfully than waking visions: and one night Warden dreamed of Edith Mayfield. When he awoke he loved her still, and she shone with a fresher lustre in his imagination. He concluded that he would, on the following day, adopt a new course of conduct to-wards Lucy; but when he met her, fresh and beautiful as the morning, he thought no more of his resolution until he was again on his couch. His moral firmness was great, and he now determined at all hazards to break the spell that bound him to the mountains. On the next day an opportunity offered to test the feelings of Lucy, for she was visited by Sally Ewing, the belle of the mountains. Miss Sally seemed at once to take a fancy for Warden, and he, with the gallantry of his nature, repaid with interest her attentions. She remained two days at Neal's, during which time the young Alamancer assiduously cultivated her acquaintance, and almost turned her head with compliments and verses which he dedicated to her. She was a rosy, lively, giddy young woman, spoiled by the addresses of many suitors and by the fond caresses of her parents, for she was an heiress. She became pleased with Warden, talked about him all night to Lucy, and was perfectly delighted when he accompanied her home. She had an only brother, a young man not deficient in intelligence and manly beauty, but spoiled as much as herself, and regarded by all the ladies of his acquaintance as a great prize. Henry Warden had often heard Lucy speak of the great family of the Ewings, and he was by no means pleased when informed by Sally that her brother Ned and Lucy had been dedicated to each other by their respective parents, and that beyond all doubt they would some day be married. It was of no consequence to him so reasoned Henry Warden; and yet he was not extravagantly rejoiced when he found that the young mountaineer, compassionating his lonely situation, proposed to go with him to Neal's and spend several days. Miss Sally herself had a hand in effecting this arrangement, and received, for her kind suggestion, the spoken thanks of the person intended to be benefitted and his secret dislike. Accordingly brother Ned got himself ready, and looking on a match between his sister and Warden as a settled thing, he treated the latter with fraternal affection and confidence; ran over his history on the road, and dwelt voluminously on his exploits in hunting

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

foxes, killing bears and deer, and catching racoons. Whenever Warden would pause to gaze on some scene of surpassing beauty, brother Ned would connect the place with a legend of the chase, for which, and for which only, he supposed all the localities of the region had an interest for his friend. Arrived at Neal's, they were both received with kindness by Lucy; but during the day she exhibited a marked preference for the new comer, and listened with gratifying attention to his disquisitions on dogs, guns, horses, and wild turkeys. Henry bore all this very patiently at first; but as Lucy still grew fonder to the other and colder to him, his vexation began to show itself in various ways. The day passed off, and that night the Alamancer found that he was jealous. He had once concluded to leave the mountains immediately, for as long as he had no rival in the esteem of Lucy he was fearful of the consequences of his longer stay; now he felt, what he had not felt before, a desire to win her affection, a dread of losing her friendship. But he had not time for much reflection, for brother Ned talked incessantly until both fell asleep. On the following morning Lucy looked not so well as usual, and met Warden with a tenderness in her manner which he was not in a mood to observe or appreciate. Desiring to commune with himself, he walked down the valley to a nook, on the sunny side of a mountain, absorbed in his own reflections. He did not, however, fail to observe the romantic character of the place where he sat; a place that seemed to have been formed as a bower of love for the deities of the wood. It was a semicircular chamber or alcove, cut deep in the base of the mountain and covered over with small trees, whose boughs were woven together by vines of wild honeysuckle; and seats of turf, and beds of flowers, and sweet shrubs were tastefully arranged over the area. On the front side stood a large and aged maple, and a few yards off was a spring of clear, pure water that gushed up from a bed of white pebbles, and which was walled in with rock. On the other side of the valley, and not far off, the creek before mentioned kept up its perpetual babble; and far up and down its course the eye ranged along a narrow green valley, on each side of which cliffs of rock along the sides of the mountain were darkly visible among the thick foliage above which they rose, looking like the turrets and towers of ancient and dilapidated castles. Warden had often lounged in the place before: and as he now sat, reflecting on those past and happy hours, he heard the rustle of a dress behind him, and the next instant Lucy Neal was seated by his side. Laying her small, white hand in his, and looking up into his face with the most affectionate and tender expression beaming in her own, she exclaimed, with a smile, Now, Henry, you know how it feels!

I am doubtful as to what you mean, said Warden; but, if I am right in my opinion, you make me happy indeed. I suppose excuse me if I am wrong I suppose you have been paying me back for my attentions to the celebrated and accomplished Miss Sally Ewing. Am I right?

Lucy blushed and hung her head for a moment, and then replied, I was very unhappy, and I ought not to have acted so.

What would the gallant reader have done in Warden's situation? what could he have done? Few, perhaps, who see these pages could be as self-denying as the Alamancer, whose sense of his responsible and delicate position again rushed upon him with painful force. He raised her head to his lips he kissed it over and over again, exclaiming, May God bless you forever, my dear, dear friend!

He committed himself no farther; but Lucy was happy, entirely so, and totally forgot her suitor, who was impatiently awaiting her return to the house. Warden, however, remembered him at last, and suggested that it would be rudeness in them to stay away longer from their guest.

I don't care if it is, said his companion, and I hope he'll never visit me again. I don't want to see him, or think of him any more; for if I do I'll hate him, and that would be a sin. I shall never hear his name again without being unhappy.

It should not be so, answered Warden; for I'm sure that, so far from disliking what has happened, it has made me happier than I was. I should never think of your conduct with the slightest vexation, or condemn you in the least.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Won't you, in fact? Do you fully forgive me for what I did? and will you forget it all, as if it had never been? Please tell me the truth.

This is the seal to my assertion, said Warden, again kissing her hand, and then holding it in both of his. As I hope to be saved, I declare to you that I will not and cannot blame you, nor shall a shadow of displeasure in regard to you ever cross my mind. In your own language please, please forget all that has past. You'll make me miserable if you think of it at all.

She replied only with a look; and, hand-in-hand, they returned to the house.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

There is a Divinity that shapes our ends.
Rough-hew them as we will. *SHAKSPEARE.*

HENRY WARDEN was now fully aware that his situation had become extremely critical. It was time for him to take some decisive step; yet what could he do? He was too modest, and had too humble an opinion of himself to believe, merely from her conduct, that he was loved by Lucy Neal; but still, he could not but feel that she regarded him with a tender interest. Was he to presume that her affections were fixed on him, and, acting under this supposition, to disclose to her frankly the secrets of his own heart, or leave her at once without making any explanations? The former course might grossly insult her; the latter might involve her in distressing doubts, and shake her confidence in her friend. Besides, was it prudent to forego a certainty of happiness for an uncertainty of bliss? Edith Mayfield had rejected his suit, had spurned from her the first and brightest coinage of his soul, and had, as he feared, proved to be deceitful and selfish. Thus, it was doubtful whether he could ever win her; and if he should succeed in that, it was still more doubtful whether a union with her would prove a blessing. It is not the lot of mortals to be entirely blest, thought he, and it is folly to expect it. Lucy is beautiful she is young, artless, and innocent. She is, in fact, all I could wish a woman to be; and, though I cannot love her as wildly and fervently as I once loved Edith, I cannot but regard her with ceaseless tenderness, and we can be as happy together as it is possible to be on earth. My first love was a foolish dream a delirium, as the master calls it, and the charms and perfections of its object the creations of my own young imagination. When he came to this conclusion he found himself extremely miserable, and he saw at once that it was impossible for him ever to esteem another woman if his early hope should prove to be a baseless fabric. We ask again, what could he do? The wisdom of mortals is often the extremest folly; and, knowing this, Warden resolved to be guided by circumstances, and to try further the heart of Lucy Neal. In the execution of this plan he one day abruptly informed her that he was going to return to Alamance. I'm in earnest, said he, for I have over-staid my time and must leave to-morrow.

Lucy essayed to make a reply; but, not being able to speak, she began to weep, and Warden remained silent, not knowing what to do or say. Lucy, however, relieved his embarrassment by leaving the room, and, hastily washing her face, she returned again, smiling and blushing.

Why did you attempt to quiz me so? asked Warden, somewhat astonished at the sudden change in her manner.

I was just in fun, replied she, and, attempting to laugh, she again burst into tears and withdrew.

Warden took up her scrap-book, in which she had before requested him to inscribe some memento, and, going down to the alcove, wrote the following piece:

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

This book is like the sacred ground
Where all the parish dead are laid,
Where daily o'er some fresh-made mound
Sad tears are shed and vows are made;
Next day there's silence o'er that grave
But yester-morn by mourners prest;
And soon th' untrodden grass will wave
Above our friend's last place of rest.
Thus o'er each token graven here,
You will a moment weep and sigh,
But ere the next shall claim a tear
The last you'll read with careless eye;
And few short years will by you glide,
With all their varied hopes and aims,
Before this book is thrown aside,
A record of forgotten names.
But if, like many, you should find
Each lover false, each friend a knave,
When wayward Fortune proves unkind,
And all your hopes are in the grave;
When from these leaves thy tearful eyes
Recall fond mem'ries of the past,
Then know that, buried here, there lies
A heart that thee to the last.

Lucy did not read these lines until the author again left the house, and when he returned she hastily closed the book, while her eyes swam with tears.

I fear I have offended you, Lucy, said Warden, taking up the book, and turning to the page on which his piece was written.

Why do you think I am offended? asked Lucy.

You *look* as if you were.

My looks don't represent me fairly, then, replied Lucy; and, in fact, it seems that you have all the time mistaken my character.

I feared to write the piece, said Warden, for it is impossible for me not to speak warmly when the rhyming fervour is on me. They are my true sentiments, however, for I shall ever remember you, though you may not be obliged to me for it.

Lucy, hurt and surprised at this language, gave the speaker a look that fairly made his breast ache, and again a flood of tears drowned those bright and tenderly-beaming orbs.

For God's sake forgive me, passionately exclaimed Warden, at the same time taking one of her hands in both of his. Forgive me, Lucy, my dear, sweet friend, if I have wounded your feelings. I did not mean to do it; indeed, I did not understand you when you said I had mistaken your character. Please, please do not cry so, for every tear you shed burns upon my heart. Do you forgive me?

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I meant, said Lucy, drying her eyes, that you did not know me if you thought me fickle and forgetful. I know, Mr. Warden, I shall never forget you, and I thought you ought not to have believed that I would.

So you may now think, Lucy, answered he; but a few years, and new scenes and new acquaintances will make a great change.

So *you* may now think, said Lucy, smiling; but when you've tried me you'll change, I hope, and will then be ready to finish

Finish what? asked Warden.

Lucy hung her head and blushed, and at last answered, in scarcely audible tones, It's no matter, and I ought not to have mentioned it.

I understand you now, replied Warden, and will do as you desire. I could not find a word that suited me; for '*prized*' and '*liked*' do not express my feelings, and are unpoetical. I'll go down to the alcove and see if your name upon the maple will not inspire me.

He was now fully determined to write *loved* in the blank in the last line; but as soon as he set his foot in the bower Edith Mayfield came into his mind, and all the early history of his life rushed upon him with overwhelming force. He had, though he scarcely knew it, been long struggling with himself, and now the crisis had come; and his moral firmness triumphed. His resolution was fixed at last, and immovably; and as he hastened to the house he thought he heard at the gate the sound of a well-known voice. It struck strangely on his ear, and, hardly believing his senses, he hurried to the lane, and there, to his inexpressible astonishment and delight, he met with Rust and his sable namesake, Ben. From these he received his mother's letter, informing him of his brother's illness, and he immediately began to prepare for his return to Alamance.

Lucy Neal no longer urged, as she had formerly done, the further stay of her friend, and had but little to say during the evening and the sad night which followed. She was, however, extremely attentive to the wants of Warden's two friends, while on himself her swimming eyes were constantly bent, and her manner towards him was full of timorous and touching tenderness. Struggling between smiles and tears she glided about the house, preparing various articles for his journey, and occasionally suggesting precautions to him with a voice whose trembling melody melted like a strain of sweet, sad music, into the heart of every hearer. There were few dry eyes that night at the conclusion of the prayer of Abraham Neal. Good-night fell mournfully and softly from the lips of every one, and Rust was the only one who slept that night beneath the roof of The Mountain Home. His was the only appetite at breakfast next morning, and he only said farewell when the parting occurred. The tears streamed down the cheeks of the venerable Neal, his wife kept her handkerchief to her eyes, and even the servants wept. Lucy, however, who had cried before when Warden spoke of returning, now, tearless and silent, pressed his hand, and then immediately ran to her chamber, at a window in which her face and handkerchief were visible. Warden himself looked back at every step, till he came to the great maple on which he had carved her name; and then, taking out his own handkerchief, he waved it at Lucy, kissed it, and hanging it on a bough of the tree, disappeared in the forest. She was soon at the alcove; and, while pressing the handkerchief to her breast, a note fell out, which she often kissed before she read:

I had much to tell you, but could not. Forgive me, and remember me as a brother. We'll meet again on earth or in heaven, Lucy.

Adieu!

H. W.

CHAPTER XXIX. HOME AFTER A LONG ABSENCE.

HENRY WARDEN'S feelings became more and more depressed as he advanced from his late pleasant retreat. He little dreamed, until he parted from her, of the hold which Lucy Neal had acquired upon his feelings, and, as is usually the case, he began, when too late, to remember her various excellences, her pure and fervent attachment for himself, the happiness which, with her, he might enjoy, and his folly in not accepting the boon which had been thrown in his way. He remembered, too, that Lucy was just such a character as he had once supposed Edith Mayfield to be, and that this latter was not such a being as he had imagined she was. When, however, the mountains, which spoke of Lucy, had melted from his sight, a new train of thoughts came into his mind, and old associations and recollections were revived. He listened with more attention to the stories of the two Bens, one of whom was constantly talking, and became more impatient to get home. Guided by the tact and skill of Rust, he was soon at Alamance, arriving in the night, at the house of his friend and companion. Here he heard of his brother's death, of the forfeiture of his father's estate to Nathan Glutson by the terms of a mortgage made long ago, of the disappearance of the negroes, and the flight of his mother and sister, who had taken refuge at Esther Bell's. He heard also, for the first time, of the fate of Edith Mayfield; and his heart giving way under its accumulated sorrows, he remembered the advice of the master, and bitterly repented his folly in having risked his happiness on the chances of such an uncertain hazard. He was more than ever anxious to see his mother and sister, and, despatching a messenger to them that night to notify them of his arrival, was informed that they would meet him at sunrise on the following morning, in a place near Esther Bell's, known as the Grape-vine Thicket. Thither, before the appointed hour, Henry Warden went, and was soon locked in the embraces of mother and sister, no one of the three for a long time speaking a single word. The earth was still wrapped in the thin shadows of the morning twilight, and hence neither mother nor son could see the changes which time had worked in the features of the other; but, dark as it was, Henry observed a great alteration in the person of Kate. When he left her last, she was a mere child, and now the same Kate lay in his arms a beautiful girl, already nearly a woman, and a new pang shot through his heart as he remembered the humble position which, as a lady, she would have to take in society in consequence of his father's slender circumstances. Mrs. Warden was the first to break silence, and avoiding all allusion to the affecting incidents of her own history, she pressed her son for an account of his adventures. His story was very briefly told, for he was now sufficiently master of himself to inquire into the particulars of matters which were burning in the hearts of all. After a long and minute account of the life, actions, sayings, illness, and death of little Wash, and of family troubles, Mrs. Warden spoke as follows:

I know, my son, what you wish to hear. She has left us, and it is supposed that she was drowned, though some strangely suspect Nathan Glutson to be guilty of her death. That she loved you I have no doubt; for, though she never told me so, I could read it in her actions. She came almost every day to enquire about you, and the last time I saw her the very day before she disappeared she was at our house, and seemed so sad that I pressed her to let me know what ailed her. She said she had her sorrows, which were known only to herself, and that although every body thought she was happy, she was in reality the most miserable person on earth. My kind words caused her to weep very much, and seemed to open her heart, for she promised to make me her only confidant the next time she saw me, and requested me to remember her to you. It is said that people of fine sensibilities often have presentiments of coming evils, and I begin to believe it, for I never saw Edith look so sorrowful as she did when she bade me farewell. She was so meek, so gentle, so tender and sad, and her eyes shone with such a soft and unnatural light, that she seemed to me to be about to leave this world for a better, and no doubt she and little Wash are now thinking of you in heaven.

Each of the three, occupied with a train of unutterable thoughts which this speech produced, sat musing in silence for several minutes, and again the mother was the first to speak.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

My son, said she, the sun is some distance up, and it is time for you to leave us, for the Tories will hear of you and soon be about.

Mother, answered Henry, I cannot leave you, and my heart reproaches me already for having remained away so long. If the Tories are swarming over the country, it is the very reason why I should be here to protect you and sister Kate.

Your presence can do us little good, replied Mrs. Warden, and may do yourself a great injury. We are in no immediate danger, for the murderers and robbers never dare to come to Esther Bell's.

They have injured you, though, exclaimed Henry; and the blood of my brother cries for vengeance. I tell you, mother, I cannot leave you, for I would be wretched, and every moment would imagine that I heard your dying shrieks.

You must go, my son, said the mother; you must go where you can best serve your country, and then you will be serving me. You are not used to the artifices and cunning of the Tories, and they would certainly put you to death in less than a week if you were to remain. Go again to the army; put your trust in God, and fight bravely for our rights. Read daily the Bible I gave you when you left before, and if we never meet again on earth, let us prepare for a meeting in a brighter world. Come, my dear son, let us part.

Stay one minute, cried Henry. Warden, and let me say another word. Who is to provide for you? Who is to provide for sister Kate, who will soon be a woman? You say all our property is gone, and you are perfectly destitute and dependent on the charity of others. I cannot endure that such should be the case, and it almost maddens me to think that dear Kate, so tender, so delicate, and so beautiful, should now become a drudge. She must and she shall be a lady, and I will be the drudge. I will throw aside my arms, and labor till I am worn down with toil before she shall sink from that rank in which she was born and raised.

My son, my son, beware of pride; it is a most sinful passion. It is not fortune, rank, and fine clothes that make the lady, and Kate will be one in any rank and any dress. The first characteristic of the lady, and of the gentleman, is an ability to act worthy of the situation in which God has been pleased to place them. Kate's heart is as good, and pure, and gentle, as it ever was, and yet she cheerfully performs the duties of her new position. So let us all act, and may the blessing of Heaven rest on you, my dearest son. Good-by!

The heart-strings of the mother were breaking, yet she shed not a tear, and did not, like her daughter, look back until she was nearly out of view, when she turned, waved her handkerchief, and then rushed into the house, and, locking herself in her chamber, poured the sorrows of her surcharged breast into that ear that is ever listening to the cries of the desolate. As for Henry Warden, he became rivetted to the spot where the meeting occurred, and stood gazing towards the house, thinking of a thousand tender things which he ought to have said, and imagining that he could still see the dear ones who had left him. All the features of the scene around him were graven in his memory; every rock, and tree, and shrub, became invested with a peculiar interest, and the place was ever after sacred ground to him. At last he remembered his father, and his duty to him, and started for his hiding-place, intending to pass in his route the old Warden place, and other scenes where he had spent the happiest portion of his life. He was partially disguised, wearing a slouched hat, which concealed his features, and an overcoat over his arms, and laying aside, as far as he could, his military air and manner. Arrived at the Warden estate, he wandered through the fields and meadows, living over again the scenes of his boyhood. Although the plantation looked desolate, blackened by the smoke of fires that had consumed all the fences, the barns, and out-houses, and not a living creature was any where to be seen, it was still to Henry Warden the most beautiful spot on earth, more beautiful than it had ever seemed before. Here were the old fields over which, with merry clamour of boys and dogs, he had often chased the timid hare in the bright, frosty winter mornings; the smooth, green meadows, where he had watched the shadows of the clouds sweeping over the wavy grass, and rolled in the sweet-smelling hay, listening to the hum of bees among the flowers, and the song of the neighbouring ploughman, while

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Merrily the mower whet his scythe.

Yonder stood an old birch, a living chronicler of the past telling, with its rudely-carved names, and dates, and hearts, pleasant stories of times gone by; and near by it was the patriarch oak, beneath whose leafy canopy he had whiled away many a summer day in rapt meditation, and in building castles, airy, light, and beautiful as the many-tinted clouds that lazily floated over him. Every object that he saw had a tale to tell; around each still clustered a thousand recollections; still lingered the bright, familiar spirits with which his happy fancy long ago had peopled it. They come again at his bidding, these shadowy friends of his younger days; but no voice or sound were heard among them, and their pale faces looked sadly on him. Here, thought he, I spent my innocent childhood, with a thousand fair and tender beings here, by each hill and vale, and green-margined brook, were the fairy realms where I lived so happy among the bright, pure creatures of my fancy. And these are now the property of another; these, around which my heart-strings must ever twine, are the possessions of my enemy. Sweet home of my childhood! My dear, native earth. I must see you no more! With this determination he turned his back on the place, when his eyes fell on an object that arrested his attention, for it seemed strangely in keeping with the desolation that reigned around. This was a very aged and decrepit negro, in garments that looked as aged as himself, and who, with a long stick in his hand, and bent nearly double, was hobbling across a neighbouring field in the direction of Warden. The latter waited until the old man approached, but finding that his hearing was almost totally gone, he deemed it prudent to ask no questions. The negro seemed to know but little; said he belonged longed to Esther Bell, and, thinking Massa stranger, might be lost, he had come to put him in the road he wished to travel.

I know these roads well, said Warden, and can find my way; but, nevertheless, I am still grateful to you for your kind intentions.

And whar mout young massa be gwine? asked the negro.

I am wandering about for amusement, answered Warden, and am going by the school-house and the church. Good-day, old man!

Good-day, massa, and God bless you! It struck the judge, after he had left the negro, that he had been imprudent, and that he ought to change his course; but not being able to resist his inclinations, he passed on over ground, every inch of which was sacred, and came in sight of the old field school. The place being fixed in his memory as he last saw it, and all the intervening tract of time being for the present forgotten, he almost expected to be greeted by the merry din which he had been accustomed there to hear. As he approached, the utter silence that reigned, and the changes which he saw, brought painfully to his mind the solitary condition of the place, and solemnly impressed him with the suitable character of all earthly things. The paths and the well-trodden play-ground were overgrown with grass and sedge; the yard was choked up with leaves and fallen limbs, and the house filled with cobwebs and dust. A few old books and scraps of paper lay scattered about; a rusty slate or two hung against the walls, with half-effaced figures on them; the master's desk was overturned, spiders were weaving through the house, and lizards and scorpions ran, frightened, over the floor and benches. Taking with him a few memorials of the past, Warden next directed his steps to the church, and going, first into the grave-yard, he found that it had also changed, but differently from the place which he had just left; for while the latter had become desolate, the former appeared to have been often visited. Following his mother's directions, he went first to his brother's grave, and throwing himself upon it, the fountains of his heart overflowed and he wept like a child. He had seen men fall like grain before the reaper; he had seen death in its most ghastly forms, but never had it appeared to him so awful and so dread as when he reflected that in the damp earth beneath him, in its dark, narrow tenement, lay mouldering into dust the manly form of his little brother, so full of life and beauty when he saw him last. He began, too, to think of the poor lad's last hours, and his reflections became so torturing, that, to relieve himself, he strolled over the ground, wondering who filled the many new graves, and noting the inscriptions on the ancient tombstones. The modern ones were of marble, but those of an old date were generally formed from slate-rock, were overgrown with moss and ivy, and covered with curious and half-effaced emblems,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

and passages from Scripture. On one he found only a name, and a circle which he supposed was intended to represent eternity. On several there were globes, and seraphs, and doves in the act of flying from them; on others, were broken wheels and extinguished candles; and on one, a very ancient one, was a solitary star. His attention was, however, particularly attracted by an old slab of blue slate, which was deeply sunk into the earth, and seemed to be crumbling away. Lifting it out of the ground, and cleaning off the dirt, he saw, roughly carved upon it, a mound, and the figure of a man standing by it and gazing at a rainbow. Under the name and age of the person to whose memory the stone was sacred was the inscription,

She died in hope so let us live.

The inscription had a happy effect on his feelings; and, casting a parting glance at his brother's grave, he went into the church. Here he had never been alone before, and as his footsteps echoed through the empty building, and he looked round on the vacant pews and pulpit, he was strangely affected. He had been so accustomed, when he entered, to see faces around and above him, and multitudes of people, and the house were so intimately associated in his mind, that, for a moment, he imagined himself to be the last survivor of the generation with whom he had worshipped there. Unusually large as was the house for a country church, he recollected to whom each pew had belonged, and the place in it where each member of the family sat during the service. Thus he knew the precise place often occupied by Edith Mayfield, and, seating himself in it, he saw lying on the floor a pocket Bible, which seemed to have been recently used. He regarded it as a sacred relic, for Edith's name was in it; and, turning over the leaves he found on the margin of a page, and just under the metrical version of the sixtyseventh psalm, the initials H. and E. W., enclosed in a heart, around which was the word Eternity, and under which a date which he remembered corresponded with that on which he had written to her, desiring to engage himself. Too late, too late! thought he, kissing the inscription; the master was right: the full fruition of love is not to be enjoyed on earth, but surely is to be in heaven. Edith, dear, dear Edith, I will think only on thee while I live, and prepare to meet thy pure spirit where sorrow and parting are never known! Thus resolving, he next seated himself in his father's pew, and conjuring up the times that were gone, and peopling the house with its former Sabbath tenants, bright and familiar faces were gathering round him, and he could almost imagine that he heard the voice of his old friend the parson, when a noise in the closet under the pulpit aroused him from his pleasant reverie to a state of very unpleasant agitation. Reason, education, and experience had not entirely eradicated those superstitious feelings which are inherent in every nature, and especially in those of a refined, poetical temperament; and Warden began to wish himself away. He dreaded no particular danger; but then the very vagueness of his fears rendered them the more distressing; and as the noise was again repeated, his hair rose, and cold shudders ran over him, when the door of the closet flew open and the Rev. Dr. Caldwell made his appearance.

CHAPTER XXX. DISCOVERIES.

THE parson, aware that his situation was an awkward one, began immediately to define his position. The times don't admit of ceremony, said he, and therefore I'll explain to you at once how I came to be here, and I will expect you to do the same in regard to yourself. Now, you must know that under that closet I have prepared a secret door, and that, when hard pushed, I take refuge there; and if the closet should be forced open, I can escape under the floor of the house. Such is the cause of my being housed up there this morning. The Tories have become ravenous, and the few Whigs left at Alamance have determined to join the army of General Greene. This very morning, at early dawn, I parted from your father, he aiming for the army and I for Esther Bell's, to deliver some messages from him to your mother. I was on foot; and, as I came on, three villainous Tories, also afoot, saw me and gave chase, and such a race a parson never had before. As the rascals were gaining on me I dashed in at Alexander's, told his heroic daughters to act as I if were hid about the premises, and seeing that they understood me, I escaped by the back door, plunged into a swamp, and safely made my way hither. When you first entered

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

the church I believed you were one of my pursuers; but when you came to your father's pew, I was enabled, after a long peep, to make out your features. I knew you were sent for and the cause, and so tell me, in brief, where you came from, how you have been, what you are doing here, and whither you are going.

I have been generally well, answered Warden, excepting some slight wounds I received in the battle of Camden, of which you have heard. I came from the mountains whither I was carried. I am here to gratify a natural feeling, and I am going

Hush! hush! exclaimed the doctor. Do you not hear voices by the creek?

Before Warden could answer, three men appeared on the brow of the hill which led down from the side of the church in which the two friends were standing, and the same persons who had chased him in the morning. He and Warden also saw that William Glutson was one of the party; and the young officer, true to the instinct of the soldier, instantly drew and cocked his pistols, and, handing one to the doctor, said, Make sure of the man on the left, and I'll pink the one on the right.

I will when it is necessary, answered the parson; but for the present let us watch and listen. See! they are coming right under this window, and we may gain some important information. Keep perfectly still, and we can hear every word through this broken glass.

The Tories did come under the window, and seated themselves on a bench by the side of the church, Will Glutson saying, as he sat down, I shouldn't be surprised, Pete, after all, to find that you've been fooled.

How could I be fooled? answered the one spoken to; haven't I told you what I saw and heard with my own ears and eyes? The man that fools me will have to rise before day.

What sort of a negro was it that you saw? Describe his looks, and tell us all that passed.

He was a miserable old sinner, with one foot in the grave and 'tother hobbling to it, and was so deaf that I made myself hoarse in bellowing to him. He knows nothing and nobody, except his master and mistress and the parson, and couldn't even tell that there was a war going on. I told him I wanted to see the preacher badly, as my child was very sick, and he said he had just lent him his horse, and that he had gone off in a prodigious hurry to see some one at Esther Bell's. So you see he has fooled the old negro and given us the slip.

The devilish old fox! exclaimed Glutson; his hide and tallow would have been worth a fortune to me. D n him! I thought I had him sure.

And so did I, said Pete Simmons, and was beginning to laugh to myself as I thought how we'd roast his ribs. I would have been sheriff; and, gods! how I would have welted him every pop! (Here the old gentleman alluded to unconsciously winced and felt his back.) I was so sure of him, continued the last speaker, that I was cutting him about at random to find his tender points. Holy Moses! wouldn't I have made him hop as I jerked him over the naked legs. (The old gentleman did hop, but soon recovered his composure.)

We'll get the old cock yet, said Glutson, and then you may tickle him to your heart's satisfaction. In the mean time I have great news to tell you Henry Warden has returned to Alamance.

What! him they called the judge? asked Dick Sikes.

The very same; come, by G d, right into a trap, and this night we'll take him It was now Warden's time to start; but a motion of the doctor's hand admonished him to be quiet, and Glutson continued: Great times are ahead. I know the sneaking, whey-faced hero well, and he'll stay with Ben Rust to-night, for Ben has also come with him.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

We must and can take them both, and these are my plans: There are five of our friends at father's, and we three make eight. Do you two prowling about Bell's and Rust's this evening till night, and I will also have spies out in every direction. At ten o'clock we will meet here, and every man must have a gun, a sword, and two pistols and a dirk, and surely eight of us can storm Captain Poll's castle, and take her and all her friends. We'll surround the house about twelve o'clock, shoot old Poll if necessary, and if not, tie her; we'll then hang Ben up at her door for a sign, and the judge, as he is called, must be taken alive.

For my part, said the Tory who had last spoken before, I don't care to be engaged in this business, for I have nothing against the judge. I never saw him; but I used to know him by report, and it always spoke well of him.

And for that very reason I hate him, exclaimed Glutson; he has crossed me, too, and I intend that he shall pay for it if it is fifty years hence. I look on this whole war as one between me and him, and I intend to spend my life in persecuting him and his family. But there are other reasons for our putting him out of the way, Dick, and you shall be well paid for your trouble if you join us; and if you don't, your throat shall be cut from ear to ear. Do you hear me?

Yes, I hear you and heed you too, replied Dick; I am always ready for a fair bargain; and as you've hired me, and the pay seems to be good, I'll go it. I can't afford to quarrel with my bread and meat, especially as you take all the responsibility.

Certainly I do, returned Will Glutson, laughing. It's twelve o'clock, boys, and so let's adjourn; and, remember ten o'clock to-night!

The Tories now left, and were soon out of sight, much to the relief of the parson, who had a difficult task in restraining Warden from trying his strength with Glutson. A time will come, said the old man, when you may have a chance to grapple with him out of sight of this holy edifice sacred to peace. And now let us also be moving, for we must go immediately to Rust's, and consult about our common safety. The vile dogs! they have not got me yet, nor will they while my trust remains in the mercy of God and the speed of my legs.

The reverend gentleman had no lack of courage indeed he was as fearless as any man of his time; but the character of his mission made him averse to the shedding of blood by himself unless in self-defence. He was, besides, a general benefactor, and he knew it, and his fears, therefore, were not for himself; for he was ready at any time to quit the scene of his earthly labors, and render an account of his stewardship.

On the road the two friends overtook the aged negro whom Warden had met in the morning, and who now came so suddenly and noiselessly in view that he seemed to have dropped from the clouds. I mistrust you, old man, said Warden, and must handle you a little to see if you are a wizard. Tell me, on your life, continued he, seizing the negro by the collar, how came you to be dogging me from place to place.

Because, Master Henry, answered old Ben, shedding his aged locks, these here cussed Tories begging Master Caldwell's pardon these cussed Tories are monstratious cunnin, and you aint usin to 'em. I knowed you'd be strollin about the country in broad daylight, and so I thought I'd stroll about some, too, and watch.

It appeared that, to protect his young master and to scour the country in search of news, the faithful servant had covered his head with meal, and assumed such a disguise that even Henry Warden did not know him. He had, during the whole of the morning, hovered near the young officer, and beneath his venerable coat were found a brace of pistols, the gift of his master, and a very homely but savagelooking dirk. It was easy now to account for the singular information to the Tories which saved the parson, and Henry Warden also understood why he himself was asked in the morning which way he was going.

CHAPTER XXXI. WARDEN LEAVES ALAMANCE AGAIN.

WITH all their persuasions, the two friends, Warden and Caldwell, could not induce Ben Rust to leave his mother's house. With a blind obstinacy, he declared his unalterable purpose of remaining where he was, provided his namesake, Ben, were permitted to keep him company.

He shall, said Henry Warden, and I will too, in life and in death, if you will not leave.

No, you won't, my Christin friend, replied Rust; it won't do for the same house to cover us both.

How do you mean? asked Warden.

I mean, answered Ben, that though you're a good general in a regular-built continental fight, you don't know nothin about the science of Tory tactics. Old Ebony here and I have been studyin it for years as hard as Julius Caesar, and, I tell you, it's so monstrous difficult we've only got to spellin, as it were, in three syllables. If you stay here, you'll be in your own way and in mine too.

I think I know enough, said Warden, to be certain that three men are stronger than two, and that eight are more than twice as many as three.

Praps that's true in figures, replied Ben; but it won't always hold good in fightin. I've already got my plans laid, and if they fail, old Ebony and I will make sure of four, and then there'll be only two Whigs gone. If you stay you can't save us; and, accordin to your own calkilation, its better to lose two than three. You must be off directly it is dark, and I advise you to make for the army.

Mrs. Rust, at least, must go with us, said the parson, for the Tories may do her an injury.

If they do they'll rue it, answered Major Poll. I'll fly from my house for no such cursed varmints. Here I mean to spend this night, trusting to my son and my own good rifle, and wo be to the man that lays hands on me!

The parson and his young friend Warden, finding it useless to argue longer with the Rusts, and believing it best for them to leave, parted from them at dark; and knowing that no search would be made that night at Bell's, went directly there. They remained but a short time, and before the dawn of morning were on the road for the head quarters of General Greene. Warden, with feelings that cannot be described, found himself again, and for an indefinite time, leaving the home of his youth. Far different were his feelings now from what they had been when, in the very morning of his life, he had first started to join the defenders of his country. Buoyant, then, with hope, and strong in the untried energies of mind and body, he had gone forth, confident of an early and successful termination of the struggle in which he was about to engage, with visions of an honourable distinction, and of bright rewards of love gleaming in the vista of the happy future. He had fought he had bled he had endured hunger, thirst, fatigues, and privations for years; and the situation of his country seemed to be still more gloomy than ever. He had returned to find his only brother dead his home desolate, his mother, and his father, and his sister exiles, his friends scattered; and she the chief, the dearest hope of his life she, whose affection was to reward him for all his toils gone forever. As a thief in the night, he was now escaping, and what was the prospect before him? Not fame its charms had vanished; not love for it was now a thing of memory only; not a bright and happy home to greet him on his return for that was gone. For what, then, was he going to peril himself? He had now learned that hardest of all lessons, patiently to submit to the inscrutable ways of Providence, and to labour without hope, because He has made it our duty here. His reverend friend, guessing at his thoughts, endeavoured to amuse him with wise discourse, touching, with much tenderness and delicacy, on the circumstances of Warden's situation, and gently leading his mind to a just conception of the sublime consolations of the Christian

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

philosopher consolations which few experience, and which none can appreciate, till all the mortal hopes and passions which support them have left them, and the pure mind, like the pyramids in the sands of Egypt, stands in its now solitary and naked majesty, self-relying and self-sustained. Conversing on such matters, Warden remarked that he believed he had still about him some verses which he had composed years ago, and which, as it was now light, he would read by his friend's permission.

Certainly, said the parson, I would be pleased to hear them, for I have myself been a dabbler in rhymes.

I was young when I wrote them, said Warden, very young, and you must excuse the egotism. But here they are:

'WHEN TIME ITS SILENT WORK HAS DONE.

When time its silent work has done,
And years have rolled their changes by,
When, like the early mists, have gone
The passions from our mental sky;
When all the hopes and fears that now
Throw lights and shadows o'er the mind.
Have vanish'd from the world's stern brow.
And left it in its bleak outline;
When cold reality shall rise
With wither'd limbs, in sable serge,
Where now gay phantoms cheat the eyes
Upon the far horizon's verge;
When flowers have faded from the way,
And all the glitt'ring, laughing band,
Who made our morning's path so gay,
Have left us on Life's waste of sand,
Where then must look the heart for rest,
On what firm prop its burdens stay?
What then will soothe the aching breast?
Where will the soul its thirst allay?
Oh! then will fall that giddy throng
Who feed on thoughts of vanity,
And Life's sad cares for them too strong,
Existence will a burden be;
And panting 'neath a tiresome load
Of follies changed to grim despair,
Their fainting forms will, strew the road,
Their bootless cries will fill the air!
Then wilt thou, like you tireless sun,
Break from obscuring clouds, my soul,
'With all thy travelling glories on,'
And speed thee to thy destined goal!
Then mute will be the sland'rer's tongue,
Vile hate upon itself will prey,
The envious heart, with madness stung,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Will fly the withering light of day;
Whilst thou, self-poised and self-sustained,
Thy every foeman put to flight,
Will stride, with all thy powers unchain'd,
Still onward in thy path of light!

Very respectable, said the doctor; but was not the vanity of ambition here taking the place of other lighter vanities?

I will not say that it was not, answered Warden; for I know I had deceived myself. I trust my eyes are at last open, and I see, indeed, that all is 'vanity of vanities.'

All things earthly are, replied the doctor; there's nothing true but Heaven.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A spirit of health, or goblin damned. *HAMLET.*

WILLIAM GLUTSON and his friends from his father's were not without a feeling of awe when they entered the old church of Alamance on a moonless night. Conscious that their intentions were evil, hardened as they were in iniquity, they still had a superstitious dread of churches and graveyards at night, and, when near them at such a time, feared a visitation from some terrible inhabitant of the land of spirits. They waited some time for the two who were with Glutson the day before, and who were by no means anxious to be the first at the church. These latter came at last, and, mustering courage sufficient to open a door, called out, with their eyes shut, to know if any one were present. They were answered by William Glutson, whom, with his company seated near the pulpit, they were bold enough to join. The Tories chose to assemble and arrange their plans in the house to avoid the keen night air, and also, perhaps, to be out of sight of the white slabs that gleamed with spectral instre in the neighbouring cemetery. Still, they were by no means easy in their location, and as an occasional blast of wind moaned through the doors and rattled the loose panes of glass in the crazy windows, cold shudders ran over them, and they pressed more closely together. These fears, however, gradually left them, and they were beginning to swagger and boast of their former exploits, and make themselves merry at the expense of their expected victims, when suddenly one of them exclaimed, What's that? There is nothing so contagious as terror, and the whole band, instantly electrified with fright, huddled against each other, while they cast fearful glances round the walls of the church. They saw nothing but the shadowy outlines of the great pillars that supported the gallery, and the pulpit that loomed up near them, while the sighing and rumbling of a slight and fitful breeze was the only sound to be heard.

It was only the creaking of the doors, at length spoke Glutson, with an effort to command a careless tone; who's afraid of an empty old church?

I'm not afraid of it, said the one who had given the alarm, nor of all its contents of ghosts and devils. But *I am* afraid of Whigs, when I can't see them; for they might kill me before I know where they are. I'm certain I heard one sneeze, and all I want is just to see the whites of his eyes, and then I'll feel at home.

Each one, now ashamed at having been alarmed, began to bluster and swear; and one of them, bolder than his compeers, had the daring courage to leave them several yards, searching the neighbouring pews, and calling on various noted Whigs by name to come out and fight like men. While he was thus engaged a terrific and unearthly scream, wild as the howl of a legion of devils, burst over the heads of the affrighted Tories, and froze them to

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

their seats. Again, wilder and louder, that howl rent the air, a light flashed through the church, and a hideous and gigantic figure, with eyes and teeth of fire, rose from the pulpit. At the same time, and from the same place, two ghostly figures, clad in white shrouds, issued, as it seemed, swift as the wind, while a deep, sepulchral voice cried out, Bring the sinners to me, their time has come!

The astounded Tories, unnerved by their fears, dropped their guns, and, muttering broken prayers and promises of reformation, endeavoured to escape as fast as their palsied limbs would carry them, running against each other, and falling over chairs and benches. The figures in white, emitting a sulphurous odour, were soon down among them, and, seizing three of the fugitives, bound them with their hands behind their backs, and placed thin bandages over their eyes. The others gained the doors, and taking different roads, and aiming at no particular place, made off at the top of their speed, their excited and disordered imaginations converting every dead tree and phosphoric stump into a ghost or goblin, while every rustle among the leaves acted as a spur to their jaded energies. The three who were taken suffered themselves, trembling and powerless, to be fastened together and led back near the pulpit, being able to distinguish only the dim outlines of the terrible being above them, the horrors of his face being magnified tenfold by the indistinctness of their vision. One of the apparitions now left them in charge of his ghostly compeer, and immediately the deep voice from the pulpit called out,

Who are these?

Your names are desired, squeaked, in shrill and harsh tones, the jailer of the Tories.

They were given as Peter Simmons, William Glutson, and Richard Sikes.

The Voice, solemnly. Richard!

Sikes. Yes, sir, good devil, I hear you.

The Voice. Richard! Sinner! thou cursed and ungodly youth, call me not good. I am the father of evil the great beast with seven heads and ten horns, and have come to put you in my wallet, and carry you to the lake of fire and brimstone. Don't you see my raw head and bloody bones?

Sikes. Oh good, merciful gentleman devil, please have mercy on me this one time, and I'll never sin any more. I never hated you nor abused you, like some people, but always defended you, and said you were a good Christian and an honest man, and that you didn't have a fair chance. For G 's sake let me off now, and I'll serve you faithfully.

A horrid yell, like the laugh of a demon, followed this speech, and the Voice continued,

You've served me already, Richard, and that's why I want to take you with me. You shall dance with me in the fiery furnace, sleep on a red-hot gridiron, and drink my health with melted lead. Schowoo! won't it be fine?

Sikes. Thank you, good devil, thank you. I'd rather stay here, if it's the same to you. I'm a poor man, and have nobody to work for me but myself.

The Voice, impressively. Richard! how came you in such unrighteous company?

Sikes. Squire Glutson and his son William hired me to work for them, and told me the king would thank me for it.

You lie! you sneaking villain! exclaimed William Glutson, beginning to entertain strange suspicions. You silly fool, don't you know whose hands you're in?

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

He began to struggle to release himself; but soon another hand, with an iron clutch, had hold of him, and a voice said in his ear, Bill Glutson! a pistol is at your breast, and if you call a name, or make another effort to get away, you're a dead man. You know me; submit and obey!

With this admonition, the Tories were led off a few miles, to the heart of a large forest, and there Glutson and Sikes (the latter of whom had made promises of reformation) were firmly secured to separate trees. They were now completely blind-folded; while the bandages were taken off the eyes of Simmons, and he stripped of all his garments but his shirt and pantaloons, and these latter rolled and fastened above his knees. A sapling, from which the limbs had been cut, and the bark taken off for some twenty feet from the roots, stood by, and, pointing to it, one of his keepers thus addressed Simmons:

That's what we call the 'Coon's saplin,' Pete. When you climb to that ere limb, jist up there you're a safe coon, and may travel. Ebony, keep your gun cocked; and now, my Christin friend (turning to Simmons), to assist you, I'll tickle your legs while you climb. Hangin's the forfeit if you don't git up. So here goes!

The Tory, knowing it was no time to beg, started up the tree, hugging it with a deathlike grasp; but before he had ascended far, several keen cuts across his ankles with hickory switches, relaxed the pressure of his legs, and down he came. Again and again he was forced to make the experiment, and always with the same result, the switches being applied to his back and shoulders with vigour and vivacity as he started up and came down. At length, being entirely exhausted, and smarting all over with gashes from which the blood was trickling, Simmons begged for mercy. It's no use cryin, said his tormentor; one of two things is got to be done. You must git to that limb yourself, or I and old Ebony must lift you to it with a rope round your neck. Which do you prefer? The unfortunate Peter chose the former; and, after resting a while, made another and final effort. Swift and furious came the blows over his back and arms; but these were protected, to some extent, by his shirt, and Simmons, was climbing for his life. His energies seemed to increase as he went up, and he was six or seven feet above the ground when a few sharp jerks across his naked feet and ankles brought him rapidly to the earth. He was considerably bruised by his fall; and, rendered desperate by his sufferings, asked to be hung at once. The penalty was, however, remitted, and Simmons was again blind-folded and fastened to a tree.

It now came Glutson's time to receive his dues; and, accordingly, he was led out, his eyes uncovered, and thus addressed:

Bill Glutson, your time has come at last! I never thought I would have to do this job; but you have forced me to it. What have you got to say why you should not die?

I've got nothing to say or repent of, sulkily answered Glutson.

Bill, it won't do to be so stout about matters, said the other, and you know it. You needn't think, that because I spared Pete Simmons, that you, who are the greatest sinner of all, will escape. Answer me now, on your life: Have you not hired others to rob the patriots? Did you not assist in beating Esther Bell, as she was going to see the sick? Did you not lay plans to catch preacher Caldwell, and deliver him to the British? Did you not lay in wait to kill me and Henry Warden? Have you not ordered George Warden's fences to be burned his house robbed and assisted in carrying away his negroes? Did you not murder my cousin, Betsy Deans? Have you not been a vile Tory, opposing your own country, and robbing, beating, and murdering its defenders? This is the indictment; what say you to it?

I'm not bound to answer your questions, replied Bill, and you have no right to make me.

Bill Glutson, I have told you your time is come, and you know I don't break my word. We have played together, Bill, gone to school together, and have known each other since we were children. I never had any ambition against you; I never wished you any harm; and yet you seduced my cousin, promising to marry her; and when she

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

got in a bad way, and was heart-broken and threatened to expose you, you took her up on your horse, telling her you were going to carry her to your father's, and marry her; and when you got to little Alamance you threw her in the water and held her under it till she was drowned. The speaker and Glutson were both affected; and, after a pause, the former continued: You've also sought my life, Bill, and intended to hang me tonight. You intended to kill Henry Warden, and Esther Bell, and you have led on the malignant Tories in all their rascalities. *You must die!* Kneel down and pray for once in your life, for in twenty minutes your soul will be in eternity.

I cannot pray, now, said Glutson, piteously; give me till to-morrow to think over my sins and repent.

You'll never see the sun rise again, answered his executioner; will you prepare?

Give me, then, two hours, for old friendship's sake, just two hours, and I'll ask no more.

Will you pray before you die? demanded the person implored. Come, Ebony, he's as ready as he'll ever be. Let's make a finish at once.

Oh, for G d's sake, for mercy's sake, pity me, cried Glutson, now frantic with terror; do not murder me in cold blood. It will be murder if you kill me now. You may beat me every day, put me in a dungeon, and feed me on bread and water; you may have all my property, and all my father's. I'll assist you in defending the country; I'll tell you where all the Tories hide, and help you to hang them, if you'll just let me live. For your own sake, for your mother's sake

Mention not my mother here! exclaimed the other, nor my name, or this pistol will do the business at once. It will not be murder to hang you; and if it was, I have what I consider good authority. I ask once more, will you pray?

I cannot now! I cannot for a while! Give me just half an hour.

The time's up, and five minutes over, was the answer; here, Ebony, take the end of this rope and fasten it to that limb up there.

The person addressed did as he was bid, his coadjutor holding up in his powerful arms the trembling and struggling body of the Tory.

Is it fastened? asked the Whig on the ground.

Yes, sir, all ready.

Bill Glutson, farewell! and may God have mercy on your soul.

The Tory was about to make an effort to speak, but the first word was choked in its passage, and his writhing limbs were dangling in the air. In a few moments the convulsive efforts of his body ceased, and a slight tremulous motion indicated that the flame of life was flickering in its socket, when the rope was cut, and he fell heavily and senseless to the earth.

The binding around his neck was immediately undone, and such appliances used as were calculated to restore his suspended animation; but as he began to give signs of returning life, the incoherent words which he feebly articulated, and the wild, rolling, and vacant stare of his eyes, showed that reason had deserted her throne, and that his brain was seething with fever and delirium. He evidently thought himself in the abodes of the damned, and that the giant trees around him were the monstrous and shapeless tenants of those dismal regions. His father's house was not far off, and thitherward he was carried by one of his executioners, entreating him to drive off the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

ghost of Betsy Deans. After placing him in the yard, the Whig returned for his companion and his prisoners, and, approaching to within a few hundred yards of Glutson's mansion, its tenants were roused from their slumbers by a succession of savage howls, and beheld, with speechless terror, the awful visitant of the flaming eyes and teeth. At the same time a fierce and terrible voice proclaimed,

Wo, wo to thee, Nathan Glutson! You are a murderer, a swindler, and a thief; a liar, a hypocrite, and a villain! Your sins are all known to me, and soon I'll call to settle your account! Repent, for vengeance is at hand!

The house of Glutson became a scene of lamentation and wretchedness. The tales of others, the evidence of his own senses, and the condition of his son the pride and hope of his house satisfied Nathan that an avenging spirit had been abroad. William became a raving maniac, and seemed to be tormented by furies, till at last his malady became so frightful that no one could bear to be in his presence. A fierce and incurable fever preyed on him night and day, and the phantoms of his stricken conscience, in the shape of hideous demons, mocked at his sufferings, till at last he wasted away, and went to realize those untold and unimagined horrors of which he had here a faint foretaste. These events put afloat a thousand rumours at Alamance. Many of the Tories believed that the evil one had been made visible among them, while some very pious old ladies among the Whigs devoutly thanked the Almighty for answering their prayers, in sending to them an angel of deliverance. The shrewd patriots held their peace, and Esther Bell and Anne Warden cautioned Black Dan never to let his prisoner, Simmons, into the secrets of the huge gourd with teeth and eye-holes, and which, with a lighted candle in it, looked so terrible at night. Dan treasured the gourd as the gift of a friend, kept his prisoner close, and, occasionally, at night, assisted by his fellow-servants, exercised him at the Coon's saplin. Amid all the speculations among the unknowing ones at Alamance, two things were reduced to certainties, namely, that the two Bens and Dick Sikes had disappeared, and that the Whigs, for a season at least, had rest from their enemies.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHOEVER has been once on the sandhills of North Carolina will not forget them soon. The country is not hilly, as the term applied to it would seem to indicate; but an unbroken plain stretches round the whole horizon, and the face of the earth, never clothed with verdure, and thinly covered with leaves, gleams like the desolation of perpetual snow. Still, it has its beauties and its attractions peculiar to itself, and which endears it to the dwellers there. There are occasional mounds of drifted sand to relieve the monotony of the plain; near its streams the air is laden with the fragrance of delicious flowers, and at all seasons the evergreen still wears its summer robes. Nature seems ever to be in a state of soft repose, and the hazy atmosphere invites to that dreamy listlessness, that middle ground between the hard realities of life and the wild phantoms of sleep, so pleasant and soothing to the contemplative mind. The crowning glory of the country, however, is its forest of pine. There are no thickets of brushwood, no tangled webs of vine, no dwarfs nor misshapen woody monsters in this noble family of trees. Grouped in squares, circles, parallelograms, and an endless variety of fanciful figures, they rise high and straight from the earth, some with the stately grace of matrons, and others with the elegant symmetry and lighter proportions of youthful maidens, while the long and slender leaves that, like dishevelled hair, depend in rich luxuriance from their neatly-rounded summits, justify the figure used. Few birds are seen among them; and had Ovid told us that to these, and not to poplars, the Heliades were changed, the constant moan heard in their midst might well be taken for the endless wail of the sisters for their rash brother Phaeton.

Thus, with his usual felicitous style, does the master begin the second volume of his notes, and introduces us upon a new scene of action. In one of these groves, and not far from the ancient village of Cross Creek, now the town of Fayetteville, there was a noted spring, visible a long way off by the green grass that fringed its waters. Close by the spring was a circular mound, with perpendicular sides, about ten feet high, and one hundred and fifty yards in circumference. It was ascended by steps cut in several places and covered with seats of plank, which were fastened in the sides of the stately pines. This place was often resorted to in summer and autumn by parties of pleasure, and was called The Lover's Knowe, from the fact of its being a famous trystingplace, and the scene of

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

many a courtship. Incidents of this sort had given a name to every locality on and about the terrace. There was, for instance, a small tree called *Sandy's Hope*, because the mistress of one Sandy Cunningham had listened encouragingly to his suit, while with a penknife she was trimming the pine, then a mere twig. *Walker's Nose*, was a large root, on which one Angus Walker sat at the feet of his lady-love when she put his proboscis out of joint, or, in other words, discarded him; and *The Stane-Bane* was a rock where angry lovers retired to quarrel and settle their difficulties. Not far from this latter and just on the western edge of the mound, was a place called *The Kelpy's Seat*, a name which it held even within the recollection of a Scotch lady who is yet in the prime of life. It was so called because it was the favourite seat of one who, for a short while, mingled in the society of that region, and who formed few acquaintances and still fewer intimacies there. At all the parties, by daylight or moonlight, at the *Lover's Knowe* the stranger sat still and silent on that seat; and even when music and the dance put me and motion into the oldest, that stranger still sat mute and sad, gazing at the far horizon, or looking up through the boughs of the leafy trees at the full-orbed moon, or at some distant and lonely star. Tartans, plaids, and plumes, though new to her, excited little interest, and equally were neglected the wild strains of bagpipes and harps. She was usually dressed in deep mourning, and as she would sit with her head thrown back against the tree, at whose roots was the seat, her hands crossed upon her lap, and the moon beaming full in her pale and upturned face, she seemed an ethereal personation of that profound, tender, and nameless sorrow which sometimes dwells in the breasts of earth's finest mould. She came mysteriously into the country; her conduct and manners were mysterious, and her history a mystery. All knew that she was beautiful as an angel, meek as a saint, inoffensive as a dove; yet whence she came and what her business, were things known only to a few. Great curiosity was of course excited, but speculation exhausted itself, and the strange maiden was still wrapped in obscurity.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ON a pleasant evening, late in autumn, the strange lady and female companion of about the same age were sitting on the *Lover's Knowe*. The stranger, clad in mourning weeds, was gazing, sad and abstracted, on the northwestern horizon, while her companion, whose light eyes, flaxen hair, and short plaid dress displayed the Scotchwoman, kept up a continual humming conversation, seemingly but little concerned whether she had a listener or not.

And ye'll be glower'n at the west till ye stare yer e'en oot, I am thinking, at length said the latter, with some impatience.

I must beg your pardon, Nannie, said the other, for not paying better attention to your tales of fairies and kelpies. My heart, you know, is far distant from here, and I was just now fancying myself in my former happy home.

And is na my heart in the heelands o'bonny Scotland, which I maun never see again? answered Nannie Scott; and are not all my kith and kindred in the auld kirkyard there, and I a puir, lone lassie wi' neither friends nor waurldly gear? An' yet I am as blithe as the mavis in spring.

The linnet would have been more proper, Nannie, for you sing your sweetest notes in the gloomiest weather. But how can you say you have no friends, when you are among your own people, and every body is kind to you? My ease is entirely different, and I have no friend here.

And am I not your friend, dear ladie? asked Nannie. It's true, I am a puir, kintra haverel, but I hae a douce and feekfu' heart, and ane that's true to you.

And so, indeed, you have, my friend, replied Edith Mayfield, and I am sorry you misunderstood me. From the time I met with you at that odious place of *Glutson's*, you have ever been kind and true to me; and, but for you, I know not what should have become of me. On your faithful bosom I rely as on a sister's.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

An'yet, said Nannie, ye would gang an' leave me this very een, an' ye could have yer ain way anent the matter.

It is not you I wish to leave, answered Edith, but these hateful people. As you know for I have already told you I was stolen away against my will. You saw that when they forced me into the carriage with you that night at Glutson's. Ross has stolen me away from my parents and my home, and put me under the care of his old aunt, who, as you know, watches me strictly, and does nothing but ding-dong me day and night about her relation. They expected to wean me from Alamance and all its memories, and that my dislike to Ross would finally give way; but it has grown stronger and stronger, and they have found that a thousand years of confinement would not bend me to their purposes. They have, therefore, I do believe, resolved to force me, and it was to talk with you on this very subject that I brought you here. I must escape; I must leave this very week, or be ruined forever. And why should you not go with me? I observed the roads as we came along I have talked with old Duncan, the piper, and believe he will assist us. These are my plans

Whisht, hiney! is na that Alan Ross?

The person named was just in sight; and, soon coming to where the ladies were, Nannie Scott withdrew to the farther side of the knowe, though Edith entreated her not to quit her side. A favorable omen, ma chere amie, a favorable omen! exclaims Ross, gayly. I came on a message of love, and I find you at the Lover's Knowe, and your attendant leaves you at my approach. May the god of eloquence inspire my tongue to speak worthily the tale you seem disposed to hear!

You are mistaken, sir, said Edith, if you suppose you can say but one thing that is pleasant to me. It was not by my will that my friend left my side, or that I see you to-day. Would to God our meetings depended on my choice!

In that case, fair lady, the light of your glorious beauty would be hid from the eyes of your most devoted friend. But, thank Heaven, wilful woman cannot always have her way; and it is well for her that she cannot. I have no doubt that, if it were left to you, you would refuse an offer which I am now going to make, and which all the world would say is for your benefit.

Edith made no reply; but, turning her averted eyes upon him, he continued: I have at length hit upon a proposition that ought to be agreeable to you, for it will save your life and ensure your happiness.

The speaker again paused; but Edith expressing no curiosity, he went on: You seem to have so little confidence in me, that you will not even deign to enquire what I mean. Well, I will tell you at once, and you will see if I was not right for once. Your health is declining Henry Warden is dead, as I have long ago proved to you by his neighbors, William Glutson, and others and you will linger out in America a wretched life, and perhaps fill an early grave.

Oh, merciful God, grant that it may be so! exclaimed Edith, passionately, the tears filling her eyes. Oh, grant that I may soon rest by his side, and my soul be with his in heaven! Base man, when you brought this news before, you forced from me the most sacred secret of my heart. I told you then, and I tell you now, that the ashes of Henry Warden dead, are dearer to me than all the living world besides, and never, never shall I quit the country where they repose! I ask you again, if you have yet one spark of honour in you, to speak of him no more to me, and I beg you to leave me oh leave me, for a while at least! And so saying, she covered her face with her hands and wept bitterly.

Ross strode over the terrace till her grief had abated, and, returning to her, sat down at her feet, and, in mild and gentle tones, asked her pardon for the unhappy allusion. Edith, continued he, I have told you, and you know my history. I have told you that till I came to America, I had a ruling passion which excluded all thoughts of love.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

That, from my childhood, I passionately longed for the restoration of the Stuarts; that, young as I was, I fought under Cameron on the disastrous field of Culloden, and that I afterwards shared the exile of Charles Edward in France; that my estates, my father dying, were confiscated, and that a reward was set upon my head. I have now something else to tell you, and I beg you to give me your undivided attention. I have heard happy news from Europe. Our gracious sovereign, at the solicitation of my friends, has been pleased to pardon me, and to restore to me my inheritance, and it is not a small one. I am going soon to take possession of it, and with me will return my aunt and several other Highland families of distinction. I have prepared a deed giving you one-third of my estate, and it will support you in that rank and station which you are entitled to hold. Your health your spirits demand a change of climate and a change of scenery. You will see great cities and a great people; you will be treated as a daughter and sister by a large and powerful connection; you will move in a society more polished and refined than the best in America, and you shall be mistress of yourself, and never shall I mention love to you until all traces of grief have left your heart, and you are the gayest of the gay. I ask you only to go with us, and leave this miserable desert country, where there is no society, and where you are so entirely unsphered. What a brilliant star would you make at court!

Mr. Ross, answered Edith, I have listened as you desired, and the respect which I have paid to your proposition will show that I can yet think you a gentleman, notwithstanding the injuries and insults you have heaped upon me. You must not, however, be deceived by my mildness. What I say now I say in earnest, and I will never change my mind. With my own consent I will never leave my parents, I will never accept a present of the smallest value from you, nor will I ever leave America alive, even though my parents and all my kindred were dead. If I had not even the canker at my heart if there were here no relics sacred to me, I will not leave my country. Our people are plain and simple, it is true; our country is yet rough, and comparatively a wilderness, and a terrible war is now raging over it; but, sir, it is the land of the free! and more charming to me would be the most savage wilds, where none but freemen dwell, than all the splendours, luxuries, and pleasures of the most magnificent court in the gorgeous East!

A traitress, by Heaven! exclaimed Ross, smiling. I have heard of such language among the American dames, but I never dreamed that one so young could preach it with such a flashing eye! Lady, I know whence those sentiments were inspired; and when I tell you you must forget the teacher and his lessons, I flatter myself that I do but repeat your father's instructions.

It ill becomes you to quote my father to me, answered Edith; and his name, I should think, ought to fill you with remorse. I owe my father obedience. I love him, and have and would serve him with devoted tenderness: but he has no control over my conscience; and as to my soul, God, who gave it, has inspired it with a passionate love of liberty. I know that my country is engaged in a glorious struggle. I know my countrymen are in the right, and I pray daily to Heaven for their success. I reverence the great and good men who are spending themselves in the just cause. I look on them as the best patriots the world has ever seen, and I believe their names will be held in everlasting remembrance!

I am a loyal subject of his majesty George the Third, whom God long preserve! said Ross; but I care little for these disputes about liberty. I can see that you are now carried away, as I once was, by a sublime abstraction; and you must permit me to say it is a most unprofitable passion. I have forsaken bully Mars, and henceforth I am for the soft pleasures of a more mighty god. Lady! dear, dear lady! I love you with a pure and single devotion! Here, at your feet, kneels one who never bent to beauty before, and here I offer you all the boundless affection of a heart that has ever been true to its friends, and a name that the breath of dishonour has never tainted. You have enthralled my soul! In your smile only can I live, and you would I ever cherish with unspeakable tenderness and affection. Oh! in the name of all you hold dear on earth, pity, pity, I beseech you, the supplicant who now humbles himself before you! Have you not a woman's heart? Have you not a portion of our common nature? Can you, with relentless cruelty, consign me to that despair, compared with which the pangs of death are light? Surely, oh! surely you cannot hate me surely you are yet kind enough to pity the most miserable wretch on earth!

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Edith, moved to tears, bade her kneeling lover to rise, or she would instantly leave him. I have told you, she continued, I cannot love you, and that I will never, never give my hand without my heart. Pity I can and do feel for you, who never felt pity for me. Let me appeal to you as you have done to me; let me appeal to your honour, to your generosity, to your humanity. Repair the wrong you have done to me and to my parents. Restore me to them and I will not hate you; I will thank you, and esteem you as a friend. I will forgive all the past; I will never speak to you harshly again; I will beg my parents to forgive you; and in all that I can, consistently with my honour and my happiness, I will serve you, and I will even pray for your happiness.

Edith, said Ross, solemnly, I seek supreme bliss: you desire, at best, a shortlived satisfaction

'There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them as we will.'

I should have said a destiny, and no one can resist his destiny. When I first saw you I was plotting no ill against you; when I fell in love, it was not by my own consent. Love is an involuntary and overmastering passion, and it enslaved me while I was on other business. I cannot help it; and as self-preservation is the first law of Nature, I must attend first to my own happiness. You are as dear to me as my own heart's blood, and yet, for that very reason, I must insist on your doing what you dislike. You must blame the Fates, not me. Still, I believe I know better than yourself what is for your own happiness, and I thoroughly believe I am consulting it. All ladies are whimsical, and you are now especially so. Your mind is clouded by morbid humours, and you persist wilfully in seeking your own destruction. It must not be. I must save you, and save myself, and *I will do it*.

What do you mean, Mr. Ross? cried Edith, rising to her feet; I do not understand you.

You will soon, fair lady! replied he, also rising, and proudly pacing over the mound. Edith stood gazing at him in much bewilderment, until he at length approached her, and, drawing himself to his full height, said, slowly: I have humiliated myself. Fool that I was, I have been too complaisant to the whims of woman, and suffered her to scorn me and trample on my heart! I am myself again: to-morrow night you too shall be yourself, and *you shall be mine!* Adieu! Before she could speak he was gone.

Did I not tell you so, Nannie, exclaimed Edith, weeping, and wringing her hands; the base wretch intends to force me to-morrow night.

Dinna fear, dear lady, dinna fear but the Lord will provide, said her companion, with the confidence of her race in supernatural agencies.

But God does not work by miracles, Nannie; and if you do not devise some plan for me, I'm sure He will work no miracle in favour of a miserable creature like me.

He has afore now, answered Nannie, helpit mony a pair, forfairn lassie in the very bit o'time when their case was maist fearful. What says the Psalmist, 'Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler.' The two friends, unable to come to any conclusion, returned to their residence at Aunt Ross's, laying many schemes on the road, and abandoning each as soon as it was formed.

CHAPTER XXXV.

NANNIE SCOTT was a distant connection of the Rosses; and, having lost her parents when a girl, had been raised by the aunt of Alan Ross, with whom she now resided. This aunt was the confidant of Ross, and had sent Nannie with him to Alamance, to act as a companion to Edith Mayfield, when that lady was abducted. Edith and Nannie became intimate on the road; they were lodged in the same room at Aunt Ross's, and were inseparable

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

friends and companions. The Scotch girl, though of a grateful disposition, had little reason for thinking herself under obligations to the people with whom she lived, more in the capacity of a servant than that of a member of the family. She was, therefore, not disposed to assist in their attempt on her friend, to whom she was now much attached, and whose deliverance from her present position she sincerely desired. On the night, therefore, following the interview at the Lover's Knowe, Edith and Nannie discussed between them many plans for the escape of the former, but no feasible one seemed to offer. The latter told many stories of happy and providential escapes made by distressed maidens, which she had heard when she was a wee bit lassie; and the former, at last devoutly commended herself to Heaven and fell asleep. When she awoke the sun was already up, and her companion gone. The family, as much astonished as Edith at Nannie's absence, would not believe but what the former knew where she was, and that some scheme for an escape was on foot. Edith was watched closely during the day, and saw, by the preparations going on, that she was certainly to be married on the approaching night. She had a faint hope that her friend might yet save her; but, with the suspicions natural to those who have been persecuted, she finally began to fear that even Nannie was against her, and had left on purpose to be out of the way. As the day advanced, these suspicions were confirmed; and, giving herself up for lost, she threw herself on her bed, and there remained weeping till some females came to prepare her for the ceremony. Without assisting or resisting, she permitted them to array her in bridal costume and lead her out. When she saw present only a few friends of the family, and a young and sinister-looking minister, her heart failed her, and she fainted. Up to this time a faint hope had still shone in her breast; she still cherished a vague expectation of deliverance. She saw at once the awful reality of her position; her senses reeled, and it was long before her suspended animation was restored. When it was, she was again brought into the room where the company was waiting, and was held on her feet by one of her maids. Her whole life now rapidly passed in review before her. She remembered her apparent cruelty to Henry Warden, and, magnifying the enormity of her conduct, she persuaded herself that her punishment was just. With this belief she became more composed, took her place by Ross, and the ceremony commenced.

Edith do you take this man to be

Hold! not another word! shouted a travel-stained woman who darted into the room; and, rushing between Edith and Ross, stood confronting the minister.

Who is this wild woman? asked the astonished preacher; let her be taken hence.

Who am I? cried the new-comer; look at me, unholy man, and see if you have forgotten Flora M'Donald! At the sound of this name the company stared at each other, and Flora went on: Little did I think, Alan Ross, that a kinsman of mine would ever disgrace the proud name he bears by such an unmanly deed! But there is no time to talk; show us a room, Mother Ross, for the lady has fainted in my arms!

When Edith recovered she was in her own room, and Nannie Scott was bending over her with the most anxious solicitude. She would have Nannie tell her immediately how she came to be saved; but her friend told her to be easy for the present, and wait for the return of her protectress. This latter remained with the family till all retired moodily to rest, and then stole softly to the apartment of Edith.

My young friend, said she, as she came in, if you are able, give directions to Nannie to get your clothes ready; for you must be off while they think you are yet unable to move.

I shall give no directions, answered Edith, till I know what has happened. How came I to find in you a friend?

I had seen you, and suspected something was wrong, replied Flora, and today my suspicions were confirmed. It is a long distance from here to my house, and yet your friend there walked it alone by noon, and told me all your story.

My dear, dear friend, indeed, exclaimed Edith, embracing Nannie.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Time presses, said Flora, and you must thank her hereafter. My husband was not at home; but I instantly got ready, and, furnishing Nannie with a horse, we hurried hither. On the way we fell in with a company of three men, two white and one black; and the leader, who was a very odd sort of a man, made many enquiries about the road to this place. I was in doubt what to do, fearing that they might be confederates of Alan Ross. To try them, I therefore remarked that I supposed they were going there to the wedding to-night. I was eagerly asked what wedding, and replied that you were to be married to Alan Ross at such an hour. No she won't, by the eternal G d, if you will show me the way! exclaimed the leader. I was satisfied by the honesty of his look and manner, and, revealing to him my business, he candidly told me his, which was, to carry you to Alamance; and he is now waiting for you at the end of the lane.

Edith felt a new life swelling within her heart; but then came the sad reflection, Alas! I shall not see *him!* She half trusted that he might yet be alive, and that he was at the head of the plans laid for her rescue. She enquired, therefore, eagerly for the names of the Alamancers.

I asked them for their names, replied Flora, and the leader said it might not be prudent. He called the black Ben frequently quoted some one he calls Old Proximus, and told me to give you his respects *viva voce*.

Ben Rust, as I live, shouted Edith, jumping up, and hurriedly assisting Nannie Scott.

I had like to have forgotten a message the negro sent you, continued Flora M'Donald, after a pause. He desired me to say to you that it was all a lie about Master Henry's death, and

Oh, God! I thank thee! exclaimed Edith, and she swooned in the arms of her friends. Flora M'Donald suspected a secret, but she said nothing. Edith, however, as soon as she could speak, threw her arms around the neck of her deliverer, and, kissing her fervently, said, My more than mother, you shall see how happy you have made me. I will tell you what I never told mortal before, while I thought he was alive: and hereupon she gave a brief sketch of her connection with Henry Warden. Flora shed tears, and, feeling herself more than paid, hastened her young friends to leave the house. It was now Nannie's turn to weep, and she lingered on the threshold, sobbing as if her heart would break. When they arrived at the place where they were expected, Rust shed the first tears that had moistened his eyes for years, and old black Ben blubbered like a child.

Nannie Scott, said Flora, at length, it is the last opportunity I shall have of giving you some token of the high esteem in which I have held your many virtues. Accept that horse which you rode, and keep him in remembrance of me.

The poor girl could say nothing; but Rust spoke for her, and declared that the animal should be called Flora M'Donald till the day of his death, and that he should be buried with military honours. Ben then, forgetting his accustomed caution, proposed three cheers for Flora, and it was with much difficulty she could prevent him from carrying out his purpose. Well, well, my beautiful Christin friend, said he, when we git to Alamance, and the wars are over, I'll git the whole country together and give you three sich everlastin jovers as were never heern before.

Edith promised to write to Flora, and begged her to signify in what way she could show her unbounded gratitude.

When I return home, said Flora, I will let you know where to write, and would be glad to hear your future history. I believe I almost know you will be happy yet with him to whom you have been so devoted. I ask only that, when you are at home, and among your own people, you will act as a sister to Nannie Scott, remembering that you yourself were once a stranger among a strange people, and that you will sometimes remember and think kindly of Flora M'Donald.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The Alamancers, with Nannie Scott, now left for home, Ben Rust thinking it prudent not now to divulge to Edith Mayfield the death of her father.

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE COUNTRY INN.

WHEN the Alamancers, under the command of Captain Cornelius Demijohn, parted from Henry Warden, they joined a company of Whigs, with whom they took part in the battle of King's Mountain. The master has much to say in regard to that engagement, and relates, with great minuteness, and in a lively style, some very entertaining and surprising incidents connected therewith. The course which our history has assumed compels us, with much reluctance, to pass over these events and proceed with those matters immediately connected with the persons whose destiny the reader is impatient to know. After the battle alluded to, Uncle Corny was no longer able to restrain his impatient desire to see the widow Powell, whose memory rendered sacred to him every foot of earth in South Carolina. The master, in compliance with a former promise, agreed to accompany his enamoured friend, and the Alamancers separated. As neither of the gentlemen was a cavalier, Corny and his friend were totally unsphered by being mounted, the former on a lean, draggled-tailed pony, whose back swayed beneath its ponderous weight as if it would break in the middle, while the latter received practical instruction in the original mode of churning butter on the back of a tall, gaunt, and hungry-looking animal.

The captain, with the wish of every lover for the annihilation of time and space, made frequent and furious digs at the flanks of his steed, his armed boot heels clanging together under its weasel-shaped belly, and hurried on unmindful of the sufferings of M'Bride, whose old roan had a gait compounded of every possible motion except that of a direct horizontal progression. Nothing was said, Demijohn being busy with his own fancy, while Hector M'Bride kept pressing his hands upon the pommel of his saddle to create, as far as possible, a diversion in favour of the main point of contact between himself and his horse. In this way they arrived at an inn, or grocery, upon the roadside, and stopped to refresh themselves. The landlord was a fortunate character, who, by asking no questions and answering none, managed to carry on a flourishing business during all the troubles of the times, and was patronized by Whigs, British, and Tories. While the travellers were here resting themselves, there came up a roving Georgian, a sallow, lank, and bilious-looking customer, whose hat, to use a modern phrase, was extremely seedy, and whose threadbare dress would have been comfortably cool during the dog-days, in any other climate except that where the fashionable summer costume is said to be a shirt collar and a pair of spurs. He immediately called for a drink, and, taking his glass in his hand, announced himself as John Nipper in perticler, a gentleman at large, who was ready to make the acquaintance of any good fellow, and who could out-run, out-jump, and stick his nose farther in the ground than any man on this side of Jerico. Having swallowed his brandy, he turned, with a patronizing air, to the Alamancers, and desired to know if they wished for any sport.

We are not sportsmen, answered the master; whereat. John Nipper in perticler looked most particularly hard at him, surveying him from head to foot, and from foot to head, and back again.

Well, friends, said he at length, in compassionate tones, I'm sorry for you, and the best we can do is to take a drink. Fill three glasses, landlord; and now, as we're all ready, I wish to propose a toast. First, here's to ourselves, individually and collectively; secondly, here's to you and towards you, if I hadn't 'ave seed you I wouldn't 'ave knowed you; and, thirdly, and lastly, here's to the widow Powell!

I shall not drink that toast, sir, in such company! said Corny, throwing down his glass with violence.

I say you must drink it, though, replied John.

And I say I will not drink it, retorted Corny.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Yes, but you must, old Snufflebags.

Yes, but I won't, puppy, dog, knave, villain!

Wall, them's hard terms you use, old friend, answered John Nipper, but I attribute it all to your ignorance of the English language. Now I'll prove to you why you ought to drink the toast: aint you fond of good horse-flesh?

Not particularly.

But don't you like a clean-legged, high blooded, mettlesome nag, that goes like a bird a-flyin'?

I can't say but I prefer a more gentle animal, answered Corny; but what has this to do with the toast?

Adzactly, and now I'll bring you to the pint. I knowed, as soon as I saw you, what kind of a crittur suited you. You want a good-natered, kind-conditioned, soft-goin animal that'll love and respect you, and that's easy to git on and off of don't you?

Such a one would suit.

And if it's a mare it will do?

Certainly.

Good! shouted John; now the widow Powell is jist sich a crittur, for John Nipper in perticler has tried her long enough to know.

You scurvy knave! you foul-mouthed puppy! you lying scoundrel! say again that the widow Powell is a mare, and I'll hew you into shavings!

Jemini, Jerusalem! Stranger, I've heern tell of men bewitched, and who couldn't tell a black sheep from the devil; but I never before saw one who couldn't tell a hoss from a human bein. If you aint a born nateral then *I'm d d!* I say, land-lord, whar *did* he come from?

The individual in question, as well as Hector M'Bride, seeing the mistake, explained matters to the satisfaction of the parties, and they all adjourned into the yard to see John's nag.

Walk up, gentlemen, cried John, walk up and see for yourselves. Aint them pasterns clean and nice? Did you ever see sich a head and sich eyes afore? She's not perfection, is she, nor the cream of Tartary, nor the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley? No, no, she aint none of these, nor she aint a dove, nor a lamb, nor a human crittur? Nor she aint gentle and knowin, and lovin neither: here, Sally, follow me.

With this he threw the bridle over her head, and, running round the house, she followed him, wheeling when he wheeled, and keeping close at his heels as he muttered to himself: No, no, Sally, you can't talk, nor sing, nor read and write and cipher. You're not high-larned, Sally, and never went to school; but the way you can think *is* a sin! With this John mounted, and, putting her into a rapid motion, exclaimed: This is what I call the Gor-g-y step! I could go to sleep here in five minutes by the watch, and never wake till she stopped. If you had the rheumatiz in all your bones, the lumbago in your back, and a side-ache, and a head-ache, and tooth-ache, you'd rather be on Sally's back than on the softest feather bed. If you would'nt, darn *my* soul!

Friend, said Demijohn, I have little confidence in what you say, but I want that nag.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

You can't git her, responded John, emphatically.

But I must have her; so there is no use for any more of your foolery.

John alighted; and, taking Uncle Corny by the arm, walked off a few yards, and then, looking him seriously in the face, asked, Are you the Treasurer of the United States?

No.

May be you're General Washington?

No, I am not Washington.

Praps you're Lord Cornwallis?

I tell you I am a plain captain of militia, answered Demijohn, impatiently, and I want your nag.

You can't git her, captin, replied John Nipper in perticler; the price would break you, and wouldn't *I* be called to account for it? for bringing you to poverty, your wife to want, and makin your little children beggars. No, no; John Nipper in perticler is too good for that.

He did, however, yield at last to temptation, and exchanged with the captain, taking the worth of both animals for boot. He now prepared to leave, and insisted that all should join him in a parting cup. Taking his liquor in his hand, he remarked, with sorrowful tones, that friends must part; a sad reflection which was, however, in his estimation, fully compensated by the consoling remembrance that they would all meet at the hatter's. If you ever visit the upper settlements in Georgy, continued he, call on John Nipper in perticler, and if he does live in a log house he'll give you the best fare and show you the greatest wife, *prehaps*, in seven states! With this he took an affectionate leave, and went on his way rejoicing.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Was there ever a sane lover? *Questions for the People.*

THE last words of John Nipper in perticler stung Captain Demijohn like a thousand hornets. And here the editor would quote an observation of the master's in regard to jealousy: Thus we see, writes he, alluding to Uncle Corny's suspicions; thus we see an illustration of a principle in human nature. If we love an object, we think it the most interesting and beautiful of its kind; and, judging others by ourselves, we believe they think so too. Hence I have known women to be jealous of their monkeys and poodle dogs; and men of their pet bears, which they actually sold, fearing their mistresses might fix their affections on them. Thus it was with Uncle Corny, who now hastened, with the master, to depart. His toilet was arranged with fastidious care; and emboldened by his late potations, and by his impatience, he forgot his accustomed prudence when on horseback, and forgetful, also, of the master's sufferings, spurred up his nag to a rapid canter. As he came to the skirt of a wood, his skittish animal becoming alarmed, suddenly squatted and wheeled, while her burden, from the *vis inertia*, continued onward in the original direction, and came to the ground with a thundering crash. The captain realized what he had often sought when a boy, a vision of stars in the daytime; but his groans indicated any thing else but pleasure at the sight.

For a while he was satisfied that his skull was fractured, and at least seven of his ribs driven in; and, as M'Bride

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

came up, he called piteously to him to examine and see if his brains were not oozing out. The master assured him, after a careful examination, that no serious damage was done; and, being assisted to his feet, he hobbled back to the inn, where his wounds and his impatience threw him into a fever. He was, in fact, slightly delirious, and while the excitement was on him he procured pen and paper and set himself to the serious job of inditing an epistle to the widow Powell. The master, in a chaster style and a freer hand, would have performed the labour for him; but, to use a vulgar phrase, the steam was up in Uncle Corny, and albeit unused to the author's small and pointed weapon, he now grasped it as if it had been a sword, and panting and expectorating at a furious rate, with his whole system worked up to the fiercest intensity, he wrote as follows:

BEAUTIFUL SALLY These few lines come from your adorer, who is now, as the French say, horsed in combat. I have been, my beautiful pigeon, flying on the wings of love to get a sight of those two stars that shine in the heaven of your face, and had got as far as this inn when a strolling vagabond cheated me out of my noble steed, and gave me, in return, a devilish little animal as spiteful and malicious as himself. The wicked creature threw me, and bruised me so terribly that I can scarcely walk over my room, and must, therefore, for at least a day, forego the pleasure of seeing you, dove of my heart. Oh that I had the wings of the eagle, that I might soar away, with lightning speed and alight by your side! Oh that you were now present to lay your snowy hand on my aching head, and cause all my pains to vanish by the music of your voice! I thought at one time half of my ribs were broken, but what of that? When I am with you, duck of my soul, if all my ribs were smashed to pieces I would not mind it, for you'll be my rib, my life, the very breath of my nostrils; and as you are an immortal beauty, and therefore immortal, how could I ever expire? But perhaps you love that infernal Georgian, that 'John Nipper in petticer,' a most particular scoundrel and scabby wretch.

My honoured friend, Lieutenant M'Bride, says the women are all bewitched; and surely you must have been when you suffered such a snivelling poltroon to storm the castle of your heart. My honour, as well as my happiness, is at stake in this matter, for did I not leave my own flag flying over the fortress? Did I not carry with me one of your ambrosial curls as a pledge of your fidelity? And yet you have turned traitor, succumbed, and surrendered to a straggling interloper, whose achievements have consisted in the scaling of sheep-folds, and the storming of hen-roosts! And this, too, after I had offered you the heart of a soldier, and the hand of an honest man! while you were dwelling a crowned empress in my soul, living there on honeysuckles and hummingbirds, and while I was ready, with my good sword, to overturn for you all the kingdoms of the world! I thought you a Quebec, a Rock of Gibraltar, which even the bravest could not scale in the face of an enemy; and yet, while my memory and name were guarding the citadel, its ramparts of mud and cornstalks have been successfully assailed by a grasshopper-looking belligerent, one hundred of whom I could drive through all the swamps in Georgia.

Oh my beautiful, my dear, my beloved Sally! oh charming deceiver, oh delicious mocking bird! how have I thought of you, and dreamed of you, and kissed, a thousand and a thousand times, the precious token which you gave me! I wear it next to my heart, in which you are set like a jewel in a watch, and of which you regulate all the motions. I intended, when the war was over, to carry you to Alamance, to dress you in silks and calicoes, feed you on pigeons and blue-birds, and make you the most blessed woman on earth. And you shall be, by Jove! you shall; for you are the most beautiful, tender, and faithful creature on earth, and whoever disputes it shall taste my sword. I know you are an angel, a seraph, a celestial cherub, and I am ready to cut my own throat for having reflected on you. Death and perdition! how could I have been so flinty-hearted as to have insinuated a reproach against such a bright incarnation of all that is good and sweet? Have I wounded your delicate feelings? have I touched your sensitive heart? Oh dearest, forgive me, forgive me! I bow humbly in the dust at your feet; my own heart is broken into a thousand fragments, and I wish I had never been born! I ask again, I entreat, I beg, that you will forgive me, for my disorderly feelings are in a state of insubordination, and will not submit to discipline as they ought. My understanding has ingloriously fled, and I cannot rally my senses while they are fronting the battery of your eyes. Forgive me, dearest apple of my eye, and accept the token which I send you a lock of my hair which is the only valuable thing I have about me worthy of you. To-morrow or next day I hope to present myself and all that I have for your acceptance, and to smother your reproaches with a thousand tender kisses. Lieutenant M'Bride, of my command, will hand this to you, and with him you can hold a conference, as he is endowed with

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

powers plenipotentiary to represent and act for his senior officer. You will please send a note, a token, or a message by him, to relieve my pains and sorrows, and enable me to rise from my sick couch and hasten to your presence, my dear, sweet angel.

With sentiments of the profoundest esteem, love, and adoration, I have the honour of being,

Your devoted servant,

CORNELIUS DEMIJOHN,
Captain in the Regt. of N. C. Militia.

The only aid which the master rendered in the production of this composition was in punctuating the sentences, and correcting the spelling of two or three words. When it was finished, to gratify his wounded friend, he took charge of it, and started for the widow Powell's, on the road whither his reflections, as his own words show, were not the most pleasant. I became satisfied, writes he, that men and women who want to marry are decidedly the greatest nuisances in the world, the grand disturbers of every community. Is it not strange that before parties can come together, they must, each one, go through such a tedious course of folly? Here, for instance, is Mr. A. who's known Miss B. all his life, and Miss B. has known Mr. A. equally as well and as long. Now Mr. A. takes it into his head to marry Miss B., and what does he do? Does he go straight to her, and plumply tell his wishes? and does she, like a sensible being, agree at once to the proposition? No. Mr. A. must begin a new series of visits and attentions must rig himself out in new apparel, smooth his hair with the nicest care, and add a new strut to his gait. He must, as the saying is, fly round, and round, and round her must chase her from camp-meetings to balls, and from balls to watering-places, galloping after her carriage or gig, picking up her fan, carrying her bandbox, and tying her shoe-string, with devoted assiduity must sigh, blow, and flatter must send verses, flowers, letters, candies, and presents enough to set up a wholesale establishment of confections, gewgaws, and curiosities. Such is the grand parade which is made about a matter that is the simplest thing in the world, and which the parson could finish in less than fifteen minutes. Why do not people tell their minds at once to each other, and do what they want to do? As I thought of these things I became confirmed in my intentions of writing a book; yet I much doubt if the world will profit by instruction. Men, when they want to marry, will still assume new and ridiculous characters, that sit on some of them about as gracefully as would the plumage of the peacock on a staid and solemn donkey; and they must go through these transformation because woman is, and will be till the day of doom, a most incomprehensible absurdity.

The author of these sage reflections found John Nipper in perticler, at the widow Powell's, disposing of himself in a manner quite free and easy. The Georgian received the new-comer very cordially, introduced him to the widow, and inquired if he would have his horse taken. The master, who saw that it was useless to tarry long, declined John's offer, and desired him to retire for a few minutes, as he, the master, had some private business with the widow. John Nipper readily and cheerfully obeyed and when he was gone M'Bride spoke as follows:

Mrs. Powell, I have brought you a letter from your friend Captain Demijohn, who lies sick at the neighbouring inn.

Poor, dear man, I'm sorry for him, replied Mrs. Powell; has he got the fluanzy, Mr. Magfried? If he'll bathe his feet in warm water, drink some hoarhound tea just before he goes to bed, and tie a stockin round his neck

He's not got the influenza, good woman, nor is my name *Magfried*. I am known as M'Bride, madam, Hector M'Bride; and I think you ought to recollect me, for I lodged with you on one occasion.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Well, dear me, I thought I had seen you afore, Mr. M'Bride. I remember now, it was in the year of the great August fresh, you sold my poor, dear husband, that's dead and gone, nine yards of green calico, which was the best bargain he ever made, for it lasted me a twelvemonth, and then made a very good quilt. Are you in the peddler business yet, sir?

Father of Mercies, forgive us all for our follies! exclaimed the master. I'm not a peddler, Mrs. Powell, at least in the dry goods line, though my vocation in this world may well be called that of a peddler of pearls among swine. To be brief with you, madam, I and Captain Demijohn, with a few soldiers, lodged at your house on the night after the battle of Camden: and I now return you thanks for your kindness to us then. On that occasion the blind rescal Cupid pierced the heart of our gallant commander, Demijohn, and he has had the *tremor cordis* ever since. You only can cure him, and that's the object of my mission.

A lack-a-day! ejaculated the widow, I do now remember Mr. Demijohn, who was a very fleshy man, was he not?

Quite so, madam.

It's all fresh in my mind now, returned Mrs. Powell; though I've seen so much trouble that I can hardly recollect any thing. If the trimble cords is not ketchin, Mr. M'Bride, I'll go over and see what I can do for Mr. Demijohn; but I haven't got any salts, and the camphire is just out. If he's not too bad off, I may be able to cure him with yerbs and bleedin. Have you a lance, sir?

You misunderstand me again, answered the master, and I must, therefore, tell you plainly that my friend is desperately in love with you; and, having been hurt by a fall from his horse, and therefore not able to visit you to day, he has sent his heart on paper. You will please read the letter, and prepare your answer, for I'm in haste. Captain Cornelius Demijohn will visit you in person to-morrow, or next day.

Dear! la! it's a love-letter, is it! exclaimed Mrs. Powell; Well, I do think! and with this she opened the letter, held it upside down, and regarding it attentively for a few moments, blushed, and said, Well, the captain is a sassy dog. I'll go and read it to myself, Mr. M'Bride, and write an answer.

M'Bride, suspecting that she could not read, insinuated that he would read the letter for her, as the captain's hand was not extremely legible. She was too modest, however, to accept the offer, and so, after being absent several hours, returned, covered with blushes, and handed to M'Bride a sealed note, with which he immediately returned to the inn, suspecting that John Nipper was the author of the production which he carried, and satisfied that his friend Demijohn was on a decidedly foolish errand.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. CAPTAIN DEMIJOHN SETS OUT TO SEE THE WIDOW POWELL.

UNCLE CORNY, before he heard a word of explanation from the master, eagerly tore open the widow's letter, and, to his unbounded astonishment, read what follows:

These is to inform Capting Demyjon that John Nipper in perticler has red the Capting's letter, and returns his complements in kind, and has the plessure of informing Mr. Fatty that he had as well return to whar he cum from. Mr. Demyjon has got one widdler Powell, who he ses cum near to break his ribs, so he had better let the tother widdler alone if he dosent want all his ribs smashed and his daylight's let out.

No more from yours till death do us part,

Reason, threats, and entreaties were now of little avail with Uncle Corny. He was satisfied, and acknowledged that the widow had played him false; but has it not been the case since the world began that all used-up lovers and injured husbands must see their own shame with their own eyes? Captain Demijohn formed no exception to the general rule, and was determined, he said, to chastise John Nipper for his insolence, and to confuse and abash the widow by confronting her in person, and reminding her of her fickleness and treachery, not recollecting that at such interviews the gentleman invariably suffers more than the mistress. Accordingly he exchanged horses with the landlord, loaded and primed his pistols, girded on his sword, and arrayed himself in uniform. This done, he held out his hand to M'Bride, saying, Farewell, lieutenant; I cannot I have not the heart to ask you to trouble yourself any more in my behalf to be sure I can't. I thank you for all your kindness, and shall remember you when I am breathing my last. Here we part.

God forbid! exclaimed the master, God forbid that I should leave you, now that you have more need of a friend than you ever had before. You are infatuated, my friend about madly to rush into unnecessary difficulties, and that is the very time that friendship's zeal should burn more warmly than ever. Go where you list, I am with you to the death!

The rage of Uncle Corny was increased to a fury when he found the widow's house deserted; and there is no telling what he might have done in the extremity of his passion had it not been for a lad who opportunely passed and informed him that he met the widow, a short distance off, riding behind a stranger. The boy also stated that an old negro woman was in company, riding a separate horse and carrying a large bundle, and he supposed they were going to the neighbouring village. Forwards! shouted Uncle Corny; and, clapping spurs to his steed, he dashed off at a respectable gallop, followed by the master, whose horse could not be induced to change his long trot for any more accommodating motion. Thus they clattered along until they neared the village, when suddenly half a dozen armed men sprung at the bridle of Demijohn's horse, one of them crying, Hold him fast, the rascal, hold him fast! The captain's hand was instantly on his sword-hilt; but before he could draw his trusty weapon he was dragged to the ground, disarmed, and bound.

What's all this ado, my masters? asked M'Bride, as he rode up.

The other spy the other spy! cried the men who had arrested Corny; and soon the master was in the same plight with his unlucky friend. Demijohn swore, threatened, and chafed; the master explained and entreated, but neither of them was heeded in the least, and both were led into the village; a great concourse of boys, negroes, and women following after, and seemingly disposed to tear the prisoners to pieces. Uncle Corny, especially, excited a general indignation, the women tongue-lashing him as he passed along, and heaping on him every sort of opprobrious epithet, and the boys goading him with sharp sticks and pelting him with rotten eggs. The fat knight, with his face distended beyond its usual dimensions and glowing like a furnace, his mouth foaming, and his eyes glaring like those of an enraged buffalo, appeared to the multitude a frightful monster, while his stubborn silence and the vigorous manner in which he applied his feet to the shins and backs of the boys had no tendency to diminish the odium and dread which his presence at first inspired. In this way they were carried to the bar-room of a sort of tavern, the only public room in the place, and here the crowd pressed in until Uncle Corny began to dissolve into streams of perspiration. Behind a little table, at the farther end of the room, sat two grave-looking men, and to a small open space in front of them the prisoners were brought, the multitude pushing and crowding round until court and prisoners were nearly overwhelmed.

Stand back, gentle-men stand back, if you please! said one of the court. The court can't do justice when it's scrouged in this way. Stand back and let us proceed on with our proceedings, and do all things according to law. Prisoners, you will please to tell your names.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Cornelius Demijohn and Hector M'Bride, answered the master; and I would be pleased to know, continued he, on what charge we are arraigned. Is it for being Whigs or Tories?

Never mind, my good fellow, replied the spokesman of the court, do you speak when you're spoken to, and you'll larn in good time what you are brought here for. Squire, have you got thar names writ down?

Yes, sir, all down.

Now, Mr. Demijohn, continued the questioning member, will you be good enough to tell me, in the first place, what you are doin here; secondly, why you came here; thirdly, why you wear that uniform; and, fourthly, where you live? Put down all the questions, squire, and leave a place for his answers. Come, sir, the court's waitin.

I came from Alamance, answered Uncle Corny.

That's not the first question, sir, interrupted the court. We want no dodgin here. The first query is what are you doin here eh?

Demijohn. I was brought here.

The Court. You was brought here, was you? (a most precious rescal). Well, sir, what were you doin at the inn? Have I got ye now, old fox? It takes me to sift sich as you, and I'll do it before I'm done with you. Out with it, man, what were you doin at the grocery?

Demijohn. I was attending to my own business.

M'Bride. Will you permit me to speak for my friend? He is in a bad humour, and perhaps I can, in five minutes, give you all the information you want.

The Court. Perhaps you can, Mr. Bagoflies, and a precious sight more than we want. You will please to hold your tongue, sir, as it will be time enough for you to speak when your own turn comes.

What was your business at the grocery, Mr. Demijohn? I've put the question in a symbolical form, and all you've got to do is to give me a plain answer. It's monstrous easy, continued the Court, in mock-gentle tones, to tell what you was doin. It won't kill nobody, so jist out with it.

Demijohn. Go to the devil, sir! I'll answer none of your questions, until I know what crime is alleged against me. So take your own route.

The Court. I'll send you to the devil presently, my bully; but first I must know why you, bein a malignant Tory and Britisher, have on that uniform, eh? Have I hooked you now, my friend?

The old squire's a hoss, said one of the crowd.

He knows what he's about, spoke a second.

Well, he does, said a third.

Perhaps, suggested the silent member of the court, perhaps it would be well enough to search Mr. Demijohn, and see what papers he carries about him.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

That was well said, replied the other magistrate; and immediately examining the clothes and pockets of the captain, they found various articles, which were laid on the table for inspection. First was opened and read the letter of John Nipper, and next the captain's tobacco-box, which contained nothing dangerous to the cause of the Americans. At last they found a curious bundle, which at once excited a universal curiosity, and which the magistrates, with great caution and solemnity, proceeded to examine. It was enveloped in a handkerchief and four or five sheets of the softest silk paper, and, when finally exposed to public view, created no little astonishment and alarm. First, there was a lock of hair, tied with a piece of pink-coloured ribbon, and next there were various scraps of paper, written over with what purported to be amatory verses to some unnamed beauty. Each of these was read aloud by the talking magistrate, who observed, as well as did the crowd, that their production strangely affected the prisoner who had carried them about him, and whose colour now changed rapidly from red to blue, and from blue to white, while he trembled from head to foot. It was evident to the court that some diabolical plot was contained in these most unpoetical, rhyming effusions; but they were at a loss to know what it was, when suddenly a bright thought occurred to the leading justice.

I see it now, said he, it's all as plain as the nose on my face. This, squire, is, beyant all question, the hair of King George, for I've heern say that all the Britishers and Tories worship him as if he was their god, and that's the reason they call him lord and master.

But what does he carry this lock of hair for? asked the other justice.

Bekase, answered his associate, bekase he's a papist. Besides, you see, this lock of hair is their secret passport, and every Britisher and Tory in the United States has got some of it, and when they show it to each other they know they are among their friends. As to these here papers, I'm thinking they allude to the death of General Washington, or Marion, and it's all plotted out here by Lord Cornwallis himself. See here, what he says in one place (it's darnation hard to read), 'And death shall end all pains;' and here agin, he says, 'Right through the heart like like' what the devil is this word? 'like' e, l, e, c, elec 'like electricity.' If that's not arson, mayhem, and treason, then old Brainchops is a fool, and don't know nothin at all. Gentle-*men*, continued he, rising, and motioning to the master to be silent Gentle-*men*, we have this day diskivered a grand plot which mout have ruined us all. *I* know'd for a long time past that some sich scheme was hatchin, and I told Squire Snapplegrit that somethin was goin to happen. *I* know'd it; and *I* know'd, as soon as I laid my eyes on this big bully, that he was the very man. I told Squire Snapplegrit, as soon as I seed him, that he was a spy; and you see that I've worm'd it all out of him, notwithstanding he is so mulish. *I've* managed sich as him afore, and they never ketch me nappin. Gentle-*men*, it's a solemn business to take the life of a feller-creetur in cold Slience! who's that kickin up sich a row back there?

Avaunt, and quit my sight! exclaimed Uncle Corny, staring towards the door, and becoming greatly excited Oh! thou she-monster, thou worse than the lewd woman of Babylon! leave me leave me, and never let me see you again! Are you not ashamed? Is not your heart broken? I can bear death I can smile at the persecutions of these fools but, O God! to think that you, Sally you, whom I loved, should betray me, and then come here to mock at my sufferings!

The whole crowd was in a state of confusion the magistrates storming for silence, those about the door swaying to and fro, cursing, cuffing, and kicking each other, and Uncle Corny still staring at and upbraiding the widow Powell, when that good woman made her way to the magistrate's table. Her face was red with blushes and with her exertions to get into the room, and being entirely out of breath, it was some time before she could speak.

Good woman, asked Squire Brainchops, at last, what is your business here?

Yes, sir yes, sir; I'll tell your honour when I take a little breath My husband that now is, sir

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Let me be shot at once! exclaimed Captain Demijohn, raising his arms to his face. End the business at once I'm ready.

You shall get your desarts in good time, my friend, said Chief Justice Brainchops; but we must proceed with our proceedinces in regler syllogisms. Go on with your story, madam.

Yes, sir, your honour. As I was about say, my husband that now is I'm married now, sir married a second time, my poor, dear, first husband, whom you all know'd he was a mighty good man, and everybody spoke well of him he died; let me see it was either on the tenth or eleventh of November, just three years ago I have it set down in my Bible at home, but I disremember now whether it was the tenth or eleventh, but it was one of them days, sure, and I remember that the next day came the great November snow

Good woman, said the silent magistrate, tell us at once what you want, and never mind about your first husband, or your second.

Yes, sir, your honour. Well, my present husband we were married to—day, sir, by Parson Miller, at my relation's, Betsy Tibbleshanks. It was done in a hurry, and I haven't yet got over the fright; but my husband told me, 'Sally,' ses he, 'I expect that Captain Demijohn and Leftenant Magfry are in a peck of trouble jist now.' And then he told me that he had told a story on them to have them arrested, and that I must come and tell you about it.

Who's your husband? asked Squire Snapplegrit.

Mr. Nipper, sir John Nipper, answered the lady, modestly; at which Captain Demijohn started as if a pistol had been fired in his face. The master was more composed, and begging permission to examine Mrs. Nipper himself, he proceeded as follows:

Mrs. Nipper, do you not know the fact that I and my friend there are Whigs, and that we fought in the battle of Camden, and lodged at your house the night after?

Yes, sir; I remember it now as well as if it was yesterday; and that night Mr. Demijohn and myself set up all night with a poor sick officer. I never thought then that Mr. Demijohn

M'Bride. Stop a moment. Is not that your hair?

Mrs. Nipper. It looks very much like it, sir, and Mr. Demijohn told me he was going to tie it up in pink ribbon as soon as he got to a store. He spoke to me very politely, and often told me he could die for me; and little did I then think he was such a man as he is; but men are mighty deceivin, and I've often heern old Mother Suddlepot say, that lives over by the great mill, on the other side of Peedee I used to go there often when I was a girl, for I had a cousin livin there who's been killed in the wars. He was a valiant man, and they say when a cannon—ball tore off his shoulder, he

For God's sake, leave off your cousin's history, exclaimed the master, and attend to the business in hand. Why were you afraid of Mr. Demijohn?

Why, sir, answered Mrs. Nipper, didn't you bring a letter from him, and didn't he say in that letter that he was goin to carry me to Tophy and feed me on snails and rattlesnakes? That I was ugly, and reformed, and bewitched, and that he and yourself was goin to carry me off next day because he had a spite agin me, and that I hadn't no friends, and needn't make any fuss about it. Here's the letter, sir, which my husband that is requested me to bring to you.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The master, for the satisfaction of all parties, and to convince the woman and the crowd that they all had been imposed on by the Georgian, desired to read the letter; but Demijohn opposed it, being unwilling that the world should know his folly.

I have been a fool, said he, and I am willing to pay for it. Let me be shot rather than be cleared by exposing my childishness; in fact I prefer death, so let the court proceed.

The court, however, were disposed to read the letter, and did read it aloud, every word piercing the unfortunate author like a dagger, and creating an immense sensation in the crowd. Hatred for the captain was changed to sympathy, and the public indignation turned against John Nipper.

I always suspected he was a knave, said Squire Brainchops, and told Squire Snapplegrit that I didn't like his looks. Where is he? Let him be arrested and brought before us directly.

The multitude, eager to see some one executed, now dispersed in search of the Georgian, little heeding the entreaties of his wife, who declared that he was sick a-bed. John, however, was not so sick as to be unable to leave the village as soon as he parted from his wife; and the inhabitants now searched for him in vain. His wife's old servant and all her clothes were gone, and it was also ascertained that her husband had that very day sold her interest in the land on which she lived, all her stock and household property, and pocketed the money. Whence he had come, whither he had gone, who he was, where he resided, no one could tell, and his unfortunate bride was overwhelmed with grief.

As she sat at her relation's, weeping and wringing her hands, Cornelius Demijohn, who was now at liberty, accosted her. Madam, said he, I come to bid you farewell. You have injured me don't cry nor say a word, for I forgive you. You were deceived I know it all. Farewell, and may you yet be happy! He gave her his hand, and when he took it away a paper dropped on the floor, in which was found a twenty-pound note and these words: Expect this sum from me till you marry again. C. D.

Mr. M'Bride, let's go to Alamance, said Uncle Corny, as he met the master in the street.

Agreed, with all my heart, answered the latter; and the two friends were immediately on the road. Not another word was spoken by either; but as the captain came to the late residence of the widow Powell that was, he halted his horse for a moment, and a single tear moistened his eyes as he took from his pocket a little bundle and flung it into the yard. The master understood his feelings, and in silence they journeyed on till they reached the inn, where M'Bride, after some persuasion, induced his friend to take up for the night, which had now commenced, and which threatened to be cold and stormy.

CHAPTER XXXIX. TRAGEDY AT THE INN.

THE master having promised his host extra pay, the latter agreed to receive no other guests that night; an agreement, by the way, which he supposed he would not be tempted to break, for the wind moaned dismally through the yard, and the sleet rattled against the windows. The party within, though seated round a cheerful and blazing fire, seemed to be affected by the dreariness without, and for some time not a word was spoken. Demijohn especially looked sad and disconsolate, and with his left arm hanging over the back of his chair, his chin drooping on his breast, and his hat pulled nearly over his eyes, seemed the very picture of melancholy as he sat with his eyes fixed on the glowing embers, and his mind occupied with gloomy reflections. M'Bride was stooping to read, by the light of the fire, a piece of an old copy of the *Primoe Origines* which he had found on the premises; the host was tinkering and whistling in one corner, and his wife sat in the other, engaged with her knitting and rocking a cradle with her foot, when suddenly a loud rap at the door startled all from their seats.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Who's that? demanded the landlord.

Open and see, was the answer, and again the knocking was repeated.

You must tell your name and business, said the innkeeper, before I can open the door.

I can't afford to holler my name in this night air, replied he outside, and it's not the fashion for gentlemen to be introduced with a door between them. Open this door, I say.

Stranger, said M'Bride, this house is chartered for the night, and is full besides. There is a village near by, and there you can be accommodated, so depart in peace.

I'll enter in war, answered the stranger, and I'll empty the house in a twinklin if this door aint opened. I say, do you want these planks shivered? And at this he thundered against the door with so much violence that the landlord begged him to desist for a moment, and, putting his mouth to the keyhole, asked to which side his would-be guest belonged.

To the outside, answered the latter, and a devilish cold one it is.

Landlord. Are you Whig or Tory, many or few?

Stranger. You're almighty perticler, and I must give my answers to them questions at my leisure, after I git warmed.

And if you don't answer them now, spoke Demijohn, reaching for his sword, I'll see very quick who's the stronger, you or we. We are armed and, by Jupiter, if you do not tell to which side you belong, you shall taste of my sword.

Liberty, then, and be damned to you! shouted the stranger; and instantly the door flew open, and Ben Rust was nearly squeezed to death by the master and Uncle Corny.

My Christin friends, said the new-comer, it's no time for compliments, for there are ladies out here, and you may prepare to see a sperit.

Neither Demijohn nor M'Bride had ever heard of the reported death of Edith Mayfield, but still they were as much astonished to see her as if she had been a ghost. While supper was preparing for the new guests, Rust briefly narrated the adventures of Edith and of himself; told how Richard Sikes had conducted him to her place of concealment, and was beginning to give an account of the state of things at Alamance when another knocking was heard at the door. The stranger at once announced himself as a faithful British subject, said he was alone, and that he was so anxious to be admitted that he surrendered himself a prisoner on the spot. The door was cautiously opened, and Dick Sikes shrunk behind the trembling Edith, for both saw their most dreaded enemy, Alan Ross. He remembered the master and Demijohn, whom he cordially saluted, and, bowing stiffly to Rust and the ladies, said Mr. M'Bride you seem astonished, and you have reason to be so. I am now about to end my allegiance to my earthly sovereigns, three of whom I have served. In the service of the first I was rewarded with wounds, poverty, and exile; in that of the second, with suspicions and distrust; while from the third I have received a broken heart. Gentlemen, may God prosper you and reserve you for a better fate than mine; Edith, farewell, for here we part forever, you for heaven and I for hell! Instantly, and in quick succession, two pistols were fired, a groan and shriek were heard, and Alan Ross and Edith Mayfield fell lifeless to the floor. The company crowded so thickly round the latter, that for some time no one knew whether she was dead or only wounded; but at last, Nannie Scott, lifting her inanimate friend in her arms and carrying her to a bed, ascertained that she had swooned from alarm, being but very slightly wounded on the shoulder. Ross himself expired immediately; and, as the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

company were gathering round him, and the confusion subsiding, a groan was heard in the corner of the room, and there Dick Sikes was found mortally wounded and weltering in blood. The poor wretch, fearing to be seen by Ross, whom he had once served, had hid behind the ladies, and there received the contents of the pistol aimed at the breast of her whom he had been instrumental in saving from an unhappy fate. He asked every one's forgiveness, besought Edith to pray for the salvation of his soul, and then, extending his hand to Rust, said, feebly, Farewell you are the only friend I ever had: I hope you'll remember and death closed his lips forever. A bundle of papers, not sealed, and addressed to Henry Warden, was found in the pocket of Ross, and then he and the Tory, side by side, and by the light of torches, were hastily buried in a small neighbouring glade. After the others had left, Ben Rust lingered for a while over the last resting-place of Sikes, and dropped upon his grave the only tear of kind sorrow that had ever been shed for him. By the time he had returned and finished his supper, it was nearly day; and the landlord, horror-struck at the tragedy which had been enacted in his house, was urging his guests to be off by the early dawn. I am at heart a Whig, said he; but I'm poor and timid, and cannot endure to see bloodshed. I therefore have tried to remain neutral in action; but I often find ways to serve our friends, and you may rely on my fidelity and prudence. The whole country will be excited in a few hours, and, if you do not wish to be seen and heard of by every body, you must be far away by ten o'clock to-morrow. I'll take care that no one gets on your track, if you'll tell me which way you are going; for I'd die before I'd expose that beautiful and innocent lady to any more troubles.

The master informed him that as the border country was unsettled and dangerous, he should aim for the mountains of North Carolina; and accordingly at break of day the Alamancers and Nannie Scott were on the road. As the landlord predicted, the country did become excited; the most strange and miraculous stories got into circulation, and the glade was considered as haunted ground for half a century. Recently, however, the place was enclosed and put under cultivation, and human bones and a pair of rusty pistols were turned up by a ploughman. They, of course, created quite a sensation; but if these sketches ever reach that country, they will at once solve a mystery which has puzzled the learned men of the villages, and afforded many exciting questions for the debating clubs of the neighborhood.

The master, who was always interested at the sight of manuscripts, could not resist the temptation to open Ross's papers, which he found to consist of his will, a letter to Henry Warden, and a sketch of the author's life, to which the letter was a sort of introduction. The will directed that all the testator's real and personal estate be sold, and the proceeds be divided equally between Nannie Scott, Henry Warden, and Duncan Stuart. Two of these persons I have injured, said he in the instrument alluded to, and the other is my relation, and has been a dependent of my family; may what I leave them pay, in part, the great debt I owe them.

Of this will Flora M'Donald and her husband were left executrix and executor, and full directions given for the transmission of the funds to the United States. At the first halting-place the master read, first to himself and then to the company, the history of Ross; and as it was left among the papers bequeathed to us, it will appear in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XL. SCRAPS OF MY OWN HISTORY.

BY ALAN ROSS.

IF ever I should write a book an achievement I shall attempt as soon as I get time it shall treat of a new subject. Solomon and his admirers say there is nothing new under the sun; but, with all due respect for the wisdom of the learned Hebrew, I dissent from the opinion quoted. Who in *his* day ever heard of a treatise on window-gazing? This is the subject on which I wish to publish a work, and if I die before I do it the world will be a loser. Poets and lunatics proper have, from time immemorial, dilated upon the pleasures of star-gazing, moon-gazing, landscape-gazing, and ocean-gazing, but of all the exciting, beautiful, or inspiring scenes in the world, commend

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

me to the sight of a lady's a strange lady's face at an upper window. There is a great difference between such a sight at an upper and a basement window. In the latter case the fair nymph seems to be associated with ideas of household labours, is not in her own peculiar abode, where she is supposed to think only of love and romance, while the approach to her is easy. Besides, she is within speaking distance, and a single word would dissolve the illusion, and at once proclaim the beauty to be a common fellow-mortal; and all this, in addition to the risk of seeing bad teeth, hearing a coarse voice, and finding a very dull and stupid intellect. But when you dimly see a sweet face behind the half-drawn curtains of an upper casement, the heart is at once fired with a voluptuous glow, and a crowd of pleasant and undefinable ideas rush upon the mind. The imagination has full room to play, and the fair vision is converted into a delightful and gracious houri, with a tender heart and a soul where only love and its pleasures can ever be thought of. We imagine that she will kindle at a look or gesture, and a mute correspondence immediately commences, we thinking our neighbour affected like ourselves, and that every motion of her head and wave of her hand are intended to convey a world of delicious meaning. Those only are happy who live among the creations of fancy; and when is the imagination so bright as when sitting at our own window, on a pleasant evening in June, the window just opposite, on the other side of the street, is seen to rise, and a blooming young maiden is revealed, her face, and neck, and the beginning of her breasts' gentle swell being visible? Here you have before your eyes an enchanting and lovely creation, with mortal passions and sympathies, and yet totally disconnected with the vanities, foibles, cares, and sorrows of mortal existence. On such occasions the being before me seems born only to love and be loved; and thinking that she has been watching me and is occupied with thoughts similar to my own, I become ecstatic, and forth-with open a communication with her. At first I make acquaintance by a half-averted look or gaze, then I make some very slight and scarcely perceptible motion with my hand, and finally become liberal with signs and gestures. In this way only, except in one solitary instance, have I loved; and I have spent thus hours, days, and months, the most pleasant part of my existence. I cannot love a woman that I know, and with whom I associate. If I converse with her, from lips that seem to be made only to distil nectar and to discourse celestial harmony, I hear coarse, rude sounds, and plain and vulgar ideas; if I touch her, I find that the apparently ethereal form that floats along in webs of gossamer is a waded mass of dry-goods and whalebone; and if I mingle with her much, I soon learn that the whole animal is but a compound of passion and folly. And this brings me to another and a darker trait in my character. This world has ever seemed to me a great battle-field, where all animated beings and the elements of inanimate nature are perpetually combatting. In the war of elements among themselves, and against all breathing things, the earth yawns, and mountains are rocked to their bases; volcanoes pour forth their floods of liquid fire, the clouds dart their terrible bolts, shivering and destroying whatever they touch, conflagrations lay cities in ashes, tornadoes and whirlwinds sweep, with desolating fury, over the country, and the raging billows of the seas are ever yawning to engulf in their fathomless depths. These are some of the most notable ways in which the wars of senseless matter are carried on; but every substance in the material world contains an element of destruction that wars on other elements, each one struggling for the mastery, for absolute dominion. Which will finally succeed whether, as some think, fire, or, as others suppose, water it is to my mind certain this earth of ours, this congeries of hostile particles and principles, will be rent and torn by terrible convulsions, and become a formless and uninhabited chaos, a globe of burning fire be shattered into millions of fragments, or become a great mass of virus matter, whose putrescence will scatter pestilence through the universe. As it is with inanimate matter so is it with man and brute, whose vocation is destruction. Are not all men, and women too, fighting each other, openly or covertly? Look abroad over the world; consult history, consult your own experience, reader, whoever you be. War is the chief pastime of kings and rulers, by whatever name they may be called, and at their command mighty armies are ever in the field, strewing the earth with human bones, and moistening its soil with human blood. The first element of a great state is a great and well-appointed army; and to butcher our species is the surest, the shortest, and the safest way to the veneration and confidence of our race. But it is not merely when armed soldiers meet that hostilities are carried on. Every city, and village, and hamlet yea, every courthouse, and church, and domestic altar, is a battle-field. The pastor pounds you from the pulpit, the lawyers baste and the judges roast you in the forum of justice, the doctors poison and crucify you, the usurer and the bailiff pursue you with writs and warrants, the author stings you with his pen, the women ensnare you on every side, and the tongue of slander and detraction will follow you beyond the grave. Every one is trying to pull down others to build up himself, and as each individual is an Ishmael, with his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, so are sects arrayed against sects,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

creeds against creeds, classes against classes, and ranks against ranks. Among these classes may be mentioned the male and female, who carry on an hereditary and inextinguishable war against each other. Every woman is a magazine of destruction, a miniature army in herself, from a child, carefully equipped for destruction. Her dress, her looks, her words, and her very gait are all designed with a view to the infliction of injury on the opposite sex; and pretty much the same may be said of them. On both sides fraud, artifice, and deception are practised; and as some men seem born to be fooled by the women, so are the women destined to be the victims of other men. Now, of all wars I love that most where the braying of trumpets, the thunders of artillery, the glitter of steel and gold, the proud prancing of horses, and the furious shock of contending hosts lend an air of grandeur to the scene and fully entitle it to its appellation of glorious war. This is my theatre, here I prefer to combat; but I was born a soldier, and ready for any kind of fighting. Although I had rather front a battery of forty well-served cannon than be tied to the side of a termagant who displays her military propensities in curtain lectures and fireside hostilities. I am not the coward to shrink from any contest. I was born a soldier, and born to be a victor; and, while some of the sex have been victimizing others, they have, with singular infatuation, invariably fallen before me. I am the avenger of my sex, and have inflicted on the wily and heartless vixens the woes and infirmities which they had heaped upon the heads of honest and generous lovers. I happily came into this warfare armed with a brazen face, a cold, selfish, and ambitious heart, and a lying and fluent tongue a gentleman who worshipped honour, but only that ceremonious punctilio which all gentlemen are bred to observe towards each other. Nature was also liberal to my person, for I had a bold stare, a rakish look, a goatish beard, an athletic person, and a strut which a newly-appointed officer might envy. I was insensible to a tender emotion, except at a window; and, thus prepared, I went forth to conquer. I never experienced a defeat, and soon acquired such a reputation that one look was a victory. Thus things stood with me when my political aspirations were extinguished in blood on the field of Culloden, and I had to fly my country, leaving to mourn and wither behind me a large circle of female friends, who each gave me a lock of their hair, and each one of whom had sent to the army and navy several of its most noble and gallant spirits. I carried with me the precious tokens, cherishing them with great care to exhibit for the amusement of the ladies over the Straits.

I did not carry my good fortune with me, however; and so unflattering was my reception by the lively beauties of France, that I retired to the country town of Cahors, and took up my lodgings on a street all the windows on which I had seen filled with female faces. My only acquaintance and companion was a certain Captain Eli Dujant, a droll character, who told me that in the wars in Italy, under old Marshal Villars, he commanded a company of discarded lovers, who were the most desperate fighters in the French army. They had all gone to the wars to win glory and break the hearts of their mistresses; and, as their fate illustrates a certain homely old proverb about biting off the nose to spite the face, I will here record it for preservation and for future benefit. At the taking of Milan seven of these gallants were left on the field of battle, buried with the undistinguished and unremembered dead. Three soon after perished by disease fifteen were killed under the walls of Parma, and some twenty or thirty were lost by various casualties. One returned home a sous-lieutenant on one leg of bone and flesh and one of wood, and found his dulcinea a country farmer's wife and the mother of three dirty children; another came back *minus* an arm, a lip, and half a dozen of teeth, to recognize his quondam spiritual mistress in the fat and greasy owner of a village bakery; a third now hops about a hospital on wooden pins; and the fourth, who was the captain himself, lives upon the interest of a small estate, is a roistering, boon companion, a village pothouse politician, and carries in his face and on his body the mark of almost every kind of weapon used in war. His nose was spilt by a sword-cut his cheeks furrowed by musket-balls, his chin seamed with a bayonet-thrust, three fingers on his right hand broken, and his left ankle fractured by a spent cannon-ball. His mistress had, in the mean time, decamped with a strolling dancing-master, and Captain Dujant, thoroughly cured of his belief in ideal love, very philosophically concluded to take the world as it is. I did not tell him of my intended window campaign, and to give the business a further zest, I would not permit myself to hear of any lady's name, rank, character, or age. I sauntered up and down the street for several evenings, watching to see who noted my appearance, and when I saw that I was attentively marked, returning immediately to my room and presenting myself at my window, I found that I had at last attracted the attention of a beautiful face, and that the lady had ascertained where I lodged, and, as it seemed, my object. This was enough, and so the next day I remained at my window, and so did she at hers, frequently exhibiting herself to the shoulders, in the street. The next day I began a communication with

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

signs slight motions of my hand and was fairly thrilled with ecstasy when I saw her hand gently wave in return. It was several days before we could make distinct and significant signs; but at last we became extremely confidential. I was delighted, enraptured, and my happiness exceeded all bounds when she, on a certain day, requested me, by signs, to be under her window at eleven that night. At the appointed hour I was there a shutter opened, a small white hand appeared, and I coughed slightly to indicate my presence. The next moment a ladder of ropes was flung out, and soon I was at the window, reflecting on nothing and glowing with indescribable emotion. The curtain was raised, a light flashed in my eyes, and, without looking before me, I plunged into the room and found myself in the centre of a group of men. I was, of course, embarrassed, but instantly a merry, ringing laugh behind me caused me to turn, and I beheld, beautiful as an angel, and as innocent-looking, my window acquaintance.

Madame , first announcing her own name, continued, This, Mr. Ross, is my father, Monsieur de , this my husband, and these my brothers. Thinking you wished to visit the family, Monsieur, and knowing your penchant for making acquaintances at windows, we concluded it would be gratifying to you to be thus introduced.

We would be glad to see you often, said the husband, and if such a mode of visiting is most agreeable to you, the ropeladder will still be at your service, and the window open, though, as we reside down stairs, it would suit us, best to receive you there. I suppose, my dear, turning to his wife, he can get through one of the front windows on the basement story.

Certainly, my love, answered Madame , with a sweet smile that stung my soul, certainly Monsieur can come through the window by the chimney, and I will have the furniture moved out of his way.

Now, if I had had less effrontery than the renowned namesake of Saint Nicholas himself, I should have swooned, and have given up my habit of window-gazing; but, happily for me, the shafts of wit and sarcasm could not penetrate my mail of brass. With the utmost *sang froid* of manner, I bowed to Madame , thanked her for her kindness, and intimated that it was true I had wished to make the acquaintance of her family, that I had the utmost horror of doors, and that, having now accomplished my object, I would take my leave, promising to call again. I requested permission to leave as I had entered, and, as I went down, whether by accident or design I know not, but the street was full of people, who gathered round me, and seemed much amused at my situation. I was, however, consoled with the reflection that they did not know my name, when, just as I touched the ground, Madame's husband bawled out from the window Are you safely down, Monsieur Ross?

Was I cured of my singular passion? Not at all. It had grown with my growth, strengthened with advancing years, and though I was yet young, quite young, I had seen too much pleasure in its pursuit to think for a moment of giving up my most cherished occupation. The French are the most liberal and philosophical people in the world, and I prove this assertion by citing the fact that I was not next day mobbed by the citizens of Cahors, because I was a mysterious stranger, who would not tell his business or form intimacies in the town. No doubt the kindred and friends of Madame amused themselves sufficiently at my expense; but no one talked *to* me or interrupted me, and so I began to look about for another adventure.

In the suburbs of the town, and standing by itself, was a neat residence, surrounded by a wilderness of flowers and shrubbery, and wearing an air of seclusion and privacy. On reconnoitring it attentively I saw, to my inexpressible joy, a corner window of the second story open, and a toilet-table, and other indications that the room was inhabited by a lady. I had no doubt but that she was as fair as one of the blossoms of the peach-trees whose glorious bloom made a paradise of a neighbouring orchard; and the situation of the house, and everything about it, conspired to keep up the illusion that some tender Amanda resided there. The window, however, was nearly obscured by the foliage of a great elm, whose leafy branches covered one side of the house, and through which a luxuriant cypressvine had woven itself into a tangled web. Occasionally I could see the flutter of a dress, and once or twice a gloved hand was thrust out to cull a flower from the vine, but I never could get a glimpse of the owner's face. What astonished me still more was the entire stillness which pervaded the place, and the absence of any

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

living thing, except the inhabitant of the enchanted chamber. I still kept prowling about the house; and, becoming bolder and more impudent than ever I had formerly been, I one day went into the yard, and, finding a side door open, I walked into the house. There was a family at dinner: for the first time in my life I felt ashamed. Had the tenants been ordinary people, I might, perhaps, have conducted myself with my usual effrontery; but at opposite ends of the table sat two persons whose looks awed and confused me not a little. The one was a hale, but venerable and white-haired man, whose lofty forehead seemed to have been made for a crown, and in whose face Nature had plainly put the stamp of its highest order of nobility that of an honest man. His looks were neither stern nor timid, and though they indicated a rather kind and generous disposition, they showed that a lion's heart beat within his aged bosom. The opposite character was a lady, and such a lady! I saw her but a moment, but in that moment her face was so impressed upon my mind that it can never be effaced. In person she seemed taller than her sex usually are, yet her form was so slender, so symmetrical her movements so graceful, every motion of her limbs and body so full of poetry, that, when you did not see her eyes, she seemed an airy, light, ethereal creature, an unsubstantial embodiment of beauty, grace, and sentiment. Her features, however, were rather prominent, and her pale, blanched skin seemed perfectly white when contrasted with the raven hair that was gathered into a massive pile upon the crown of her head, and with her large, lustrous, fiery, black eyes, that indicated a slumbering volcano in her breast. There were other persons at the table; but I paid no attention to them, stammering out, in French, a hasty apology for my intrusion, and alleging that I had mistaken the house.

Your accent declares you to be my countryman, said the old man, in English, and I will venture to address you as such. Whom were you seeking?

Captain Dujant, I replied, in the same language, and holding out my hand, continued, I am glad, sir, that I have found a countryman, and should be still more happy to make your acquaintance.

I am *incog.* for the present, said he, rather coldly; and, as he was one of those whose slightest words are to be obeyed, I took my leave. As I went out at the door I cast a longing glance at the lady, and a slight colour mantled her cheeks as her glowing eyes melted into mine. I was now keenly desirous of following up my adventure, and taking my friend, the captain, into my confidence, we agreed that it was best to give the lady some hint of my passion in plainer language than that of signs. As every French gentleman can write gentlemanly verses, the captain composed, and I translated, the following:

IMPROMPTU,

On seeing at Table a beautiful Lady, whose acquaintance
the Author was not allowed to make.

But for the place where first my eyes
Beheld that pale, fair face of thine,
I should have thought thee from the skies,
And now believe thee *half* divine.
Yet still I must in conscience say,
I hope you may a mortal prove;
At least that one poor mortal may
Attain the heaven of thy love.
But I, alas! may never know
But what thou art a bloodless sprite,
A sweet, but unsubstantial show,
A beauteous, airy form of light.
To solve this doubt within my mind,
I've wish'd (forgive me) that I could

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Once clasp thy lily hand in mine
And feel if it be flesh and blood!

That night we treated the strange lady to a serenade, and, as her window was open, I flung into it a perfumed pair of tiny gloves, in which my verses were folded, and then hastily left the place. As my place of residence was too far from the window to undertake to communicate by signs from my own window, and as it was indelicate to stand in the street gazing at the lady's chamber, I could only pass it and make signals as I walked. On the following morning after the serenade, I could see that the fair stranger was sitting by her window, for a portion of her body was visible, though her face was concealed. A hand with a glove on it not one of those I threw into the chamber was thrust out, and it waved and moved in answer to the motion of mine. I was enraptured, and passed often that day, the hand still answering to mine, whose language became bolder and more significant. The next day the window was closed, and the next; and again having recourse to my friend, the captain, he soon ascertained for me that the bird had flown. The family had, in fact, left the town; but their probable destination was ascertained by the captain, who had a lively curiosity, and who had become my devoted friend, taking a prodigious interest in my window adventures. The novelty and excitement of such an occupation pleased him greatly, and when I began to prepare for my departure to Bordeaux, he declared his resolution of bearing me company. At Bordeaux the captain had acquaintances, and he learned that the very day before we arrived a family, answering to the description of those we were pursuing, had taken passage to the island of Cuba.

All the soldier in my nature was now fully aroused, and in a few days the captain and myself were on board the Neptune, on our way to the port of Havanna. In this last-mentioned city we were both total strangers; but we paraded the streets morning and evening, scanning every face we saw at the doors and at the windows of the houses, and carriages. At last, in a quiet part of the town, the identical gloved hand I had seen so often in Cahors waved at us from an upper window. I was transported with pleasure, and a lively pantomimic conversation sprung up, the Frenchman joining in with more zeal than grace, and accompanying the rapid and extraordinary evolutions of his hands, head, and body, with a running commentary which brought upon us the gaze of all the neighbourhood. After several mute conversations, I at length determined to scale the window, when, one moonlight night, as a carriage passed me, two eyes which I could not mistake gleamed upon me. I watched the vehicle, keeping my eyes fixed upon it among the crowd of chaises that dashed through the streets, and marking every peculiarity about it until I was satisfied I should always know it. That night it passed me several times, and several times the bright meteors within shone upon me with an expression that convinced me I was known. At length I took my station near the house where I supposed the lovely unknown resided, and, to my unbounded astonishment, her carriage drove up to an opposite house, into which its beautiful tenant was escorted. Here was a mystery, and it was rendered still darker on the following morning by the discovery that the gloved hand did not belong to the lady I had met at the table in Cahors. The face of this latter I distinctly saw at an upper window; and as she seemed to recognise me with some emotion, I gave up to the Frenchman the pursuit of the gloved hand, concealing, however, my reasons, and only alleging a new adventure.

Here the master's reading was interrupted by piercing screams and piteous entreaties for mercy, issuing from the neighbouring woods. The master, ever ready to succour the distressed, and Rust, ever keen for an adventure, rushed off in the direction of the sound, and, in a solitary glade, in a deep and darkly-shaded valley or glen, saw what the reader will hear of in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XLI. AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE AND A NEW ONE.

As the master and Rust approached, they found three men, two of whom seemed to be the prisoners of the third. One of the former was secured to a tree, while at the root of a solitary hickory, in the centre of the glen, kneeled the other, his hands tied behind his back, a rope round his bare neck, and his eyes fixed upon his captor, who was in the tree, and preparing to hang the suppliant below. The youth above had contrived to bring up a heavy beam of

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

wood, and when first seen he was in the act of fastening this to his feet, whereby the master instantly concluded that he intended to raise his prisoner by swinging himself to the other end of the rope. It was a singular and novel spectacle; but before the Alamancers had time to make a remark an eagle-glance was upon them: the man up the tree was instantly on his feet, and, raising his rifle, said, Stand and tell whether you are Whigs, Tories, or British!

The master now recollected his folly in having hurried off without his arms; but Rust, who had been more mindful, presented his gun, exclaiming, Fire at your friend! Blaze away if you can at a Whig.

The young stranger dropped his piece, and a smile spreading over his thin and sallow visage, he held out his hand, and frankly declared that he also was a Whig. The master, as he approached, was recognised by the culprit at the tree, who proved to be the veritable John Nipper himself, and who was extravagant in his expressions of delight at the unexpected meeting. The faces of the good and generous cause them to be heavily taxed by two classes of persons: they render them the prey of the evil-designing, and they cause even strangers and brutes, when in distress, to appeal to them for help. John, who had rightly scanned the master's countenance, and had formerly played upon his simplicity, had now the bold effrontery to address him as a friend, and confidently to demand his protection. M'Bride was embarrassed by the impostor's attentions; but his kind and merciful heart was touched, and he began to interfere in Nipper's behalf, when the young South Carolinian, searching his face with his sharp, grey eyes, asked, Is he your friend, sir?

I claim friendship with no such man, answered the master, irritated by the questioner's words and manner; but he is a poor devil, and I trust you will not stain your hands with his blood.

Look at that paper, sir, said the other, and see if he is a poor devil. I believe your name is M'Bride.

The master opened the paper and found what follows: A covvy of too, Leftenant Hector Macbride and Capting Kurnelius Demmijon, Macbride has short legs, grey eyes, a little bald on the top of his hed, has bin a schoolmaster, talks a grate deel, is verry larned, and a grate fule. Demmijon verry fat, red in the face, big blue eyes, black hare, and dont say much; drinks like the devil a bite.

There were other particulars in regard to the Alamancers, their place of residence, their present location, business, and the probable rout they would take after seeing the widow Powell. The master was bewildered, astounded, and infuriated; and, looking first at Nipper and then at the Carolinian, the latter said, I see you are at a loss. Now you must know that this Nipper, whose real name is Joseph Shanks, is one of the greatest rogues, the most diabolical villain and Tory in all the country.

The master then learned that this Shanks, and several others in Georgia and South Carolina, had banded together to plunder and murder the patriots. That they were ever prowling about the country, singly and in pairs, passing under assumed names, noting the persons whom they met with, and then giving information to the gang, who held stated meetings. He learned also that these robbers added to their profession another occupation which exceeded in villainy any thing of which the master had ever conceived. They would hunt out lonely widows and unprotected single women, insinuate themselves into their good graces, get married to them by one of their band, who personated a clergyman, and then remain with their supposed wives only long enough to turn their effects into money, when they would desert them.

This scoundrel, Shanks, continued the South Carolinian, while I was upon his track, married and plundered the widow Powell, a simple-hearted woman, and an old acquaintance of my mother. I followed the incarnate devil, and at last overtook him and two of his associates, who had camped in an old school-house. I shot one through a crack in the wall, and the others surrendered.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The master found, on further enquiry, that the slave and effects, and some of the money of Shank's last victim had been returned to her, and that it was the purpose of their captor to hang his prisoners. He endeavoured to dissuade the youth from the commission of such hasty and extreme punishment, urging that it was better the guilty should escape than that they should be executed without due form of law. The Carolinian, however, was determined on his purpose, declaring that he would take the responsibility of executing Shanks at least; and as the master wished not to see the scene, he returned to his friends from Alamance. Rust, who was prodigiously taken with his new acquaintance, remained to assist him in the execution, and for an hour afterwards such piteous moans, entreaties, and lamentations issued from the woods, as satisfied M'Bride that the other wretch was undergoing a torture not much more desirable than the pangs of death. It was true enough, for the arm of Rust had lost none of its vigour, nor had his taste for wetting the backs of Tories been at all diminished. When, in his own language, he had sufficiently curried the Georgia Colt, he dressed him, and conducted him and his captor to the presence of the master and his companions. As the youthful and strange Whig approached, his countenance and his manner excited general attention. He was yet a mere lad, tall, slender, and awkward, but with sinews that seemed to be wires of steel. He was plainly, even meanly dressed, clumsy in his address, and simple in his manners; and, though so lately acting the hero and the executioner, he now showed, by his candour and simplicity, that he was an unsuspecting boy. He believed whatever was told to him, and was greatly pleased with the attentions paid him by the master and his friends, with childish sincerity assuring them, after their compliments on his bravery, that he was their friend for life. If ever any of you get into trouble, call on me, said he, and I'll protect you.

The company gazed at each other; Rust, who liked the lad, turned his head to avoid any display of his feelings at such a singular boast, and the master, smiling, said, You have, my young friend, truly done wonders, but you must not be too confident. When I first saw you I thought you cruel and revengeful, but I was mistaken; and I now doubt now that your apparent cruelty is the result of an ardent and rather hasty desire to administer justice. It's a generous but a dangerous trait, and the best thing I can do for you is to guard you against it.

I don't think so, answered the youth, a glow kindling on his well-marked face. If you *know* a man has committed a crime, and have him in your power, why permit him to run the chances of an escape by a tedious trial, where form more than justice is regarded? Besides, these are revolutionary times; the country, is in a glorious war for liberty, and, as the people have said all the tyrants and Tories must die, they shall, by the eternal, when they fall into my hands. This rascal,' turning to the Tory, I have saved for a particular purpose. You are at liberty, Jack, and mark me! if you regard your life, go straight to your masters, the British, and tell them that I shall remember them, and that I hope we'll meet again.

The Tory promised to do as he was bade; and the young Carolinian, resisting all the importunities of the master to go with him, took leave of the Alamancers, declaring that he could take care of himself. I wish, says the master in his notes, I had a sketch of his face, for it was a remarkable one. I have often lamented my want of ability to draw, for I meet with many strange and uncouth faces, but of all I ever saw that of the rude young Carolinian, for its boldness, sternness, and well-marked and rugged features, impressed me most. If the lad lives, he will yet emerge from obscurity, and will at least obtain a local notoriety if he does not become somewhat distinguished in his State. His name, as he told me, was Andrew Jackson.

CHAPTER XLII. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALAN ROSS CONTINUED.

THE Alamancers, after the events related in the last chapter, thought it prudent to resume their journey. At noon on the following day they halted again, as on the day previous, and the master, while his friends were refreshing and resting themselves, finished the Scotchman's story.

One night, continued the manuscript of Ross, my friend, Captain Dujant, rushed into my room more excited than even any Frenchman I ever saw. His eyes were rolling wildly in his head, his hair stood out like the quills of

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

the fretful porcupine, his nostrils were distended, his dress disordered, and his mouth foaming; and, flinging his hat on the floor he stamped, chafed, and jumped about like a madman.

What, in the devil's name, is the matter, captain? asked I, rising to my feet and avoiding him as I would a frantic bedlamite.

Mattaire! shouted he, in broken English, Mattaire! Vat de mattaire? Ciel! Diable! Tamnation!

And here he let forth a volley of exclamations in English, French, Dutch, Russian, and Slavonic, for aught I could tell, for I could not understand a word he said for at least half an hour, during all of which time his arms, legs, head, hands, body, and tongue seemed to be talking, for such vivacity of action, serio-comicality of manner, and volubility of speech it is impossible for the most lively imagination to picture to itself. I found out at last that he had scaled his lady's window; but what terrible accident had happened to him I could not learn. I was, however, dragged by him to the residence of his mistress, and, approaching a basement window, he suddenly halted; and, staring as if he had seen the great beast spoken of in the Revelations of St. John, he cried, pointing at the window, Voilà, voilà regardez!

I approached the aperture, and scanning the room, I saw, reclining on cushions and fanning herself, the mysterious owner of the gloved hand. Her skin was as black as the darkness of an Egyptian night, her hair short and crispy, and her nose as flat as a flounder, while her great white eyes glistened in the centre of her huge fat face, like two moons in a firmament of ink.

While I was still gazing at her she rose and advanced towards the window, and, as I was hid myself, I was able to obtain a full view of the figure of this African Venus. She was but little taller when standing than she had been in her recumbent posture, and there was about as little undulation in her form as there is in a hogshead of Jamaica rum, which she much resembled. Her walk was a sort of a waddle, and through the thin and elegant drapery in which she was attired the perspiration was pouring out in streams, while there was a fragrance about the room which an American planter will readily understand. She came to the window, looked up at the moon, and, heaving a deep sigh, ejaculated in broken French a tender sentiment about Monsieur Dujant. This last-named worthy, as if fearful of being devoured by the monster before him, seized my arm, and, trembling like an aspen, hurried me from the scene. When we had arrived at my room, Captain Dujant had sufficiently recovered to give me a tolerably intelligible account of his adventure. It seems that the abstract of sentimentalism of a window flirtation was too rarefied a diet for a Frenchman's heart, and, from making signs, he took to writing letters, and was finally so far admitted into the lady's confidence as to be informed by her that she was the arbiter of her own destiny and immensely rich. The Frenchman was so carried away by the enthusiasm inspired by the chase, that he contracted an alliance with the unknown beauty, and it was finally agreed that he should see her. What took place at the interview no one will ever know, as the captain becomes so much excited when he gets to this point that the most expert linguist cannot understand a word he says. The next day he was on his way to la belle France, and I have not heard of him since, though I cannot but feel grateful towards him for having taken off my hands the veiled beauty of the mysterious chamber. His absence caused me a slight depression of feeling; and, as I was sauntering about in the cool of the evening, I was accosted by name by a young man who met me. He informed me that he was the son of the gentleman whom I had so unceremoniously visited in the town of Cahors, and that his father, having learned my name, lineage, and fidelity to the House of Stuart, was desirous of making my acquaintance. The old man had learned part of my history from the Frenchman, without being known to him, and I was startled at hearing that his name was Duncan Stuart. His veins were rich with the blood-royal of the ancient house whose name he bore, and he was, in fact, as I knew by the court calendar, but three degrees removed from the throne. Of course he hated the Guelphs, and the Guelphs, as he supposed, hated him, and he was a fugitive from that beloved land over which his noble ancestors had swayed the sceptre of kings. Such is the course of things here in the eternal race for power peasants shoving princes from their thrones, and the descendants of princes seeking protection among republican rebels. Such was the fate of Duncan Stuart what glorious names in Scottish annals! and he was now actually on his way to America. Thus was I meditating when I entered the house where

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

the Stuarts were staying; but my philosophical musing was quickly ended by the flash of those eyes of liquid fire. I was formally introduced to the blushing lady, whose Christian name of Louise was only pronounced by Duncan Stuart. I soon found that her mind was quick, profound, and cultivated, her fancy vivid, lively, and brilliant, and her heart susceptible of the most varied and intense emotions. She was, in fact, the most inflammable creature I ever saw, keenly sensible of pain or pleasure, with lively feeling relishing the delicate sallies of wit, the bright pictures of fancy, and the sadder, yet sweeter touches of sentiment. Withal she was passionate, and never was there such a compound of the ethereal and sensual such a blending in one soul of the celestial tints of Paradise with the grosser colours of earth. Her conversation was like the display of Chinese fireworks, now the sparkles of fancy, with ten thousand varied, soft, and tender hues would gleam, like the spray from a fountain of liquid diamonds, or like a shower of cinders from the altars in heaven; now the coruscations of her wit would flash in quick succession vividly and brightly as the arrows of the clouds, and anon the meteors of wilder and deeper thought, with their strange and novel shapes, would shoot athwart the dark firmament of speculation, leaving long, spiral tracks of light behind them. One strung with nicer sensibilities than myself would have been amused, charmed, awed, and impressed, now with a happy train of thought, and now with a touching strain of unspeakable pathos; but I was thinking only of a new and brilliant conquest. True, I could fain sentiment; and, as we sat in the sleeping moonlight, which, in that tropical clime, lit up the earth with hues that seemed to be lent from some dreamy and celestial land of blessed spirits, I was doing my best to entertain my companion with that courtly discourse with which I had shone in the polished circles of Europe, when suddenly the sound of a guitar floated softly through the air, and fell in plaintive melody on our ears. My fair friend became instantly attentive, and, following her example, I listened also, and, to my astonishment, heard a rich and melodious voice accompanying the music with the following song in English:

'Twas in my boyhood's early prime,
And in my own fair sunny clime,
One hazy, dreamy, summer day,
Beneath a willow-tree I lay;
The babbling sound of waters near
Fell softly on the drowsy ear,
With tinkling bells of browsing herds,
And hum of bees, and song of birds;
Above me glow'd a cloudless sheen,
Around me hills and meadows green,
And many a wide and level plain,
O'er which there waded the yellow grain:
'Twas there that in my waking dreams,
Fair as the dawn's first trembling beams,
And tender as the starry night,
Though clothed in Heaven's own purest light,
A voiceless spirit smiled on mine
And bound it with a spell divine.
And ever since that happy hour
In festive hall and rustic bower,
Through crowded streets and shady woods,
And Nature's deepest solitudes,
I follow'd still that spirit's face,
But sought in vain its dwelling-place,
Until I saw those eyes of thine,
Where faith unchanging, love divine,
So meekly yet so brightly shine,
And where there beams a heart that now

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Is stainless as thy marble brow.
Oh, dear Louise! how like a star
Of Iran's summer skies you are!
How like a flower that scents the vale,
Or maiden in a fairy tale!
So dreamy, light, so sweet, so wild,
A sylph in form, in heart a child;
While like the hum of distant bees,
Or like the sigh of Autumn's breeze,
Or like the notes of birds in Spring
When Nature sports her robes of green,
Thy voice, low, plaintive, soft, and clear,
Doth fall so witching on the ear,
That from this earth my spirit flies,
And dreams itself in Paradise!

I have preserved the words, not because they were beautiful in themselves, but because they recall the happy emotions which their first recital produced, and on account of the singular character of the author. The time, the air, and the company and country in which I then was, caused them to fill me with a glow I never felt before; and my companion, observing my feelings, seemed to exhibit more sympathy with them than I cared to see. The demon of jealousy was aroused, but I concealed my thoughts, and heard, with apparent interest, that the serenader was a young and adventurous American, who had been ship-wrecked, and had had a rather romantic introduction to Louise and the Stuarts. I saw him next day, and one glance showed me the son of genius and poetry. He was quite a youth, small and tender as a maiden, whom he might well have personated but for his high, broad forehead, sicklied over with the pale cast of thought, and the fire of his dark eyes, which threw over his face the light of a bright intellect, and a heart of pure, fervid, and exalted sentiment. It was a face beaming with a world of glorious meaning, and you could see at once that his unfathomed soul was a crystal sea of light, not coloured by the faintest stain of baseness or sensuality. It was evident that he loved Louise with the holy and impassioned fervour which can only burn in the breasts of earth's finest mould, and I observed that he had made a decided impression on the lady. I had the advantage, however, in being an inmate in the house of Duncan Stuart and his most intimate friend, and so I took my time in carrying on the siege, gradually poisoning the mind of Louise with my own sentiments, and endeavouring to give the animal ascendancy over the ethereal in her nature. In the mean time we all came to America, and, Stuart continuing his confidence, I remained his guest, and my rival hung about in the neighbourhood, observing, with inexpressible anguish, the palling of his hopes, and breathing his passion in prose and in verse, whose words ought to have melted the most obdurate heart. But Louise was now, mentally, my prisoner. Her sentiment was gradually fading, and she, by degrees, learning to ridicule and hate the man who was so much like her original self.

Stuart had settled in the southern part of North Carolina, and soon gallants and suitors, from far and near, gathered round the lady who had grown up under his roof and next to his heart, and between whom and himself there was some mysterious connection. I cared not to unravel it, and was fully satisfied in knowing that I was intensely loved by this fair unknown, and that I was master of her will. The most fiendish passions took possession of my heart. I secretly built me a cottage in a secluded vale on the banks of the Clarendon*

* Clarendon: this was the original name of the Cape Fear. *Ed.*

river, and began to hint to Louise my infernal designs. At first she was startled; but I soon overcame her opinions, and she finally began to agree with me that marriage was invented only for the animated clods of earth a slavish institution, which quenched the fires of love, and entailed misery on its votaries. Of course, I believed no such

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

thing; but my tender friend imbibed the opinion with ardour, and became so devoted to me that her principal amusement consisted in the ridiculing of those who demanded her hand in wedlock. She even went so far as to make a register of the names, appearance, actions, and sayings of her suitors, and this she gave to me, and will be sealed up in this history.

Tales of scandal began, at last, to creep abroad; and my first rival, who now despaired of success, and who was one of the noblest characters on earth, was desirous only of saving the reputation and securing the happiness of Louise. With a pure and sublime devotion to the weal of a scornful mistress, unknown before his time, he gently, and by letter, insinuated to her the danger of her position, which was on the crumbling verge of an awful precipice. He professed to have the most unbounded confidence in her purity, but he forcibly reminded her of the danger of braving public opinion, and entreated her to beware of an intimacy with me, whom he accused of improper motives. I was present when she read the letter, and, heavens! who can describe her looks and manner? Were I to live a thousand years I should never forget the grandeur of her actions, the unearthly fire that blazed in her eyes! What an actress she would have made! How queenly, majestic, and awful would she have seemed in tragedy! She at last became furious; but I, although a stranger to the feelings of a coward, deemed it prudent not to break with her bold lover, and prevailed on her to send him a moderate answer. She could, however, no longer endure his presence; and, though he begged only a friendly nook in her heart, she plainly told him that, though she knew he was her friend, she could never like him again. She even endeavoured to insult him, and requested him never more to show her his face. Reader, did you ever see a poet, a noble son of Nature, while his heart was breaking? It is one of those sublime and impressive tragedies at which angels are the weeping spectators, and no pen can describe it, no scenic representation can convey the faintest idea of it. The South-Carolinian (for he was from that state, or province) felt his generous heart wither within him, and saw the glorious hopes of a soul brighter than the sun which lights the universe, set forever! In fact, the sun of his happiness had gone down, and his harp the first, best, and dearest friend of his early and guileless youth poured forth a few sad wails of enchanting melody, and then became silent forever. Now, thought I, is the time to vindicate my honour and the young harper received, among his other thickcoming misfortunes, a cartel from me. My second, or friend, was a glorious villain an old subaltern of mine, whose heart was harder than adamant, and who was never so happy as when carrying out my devilish purposes. As I expected, the discarded lover of Louise desired an opportunity of seeing his friend, and also intimated a hope that the necessity of a fight might be avoided. Old smiled grimly, and answered that if the gentleman had no stomach for the fight he must write and sign such an apology as he should dictate. The young Carolinian immediately betook himself to the only military friend he had in the neighbourhood, and, stating the whole case, asked advice. Most people consider you brave in proportion to the length of your whiskers, the ferocity of your looks, and the malignity of your heart and thus my rival's friend judged him. He plainly showed, by his hesitation and embarrassment, that he suspected the pale poet of cowardice; and this latter, divining how matters stood, exclaimed

I know your thoughts; but you shall not be compromised. I must have a friend, and I must make an explanation to Ross; but, if you will go with me to the field, I will, to satisfy you, now give you a power of attorney to blow out my brains, if I do any thing you can condemn!

This appeal could not be resisted; and so, next morning we had a meeting. As we took our stations, pistols in hand, my antagonist said,

Before we fight, I wish permission to make an explanation. Mr. Ross, I have suspected that you had and have base designs on an innocent and unsuspecting lady; and, thus thinking, I discharged my duty by warning her against you. As I know little of you personally, and as lovers are proverbially jealous and suspicious, I may have been mistaken. If you will disavow such intentions as I have charged you with, and give me proof of your character as a gentleman, I will make the most ample apologies to you, and before all the world.

With a sneer, I answered; I expected this. If your heart, sir, is cowardly, say so at once, and I will dismiss you. God forbid I should wish to frighten you to death!

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Mistake me not, sir, answered he: my explanation was to discharge my conscience before God, our master. To you, dog, I have nothing to say, and you shall die!

The cool sternness of his manner somewhat disconcerted me, and hence I missed him, while his shot wounded me sharply in the thigh. I was not much hurt; but, choosing to get out of the fight, I fell and pretended that I could not stand. The Carolinian, with his friend, approached me, saying,

Gentlemen, I am the challenged party, and I have a right to continue the fight till the challenge is withdrawn. There must be another shot; and, as I seek no advantage, tie my legs together, and lay us side by side, or put the muzzles of our pistols to each other's breasts. The dog must die!

Was he not game? My wound, somehow, became suddenly very painful, and my challenge, from necessity, was withdrawn. The next day Louise received the following:

TO LOUISE.

WE MET AS STRANGERS.

We met as strangers; but thy star-lit face
Long, long ago, and oftentime, I'd seen;
In its soul-speaking features I could trace
The image sweet of boyhood's early dream.
My waking fancy oft had pictured thee,
And loved thee, too, as one of fairy birth,
Not dreaming that familiar one could be
A native mortal child of this sad earth.
* * * *

We met as strangers! Lady, when we part,
Not as a stranger from me wilt thou go,
With thee must travel still my absent heart,
And mine, alas! will be a double wo!
* * * *

We parted soon; but oh, if ever o'er
Thy mem'ry's joyous stream one thought of me
Should glide, think of me as one no more,
Whose viewless spirit still is following thee!
And if some time, perchance, in after years,
Thy eye, in pensive mood, should meet my name,
More dear will be the tribute of thy tears
To me, than all the laureled meed of fame!
* * * *

Thy tears! alas, was ever woman known
To shed a kindly tear or heave a sigh

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

For those whose cruel lot stern fate has thrown
Where perils and where hardships thickest lie?
We met as strangers! As a stranger soon
You coldly bade me from your thoughts depart,
Refusing, e'en when begged, the common boon
Of friendly habitation in your heart;
Not caring, as in cold and proud disdain
You sent me forth and doubly barred the door,
What keen and ever-during, fiery pain
You planted deep within my bosom's core!
We met as strangers; and a stranger I
Must still forever be to one like thee.
For naught that's noble can thy haughty eye
Discern in unpretending friends like me;
Nor can you see how we can ever feel,
Or sigh, or writhe, or with keen anguish smart,
When through our souls, like barbed and pointed steel,
Of wanton scorn, you drove the poisoned dart.
* * * *

We met as strangers! Thus the high and low
In worldly fortune here must ever meet.
Between them must a trackless ocean flow
O'er which their kindred hearts can rarely greet.
The wise, adventurous men do often sail
From coast to coast, and mingle frank and free;
But women, land-bound, timid, proud, and frail,
Still clings to her own narrow coterie,
And thinks that all beyond this petty state
Are outside savages, a barb'rous race,
'Gainst whom to nourish constant spite and hate
Are exemplary acts of Christian grace!
* * * *

We met as strangers; and henceforth shall all
The glare-caught race (whom not a few have thought
As soulless as they're heartless since the fall),
With all their whims, forever be forgot.
They not unwisely think who deem them toys.
The pretty playthings of an idle hour;
But strangers to those higher, lasting joys
That should engage for long, man's nobler power;
Unworthy of that love, so pure, sublime,
Celestial product of diviner moulds,
That fervid glow immortal, which no time
Can ever dim or quench in manly souls:
That passion which in genius can inspire
These deathless thoughts, those deeds of high renown,
Which, writ in characters of living fire,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Through coming ages will undimm'd go down,
Reflecting o'er its consecrated name
A glorious halo, while those petty souls,
Who thought its love and adoration shame,
Have long been sleeping in forgotten dust!
And yet, when on thy sylphlike form I gaze,
And see how far above thy sex thou art,
I mourn to think an angel's gracious *face*
Should grace proud woman's selfish, sordid *heart*.

This offering, like all the others from the same votary, fell on an altar of stone, and the author disappeared perhaps to pine in some sequestered vale, and drop into an early grave perhaps to become a desolate wanderer over the earth or, perhaps, to don the soldier's harness and become the iron chief of some ruthless band. To tell the truth, I now had my wits too much employed to think of the hapless disciple of the tuneful nine. One by one the lovers of Louise dropped off, her female acquaintances began to shun her; and, finally, old Duncan Stuart himself became suspicious. Fearing every hour that the old lion would set one of his cubs upon me, or demand an explanation of my intentions towards Louise, that good girl cut the Gordian knot of my difficulties by taking it into her head to disappear. It is needless to speak of the passionate grief of the brave sons for their adopted sister, or of the anguish that smote the old man's heart; still more useless to speak of my own desolate feelings. I mingled my tears with those of the Stuarts, and my only source of consolation was found in visits to my relatives, and frequent pilgrimages to Glen-Muise, my unknown cottage on the Clarendon. With Louise all Stuart's good fortune seemed to leave him; and as I was also very sad, and somewhat short of funds, I had recourse to cards for amusement, and protection from my melancholy humours. The young men became fond of the sport; they bet high, and so did I. These young gentlemen were patterns of honesty and generosity; they had the princely habit of spending freely, and I the noble trait of claiming my winnings. Hence money, plate, jewels, and negroes vanished; and, as I disliked to see a good man in distress, I also took my leave. During all this time the search for Louise was continued; and while one of the young bloodhounds was impertinently nosing out my sweet cottage, to which I had fled from the bustle of the world and the iniquity of men, he was suspected of being a Tory spy, and arrested. I, a notorious Royalist, wrote to the Rebels who held young Stuart in custody, threatening, in his behalf, the vengeance of the crown, and declaring that he was my most particular friend. Of course my letter only increased the indignation for Stuart; and as he was a gentleman, he escaped only by the loss of all his little estate.

When the war between England and her colonies was on the eve of breaking out, I found it expedient to leave my neighbourhood. Feigning employment in the royal service, I started westward; and, falling in with Nathan Glutson at Alamance, that jewel of a man treated me so kindly and deferentially, that I concluded to remain with him. My letter, which I handed him at your father's Christmas party, was a mere sham, for I had then been at Glutson's several days. I wished to see this meeting of the Alamancers, and I took the mode above mentioned of getting a glimpse of your people, and of seeing for myself what they were about. Now this Glutson seemed a most zealous Royalist, and so desirous was he of the success of my mission that he gave me a written description of the character, manners, standing, and feelings of all his neighbours. He was particularly desirous that I should see old Mayfield; and even went so far as to send with me his hopeful son, William, whom he caused to apologize to Mayfield and his family for an unpleasant occurrence that had taken place a few days before. Thus was I introduced to Edith, and at once my wicked heart was fired with the most fiendish passions. She was artless, tender, and full of sentiment; her eyes were dark, her complexion brunette, and her lips large and luscious; and thus I thought she would be an easy conquest. Besides, I was a stranger, a mysterious character, a foreigner, an officer, and an enemy to her country and her people, and these, surely, I thought, make an easy road to any lady's heart. To my surprise, I found that the little vixen disliked me first, and slightly because I was a foreigner and rather *outré* in my appearance. Her dislike became disgust, as she quickly read my character; and, oh? wonder of wonders! she even detested me when she learned that I wished to cut the throats of all her friends, sweetheart and father included! Gracious heavens! I began to think I was dreaming, or had been transplanted to another world.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Over and over she rejected me, until at last I began to think there was *one* virtuous, rational, and sensible woman in the world. I had long looked in vain for such a one; and, not finding her, became confirmed in villainy, and determined never to marry. Edith, however, shook this determination, and (you may believe me or not) I became sincerely desirous of wedding her. I believed that I had found the rarest and most precious gem on earth, and every day this opinion grew upon me; every day my love for Edith increased. Ay, *love*; for I had now found a chaste woman, with a heart, a soul, and a mind, and I was obliged to love her. The character of this little Alamancer astounded me; her beauty charmed me; and so, with honest purposes, and in my most winning manner, I laboured hard to obtain her consent to our union. She refused me with less and less gentleness, until at last her hatred was so obvious that ten thousand devils were roused up within me. I resolved to ruin her; to seduce her, to win her affections, and then turn her off to perish. My plan was, to steal her from her father, carry her to an old aunt of mine, and there endeavour to get her consent to our marriage. If she refused I would force her; and, without the knowledge of any one, employ a scoundrel to personate a clergyman and unite us. After the honeymoon she should be carried to Glen-Muise; and while she was admiring this elegant retreat, its real mistress, the concealed muse, should come out, embrace me, and turn Edith out of doors, I approving, and showing the girl how she had been deceived and ruined. These were my plans and are still.

* * * *

Heaven and earth! the bird has escaped the fowler! Edith is gone! The above pages, Mr. Warden, were written weeks ago, and I intended, at my leisure, to finish my own history, and also that of Louise, for the amusement and instruction of posterity. I thought that if Edith were virtuous, and a *woman*, such as woman ought to be, I had a perfect right to try to make her my wife; that if she were not such as you and I supposed her, I would be rendering you a service by victimizing her. I once thought *no* woman worthy of you or me; but I now *know* that Edith is, and a hell is raging within me because I know you are more worthy of her than I, and, therefore, may be more likely to get her. I must pursue, and if I take her we will die together, and if there is a heaven she will find it. *I* cannot be worsted, even in a lake of everlasting fire. The good spirit has triumphed in saving Edith my occupation's gone, and I must try another world, if there be one; and if there is not, I will at least be out of this cursed one, where the star of my friend, the devil, is on the wane!

CHAPTER XLIII.

FROM the time that Henry Warden left her, he was never absent a moment from the thoughts of Lucy Neal. His looks, when she first saw him, his dress, and all that he ever said or did in her presence, became fixed indelibly in her memory. The books which they had read were thenceforward invested with a new and peculiar interest, and the scenes they had visited together excited in her feelings akin to those that swell within the classic scholar's breast when wandering by the site of ancient Delphi, or that burn within the pious pilgrim's heart as he strays over the sacred hills of Judæa. Raised up in seclusion, and having never, until she met with Warden, seen a human being beyond the circle of her own family, who excited in her a tender emotion, all the hoarded affections of her young heart, fresh, pure, and fervent, were lavished on him. It was not mere love in its ordinary sense, implying only passion or kind esteem, which he had caused within her; it was an intense devotion, a concentration of all the soft and tender sentiments of which our nature, in its purest state, is capable. She found in him an only brother; he was the first friend she had ever known to esteem; her first companion, entertaining and instructive, with sympathies in unison with her own; the first hero, wit, scholar, and man of intellect she had seen to admire; the first young, amiable, and polished gentleman of refined sensibilities who had ever kindled a fond glow in her ardent and stainless breast. A new era had dawned on her hitherto quiet and passionless existence; she seemed to have awakened in a new world, where the mountains and the flowers, the stars and the moon had vanished, and where all beautiful things were but the reflection of an absent face all sweet sounds were the soft whispers of his voice. Her only happiness was to think of him her daily occupation to ramble over the places where he had been, visit every day the rustic bower and the tree on which her name was carved, read constantly the verses he had written for her, and to take hourly from her bosom the handkerchief he had left her. She never reasoned on the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

nature of her passion, nor once reflected on what might be its ultimate consequences. She set no particular time for her marriage, she laid no plans for her future life; she knew she could not live without Henry Warden, and she expected him to return, and this was the extent of her reasoning on the subject. The present was a blank to her, and she lived only in that hour when she would see him again; and thus, day by day, and hour by hour, he was becoming dearer and dearer to her, till her soul was, as it were, transfused into his spirit, and her existence became a part of his. Weeks, long, dull, and tiresome weeks, had passed away, and Lucy began to look for his return. Measuring his impatience and judging his desires by her own, she had concluded that he would not be absent longer than he was compelled to be by the calls of duty. She allowed so many days for his passage to Alamance, a very few for his stay there, and a certain number for his return. When the computation was out, and another day had passed away, Lucy retired to rest with a light heart, thinking the morrow would bring her friend. The morrow came and went, and now that he had had two extra days to allow for contingencies, she was sure she would see him before another sunset. The sun did rise and set again, and her heart began to be shaded with its first disappointment. At night she was sitting at a window by the parlour fire, gazing at the cold, full, bright winter moon, as she moved with slow and lonely grandeur over the blue fields of ether, palling, in her royal progress, all lesser luminaries, which were lost in the unmatched splendours of their queen. She observed, far up in the heavens, a small, solitary, and exceedingly lustrous star, that twinkled with a soft and tender light, the brightest and the sweetest gem on the constellated robe of night. With girlish simplicity she called it her star, and watched it till it fled and vanished at the approach of the gorgeous sovereign of the night. Lucy sighed as its modest face was hid, and began to conjure up a train of sad reflections, when voices at the gate filled her with tumultuous emotions. Darting instantly to her toilet, she there, with unspeakable pleasure, heard her father welcoming M'Bride to the shelter of his roof and the hospitality of his board; and as her door was partly ajar, she watched with intense interest as the guests came in. When all were in she listened for the mention of Warden's name, till she found he was not of the company. She came out at length, and, after an introduction to those whom she had not before seen, her heart almost bounded out of her breast when she heard her father enquire for Henry Warden. M'Bride first told his story in regard to Edith, giving a short sketch of her adventures, and then Ben Rust briefly related the situation of Henry Warden and of his family. At the conclusion of Ben's narrative, Lucy felt that Henry was a thousand times dearer to her than he had ever been, and her heart swelled with pride at the consciousness of its love for one in distress, and one, perhaps, deserted by all others. She was even made happy by his wretchedness; for, Oh! thought she, how tenderly will I wait upon him, how passionately will I cling to him, and how astonished and delighted he will be at my devotion. Forthwith she began to build castles in the air, imagining all sorts of troubles for her friend, and placing him in the most perilous straits, where all the world was against him, and where, with ineffable love, she would fold him to her spotless breast and bear him beyond his dangers to some Elysian home where she would spend her blissful life in making him forget his early trials!

Edith did not fail to scan, it may be said, with a critic's eye, the features and form of Lucy Neal, of whom she had heard so much. M'Bride, partly from a desire to make her feel for her former neglect of Warden, partly to try her heart; and, it may have been, affected to some extent by real admiration, had told her much about Lucy had drawn her portrait with a master's hand, and had not failed to speak in exaggerated terms of the impression she immediately made on Warden. When, therefore, Edith heard these things, and reflected on what might have been Warden's feelings towards herself when he left Alamance, and on the effect of his long absence from her; and when she remembered, also, that when he first met with Lucy he was wounded and dejected, and that in this condition he was left with her for his only companion, she began to feel a pang, compared with which her other sorrows were light. She was, as may well be supposed, anxious to see this mountain beauty, and when she did see her, her own ill-boding fancy multiplied and heightened her charms. Indeed, each of the ladies thought the other the handsomest she had ever seen; and, although they were entire contrasts, each was such a model of her kind that the other wished herself like her rival. The lily was still fresh and wearing its richest bloom in the cheeks of Lucy; her short, light tresses, still hung in girlish confusion about her face and neck, and her soft, bright-blue eyes still beamed with an expression earnest and happy. The rose had faded in Edith's face, whose paleness was heightened by the raven hue of her luxuriant hair, and lighted with a touching beauty by her dark eyes fringed with long silken lashes, and whose tender, melancholy sparkle seemed half extinguished by an ever-rising tear. In the manners of the one the light-hearted ease, the innocent gayety, and half-frolic humour, the quick elastic step,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

and the merrily ringing laugh of the joyous and careless girl were still remaining; while those of the other displayed the graceful dignity, the sober propriety, the repose and sad serenity of one whom sorrow had made a woman before her time. Envy, hatred, and jealousy were passions that found no place in the heart of Edith; yet she was mortal, and subject to mortal infirmities. She did not actually dislike Lucy, but she was averse to the formation of an intimacy with her; while the latter, suddenly delighted with her new acquaintance, was disposed at once to become communicative and even confidential. Attributing her reserve to her sorrows, Lucy taxed her powers to entertain her, and chattered away nearly the whole of the night to the silent and abstracted companion who lay by her side. The earliest beams of the morning sun found Lucy again awake, and, leaning over her now sleeping friend, her heart was touched as she saw the marks of recent tears on Edith's cheeks. She was still watching over her when the latter awoke, and, tenderly kissing and embracing her, and soon adjusting her own simple toilet, assisted her companion to dress, talking kindly and sweetly to her all the while, and endeavouring to revive her drooping spirits by lively descriptions of the scenes and novelties she would see in the mountains.

CHAPTER XLIV.

And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee nor to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also if aught but death part me and thee. *RUTH.*

LEAVING the cause for the discussion and determination of psychologists, I can only relate the fact that Lucy Neal became wonderfully fond of Edith Mayfield. Perhaps it was because the sorrows of the good and beautiful endear them to the generous heart; perhaps it was because Edith was from Alamance, or was the first intelligent and accomplished lady Lucy had ever seen; perhaps the mystery that hung about her, her meekness, the sweetness of her temper, her failing health, and the celestial light that began to beam from her face and seemed to mark her as not long for earth, won upon Lucy's heart. Certain it is, Lucy began to love Edith as a sister, anticipated all her wants with the most tender solicitude, and exerted herself to the utmost to make her happy. She almost entirely neglected the rest of us, and, with Edith, went rambling about over the hills and mountains; watched over her when she slept, and would have forced upon her almost every thing she had that was rare and valuable. As these two were, therefore, constantly together, my friend Captain Demijohn, gloomy, taciturn, and abstracted, and, as Benjamin Rust and Nannie Scott began to find great entertainment in each other, I was left entirely to the society of our host, Abraham Neal. We had much discourse together upon men and things, and my time was pleasantly passed.

Thus does the master begin the narrative of certain incidents which we will now proceed, in a briefer manner, to relate to the reader. Lucy spoke often to Edith about Henry Warden, frequently quoted his remarks on various subjects, and was every day pointing out the scenes which he had admired. Strange to say, however, the mountains and all they contained became daily more and more distasteful to Edith, and she passionately longed to return to Alamance. She soon guessed at the state of Lucy's feelings; and, taught by her misfortunes to condemn herself in all things, she was not long in concluding that Lucy was not to blame. She even went so far as to forgive Warden, and to look upon his conduct as perfectly justifiable. She put the case to herself; she imagined, or tried to imagine, what would have been her feelings had she been treated as Warden was; and then she looked at Lucy Neal, her beauty, her innocence, her simplicity, intelligence, and, above all, her candour, confidence, and goodness, and she concluded that, under all the circumstances, it would have been folly in Warden to have slighted so fair a prospect of happiness for one so remote. True, her conduct had been prescribed by her father, but then Warden did not know it, and must have thought her inconsistent, fickle, and cruel. These reflections at first made her extremely wretched; but her great soul, at length, broke out resplendent from obscuring clouds. She believed that her destiny was fixed that all her once-cherished hopes were blighted, and she bowed with

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

uncomplaining submission to the behests of Providence. The scenes of the future were now changed, and a new train of thoughts occupied her mind. Henceforth she was to feel little interest in her acquaintances, and her heart was to be fixed on high and noble aims. She would quit society, at least the society of the young and gay thus she reasoned she would succour the patriots, hunt out the needy and distressed, and spend her days and nights in works of charity, till her summons came to quit this scene, where she was not destined to be happy, for the shores of a brighter world. Thus was her plan of life marked out, and, in its sublime devotion to the weal of others, assistance was to be rendered in bringing about a match between Henry Warden and Lucy Neal. Yet Edith wished to be with her mother before she put her heart to this last and severe test, for she had a mournful foreboding that it would hasten her flight from earth. Her strength was daily failing, and, resolving at once to brave the dangers on the road to Alamance, she one evening told M'Bride that she would start next morning. The master found it useless to resist her inclinations, and so, with internal grumblings at the strange caprices of the sex, and his own singular fate, he set himself to prepare. Lucy was immediately closeted with her parents, and, without much difficulty, obtained their permission to visit Alamance. Edith's situation, perhaps, was the main cause of this permission, for the times were dangerous and the old people loved their only child. This latter bounded immediately into Edith's chamber, and, throwing her arms about her, and kissing her over and over again, exclaimed, And so we shall not part after all!

How do you mean? asked Edith, I certainly shall start to-morrow.

And so shall I, said Lucy, for father and mother have already given me leave.

Edith was much embarrassed at the rashness of her friend, and scarcely knew what to say. At length she asked, Are you not afraid, Lucy, to be on the road at such a time?

And aint you afraid? asked Lucy in return; I am sure I shall be as safe as you.

Yes; but, Lucy, I am going home, where I have not been for a long time. I am going to cheer and comfort my lonely mother, and for this I ought to brave every danger.

I have thought over every thing, answered Lucy, and I shall not be afraid when I am with you.

Alas! replied Edith, that is the very reason why you should, for I am fated to bring misfortunes on myself and on my friends.

Please, please don't talk so sadly, said Lucy, embracing Edith; it makes my heart ache to see you so melancholy.

I cannot help it, Lucy; indeed it is said that the shadows of approaching death are often thrown on the heart before it arrives.

Why do you speak of death? asked Lucy, with tears in her eyes. You are too beautiful, too young, and good to die.

And do not the beautiful and the good often die early?

I've heard it said, answered Lucy, that whom the gods love die young, but it seems strange and unnatural. But let us look on the bright side of things, and not distress ourselves with our own fancies.

Well, Lucy, suppose you were on the road, how would you like to ride all day in the cold air, without warming or eating? asked Edith.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I shall suffer for nothing when talking to you, was the reply.

Suppose you have to sleep on the ground?

I shall sleep soundly and snugly in your bosom.

Suppose we are taken prisoners?

Suppose the sky falls, exclaimed Lucy, laughing it's needless to make any further suppositions, for I am a spoiled child, and must have my way.

Lucy, said Edith, seriously, you do not know what you are about. There are a hundred difficulties in the way, and you must not go with us.

Lucy gazed earnestly at her companion for a minute, and then, the tears falling fast, replied, I feared it would be so. I love you like a sister, but I see you do not like me, and wish to get rid of me. Thus it is with me; I have no brother or sister, no friends or relations, and am an alien from the heart of every human being.

These words, and the manner in which they were said, excited the astonishment of Edith Mayfield, and she put her arms about Lucy, saying, My dear child, you misunderstand me. I do not despise your affection; I do love you like a sister, and what I have said was on your own account, and for your own good.

Lucy's sorrows vanished in an instant, and she replied, with animation, Oh, how happy I am now that you say you love me! Dear lady, please say so again, for they were the sweetest words I ever heard. Do you really love me in fact?

I do, Lucy, and you shall be my sister.

I will, I will, and you shall prove me! I will go with you, confide in you, and nurse you like a sister, and live with you forever.

What! after I get married?

Lucy studied a moment, and answered, Why not? Surely you will not cast me off when you marry.

Certainly I would not; but suppose you yourself get married?

I could not love my husband if he did not like you, replied Lucy, with great simplicity.

Perhaps, after all, Lucy, said Edith, you only want to go to Alamance to see Henry Warden.

A crimson flush flew over Lucy's face and neck; but, quickly recovering, she replied, with an earnest look, I would indeed be glad to see Mr. Warden, and hope we'll meet him on the road; but, Edith, if you think my affection for you is all feigned, you do my heart gross injustice. But I see that you cannot like me. Well, I will ever love you, and think of you, and pray for you; and, though you despise me now, I hope we will meet in heaven, when I know you will love me, because then you will see my heart.

Edith's heart melted at these words, and, taking the hand of her friend, she said, with unusual fervour, Forgive me, my dear, sweet sister, forgive me. You are my sister I this day adopt you as such, and will forever love you as such. You shall go with me, and you shall see if I do not prove to be your best friend.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

They mingled their tears together now, and were more free and confidential than they had ever been before. Edith did really love Lucy; and, able no longer to continue her reserve, she gave full play to the feelings of her heart. On the other side, Lucy, fairly beside herself with extravagant joy, would every minute stop in the midst of her preparations for the journey, to give utterance to some happy fancy, or sketch some bright scene in her anticipated life with Edith. It was agreed between the two friends that they would spend their winters at Alamance and their summers in the mountains; but each concealed a part of the pictured future, that which Lucy hid being, in fact, the sun that was to light that future, while Edith concealed a profound sorrow that was to throw a shade over all her enjoyments. In every sketch which they drew, Lucy's joy was secretly heightened by that hidden sun Edith's darkened by the presence of a sad remembrance.

Uncle Corny was not over-pleased at the sudden interest which Edith seemed to take in Lucy; for her silence, sadness, and abstraction had afforded some consolation to him. He now found that he was alone, without a proper companion for his journey; so situated was black Ben, and so was M'Bride, who set out upon the road with his mind fully made up to turn Turk on the first opportunity. His remarks on the road, if not out of place in a work like this, would afford infinite amusement to the reader. It should be added, however, that before the party started for Alamance, Abraham Neal took the master aside and thus addressed him: Mr. M'Bride, I am going to intrust you with an important charge, and though I have the very fullest confidence in your integrity and honour, I feel as Jacob did when committing Benjamin to the care of his brethren, when they were going down to Egypt for corn. His son was not dearer to the old patriarch than is my daughter to me and to her mother. She is the light of our house, the joy of our hearts; she is young, she is tender and innocent. She is going with Edith Mayfield to Alamance, and when the winter is over at your hands will I look to find her bright and beautiful as the spring.

Excepting all unavoidable accidents, answered M'Bride, may God do so to me, and more also, if I return her not as she now is. I may bring a company with me at all events I will come myself, and, may be, shall here spend the summer.

You will delight me if you do, said Neal; and when you bring Lucy safely back, I will tell you something about her that may interest you.

And why not tell me now? asked the master, always curious about such things.

It would, perhaps, not be proper, replied the other. I can only say there is a singular history connected with her, and this, as well as her many virtues, renders her peculiarly dear to us, and makes your charge a most precious one.

Was there ever a woman's history that was not a tissue of strange events? thought the master, but he held his peace.

CHAPTER XLV. EVENTS HASTEN TO THEIR CONCLUSION.

WHEN Henry Warden left Alamance the last time, he made his way directly to the head-quarters of General Greene, and there found his father bearing arms. The stirring events which followed, crowding in quick succession on each other, dissipated his melancholy for a while, and fully engaged his thoughts. In fact, he was now a witness of and a participator in scenes, which, were they here recorded, would throw an air of romance over the performance, and cause many an infidel reader to look on the whole book as a fiction. On this account, and because also the undertaking would be too extensive, we must pass rapidly over incidents which, it is hoped, some local historian will yet rescue from fast-coming oblivion.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

A crisis in the war had now arrived. Both sides, anxious to put an end to the protracted struggle, exasperated, and, perhaps, rendered vindictive by the hardships and casualties incident to long-pending hostilities, were now rallying their enfeebled energies for a great and final effort. On the one side were a thirst for vengeance and for glory, and the stings of mortified pride and baffled ambition; on the other, the courage of despair, the fortitude and unconquerable determination inspired by the memory of past injuries, and by the consciousness of being martyrs in a holy cause. Lord Cornwallis, the commander of the British forces in the south, and a brave and accomplished officer, dreading the effects of time, and knowing the weakness of his adversary, was anxious for a speedy engagement; and, to bring it about, displayed all the masterly qualities of a great commander. He had, however, to deal with an antagonist who was equal to any emergency, and whose energies multiplied as dangers thickened around him. Wary, fearless, and untiring, patient of toil, fertile in expedients, skilled in all the arts of war, and animated with an intense love for his country with a judgment always clear, quick, and comprehensive, and a manner ever cheerful, placid, and decisive, General Greene was an over-match for any officer in the English service. For some time he and his great antagonist were manoeuvring, marching, and counter-marching one seeking, the other avoiding a collision. The British troops, well clothed and well fed, long inured to the severities of the soldier's life, and spurred on by hopes of gain and distinction, were no so severely tried as those on the American side. It was in the middle of an unusually cold and stormy winter that these operations were carried on, and the American army was almost totally deficient in camp equipage and necessary clothing. They often lay upon the bare ground, with the broad heavens for their covering, or, as was most usually the case, the clouds, from which descended, on their shivering and unsheltered bodies, rain, snow, and sleet. They would, sometimes, go for thirty-six hours without tasting food of any kind; many of them were half naked, and great numbers were barefooted, and could be tracked by the stains of blood from their feet, cut and lacerated by the hard and frozen earth. Thus hungry, cold, and toil-worn, the icicles sometimes hanging from their beards and clothes, day and night, these men were marching, floundering through swamps, and wading swollen creeks. They were in this condition, too, in the midst of their own fruitful country. They saw others, opposed to that country, living on it in ease and security; and the wan and haggard soldier often passed in view of his own plantation, desolated by the ravages of his nearest neighbour. At the head of this host was a chief whose mighty spirit was diffused among officers and men, and all orders were obeyed with a cheerful and ready submission. It was during this trial of skill between the commanders-in-chief, that patriot leaders of lesser note were daily performing deeds of prowess, and executing well-laid stratagems, any one of which would afford material for a handsome novelette. The middle counties were the scene of these adventures, and, could they but speak, every hill, and vale, and brook would tell of some deed of horror, or of some gallant achievement. Alamance, especially, became noted for these adventures; and towards that ancient community, as a focus, the strifes of the country seemed converging. Great armies marched and hovered about it, and from every quarter armed parties traversed through it. All the elements of war were now in motion. It raged in the field and by the fireside, and spent its fury on man, on woman, on children, and on brutes. Every man to be seen by day or at night, in the woods or the fields, was on some hostile and plundering errand. Every female was bewailing some loss, or flying from some danger. Every living thing was in a state of alarm, and the air was thick and humid with the smoke of campfires and burning plantations. Rumour, with her thousand tongues, was multiplying and exaggerating the terrors and casualties of the times; and the weak and timid spoke in half-whispers, and went each night to bed shuddering at some recent tale of horror. Even the commander-in-chief of the British forces committed as much destruction as he could in supplying his army; and his progress, like the flight of eastern locusts, carried terror before it, and left desolation and famine behind. Yet his lordship did not do these things with impunity; for both he and his more savage subordinates were not seldom lectured by the good dames of Alamance and of other places, who bestowed upon them more catholic sermons and evangelical denunciations of tribulation and wrath to come than they had heard since the beginning of the war. His lordship, however, was a gentleman, and suffered himself patiently to be denounced; but some there were, holding commissions in his army, whose unmanly cruelty and resentment brought a lasting infamy on themselves, and on the cause in which they were engaged. If we knew their names we would give them for the eternal execration of every honourable mind.

CHAPTER XLVI. A NIGHT OF ADVENTURES.

ON one occasion, just after the various corps of the British army had encamped for the night, a scouting party captured two females and a negro man; and, in the absence of their commander, undertook to have some sport. One of the women was somewhat elderly, plain-looking, and masculine, and her only concern seemed to be for the timid and girlish companion, who hung tremblingly by her arm, concealing her face.

I say, my pretty mistress, said one of the men, taking hold of the girl, I wish to see that sweet face of yours. It was not made to be hid.

Stand off, you scurvy knave! exclaimed the elder lady, striking the soldier in the face.

Well done, beldame! hurra, she-devil! shouted his companions, pulling back the discomfited soldier, and forming a ring round the women.

The heroine who had dealt the blow, now stood, with her arms folded, facing her enemies, and exhausting on them all the terms of abuse in the English language, while her terrified companion clung to her dress, crying, Oh, for Heaven's sake, hush, or they'll kill us, they'll kill us! These cries were in vain; for the stout woman continued her harangue, much to the edification of a portion of her hearers, who rewarded her with frequent bursts of applause, some shouting Mount her on a stump! and some, Put her in boots and breeches!

Ah, marry come up! If I was a man, with a sword at my side, I could chase you all into the sea, you cowardly villains, you sniveling scoundrels, you dirty puppies, you red-coated rampscallions!

Three cheers for that! shouted the men.

Yes; you may give cheers to keep your courage up, you sneaking cur-dogs! General Greene and General Washington will get hold of you soon, and I hope they'll skin you like a parcel of eels, and then pickle you like pork, you dastardly rogues! you robbers, burglars, murderers, thieves, assassins, and pirates!

Look here, old witch, said one of the soldiers, you mustn't make any reflections on our honour, or we might do you some damage.

'Our *honour!*' exclaimed she, as if there was honour among such filthy vagabonds, such rotten scum! Where are the mothers that bore you, where are your wives and sisters, that you must run about the country murdering children, abusing helpless women, and robbing, burning, and playing the mischief? What harm have we ever done to you? what grudge

None at all, said one of the men, except in being so d d ugly.

Ugly, am I, you son of perdition? Ugly, am I, you stinking buzzard? I had rather be ugly than be a liar, a thief, a coward, and a strolling vagabond, fighting other people's battles, having my back tanned every morning by my master's cowhide, and covered over with vermin, filth, and rottenness, and stinking so vilely that the very buzzards wouldn't touch me, though ever so hungry!

That's a whopper, exclaimed the stoutest man in the company; and, to show you that I think you beautiful as Queen Dulcinea, I'm going to kiss you in spite of your teeth, if you've got any. Clear the way, boys!

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The girl again implored and entreated her friend not to be so violent. Oh, do please ask them for mercy, she cried, in an agony of alarm, or they'll murder and ruin us! For God's sake, for my sake, and your own, speak kindly to them!

Stand off, child, said the other, and let me alone. Now come up, you bantering villain, and try your tricks on me. At this, as the man came towards her, she let fly into his face, and upon his head and breast, a succession of well-aimed and powerful blows, which speedily brought the soldier senseless to the earth.

At the same instant a voice behind them exclaimed, What new row's this, you besotted knaves? and, the men, turning round, were abashed by the presence of two mounted officers. Will you forever disgrace yourselves, and the proud name of an English soldier, by your infamous debauches? asked the elder officer. You shall suffer for this, for I know you all. Come hither, good woman, and tell me who brought you here, and what has been done to you.

This was addressed to the older female, but the younger, seeing that she was in the presence of a gentleman, walked near him and answered We were going, sir, with that servant, whom these men have tied, to a neighbour's house, and were taken near this place. No violence has been offered to us.

Then, in God's name, fair damsel, take your servant and friend, and go in peace; and may He who guards the innocent be with you!

But I must ask a favour of you, sir, before we go, said the girl, with confidence.

I shall be apt to grant any favour in my power that is asked by lips so sweet. How fair she looks by the light of the moon!

My request, replied the girl, is for your ear alone, good sir; and if you will walk a little way with me I will make it known to you.

By Heaven, she is a gem! Here, Donald, hold my horse till I act the part of a gallant knight-errant to a maiden in distress. Come on, my enchanted princess, I'm ready to swear I'll kill any giant, hippogriff, or dragon that besets your path.

My name, said the girl, when beyond the hearing of the others, is Kate Warden, and that good woman with me is Mrs. Polly Rust, my neighbour. My brother is at her house, and I am going there to see him, and I wish you to escort us safely to the place.

By St. George, maiden, you are very rash! exclaimed the officer. Your brother is a leading rebel; and, if I mistake not, a major in the service. Did you not know it is my duty to catch him wherever I can find him?

I knew, answered Kate, that you would kill him if you could, in a fair and manly fight; but I thought the brave would scorn to betray the brave, or to molest them when they trusted to each other's honour.

And so they would, my pretty damsel, under ordinary circumstances; but you must remember I am a sworn officer, and that my duty to my king compels me to arrest a traitor wherever I find him.

It is said a great battle is going to be fought soon, returned Kate Warden; and my brother wished to see me once more, as he might never get another opportunity. I have betrayed his life, I fear, and I shall never be happy again. Oh, my dear Henry! what will you think of my folly and the poor girl began to wring her hands and weep.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

By the souls of my ancestors, said the officer, you have not betrayed him. I will not molest him; but I cannot go with you. Young maiden, you must excuse me. It really seems to me that the suggestions of your innocent heart are the true behests of that honour which I profess to be guided by; and yet the world thinks not so. And so it is, continued he, speaking to himself; we are all pursuing phantoms. We profess to make honour our guide, and glory our end, and still we are ashamed to tread what we know to be the path of real honour and glory. It shall not be so with me, let the world say what it may. Young lady, I grant your request to its fullest extent; and now let us be off.

So saying, he led her back to his horse, and mounting her up behind him, and ordering his companion to take up Mrs. Rust, and telling the negro to lead the way, struck off through the woods. The older lady was behind the younger officer, and a very handsome one he was, though strangely ungallant. Totally forgetful of the face, feet, and dress of the good dame Rust, he would not keep the road, but must needs dash through the bushes to get alongside of his senior officer. The good woman sometimes uttered an ejaculation as her face got scratched, or a great rent made in her dress, and Donald M'Leod would make a hasty apology, and dash into the bushes again. He said nothing to Kate, nor did she speak to him; but though it was night, they became sufficiently acquainted to have recognised each other ten years afterwards. Arrived at Mrs. Rust's, the latter was profuse in her thanks, and Kate begged to know how she could return her gratitude.

I am overpaid by my own heart, said the senior; still, I hope you will believe me to be a gentleman according to your own understanding of that word.

And me, your faithful servant, said the other.

Ah, Donald! However, I'm mum, remarked the senior, with a laugh.

Gentlemen, said Kate, here is my handkerchief; if you will wear it about you in battle, it may be of service.

As we can't both use it at the same time, replied the older gentleman, I will give it to him for whom it was meant.

And here is mine for you, sir, said Mrs. Rust; there is virtue in it.

I'll keep it, answered he to whom it was offered, to remind me of an honest deed; but as for charms and amulets, I need them not. Miss Warden, you will please to present to your brother, the major, the compliments of Colonel Webster, and tell him to be off by the early dawn, or I cannot answer for his safety. Tell him also, that I should be happy to meet him whenever it shall please General Greene to choose his field. And so, my duty to you, ladies, and may peace be with you.

Kate Warden did not fail to tell her brother all that had happened; nor Mrs. Rust to express her astonishment at finding a Christian and a gentleman among the British. The visit of Henry Warden was undertaken for a double purpose. He had some things of importance to communicate from his father to his family, and, labouring under a depression of spirits, he was extremely desirous of seeing his sister and mother once more. His wish was in part gratified, and, after a most affecting interview, he took his leave of Kate, with a sad foreboding that he would see her no more.

Hector M'Bride and his party happened, on this very same night, to get within the English camp, and all were taken prisoners, except Corny Demijohn. That valiant knight, having the only sword in the company, and having become a tolerable horseman, cut his way through the centre of the camp, scorning to turn his back, and creating among the half-sleeping soldiers a terrible alarm. Thinking at first that they were attacked by at least twenty thousand cavalry, and seeing a huge giant, with a blood-dripping sword, bearing down through their midst, the men gathered their arms, and ran hither and thither in confusion; the officers shouted, the drums rattled, and

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

alarm—guns were fired. To add to the consternation, Captain Corny, seeing the state of things, gave a tremendous shout, and as he neared the last company, who were under arms, he cried, Surrender, you knaves, or you'll be butchered in an instant! The men stood irresolute, half—disposed to lay down their arms; and Captain Demijohn was carried by his faithful charger beyond the reach of danger, having killed three men in his perilous passage, and caused the whole British army to be formed for battle. The officers were so much mortified at what had happened that they retained the ladies prisoners, and there is a tradition that one of them fell violently in love with Lucy Neal. Be that as it may, the prisoners were all handsomely treated, though their captivity came near breaking the hearts of Rust and his sable namesake.

CHAPTER XLVII. EVENTS STILL HASTEN ONWARD.

As it was now confidently expected, from the return from Virginia of General Greene, and from his aggressive movements, that a battle was inevitable, the scattered Whigs emerged from their hiding—places, and flocked to the standard of their leader. They hastened off from the immediate neighbourhood and from remote quarters, some on foot and some on horseback; some singly offering their services, and some in small companies, consisting of not more than half a dozen. They came with such weapons as they had with them in their concealment, and some of them without any arms at all. They came from caves, from swamps, and from hollow trees, their long beards, worn garments, and emaciated forms, giving them a wild and picturesque appearance. They knew little or nothing of the discipline of armies: and, strangers to the feelings of the trained soldier, whose trade is war, they came to make a final stand for their homes and their property to strike one blow in their own way for their country and its liberties. Of such materials consisted mainly the army of General Greene, the last hope of the patriots in the South. It was a bare, sickly, and ragged rout, with every species of rusty arms, without discipline, and part of it without officers, and of whom it might have been said by their scornful foes,

'Big Mars seems bankrupt in their beggared host,
And faintly through a rusty beaver peeps.'

In striking contrast with these were the enemies whom they were zealous to encounter. Cornwallis, when marching to meet them, took Alamance in his rout; the tramp of his steeds, the braying of his trumpets, and the hoarse rattle of his drums startling the echoes of that former abode of peace, while his streaming banners flouted proudly in the eyes of its inhabitants. As the women of this ancient community beheld, from the crowded windows and balconies, the sheen of their glittering arms, and their terrible train of destructive engines, their thoughts turning to their husbands and their brothers in the camp of General Greene, some gave way to despair; and others, lifting their eyes to heaven, mutely implored the aid of its avenging arm for their friends and country. When the array, in all the pomp and pride of military show, had passed out of view, and the sound of the music died away upon the distant hills, an awful silence followed; the elements of local strife were stilled, and all eyes and hearts were turned, in hushed and painful expectation, to the scene of the approaching conflict. Confident in their well—disciplined strength, despising the might of their adversaries, with the savage delight and swift fury of hungry wolves, when about to overtake the spoil that has long eluded them, the royalists hastened on to where their prey had made his final stand, and turned at bay. They found him on his well—chosen ground at Guilford Court House, calm as a summer morning, an eagle in his eyrie, watching with keen and steady eye the coming storm, and prepared to make a desperate struggle.

This is the manner in which the master begins his account of the battle of Guilford, an engagement which he witnessed with lively and varied emotions. He and his fellow—prisoners were kept under a small guard in the rear of the British army, and beyond the reach of danger; and from here it was that he saw the conflict. He and Edith Mayfield were the only two persons in the company whose sympathies were in unison on that occasion. This latter, looking on herself as dead to love and to Henry Warden, and animated now with a holy fervour for her country and its liberties, awaited the issue of the struggle with the intensest interest. Nannie Scott kept her eyes on

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Rust, with an expression that showed how grateful she was that he was not in the strife; and Lucy Neal, half dead with fright, thinking only of Henry Warden, shook like an aspen at every explosion of the artillery, and fancying every gun was aimed at him she loved, enquired often and anxiously if the battle was not over. As for the two Bens, they were nearly wild with grief the one because he could not be near his old master, the other because he was not in the fight. None of the ladies could bear to look upon the field; but McBride, who, with the Bens, stood upon a high rock, gave them, from time to time, information in regard to the progress of the struggle.

May the Almighty curse them cowards! exclaimed Ben Rust, soon after the fight began; what a glorious sweep they had!

Those are militia, Ben, said the master, and never saw a fight before. See what a heap of dead they piled up at the first fire, and see how, like lightning, gleam the British bayonets which dispersed them. That was the first charge, and those poor fellows had not yet got warmed in the struggle.

Is our side giving way? asked Edith.

A goodly number of them have fled after a single fire, answered the master, and I fear it is impossible to retrieve the disaster. Yes, I believe we will yet gain the day, for do but see how the second line stands its ground. The bayonets are nearly on them; and now, my gallant fellows, now's the time to show your mettle. Glorious! what a terrible fire was that! Gloriously done again! Do but behold how their ranks are thinned and torn!

Is not the battle over? anxiously enquired Lucy.

Over! exclaimed Rust; If I was General Greene I'd pepper them till every red-coated knave had bit the dust or left the field. Oh that I was jist there, with my rifle!

You forget where you are, young man, said one of his guards to Rust.

I wish I could, he replied, but if I've hurt your feelings I beg pardon. Natur will have its way.

Who now appears to have the advantage? asked Edith.

It's hard to say, answered the master, for they are every where engaged, and the whole field is one sheet of flame. Who is that British officer mounted on a fine black charger?

That, said one of the soldiers, is Colonel Webster, one of the best officers in the service.

By my soul, he is showing it to-day, exclaimed M'Bride; and he's everywhere in the thickest of the fray. Oh, God! our second line is giving way. I cannot bear the sight.

Are we beaten? enquired Edith, please look again.

There is yet hope, said the master, for there is still another line to be attacked, the brave Continentals as I judge.

Do you see any of our friends? asked Lucy.

I cannot tell a man at this distance, replied the master; but I have thought more than once that I saw Henry Warden. Yes, it is he, as I live it must be he! Oh, if you could only see how gallantly he bears himself! There goes old Greene along the lines, honour and glory to his name! He must be preparing for a desperate effort, and now they are at it, man to man, and squadron to squadron. Brave men, now's the time to put forth all your

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

energies! May the might of a thousand giants nerve your arms! Oh, do but look at that noble officer! It is Washington, with his cavalry, and down he comes with an awful swoop, scattering all before him! Great heavens! I see among his men the huge form of Uncle Corny! His sword seems to be red with blood; see, he has split down at least a dozen!

Are we not about to gain the day? again asked Edith.

I'll tell you when the smoke clears away, said the master. Indeed, continued he, I do believe we are. There comes Washington again, like a furious whirlwind, and nothing stands before him. They falter, they are thrown in confusion. Victory! victory!

Every one but the ladies now mounted the rock, and watched in silence and with intense interest the progress of the fight.

Great God! exclaimed M'Bride, at length, Cornwallis is firing on his own men! The field is now a terrible scene, and the last struggle has come. There goes old Greene again! What a glorious chief he is! Alas! in vain has he contested every inch: his men are falling back; we are lost, we are lost! and in an agony of grief the master sat down and covered his face with his hands.

They've paid dearly for their victory, said Rust; and the old fox is not beaten, though he retreats. He goes off in good order with his bristles up, and growlin as if he wanted to try it over again.

It was even so. The American commander, after a desperate struggle, in which his genius and his courage shone resplendent, was forced to yield a field on which he left dead twice as many of the enemy as of his own men. Had he been able to have maintained the combat an hour longer, Cornwallis, with all his army, would have fallen into his hands; and even as it was, the enemy were so entirely crippled that they commenced an immediate and rapid retreat, dismissing their prisoners, and continuing their flight till they fell an easy prey at Yorktown. Thus it ever seemed to be with General Greene. In all his battles he deserved success; but he was fated never to achieve a victory, but to win laurels for other brows.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AT the grey dawn of the following morning Edith Mayfield was on the field of the late engagement. The birds were singing merrily where lately the din of battle raged so fiercely; but the shattered trees, the fissures in the trenched and furrowed earth, and the heaps of dead bodies that were dimly visible in the dusky twilight, still reminded the visiter of the late awful presence of war. Attracted by their groans, Edith sought out the living, to some of whom she brought water, bound up the wounds of others, and spoke words of consolation to the dying, whose parting spirits she commended to the mercy of their Giver. Several expired while she was with them, and, as she was dressed in white, they believed they saw an apparition, and their last looks were fixed on her, and their last words called for blessings on her head. As some of the wounded men had known her before, and had heard of her death, they confirmed the notion that she was a spirit, a celestial messenger of light and peace sent to relieve the wants and assuage the pangs of the suffering patriots. The character of the times, and the sombre hue of public sentiment, lent credit to these opinions, even in the eyes of the early visiters, and thus originated the current tradition of the Pale Lady, whose mission it was to heal the wounded in the American army, and consign the souls of the dying to a long and sweet repose. While she was thus engaged, and as the beams of the rising sun were gilding the tree-tops, she was met by a young English officer, who courteously saluted her, and enquired if she was acquainted with the father of Major Warden.

If you mean George Warden, sir, the father of Mr. Henry Warden, I am, answered Edith.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

George Warden is the gentleman to whom I allude, said Donald M'Leod, looking at the superscription of a letter which he held in his hand, and I must beg your assistance in the discharge of a duty which I owe to him. His son yesterday saved my life, took me prisoner, and had me released upon my parole, and gave me a letter to his father, who, it is said, was wounded in the engagement. I promised Major Warden that I would immediately seek out the old gentleman, and see that his wounds were attended to; but, as I do not know him, I will thank you to point him out to me as soon as you can find him.

By a small stream on the edge of the field, where the fight had been hardest, Edith saw Hector M'Bride seated, and appearing to be in conversation with a man who was lying on the ground, and resting his head on the palm of his hand. Going thither with the British officer, she found George Warden, who greeted her with lively demonstrations of pleasure at the meeting, and to whom she immediately introduced her companion. After the salutations were over, M'Bride requested his friend to continue the account of the battle which he had begun, and George Warden thus proceeded: As I was about to relate when these friends came up, the North Carolina militia poured one destructive fire into the ranks of the enemy, and then broke and fled. I am proud, however, to say that this inglorious example was not universally followed, for one company fought gallantly and nobly throughout the engagement. These were the Guilford militia, many of them being from our own Alamance, whence also came, as you know, their heroic commander, Captain Forbs, who was mortally wounded in the engagement.

Remember that fact, said the master, and I will also put it in my notes as a testimony against the charge of cowardice which will be hereafter brought against all the militia of the state. But where was our friend Captain Demijohn? Did he bear himself with his accustomed gallantry.

He did, replied Warden; in fact, I may say he fairly eclipsed himself. As I have intimated before, he came up mysteriously, just on the eve of battle, and took his station by my side in the cavalry. He was not in a humour for talking, and briefly told me that my sweet friend here, Edith Mayfield, yourself, Rust, and others were prisoners in the British army. As I pressed him for an account of his adventures, an explosion of cannon shook the ground, the chest of my friend heaved with emotion, his eyes flashed fire, and, seizing my hand, he said: 'The master will tell you all; I allude to Lieutenant M'Bride, who will do justice to my memory. My true and ancient friend, I am in the humour for blows now, not words I am for blood the blood of the tyrants, and by the Eternal it shall flow to-day! When you return to Alamance, and are happy there among your friends, sometimes remember and speak kindly of Uncle Corny. Good by!' So saying he braced himself for the fight, and all day he was by my side in the thickest of the fray, saying not a word, and laying about him like a giant. In the last splendid charge, led by Washington, he actually split down eleven men, over the last of whom he fell himself, saying, as he fell, 'Oh, my mother!' These were his dying words; for that he is dead I have no doubt, as he fell near me, and I have often called to him during the night without an answer. Such was the end of my friend, of whom I may truly say,

'In this glorious and well-foughten field
We kept together in our chivalry.'

Peace be to his ashes!

Amen! exclaimed the master, and may God rest his soul forever! A better man or a braver soldier never drew a sword or put a lance in rest; but it is time to seek him out and bury him with becoming honours on the field of his glory.

Accordingly, Warden was now conveyed to a neighbouring house, and left to the care of Edith and her female companions, while the master, with Rust and M'Leod, returned to the battle-field. The two latter examined with great curiosity, and a lively interest, the scene of the engagement, the young Englishman gratifying his rough companion by pointing out the most memorable localities, and giving a detailed history of the contest. As for the master, now satiated with the horrors of war, and profoundly meditating on

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Man's inhumanity to man,
he went strolling about the field, with his hands clasped behind him, taking no notice of any one, and being, in return, noticed by none. He traversed every part of the field, and his reflections became more sad and solemn from what he now heard and saw around him. Weeping women and children were now swarming in the places so lately covered with martial hosts glittering in the panoply of war, and groans, cries, and lamentations resounded through every part of the scene. Mothers, wives, and sisters were wailing over the dead and wounded bodies of their friends, husbands, and sons; and the master, to whose ears, in his present mood, these sounds of sorrow and woe were not ungrateful, became lost in thought, and almost forgot himself and his friend, for whose body he had commenced a search, when he was suddenly and unpleasantly interrupted by the voice of Rust, who exclaimed, near him, By Jehu! if the old dame don't take a Britisher for me!

I know what I am about, my son, answered Mrs. Rust, embracing, with great fervour and lively affection, the astonished and blushing M'Leod. And do you think I could ever forget you, my darling, my dear child? continued she, as she released the young officer, and flew upon her son, overpowering him with her embraces, laughing and crying by turns, and addressing Ben, who stood motionless and silent, with every kind of endearing appellation.

You don't seem to notice me, Mr. M'Bride, said a low, soft voice behind him; and, turning, the master was somewhat confused at finding Kate Warden, who had been standing near him, and whom he had not observed. His apologies for his neglect were kindly and graciously received; but he was confounded when he found that the blushing girl and Donald M'Leod, whose cheeks were also red, had been conversing together, and were acquainted with each other. To his inexpressible mortification he heard from Mrs. Rust of her own and Kate's adventure with the British officers; yet, touched by the chivalrous bearing of Colonel Webster, he was prompted to enquire for his fate.

He fell, mortally wounded, replied M'Leod, and will never again see a field of strife.

His was a noble and a gallant spirit, answered M'Bride, and he fell on a bloody field, where his peers were few.

I wish he had worn the handkerchief, said Polly Rust.

It could not have saved so brave and proud a man, who went into the fight to conquer or die, answered M'Leod. Nevertheless, he treasures the gift, and will send it home to his friends, as an humble but honourable testimony of his humanity and gallantry in this long and savage war. No stain of cruelty will rest on his name; and the last words he said to me were, that he hoped you, Miss Warden, and such as you, would cherish his memory as one who was a gentleman and a hero in your own just sense of those terms. My present, continued the speaker, more gaily, served me to better purpose, and I must needs always wear it next to that grateful heart whose warm blood it saved from being spilled on this ensanguined-field.

Kate blushed crimson, and took the proffered arm of M'Leod, who led her off to see her father; and the master, who had hoped to find a companion in the young officer, fell into a train of unpleasant thoughts. Thus it is, thought he; I can find no man who has not had an adventure with a lady; and even on this sad and impressively solemn scene, my sublime meditations must be interrupted, and my thoughts brought down to the ephemeral concerns of giddy young mortals by the foolery of love-making. Is there a spot on earth where hands are not squeezed and light hearts palpitate not with lascivious emotions? If there is I'll find it out, and build me a cottage there; but alas! I shall never find the place. I have heard whispering, and seen blushes, around the couch of the dying; seen ogling done at prayers, and soft glances exchanged over the coffin as it was lowered into the grave. Verily, I almost believe that if the last trump were to summons earth's grovelling mortals to their final dread account, fond looks and tokens would be exchanged, and fingers squeezed in the vast crowd that gathered round

the awful tribunal of their Judge!

CHAPTER XLIX.

ON the day of the battle of Guilford Court House, many of the women of Alamance assembled at the house of Esther Bell, and joined in prayers to Heaven for the success of their friends. Black Dan had been despatched to bring early tidings of the fight; and, as the sun descended in the west, anxiety became so intense, that none spoke but with their eyes, all bending their looks incessantly towards the battle-field. It was a day of doubts, of gloom, and horror. Even conscious nature, to the Alamancers, seemed to wear a grave and sombre look; the air was thick and sultry, the skies were dark and threatening, the voices only of the saddest birds were heard, and a solemn stillness reigned around. At length, late in the night, the long-expected messenger arrived, and gave a full and authentic account of the engagement. As he finished, a small and aged lady, whose locks were as white as snow, and who seemed to be gradually withering away from earth, exclaimed, ringing her hands and lifting up her eyes, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom, would to God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! It was the mother of Uncle Corny who spoke; and all, touched to the heart by her misfortunes, mingled their tears in silence, while she sat mutely moving her lips in prayer. At length, mastering her emotion, she rose, and, with a face beaming like that of an ancient sibyl, when under the influence of inspiration, she said: My friends, if I have given way to nature you must not blame me. I am like a blasted tree, whose scions are all withered, and from which no bud or branch can ever spring again. My house is desolate the light of my heart is extinguished the prop and staff of my declining years is gone. The last hope of my house is blighted, and with me my name must soon perish from the earth. Yet can I truly say, with the patient Job, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' But though my eyes be dim, and the years of my pilgrimage are more than threescore years and ten, it is yet reserved for me to see the redemption of my land. 'Then, strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees: for the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning; ye shall go forth with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.' And now to that God who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, while the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers before him, let every heart bow in prayer.

While the company still remained at Esther Bell's during the following day, George Warden and several other wounded men were brought in; but the person who excited most astonishment, and most joy, was Edith Mayfield. Her mother fainted oftener than she had done when she heard of her death, and it is not extravagant to say that, for a while, she created a sensation of pleasure as lively as if the independence of the States had been recognized by the parent country. Thus every evil is tempered with some unexpected good; and, in fact, her return was a general blessing, for it was universally regarded as a happy omen. The drooping spirits of the people began to revive, the Whigs came flocking home, industry began to assume its wonted course, and the Tories, left without the protection of the British, quit their predatory habits, and many of them left the country. The family of George Warden, however, were still in straitened circumstances, and, having no home of their own, at the earnest solicitation of Mrs. Mayfield, and of Edith, took up their residence with them. Thither, also, went Lucy Neal, Nannie Scott, and Hector M'Bride; and, as Ben Rust was a frequent visiter, the mansion of the Mayfields became what it had never been before, the head-quarters of the Whigs. The patriots began now to scour the country and execute summary justice on their enemies. As some of their proceedings are worthy of note, the reader will find an account of them in the following chapter.

CHAPTER L.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

That night a child might understand,
The De'il had business on his hand. *TAM O'SHANTER.*

A THOUSAND strange rumours in regard to Nathan Glutson had long been afloat at Alamance. His house was never visited by the Whigs, and it was even supposed that he secretly—kept in pay a number of Tories, who guarded his stolen treasure. Nathan was himself aware of the odium attached to his name, and finding it impossible to restore himself to his former position in society, and fearing too for his personal safety, he resolved to move. He intended first secretly to hunt out a location and send off his slaves, and then to sell his house and lands for what they would bring, and carry off his family. The night before he was to start in search of a new home set in with a threatening bank of clouds gathering in the south and west. Frequent flashes of lightning shot up athwart the heavens, and at intervals the heavy roll of far—off and deep—toned thunder jarred the doors and windows. The night grew darker and hotter, the lightning gleamed more vividly, and the booming of the thunder became louder and nearer, until Nathan, who was afraid of storms, thought it proper to assemble within the parlour a number of men who were about the premises.

What did you want with us? demanded one of these latter, who remained standing.

I wished, said Nathan, blinking and letting down the curtains, to give you all some further directions before I part from you.

You've already told us, four or five times, what you want done, replied the man, who had spoken before, and its growing late. Come, tell your business, and let us go to bed, for I'm sleepy.

Sit down, my friend, sit down and make yourself easy, returned Nathan, mildly, and trembling all over as a heavy crash of thunder burst through the air. Sit down all of you, for I'm going to set out the brandy; and, as good friends are about to separate, we'll make a night of it. Gracious, that was a sharp flash. I believe we'll have a shower presently.

A shower, indeed! exclaimed one of the men, who was standing at the door; it will be an awful storm. Just come to the door and see what terrible black clouds are boiling up in the south. Heavens! the whole sky is on fire!

Come, said Nathan, to whom these words were daggers, I must shut this door or you'll get frightened. Some folks are afraid of thunder.

And why shouldn't they be? asked the man; they say two men were killed by one stroke last week on Haw river; and I saw a tree in old Hackett's yard that was shattered all to pieces.

For my part, said another, I don't mind common storms, but this one to—night will be dreadful.

Sheet after sheet of living flame now glared through the lighted room, and peal after peal, louder than the explosion of a thousand cannon, shook the house to its foundations. More candles were lighted, the curtains were drawn closer, and still the fiery arrows of the clouds gleamed and sparkled in the room, blinding with intense brightness the eyes, and blanching the cheeks of its terrified tenants, while the rattling thunderbolts seemed to burst above and around them, with a crash as if heaven and earth were coming together. The wind was now terrific, prostrating, in its resistless might, the firmest oaks like rotten stubble, and the rain came down in floods. The wife and children of Glutson, aroused and alarmed by the commotion in the elements, came running into the room the females, frantic with fear, clustering round the head of the family, as if looking to him for protection.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

At this instant there was heard, above the din of the storm, a voice crying, Nathan Glutson! Nathan Glutson! your time has come at last.

My innocent children, my dear wife, exclaimed Nathan, pray for me! pray for me! pray for us all! Oh, if this night was once over I would live a different life!

I hear that promise, said a man who came in unperceived at the northern door, and was followed by a file of armed men, all in masks, Men, guard the doors and windows, said the leader, and see that no one escapes. Do you all surrender?

To whom, may I respectfully ask, said Glutson, shall we have that pleasure?

To me, was the brief response.

Well, friend, you see we are in your power, answered Nathan, meekly, and I trust you'll try us fairly.

You shall have justice, replied the captain of the armed men. Here, lieutenant, tie them all I mean all the men.

This order was promptly executed, no one making the slightest resistance, and the women and children looking on in mute astonishment and alarm.

Now, said the captain, we'll proceed to business. Nathan Glutson!

I hear you, sir.

Nathan Glutson, I've come to settle with you a long account.

If you owe me any thing, friend, replied Glutson, I don't know it; and, as for myself, I don't owe a dollar in the world.

You are mistaken, sir, returned the captain, as I will soon show you by the bill and vouchers.

It's very likely, friend; for all our memories are treacherous. I'll never deny a just debt, and if you'll show me one I'll pay it with the cash down, principal and interest.

Very well, said the captain, here is the account, and I'll read it to you, item by item.

Molly, dear, said Nathan to his wife, bring me my spectacles, and bring also a pen and ink, and some paper, for we may need them.

Not at present, replied the captain; I am going to show you a new way to write receipts.

Will you let me look at your bill? asked Glutson, his wife adjusting his spectacles for him. I do not wish, by any means, to dispute your word, but I make it a rule always to examine accounts before I pay them. Men can't be too particular about such things; and sharp looks save long suits.

That's a fact, exclaimed the captain; but the keenest of us sometimes nod, as you will see. I'll read you the account, and then you can examine it at your leisure.

Very good, my friend, you can proceed in your own way.

Well, here's the bill:

**'Nathan Glutson
To Public Justice, Dr.**

- For assisting Alan Ross to carry of Edith Mayfield, charged 39 lashes.'

You are jesting with me, friend, said Nathan.

I never was more in earnest in my life, answered the captain, and I would have you to hold your peace and listen.

- 'To negroes, bonds, many cattle and horses, stolen from the Whigs at his instigation, and for his benefit, charged, a full restituion, with interest on the value, and 69 lashes.
- To sundries, such as being a thief, a Tory, and a general nuisance, charged, 39 lashes.
- To persecuting George Warden, burning his fences and his houses, and destroying his property, charged, £1000 and 39 lashes.
- To procuring, aiding and abetting in various murders, burglaries, and assassinations, charged, to be hanged by the neck till you die.
- Sum total: to receive 186 lashes, restore all your stolen effects, with interest on their value from the time of taking, to pay down £1000, and then to die and leave a world where you are a pest.'

Now, old gripus, here's the voucher. Here's the affidavits of Dick Sikes and of Pete Simmons, all regularly taken. Are you ready to close the account?

Let me speak with you in private, answered Nathan, and the two withdrew into another room.

They had been gone but a few minutes when the captain returned, leading his prisoner by the collar, and exclaiming, The old villain as good as confessed, and tried to bribe me. Let him swing instantly.

The family of Glutson now set up a piteous lamentation, begging for his life, and offering, if he was spared, to make him give up every thing, even to the last dollar which he had.

We'll give him fifteen minutes to prepare, said the leader, during which time we'll despatch some other business. Tom Barton and Jesse Woods, I wish to have a word with you.

Who told you our names? asked the persons called at the same time.

No matter for that. I know you. You, Tom, are charged with various burglaries; and among them a most heinous one at Ralph Gowell's. You are charged with an attempt to kill Esther, Bell, with being accessory to the murder of Betsy Deans, and with having shot at that good man, Isaac Holt. There are a hundred charges against you, Jesse, and the last one is, that you treacherously shot that brave man, Captain Forbes, while he was fighting for his country, at Guilford court-house. Come, lieutenant, fix the ropes.

Prayers, promises, and entreaties were vain. The storm having somewhat subsided, the two Tories were led out, and to the limb of an oak immediately before the door they were suspended, side by side, and left their struggling bodies being occasionally revealed by the fitful flashes of lightning, and filling Glutson and his friends with horror.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Now, old Jew, said the captain to Nathan, your turn comes next, and time presses. Are you ready to pay up? Why, man, are you crazy?

Nathan, standing at the door in a sort of stupor, with his eyes fixed on the suspended bodies of the Tories oscillating to and fro in the wind, like pendulums, replied, Yes, my friend, my good friend, I'm ready to give you every thing I have in the world. Only spare my life, for God's sake; for these poor innocents' sake, spare my life! I am not ready to die; I want time to repent of all my sins.

Time, answered the captain, is what you've been very sparing of. I never heard it said of you that you did not demand payment the very minute your debt was due.

Yes; but, friend, you may do good by indulging me, for I swear to you that I will do whatever you want.

And so have your debtors sworn often before. The poor wretches in whom your usurious claws were fixed have begged, entreated, and prayed for a little indulgence. They have pointed to their weeping wives and children crying for bread; they have pointed to their own utter ruin, and shown that a little, just a little, indulgence would save them, and save, also, your debt. To these entreaties, you, hardhearted monster you, son of perdition, have always coolly answered, 'The debt's due, and I can't help your misfortunes, I must have my money.' So I now say to you, the debt's due, and, what's more, it's just. Recommend your soul to the mercy of God, for your time's up.

So saying, the captain and his men seized Nathan, and, while he was yet screaming, and his family clinging to him, he was swung by the side of his friends on the oak. The rope was so fastened that the tension round the neck was not severe, and the wretch suffered the agonies of a hundred deaths. He was finally taken down while life yet remained, and, after some difficulty, was restored to the use of his faculties. He was, however, pale as a corpse, and weak and feeble as a child, and with ready alacrity did whatever he was requested. He brought out all his papers; and these being handed by the captain to one of his assistants for his inspection, the latter found what he expected the bonds of Warden, with receipts from Glutson for nearly the whole amount. A paper was also found, in which there was a release, by Glutson, of his title to the property of Warden, forfeited by the terms of a mortgage; and this release was dated on the same day with the receipts, and five days after the mortgage became due. Glutson acknowledged that these papers had been purloined at his instigation, and ordered a secret cash-book to be brought out, that it might be seen what amount of stolen property had come to his hands. The soldiers stared at each other, and now felt that they were truly in a den of iniquity.

The celebrated book was produced a book that was long kept as a rare curiosity at Alamance, and known as the Devil's Leger. Fragments of it are now in the author's possession, being a part of the papers left by the master; and from them it appears that Glutson kept an exact account of his dealings with the Tories, each of which was known and mentioned by some fictitious name. A few extracts will show the manner in which the entries were made:

- Paid Long Thom 7 pounds 2, for five horses imported from Babylon.
- Paid King Solomon four and sixpence, for an assortment of leather, sheep, and blacksmith's tools, imported from Nova Scotia.
- Paid Jupiter Jehosiphath 1 pound sterling, for his part of the cargo from Constantinople.
- Paid the Pope 10 pounds sterling, for two negroes and sundries, imported from Botany Bay.

The captain and his men, beyond measure astonished, and even amused at what they found in the book, turned over the leaves and devoured the contents with their eyes for some time, nearly forgetting the object of their visit. After they had sufficiently gratified their curiosity, and learned from Nathan the persons to whom the nicknames were applied, the places indicated by Babylon, Constantinople, &c., and that imported meant stolen, the captain spoke as follows:

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

My friends, the night is far spent, and it's time to finish business and be off. Carry out these rascals, strip them, and tie each one to a tree and give them one hundred and eighty-six lashes a-piece. While you are about it, the lieutenant and I will attend to Nathan and his book. The men prepared to do as they were bid; and the captain continued to his lieutenant: Add up the items, and see how much plunder, besides the negroes, he has got.

The lieutenant did as he was bid, and answered, Fifteen hundred pounds sterling will cover the amount.

Count it out, Nathan, said the captain; it shall be applied to the benefit of the needy Whig families. Glutson counted out the sum in gold, and the captain proceeded: Now for Warden's negroes; where are they?

They are all in an outhouse, answered Glutson, except one, who died from ill-usage. At this the captain, his lieutenant, and Glutson, proceeded to the house alluded to, and releasing the slaves, these latter were most extravagantly delighted, and eagerly enquired where they would find their master's family.

I'll tell you presently, replied the captain; and do you wait in the yard here till I call you.

While these things were going on, the ears of Nathan were saluted by the most dismal groans from the place where his friends were suffering; and he was in such a constant terror that he trembled all over, and could scarcely speak. At every stroke and they were sturdy ones he started and looked as if his own back were smarting under the lash. After suffering martyrdom in this way, he was led out, and the captain and his lieutenant marked upon him, between his neck and heels, one hundred and eighty-six tokens of remembrance. After this, a solution of salt was thrown over the Tories; and the captain, after a considerable effort at calculation, remarked: I've been trying to make out the compound interest on one hundred and eighty-six for three years, but figures were always a botheration to me. We'll make it an even two hundred. One hundred and eighty-six from two hundred leaves how many?

Fourteen, said one.

Let it be fifteen for good measure and a round tally.

The fifteen were given, and the captain again spoke: Here, Mr. Secretary, I want you to do some writing. Give Nathan Glutson a receipt, and see that you write it plain, and so it won't wear out, for he is a tricky dog.

The injunction was obeyed with right good will, and the traces of the bold hand of the scribe would have been legible for half a century had Nathan lived so long. After these settlements were effected, the Tories were dressed and brought into the house, where the captain, changing his assumed voice and manner, thus harangued them:

Ladies and gentlemen, the performance is concluded for the night, and all accounts squared up to date. It has been, my sinful friends, a painful job to all parties concerned, and now that it's all over, I would, as old Proximus says, make a few moral observations. Firstly, then, you are informed that your credit is no longer good, and in all our dealings here—after I must have the cash up that is to say, your uncle is now about, perfectly in town, with his pocket full of rocks; and if you engage in any new rascalities you may expect to smoke for it immediately, if not sooner. Secondly, I wish you to remember Captain Bolus to all your friends and acquaintances, and especially to show them my letters, and let them know what I'll do for them whenever I find them. Thirdly, you now see the folly of your ways, and how hard it is, as the Scriptur says, to kick agin the pricks. You've brought disgrace on yourselves and on your families; you've made yourselves hated, betrayed your country, and played the very devil generally. You see and feel how you've got part of your reward; and just as sure as your backs are now smartin, if you don't repent your souls will scorch in hell-fire to all eternity. And, fourthly and this is the last and main pint, and the cream of the whole matter I give you all five days to settle up your accounts and be off, bag and baggage, scrip and scrippage, as old Proximus has it; and if after that time any of you are caught at Alamance, you will swing like them poor critturs at the door. This is said by Captain Bolus, sometimes called the Devil, and sometimes the Flyin Sarpint, who sees all round him, and who never breaks his word. And now, my Christin

friends, let us leave this cursed abode of sin and misery.

We will here remark that Nathan Glutson, who acquitted George Warden of any part in these proceedings, soon visited that gentleman, gave him a receipt in full for the small balance of his debt, and restored to him his lands. After this, Nathan and his friends disappeared; the Whigs, to get rid of him, giving him the full value of his real estate, and burning his house to the ground.

CHAPTER LI. A SAD AND SWEET REMEMBRANCE.

As congeniality of feeling produces intimacy and friendship, the party at Mrs. Mayfield's soon formed themselves into trios. Mrs. Mayfield, Mrs. Warden, and Nannie Scott discussed household matters and neighbourhood and family affairs; George Warden, Edith Mayfield, and Hector M'Bride discoursed gravely of politics and morals, life and death, time and eternity; while Lucy Neal, Kate Warden, and Donald M'Leod fished, visited, and wandered over the fields, gardens, and meadows, talking of love, romance, and marriages, poetry and novels. Kate and Lucy became, in fact, extremely intimate, were generally favorites, and had some rare frolics at the expense of the master and others, doing, at all times, pretty much what they pleased. When the Warden estates were restored to the rightful owners, and while preparations for the reception of the family were going on, the two girls went to visit the old place, and see how things were progressing. Kate did not fail to point out to Lucy every beautiful scene, and, after they had rambled about till they were tired, they went into the garden. Oh, Lucy, dear, run here! exclaimed Kate, who had separated from her companion; run here, and see what a beautiful sight! Lucy did run, wondering what had so excited her friend, who continued, as she saw Lucy coming, Here is the name of Edith Mayfield, just as distinct as it was when planted by brother Henry. He planted these carnations a long time ago, and just see how they are still flourishing, and all in bloom!

It is a sweet sight, indeed, said Lucy, and I admire the fancy very much. How did your brother come to think of it?

There is a romance connected with it, answered Kate a sad and pleasant story, and I have half a mind to tell it to you.

Please do, Lucy cried, seating herself on the grass by her friend: please tell it, for I like to hear a romance of all things.

I'm a poor hand to tell a story, returned Kate, and always do it very simply; and yet father never gets tired of hearing me talk, and calls me his little romancer. Oh, how happy we used to be before the troubles got to be so bad! I remember every thing as if it had happened yesterday, and I almost think I hear father calling on me to tell him some tale of love and romance, and trials of the old times that are gone. There sat old mother Demijohn in the great arm-chair in the corner, with her high, stiff cap and her short pipe, puffing away, and looking so kind and pleasing at us all; by her side, on a low rocking-chair, was mother, busy, with her maid, at work, and every now and then turning to father; old Ben, who then remained in the house, nodded away in the other corner, occasionally opening and rubbing his eyes, and staring as knowingly as if he had heard and understood every word; father has his arm around me, and little Wash sits on his stool at my feet, with his elbows in my lap, and gazing earnestly into my face, and believing and wondering at all I say. Those times will never come back, for one, the dearest and best of us all, is gone! Poor little Wash, my heart aches when I think of him!

Dear Kate, said Lucy, shedding tears from sympathy, you've told a story before you began. Come, dry your tears, my sweet child, and tell me about the flowers. Your next tale will not be so sad, I hope.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

You must know, then, Kate commenced, that from a child brother loved Edith What's the matter, Lucy? did you see a snake?

I thought so, answered Lucy; but it was only that crooked stick. How it did frighten me!

I despise snakes, said Kate, the great, ugly creatures! What a world this would be if there were no serpents, and how happy we could be among the flowers! As it is, we can't go into the meadow or the garden without being in terror of them; for the sly, deceitful things are always creeping about in the most beautiful places. But, as I was going to say, brother Henry loved Edith Mayfield from a child, and she was attached to him Dear Lucy, are you sick? We had better get off this damp ground and go into the house, for you look very pale.

I am not unwell, replied Lucy; I have not yet got over my fright. Please go on.

I was about to tell you that brother Henry was not like other boys; he took little interest in their plays and pleasures, and, as I have heard the master say, his soul seemed to live in a different world a world of his own, all beautiful and flowery as this garden, and where there were no snakes, toads, or scorpions, or reptiles of any sort. There was no one like him but Edith Mayfield, and you might see that she was from her very looks. Her eyes, as M'Bride says, look like the windows of Paradise, for the heaven of her soul is shining through them. Brother's and Edith's hearts grew together before they knew it, and their souls were wedded by God himself, so that, if they do not live together here, I do believe they will be inseparable companions in heaven. Lucy, you *must* be sick.

Indeed, said she, I have a palpitation at the heart, and I am in a sort of tremor all over; but it is all caused by my alarm. Never mind me, but finish the tale, for it is very interesting.

Where did I leave off? Oh, I remember now. As they grew up, Edith's father, who was a cold-hearted, worldly man, objected to her being so much with brother. He chided her about her intimacy with him told her he was a visionary, and made her act in such a way as caused brother to believe she was not what he once thought her. It was only in appearance that she disliked him; but he did not know it, and as she was very dutiful, he never could find out what her feelings were. She returned all his letters and poetry How you start! even quit school, and would not let him see her when he visited at her father's. He thought she was in love with Ross you have heard of him and he resolved to go to the wars, young as he was. Just before he went, he made a great speech at the exhibition at Alamance school-house, and every body applauded it. Edith was so pleased that she could not help showing it, and she and Henry had some very kind conversation. That was the last time he saw her. When he came home he told me all about it, and I said to him that I knew that Edith loved him, and always would. 'A woman's smiles are like sunshine in April,' he answered, and he would not believe but what her kindness was the result of a sudden whim. As mother was then gardening, brother Henry wrote Edith's name on this bed, and, sowing it with carnation-seed, he laughed and said, 'Now, sister Kate, I'm going away, and you'll see that Edith's love will be like this name: no trace of either will be left when I return!' He went off, and the carnations came up and bloomed most beautifully. The first year I showed them to Edith, and she laughed and said nothing; the next spring she was anxious to see if the flowers still remained; the next she looked at them sadly, and carried some away; the next she visited them every week, and sat by them and wept for hours at a time. You see they are still flourishing, though the garden has been long neglected, and every letter of the name is perfect. It's a happy omen. Edith has gone through many trials, and has at last got home safe, and still loves Henry. I know he loves her, and as soon as he hears that she is living, and at home, he will come on the wings of the wind. I saw him just before the battle of Guilford Court House, and he gave me some little mementoes of Edith, and told me, if he was killed, to bury them with him. All things will come right at last, and turn out happy.

They do not always, answered Lucy; as, for instance, little Wash. Was he like Henry?

Very much, only stouter, and not so intellectual, though he was very smart. Poor little Wash! he left us in gloomy times, and is not here to see our happiness.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

I'll tell him of it all, said Lucy, with a sad, abstracted manner.

Tell little Wash! exclaimed Kate, with astonishment; why, he was buried in the old grave-yard at Alamance—church long ago. I saw, myself, the cold clods fall upon his coffin, and it seemed to me that I could hear him calling to me and telling me not to let them leave him there by himself in the dark, damp ground. But only his body is there, for his spirit is now happy in heaven.

And there, replied Lucy, her tears falling like rain, shall I meet him soon.

Kate looked inquiringly at her, and, without knowing the cause of her strange words, wept also, and locked herself in the embraces of her friend. We've had a romance, sure enough, at length spoke Kate, and, like father, you've paid me with your tears. Is it not time to return?

I think it is, said Lucy, and, indeed, I feel as if I were going to be sick. I wish I was at my home in the mountains.

That's unkind, dear Lucy, returned Kate, though its natural to be sad when we first leave home. You'll soon get used to it, and be happy with us. I almost wish you were a little sick, that I might have the pleasure of being your nurse, and you'd find me an excellent one.

CHAPTER LII. THE MASTER BEGINS TO MAKE A STRANGE DISCOVERY.

I HAVE told you I should start to-morrow, said Lucy Neal, who was alone with the master.

And I have told you, he retorted, that I cannot be a shuttlecock for the women, to be forever knocked about by them according as whim or fancy strikes them. Your father does not expect you so soon, the roads are yet dangerous, and you are among your friends. You must listen to reason.

I do not wish you to trouble yourself on my account, the girl answered; I thought it my duty to inform you of my intentions. I am much obliged to you for your former kindness, and now thank you in my own and my father's name. Aunt Jennie and I can find the way, for I observed the road attentively.

The master, touched more by her manner than by what she said, felt himself strangely affected, and, apologizing for his warmth, told Lucy he would go with her to the ends of the earth. Her sudden determination and her deep dejection astonished the people with whom she was staying, and none more than Edith Mayfield. That lady, suspecting the state of Lucy's feelings, and having determined to promote her wishes, studiously avoided any allusion to her own attachment for Henry Warden. She believed, however, that Lucy had heard of it; and when she heard Kate Warden tell her mother of what took place in the garden, she saw, or thought she saw, and so did Mrs. Warden, the cause of Lucy's unhappiness. Edith, in the boundless goodness of her heart, nearly resolved to make a confidant of her mountain friend, and renounce in her favour all pretensions to the heart of Major Warden. She considered, however, that he might not agree to this arrangement, and, for this and other reasons, she held her peace. She did, nevertheless, as did also Kate and the other ladies, use every exertion to prolong the stay of Lucy; but all their arguments and entreaties failed to alter her purpose. It was then settled that the master and black Ben should accompany her and her faithful old female servant, and so they all set about making preparations. Every one, old and young, male and female, had some token to present, and old Ben found that his horse would have a heavy burden indeed. When the parting came, all wept aloud but Lucy, whose eyes were suffused with tears, and who, with a voice that melted into the soul of every hearer, spoke a few farewell words to each. She was cordially invited to return again; and when Edith told her that she and Kate would come after her in the summer, she

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

replied, with a look and voice that seemed not of earth, I shall be gone, sister, like last year's flowers. Still, till my last breath, I shall remember you all. So saying she and her escort took the road, and were soon beyond the limits of Alamance.

Mr. M'Bride, can one be saved without being a member of any church? asked Lucy.

I think it possible, answered the master; but it is advisable to join. Why do you ask such a question? Are you a member?

Lucy. No, sir; but I have often thought of such things. What is religion?

The Master. That is a question easier to ask than answer. Men have disputed and fought about it, and will, I apprehend, continue to dispute and fight about it, without ever coming to any conclusion. For my own part, while I allow every one the free enjoyment of his opinions, I have my own peculiar ones.

Lucy. So have I mine; and if you will not laugh at my simplicity, I'll tell you what they are. I have never harboured ill-will, nor wished harm to a living thing: I have always obeyed my parents in all things, and preferred the good of others to my own: I have envied nobody, hated no one, and slandered no one: I have wished to see all the world happy, and never desired a forbidden thing: I have had an humble opinion of myself, and have looked up to God as my father and as one who constantly saw my heart which prays daily to Him. Do I stand any chance of getting to heaven?

The Master. By my soul, Lucy, more than half the Christian world would do well to take your chances for their own. Your notions, in my judgement, are correct; but I would not have you to be overconfident of salvation. This vain and blind confidence is the cause of perdition to many a bigoted soul, for it causes them to lose sight of the very first element of religion. Who knows himself to be a sinner has taken the first and greatest step towards heaven; and to know and feel this daily, with inward humility and sorrow, and an humble trust in the mercy of God, this it is to be religious. Our whole life is a state militant, and we must war constantly on our own desires.

Lucy. But are there not some who become so holy that they have no need to carry on this war, and are positively certain of being saved?

The Master. That some are positively certain, in their own minds, of being saved, is undoubted; that any are holy or righteous is in the very teeth of Scripture. I tell you, Lucy, that these people who are righteous in their own eyes are certain of perdition.

Lucy. They never seem to fear it for themselves, and they denounce it very freely to others.

The Master. So they do, the hypocrites. God and the world judge differently. For example, I will state a case: Here is a sober, sedate, and severe-faced man, who eschews lewd company, indulges in no pastimes, never utters an oath, and attends church punctually every Sabbath sitting on the front pews, and listening devoutly to the services. He has a gay, wild neighbour who loves his joke, rarely goes to church, is not ashamed of being found with any one who may visit him, and who is guilty of the very irreverent habit of laughing when he's pleased. The world respects the former as a pattern of piety, and scowls upon the latter (more particularly if he's independent in his own opinions) as a miscreant on the road to temporal and eternal ruin. And yet, the all-seeing eye of Heaven beholds in the heart of the grave Pharisee the putrid contents of a whited sepulchre, and in that of the other charity, open as the day reverence to God and good-will to men.

Lucy. Is it not strange that the very followers of our meek and lowly Saviour should, generally, be so much like those very Pharisees whom he denounced as hypocrites?

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The Master. It is, indeed; but so it has been from the beginning. The descendants of Moses and the prophets were ready to crucify Christ for blasphemy towards those prophets, for being what they had predicted he would be. I have come to the melancholy conclusion, after much observation and study of history, that to preserve the world's esteem we must wear the cloak of hypocrisy. The first idea of all persons, savage and civilized of Jew and Turk, Pagan and Christian is intolerance. The world demands of you that you should think and act in all things, and especially in religious matters, as it acts and thinks. If you will but be mindful to do this, it will be better for you than to have a heart as pure as the unspotted snow. The world judges not by the intentions of the heart, nor by the absolute good or evil of the deed, but by its conformity or non-conformity to its opinions. When Lady Macduff is advised to fly, to avoid the assassins hired by Macbeth, Shakspeare makes her say,

'Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthy world, where, to do harm,
Is often laudable to do good, sometimes
Accounted dangerous folly. When, then, alas!
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm?'

That defence is available only before the bar of the Judge of the quick and dead. There the wretch, through whose rags the lance of earthly justice pierces, will stand proudly erect, his innocence guarding him with an armour impervious even to the wrath of Omnipotence!

Lucy. There's nothing I dislike so much as to have to think as other people do, and against my reason.

The Master. No ingenuous and uncorrupted person likes it; but to this 'complexion' we must all 'come at last.' Let a man undertake to follow the dictates of his own heart and judgement, even in the smallest matters, and he will suffer for it. Suppose, for instance, it was customary, in some village, for all the male inhabitants to go bareheaded and barefooted once aweek to the public square, and play at marbles and leap-frog, and suppose this custom had long prevailed; if a new-comer should happen there and take up his residence, and should fail at the appointed place and hour to make his appearance without shoes or hat, he would become directly the subject of general conversation: from this he would get to be unpopular; thence a suspicious character, and, finally, all sorts of monstrous stories would be believed in regard to him, and he would be hated and dreaded as a savage, an infidel, a pagan, a magician possessed of a legion of devils. You may laugh, but I tell you it is so. I have seen just such things.

Lucy. You must forgive me, Mr. M'Bride; I was not laughing at your doctrines, but at the singular illustration. I believe in what you say, yet I shall live and die a non-conformist, a *sui generis*, as I've heard you say, without an original or a copy. I am like nobody, and there is no communion of feeling or connection by blood between me and a living thing.

The Master. Lucy, you astonish me; and I fear my speculations have turned your brain. What do you mean by saying you are not connected with a living thing? Your parents are surely still living; at least I have heard nothing of their deaths.

Lucy. My parents have long been dead, Mr. M'Bride. Those good people in the mountains are only my foster-parents. My father, who did not stand high with the world, and my mother died about the same time, and left me, then a little girl, alone in the world, without relations and perfectly destitute. Those good people with whom I live took me and adopted me; and though they never allude, in my presence, to my early history, I remember it as well as I remember the events of yesterday. Thus, as I told you, I am connected by ties of blood with no living thing that I know of, and the world does not own me.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The Master. There you wrong the world, Lucy, and permit your own imagination to deceive you. You are universally beloved; and, to show you that you are mistaken, no one but your foster-parents knows your history.

Lucy. The world knows by instinct that I am an outcast, a child of wretchedness; and though all respect me, and may even be fond of my society, no one would like to claim kindred with me. They will associate freely with me, visit me, and invite me to their houses; they pity me and speak softly and kindly to me, but it is as to one who is not of them one whom they would be ashamed to own as a daughter or sister; one who between whom and them there are not, and cannot be, those common sympathies, those free communions, those nearer and dearer ties that bind families together.

The Master. This is all the offspring of a fancy diseased by dwelling too much on the circumstances attending your childhood; but, true or false, you have one brother who this day is proud to own you as his sister. Lucy, I am not a lover; that I cannot be. Do not, therefore, be uneasy when I tell you that from our first acquaintance I have felt a strange interest in you, and that you only, of all the women on earth, are really dear to me. I say again it is not love it is a purer and holier feeling.

Lucy. Then we two will form a church to ourselves.

The Master. You speak in riddles; if you are anxious to commune, why not join some church at once?

Lucy. I have told you my reasons. The world shuns me, and I do not wish to thrust myself into its societies. Yet I do wish to be saved, and I do hope that God, as a father, will receive me, and that in his bright mansions I will find a home.

M'Bride. Fear not, for it is impossible that hell can be peopled by such spirits as yours. But, as I was going to tell you, I too am desolate, and it may be possible that, in truth, I will find a relation in you. I will tell over to you my history, and then you can judge if we are really of the same kindred.

Oh! exclaimed Lucy, how have I longed to find some good and beautiful brother, sister, or cousin! I often think of the situation and feelings of the captive Hebrews, as they sat by the rivers of Babylon, weeping and remembering their own beloved land. Oh, how sad it is to be in a strange country and among a strange people, and to have none of our own kindred, friends, or people with us! Thus it has been with me all my life; all the world is a Babylon to me, and among its fairest, scenes I sit and weep, thinking of some imaginary country, some beautiful, green, and happy land, from which I have been taken, and where I have sweet friends who are like me, anxiously waiting for my return among them, ready to embrace and hug me to their hearts. Where is that dear land? continued Lucy, dropping a tear; where is that beautiful being who will fold me in her arms and softly whisper 'dear cousin' in my ear? Alas! I will never find that happy home!

The girl, being overcome by her emotion, was unable to give further utterance to her thoughts, and the master for a while mingled his tears in silence with hers. At length, however, M'Bride, subduing his feelings, was able to give a brief account of his own history, at the conclusion of which Lucy told him there was a strange connection between them, but she would leave it to her foster-father to reveal it. She was taken, in the mean time, with a violent cold, and during the balance of the journey she and her friend conversed gravely on religious subjects, and she was much edified and soothed by the master's discourse.

CHAPTER LIII.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

DUKE. And what's her history?

VIOLA. A blank, my lord; she never told her love. *Twelfth Night*.

The master did not fail to enquire of Abraham Neal the history of his foster-daughter; and the old gentleman, taking him aside, spoke as follows: Many years ago, there came to reside in a hut on my farm a man of my name, who had a wife and one child, then a little girl. As the family seemed to be very poor, I charged them no rent, and often made my negroes assist upon their little farm. The man was a confirmed drunkard the most entire brute I ever saw. He spent every thing for liquor, was a madman when drunk, and often tried to kill his wife, his child, and himself. The poor woman soon fell ill, and I and my wife remained with her till she died. The scene was an awful one, and I never can forget it. The child clung to her dead mother, begging her to come back to her, while her besotted father uttered the most horrid oaths, cursing God and all his creatures. He soon went off himself, dying from the effects of *mania à potu*; and, my wife being childless, we adopted the girl, and have loved her as if she were our own offspring. She is my heir, and, I trust, if she yet remembers, she will soon forget her origin.

Can you tell me the Christian names of the father and mother, asked M'Bride, and the place of their former residence?

His name was Frank her's Rotha, and she said she was from Philadelphia, which I believed, for she was a lady of education and rare endowments.

Oh, my prophetic heart! exclaimed the master; I knew it, I knew it!

Knew what, my friend? enquired the astonished Neal.

Excuse me, answered M'Bride, but even at this late date my feelings overcome me. That lady, sir, was my first, my last, and my only love. I became acquainted with her while I was a student in Philadelphia, and a mutual attachment grew up between us. My father failed; Frank Neal, who was a student of medicine, was reported to be immensely rich, married Rotha, and turned out to be a vagabond and impostor. He spent all her property, went off, and I never again heard of him till now.

It's a strange and sad story, said Neal, and when I am more at leisure, I will get you to relate it all to me and my wife. You must excuse me now, for Lucy is quite unwell, and I cannot be from her long. I like not her extreme dejection, and fear something is preying on her mind.

She well recollects her origin, replied the master, and alluded to it on the road. I cannot imagine what has brought it into her mind, for she was very happy at Alamance.

She has taken cold, returned Neal, and I fear is going to be very ill. I have noticed that persons finely strung like her have a foreboding of approaching illness. We must go and cheer her up.

It will be a work of love with me, said the master; and with what success he labored will be seen by the following letter, sent by Ben to Henry Warden, and in his absence, to his mother.

M'Bride's Letter.

MY DEAR HENRY As you will have heard, our interesting and beautiful friend, Lucy Neal, took it into her head to visit Alamance, and from thence I conducted her home. Strange enough, I found that she was only the adopted daughter of our former host, Abraham Neal, and the real daughter of my beloved Rotha; but the strangest

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

part of all was the sudden melancholy illness which overtook her on the road. She was very feeble and extremely sad when she arrived here, and spoke seldom to any one, preferring to be alone. As long as she was able to move herself, she would steal off to the mountain where you had the adventure with her, and frequently we have found her in the Woodland Bower, poring over her scrap-book, which she always carried about her. When she became too weak to walk, she would still insist on being permitted to sit in the door in the evenings, and would watch, in deep dejection, the sunlight fading on the distant hill-top. One day, nothing would do but we must carry her down to the bower, and, while I was left alone with her, I asked her why she carried that book about with her, and if there was any inscription in it she prized? 'There is one,' she answered, 'but, like my life, the main part of it is a blank. I never understood it till lately.' As she would let no one see it, I know not to what she alluded. I would observe, also for every thing connected with her history is interesting that she wore constantly about her neck a certain handkerchief, and from these data, I feared, my dear Henry, that the poor girl's heart was not her own. I thought proper once to hint to her that if even you had wronged her, I would see her righted. 'For God's sake,' exclaimed she, 'never let such a suspicion cross your mind; and assure him, from me, I beseech you, that I fully understand, appreciate, and approve his conduct.' After her last trip to the bower she became much more cheerful, but sunk rapidly. To gratify her, we placed her in a room where she could look out on the mountain alluded to, and see also her cherished bower; and the best medical aid which the mountains could afford was in attendance. She, however, declined daily and rapidly, the beauties of her heart and mind coming into bolder relief, and her astonishing meekness, gentleness, and gratitude increasing hourly. She saw clearly that her end was near, and so boundless was the goodness of her heart, that she actually begged her foster-parents to forgive her for leaving them so soon! She over and over made them say they were not sorry that she had left them to go to Alamance; and, blaming herself for having been so reserved and silent when she first returned, she said she could now talk to them on every subject interesting to them and to her. And so she did, chatting away with lively animation day and night, except when occasionally she enjoyed a quiet slumber. At these times, and before she fell asleep, she would invariably take an affectionate leave of us all, and then shake hands again when she awoke. On one occasion she desired to be raised in bed, that she might look out upon the mountains; and, after gazing for some time in silence, she said, with a faint smile, 'How beautiful does Nature seem; oh, how I have loved it! Now, mother, cover my eyes, and let me sleep.' We took an affectionate leave of her as usual, and, casting on us all a look of the most tender interest, she closed her eyes. As she seemed to slumber unusually long, we at last removed the handkerchief from her face, and found that she was indeed asleep! after life's brief and fitful fever, at rest forever! Her eyes were closed, her hands crossed upon her breast, and her face oh, how natural and beautiful did it seem in death! A smile, a sweet, gracious smile was still lingering on her pale, fair features, and it was only when we touched her cold, earthy flesh we could realize that her spirit had gone back to Heaven, as pure and spotless as when first breathed by the breath of the Almighty into its beautiful tabernacle of clay. It had found at last its native country; it had gone back to that happy land from which it had been briefly exiled, and her return was greeted, by troops of her angelic kindred, by one of the sweetest anthems ever heard in heaven! She had given particular instructions about her burial, requesting to be laid in her woodland bower, under the tree on which her name was carved, and that no monument be erected to her memory. She had also desired me to bury with her the book and handkerchief to which I have alluded, saying, 'These have been my dearest friends, my sweetest companions. They have talked to me of home, of kindred, of *love*; they only have connected me with earth, and as they have ever been with me while living, let them lie on my bosom in the grave.' In all things were her wishes obeyed; and next day, while the dew was yet glittering on the tender grass, when flowers were wearing their richest bloom, and giving out their sweetest odour, and birds were singing their gayest songs, we laid her in the earth in her rustic bower, and there we sat down and wept. It was hard for us to think she was not still among us, while all Nature seemed to be so bright and merry; and oh, how sore were our hearts when we returned to the empty and silent house, and remembered that we had left her in the woods, deep buried forever in the dark, cold, cold earth! Her soft voice still seems ringing in our ears her sweet smile still irradiates our hearts at times; but while we are listening for a light and airy step, and some one unconsciously enquires for the cause of her long absence, we involuntarily turn our eyes to the bower, and there see the sad, fresh mound of earth, which tells its own and most melancholy tale! Our good friends, the Neals, are heart-broken, and I consider it to be my sacred duty to remain with and comfort them all I can. Though I am unutterably sad myself, my sympathies are strongly awakened in behalf of these good old people, the light of whose hearts has fled, and whose gray hairs are rapidly

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

sinking with sorrow to the grave. You will please, therefore, give my kindest regards to all at Alamance, and look for me in the autumn.

My heart is too heavy to write another line, and so, my friend, farewell!

HECTOR M'BRIDE.

Mrs. Warden, her son being absent, opened this letter, according to the direction on the back, and the whole community of Alamance went into mourning for Lucy Neal. There was not an eye but paid its tribute of tears not a heart that was not shrouded in black not a tongue but often ejaculated, Alas! poor Lucy Neal! Some charming verses were written on her death, and set to a tune so pathetic, so sweet, simple, and sad, that the song soon attained a wide popularity, and has been handed down to our own times by the negroes, among whom alone the soul of sweet melody yet lingers.

CHAPTER LIV.

There is, sure, another flood toward, and these couples are coming to the ark. *As You Like It.*

KATE WARDEN was very young, and very timid, but she was not too young to fall in love with Donald M'Leod, and not too timid to murmur out, at last, her consent to his propositions of marriage. There was a condition annexed, which was, that M'Leod should become an American citizen a condition to which he very readily consented, for his parents were living in one of the northern States. It now became necessary for him to visit them; and when he returned, in the latter part of October, he set Alamance in a blaze of joy by the news of the surrender of Cornwallis. He brought, also, important intelligence to the master, who, in consequence of what he heard, set out in haste for Boston. He found that his father's old partner had proved at last to be a fortunate and an honest man; and from him he received the whole amount of his father's stock, with a handsome interest from the time it had been under the Bostonian's management. This unexpected discovery of wealth, and of virtue, where he little expected to find either, together with the brightening prospects of the American cause, very sensibly affected the master's feelings, and he returned to Alamance an altered man. It is curious to trace this change in the tone of his notes, from which, with the reader's indulgence, we make a few quotations:

This excursion (alluding to his northern trip) had a most happy effect upon me, and I daily found my heart growing younger and fresher. May God forgive me for it, I began to imagine that I saw virtue and beauty in woman, and formed several acquaintances with whom I spent my time agreeably. I thought that she, woman, was no longer the *semper varium et mutabile* of the poet Virgil, and I was guilty; on several occasions, of the miserable folly of paying compliments and inditing verses in my own name. I saw several of my old female acquaintances in Philadelphia, and, not having witnessed the gradual decay of their charms, I was not prepared for a sight so forlorn as their withered forms and wrinkled faces presented. One of my old gossips the one at whose hands I had received very ill usage was still flourishing in a green old maidenhood, the terror of all widowers and sedate and elderly bachelors. She had become extremely devout, was a thorough bluestocking, and dwelt upon the vanities of the world with an unction that would have honoured the most ranting Independent in Cromwell's army. She received me, so to speak, with open arms, and a storm of caresses; but I was vilely ungrateful, and left her as far from the promised land of matrimony as when she first commenced her pilgrimage thither. All things, even inanimate, wore a pleasing appearance. Was this but the reflection of my feelings, or was old Nature, conscious of the approaching dawn of better things, glowing again with the charms of her youth? I was inclined to this latter opinion, and, in the fullness of my grateful heart, went to see the political redeemer of our race the man whose

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

career had settled the long-disputed question, whether a son of fallen Adam could be truly great. How shall I describe my feelings when that glorious vision beamed upon my sight? Although he was surrounded by fine-looking and illustrious men, I knew him as soon as I laid my eyes upon him; for among them he,

'in shape and gesture proudly eminent, Stood like a tower.'

I stood for a long time gazing on him, and the longer I looked the more was I impressed by the majesty of that face, which I felt was to be stamped on the hearts of all generations of men. For a while I could scarcely realize my situation, and was nearly overpowered by my feelings as I looked down the dim vista of future years, and saw the gathering glories that would cluster around the memory of the man who stood living and breathing before me. And this, thought I, is WASHINGTON, whose name, in all languages under heaven, will become as familiar as household words! I reverently took his hand, and hardly thought it flesh and blood till he spoke to me. Yes, I heard the voice of Washington! I told him I was an humble pedagogue who had 'done the state some service,' and who came to pay his respects to his country's greatest man. 'The schoolmaster shall be the greatest man in our Republic.' These were his very words; and oh that they were graven with an iron pen and laid in the rock forever! I remembered the language of the Prophet Isaiah, and thought the time had come of: which he spoke when he said a man should be 'as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'

The master was welcomed back to Alamance; and when it was ascertained that he had seen General Washington he was compelled to relate to every one, children included, every minute particular about the dress, the manners, the looks, and words of the American chief. He was as ready to answer as others were to ask; and, though usually a discreet man, he ever after, at all places and the most odd conjunctures would allude to this interview; and When I saw that great man, General Washington, was sometimes the prelude to a story inapropos and tedious. In the mean time the suits of M'Leod and Rust advanced apace; and the master, gratified by the confidence all parties reposed in him, used his best endeavours to promote the laudable business of marrying. It is singular, but it is, nevertheless, true, that he even came to be considered as *au fail* in affairs of the heart, and every day was visited by some forlorn gallant, who poured into his faithful bosom the oft-repeated tale of woman's folly and perversity. He listened patiently to the momentous narration of little quarrels and crosses, and looked on with a sturdy gravity, while his garrulous clients ran over, with many flourishes and circumlocutions, the whole catalogue of the words, looks, frowns, smiles, nods, and gestures of their mysterious mistresses. He gave good advice, assisted in the composition of letters and verses, and sometimes delivered messages. As all the world is ruled by fashion, there was in those days a vast deal of love-making done at Alamance, and a brisk business in the way of weddings was shortly expected. It was, however, in all cases agreed to wait for the arrival of Henry Warden, and thus the return of that popular young gentleman was expected with a lively interest; a solicitude, by the way, in which some of his female friends participated.

CHAPTER LV. HOME AGAIN AFTER A LONG ABSENCE

THE Warden mansion was refitted, the estate repaired, and the place beginning to wear its former appearance. All the living, except Henry, were again gathered to their former home, and with them, dwelling as a member of the family, was Donald M'Leod. The master chose to reside mostly with Mrs. Mayfield; and to Edith, who had become a favourite with him, he confided all the love secrets which he heard. She shared, with him, an interest in such things, and having, from experience, learned the fatal effects of inconsiderate and hasty pets and quarrels, she made it her business to heal divisions and bring about a fair understanding between enamoured couples. Her influence with the ladies was very great, and her advice, which was gently insinuated and never given in the shape of lectures, was always wholesome and judicious, for misfortunes and reflection had made her wise beyond her sex. There was not a poor, an unhappy, or a needy wretch whom her charity did not reach, and she was felt as a blessing through all Alamance, though none but God and the receivers knew of her bounties. She knew all the neighbourhood histories by heart, and every day she might be seen in some unhappy home, listening to the good

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

wife's long detail of accidents and misfortunes. She often visited the Wardens, whom she found much depressed at the long absence of Henry, from whom they had not heard since the battle of Guilford. Indeed, George Warden and his lady began secretly to mourn their son as lost, when suddenly one day the cry of Master Henry! Master Henry! brought the white people to the door, whence they saw old Ben and a troop of negro boys running like mad down the lane, shouting, whooping, and flinging up their hats. In a few minutes a single horseman emerged from the skirt of a wood beyond the bridge, and then from field, cabin, and mansion—house another shout was raised, and Kate Warden, utterly forgetting the presence of her lover, bounded off like a young roe to meet her brother. The latter was dragged from his horse at the bridge by the negroes, in the midst of whom he slowly moved along, at least half a dozen of them holding by the skirts of his coat, and the whole crowd keeping up such a crying and yelling as was never heard before. In this fashion they moved up the lane, the negroes, with the whole force of their melodious voices, rolling out a most affecting triumphal song with the burden

O—ho O—ho, Master Henry's come again! * —

* The author well recollects having often heard this air when a boy; and, though very simple, he still thinks it one of the most beautiful and pathetic he ever heard. In all the different sets of words the burden was some sort of family reunion, and the most popular were those beginning

O—ho O—ho, Master William's coming home!

The tune is extremely like that known as Long time ago, of which it is the original. This latter, which is only one of a thousand like it, has been rescued from oblivion by appropriate poetry. What Burns or Moore will confer a lasting obligation on every lover of good music by composing words for the others? Here is a wide field for our Southern bards.

and old Ben, with the big tears streaming down his face, leading the band, swaying his head to and fro, and clapping his hands, till he became so happy that he suddenly cut the music short, bellowing out, Glory be to the eternal God Almighty, Master Henry's come again! Henry walked on in silence, and weeping like a very child till he met his sister. The negroes now made way for her, and flying into his arms, she hung about his neck, kissing him on every part of his face, as he did also with her, till their overcharged hearts had relieved themselves and they were able, with their hands locked together, to continue on to the house. Here followed another scene, the father dropping some silent tears, and the mother holding her son to her breast as if fearful some one would force him from her. M'Leod, who, from proper feelings, had withdrawn, now came in, and after him a multitude of slaves, including old and young, male and female, the halt, the lame, and the blind. Among the first things that Henry heard was the news of Edith Mayfield's safe return to Alamance; and, desiring at once to inform her of his arrival, and that he would visit her early next day, he went out to look for Ben. That faithful servant, however, was nowhere to be found. He had, as it afterward appeared, taken the fleetest horse in the stables, and, like a Highland courier, went flying over the neighbourhood, shouting, as he passed each house, that Master Henry had returned. Thus it happened, that in the course of that very evening a number of his friends called on Warden, and among them were Ben Rust, Hector M'Bride, and the men who had fought at the battle of Camden. But though Henry was truly glad to see his family and his friends, and though he had much to tell, and much to hear, that was to him the longest evening and night he had ever spent. His toilet next morning was more attended to than it had been for years; and, leaving the master at his father's, he started early for the Mayfields. As he neared the house he was met by a servant, who said that his mistress desired him, for God's sake, to return immediately, as Miss Edith had the night before been taken ill with the small-pox. If there were forty devils in the house I would enter it, exclaimed Warden, impatiently spurring on his horse, and paying no attention to the entreaties of the slave. In the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

yard he was met by Mrs. Mayfield, who in vain tried to conceal her emotion, and who, after a considerable struggle with herself, repeated the information of the servant.

How is it possible that you can tell the disease so soon? asked Henry; I thought it took several days to develop its character.

I am familiar with the symptoms, answered Mrs. Mayfield, and so is the doctor, who agrees with me that it is certainly the small-pox.

May dear Mrs. Mayfield, said Henry, I am not afraid for myself; and to prevent my carrying the disease abroad I will remain with you till Edith recovers. If it is not indelicate, do, I beseech you, for God's sake, let me see her; let me only get a glimpse of her face.

I am extremely sorry that it is impossible, replied Mrs. Mayfield. Edith is in bed and quite unwell, and it is her own request that you should come no nearer. For myself, I am inclined to gratify your wishes, even at the risk of your safety; but you know I would not tell you a story when I say she insists that you return at once. I will bear your love to her, however, and bring you her answer.

Do, if you please, and ask her how it is possible for me to serve her.

The good woman soon returned, bringing a kind message from Edith, and a request that Henry would instantly return, and wait patiently till she recovered. He had to submit, and went home with a heavy heart. His news astonished and affected every body; and the master, who had been inoculated, after arranging with Henry a plan of communication, immediately took his leave. Henry Warden had now leisure to hear the history of Lucy Neal; and, occupied as he was with thoughts for Edith's safety, he found time sincerely to mourn for his tender friend of the mountains. He deeply lamented that he had ever seen her, and although while with her he had acted with more than mortal firmness and prudence, he bitterly condemned himself, and even went so far as to consult the Rev. Dr. Caldwell upon the morality of his conduct. The reverend gentleman resolved his doubts; and with a lighter conscience he went every day to see the master, and hear from Edith. She soon took a turn for the better, and rapidly recovered; but when Henry thought he might see her with impunity he was astounded by the reception of the following note:

MR. WARDEN:

If you would consult your own happiness and mine, you must forget me. That you may not think me unreasonable, I need only remind you of the sad and lasting injury the small-pox does to personal beauty. It is true I had little before, but then I was not a fright. Think on me as on the dead, and know that I pray for your happiness. Adieu!

EDITH MAYFIELD.

Henry sent a thousand urgent messages by the master, and finding them of no avail, he took to writing; and as his correspondence may be interesting to those in love, it is given in the following chapter.

CHAPTER LVI.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Letter First, from Henry Warden to Edith Mayfield.

DEAR EDITH,

I am loath to question, in any particular, the reasonableness of your conduct; but I must be permitted to say, that I think you are now acting strangely. Do not, I beseech you, understand me as chiding you; I would not, for my own right hand, utter an unkind word. I have never done it. From a child I have ever loved you more than my own life, and in all my wanderings and trials your image has ever been present to my heart. I have never, for a moment, ceased to think of you for years; but how have I thought of you? Not as (what you were most truly) a beautiful lady; not as an heiress; not as connected with any thing temporal or perishable. Having grown up with you, it is your mind and heart, your soul, if I may say so, which I have learned to love; and as long as these remain what they were and what they are, I shall never cease to love you and think you beautiful. Your voice, I doubt not, still sounds with its wonted melody; your temper still serene, the goodness of your heart boundless, the beauties of your mind rich, rare, and enchanting. Do you suppose that, had it pleased Providence to unite us, I would not have loved you with tender devotion till your latest breath? And yet we see that personal beauty soon begins to fade. I declare to you, solemnly, that, be you what you may, you are still as dear, far dearer than you ever were before. Then, if you love me, why not let me see you? If you love me, why bury yourself from the world? If you love me, why need you care what others think of your appearance? Oh, for Heaven's sake, let me see you, if it is only once.

With the most sincere devotion, I remain
yours,

HENRY WARDEN.

Edith's Answer.

MR. WARDEN,

I had hoped that, after my first note, it would not be necessary for me to write again. It seems to me that you are infatuated I say it respectfully and that you are permitting your imagination to deceive you. You think you regard me with affection, and, indeed, it is possible that you may; but is it not Edith as she was that you love? Tell me, when you think of me now, do you see, in your mind's eye, a form emaciated and bent; a face deeply pitted and scarred, eyes bleared, and head almost entirely bald? Is not this a disgusting picture? And yet you force me to draw it, and would be guilty of the indelicacy of looking on it. As soon as you see me there will be a terrible revulsion in your feelings, and you could not even respect me again. Need I say more to a gentleman of your sensibilities? Please burn this. Adieu!

EDITH MAYFIELD.

Letter Second, from Henry Warden.

MY DEAR EDITH,

With natural diffidence I used, in my former letter, the simple prefix of '*dear*;' I now take the liberty of prefixing '*my*' to that. You *are* mine, for you do not deny that you once have loved me. If we gave our hearts to each other, were we not married in the sight of Heaven? And you know the solemn injunction, 'Whom God hath joined, let no man put asunder!' Edith, my dear, dear Edith, what do you take me for? Is it possible that you have regarded me as a giddy body, a light-hearted, gay Lothario, one of those dull compounds of animated clay, who are incapable

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

of a feeling that is not conveyed through the medium of the senses? If you did, then such a being as you never could have loved me; if you did not, then you ought to know, that it was not your face, and its fading ornaments, that won the adoration of my soul. I have attentively regarded the picture which you have drawn: I have even added some darker touches; and I say, in all sincerity, and God is my witness, *I love you!* and there is no power in eloquence, or in poetry, to express what I mean by that simple sentence. I can express it only by my actions; by a constant devotion, a boundless tenderness, a ceaseless exertion of every faculty of soul and body to minister to your happiness while you live. Try me, oh, try me, I beseech you; and if I prove not, to the letter, what I have promised, may my name be covered with perpetual infamy! Edith! I am not infatuated: I am not deceived by my imagination. I have gone through many trials; I have been sobered by years of adversity; I have had time to, reflect and weigh things dispassionately. We have both gone through a fiery ordeal; and now, with enlarged and proper views, with chastened desires, and hearts purified from all the giddy vanities of youth, although we are yet young, how happy, how lastingly happy could we be together! Again I entreat you, I beg you, if you have any regard for my happiness if you would not make me a wreck, a gloomy, misanthropic wretch for life, let me see you! let me touch your hand again; let me hear, if but once, the dear, dear sound of your voice! Please, please let me see you, and then you may impose your own conditions. I want only a chance of speaking to you, for I cannot convey my earnest thoughts by letter.

With the most tender and lasting affection,

HENRY WARDEN.

In about a week the following answer was returned:

MR. WARDEN,

Why do you continue to persecute me? I ask you again nay, I command you, forget

EDITH MAYFIELD.

Letter Third from Henry Warden.

MY DEAREST EDITH: I have ever been ready to obey your commands till now. You order me to do an impossibility, and I tell you plainly, and once for all, I cannot, I will not forget you. Forget you! Forget the sweetest hope of my life, the only object that binds me to earth! It is you who are infatuated; it is you who have permitted your own darkly brooding imagination to deceive you. Edith! my dearest Edith, why do you not listen to reason? Why do you not, if you can, answer my letters? Does not my whole life prove how ardently, how constantly, how truly I have loved you? Has not my affection been tested by every sort of discouraging obstacle by your own apparent coldness, by long absence, by severe temptations? Was I not, after a long absence from you after you had slighted, insulted, and spurned me thrown into the society of a most beautiful and enchanting creature, whose untimely end we all lament? Have not beauty, wit, elegance, flattery, wealth, and partiality in vain made attempts upon my heart? Again, you do not deny that you love me; and, as you are acting without reason, I'll tell you what I mean to do. I intend to persecute you with letters every day; I'll send messengers, I'll beset your path, waylay you, watch night and day for you until I see you. If you expect to get rid of me, you must lock yourself in your room, and there remain, and never see a human being, for I'll bribe every servant on the place to petition you in my behalf. The siege is now regularly commenced, and you may as well surrender at once.

Yours, in the bonds of eternal love.

HENRY WARDEN.

The next day Henry Warden received the following answer:

MR. WARDEN: As you seem to be so cruelminded, I will grant your request, but on this express condition: You are barely to see me and speak to me, and then retire to persecute me no more. You must exhibit no emotion; speak not of love, and never mention the ugliness of my person. I trust to your honor in this, and hope, as you are a gentlemen, you will consult my wishes.

EDITH MAYFIELD.

Warden was so overjoyed at this permission, that he was upon the road before he began to reflect on the consequences of his visit. It now struck him all at once that Edith might be right, and the nearer he approached the more he dreaded the effect of her altered looks. His reflections took a gloomy turn, and he again remembered the advice of the master. He remembered, also Lucy Neal, and she now rose before his imagination more beautiful, more tender and lovely than she had ever seemed before. What a strange fate has been mine, thought he; how do all things conspire to teach me the folly of love. I have contended with fate I have mistaken my destiny I have but he was now at the gate.

The servant who took his horse seemed sad; every thing about the place looked gloomy, and even Mrs. Mayfield received him with a mournful look. It appeared to Warden that she tried hard to conceal her extreme dejection, and he thought she looked as if she was sorry he had come. Saying to him, with a faint effort at a smile, Brace your nerves, Mr. Warden, she retired, an opposite door opened, and Warden, turning, beheld Edith Mayfield, blushing like the morning, beautiful as the first star of evening. She faltered at the door, and Warden, catching her in his arms, the past and the future vanished from the minds of each, themselves, their situation, and every thing else were forgotten in the ecstasy of that blissful moment. The minute-hand of the clock performed a revolution, and Warden was still pressing Edith in his arms, occasionally raising her drooping head from his bosom to look into her tearful eyes and fervently touch his lips to hers, while at every kiss she wept as if her heart were breaking. Something was said by each Warden, particularly, murmured many broken sentences, but neither knew then, nor ever have since, what they were. He at length recovered himself sufficiently to ask her why she wept; I cannot help it, was her answer, and again she wept and sobbed convulsively. He must needs press her still more closely and kiss her again, and so they continued, for how long no one knows. She had proved his affection she was satisfied he had loved only her, and so, totally forgetting her promised lecture about persecutions, she permitted him to set a day for their nuptials.

The master looked very quizzically at Warden when he returned, and, taking him aside, he asked, with great gravity, Didn't you find that the small-pox had made her a real monster?

Pshaw! exclaimed Warden; why did you try to fool me so?

The services of the Rev. Dr. Caldwell were now in great demand at Alamance, and the good old gentleman eased many an aching heart.

CHAPTER LVII.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And the days of auld lang syne? *Auld Lang Syne.*

THE taste of Mrs. Warden and of her beautiful daughter and daughter-in-law suggested these floral decorations; but I may say, without vanity, that they were indebted to my skill for their execution. It is true I received some assistance from old black Ben, but he was clumsy and awkward; and as for those young gallants, Henry Warden and Donald M'Leod, they were too entirely absorbed with the contemplation of their newly-married wives to be worth a fig for any other purpose. Upon the arch of the great gate, and on both sides, were arranged festoons of flowers, those on the outside being of a lilac colour, and formed into letters so as to spell very distinctly, 'INDEPENDENCE,' and those on the inside and fronting the house being of a deep crimson, and so adjusted as to make the word 'LIBERTY' legible at a great distance. Above each was the name of 'WASHINGTON,' formed of beautiful white roses, and around and beneath were various emblematic representations, all formed of flowers whose various hues were so blended and contrasted as to make a most delightful picture. Again, above the front door of the house appeared the name of 'WASHINGTON' in white roses, and under it and formed of different coloured blossoms were, 'Peace, Liberty, and Independence.' Festoons, garlands, and crowns hung from the boughs of different trees, and over the walk, between the gate and house, was a magnificent 'W,' formed of floral chains that ran from tree to tree, and attached to which there hung pendulous ornaments of the most beautiful taste and finish, and representing the thirteen United States.

This above extract is taken from that part of the master's notes where he gives a very minute and elaborate account of the preparations made at Warden's for another great entertainment. As was the case in regard to the Christmas dinner, of which we have before given an account, invitations were sent to nearly all the Alamancers, and though it was an evening party, the guests were expected to arrive at least an hour before night. Accordingly, as the sun was declining in the glowing west, they came pouring in from all quarters of the compass, and soon every Whig family in the whole community was fully represented. When the company had all collected, and the usual salutations had passed, they were all requested to attend at a carpeted platform in the yard, which had been formed under one of the largest trees, and on which stood an empty arm-chair. In a few minutes George Warden came leading out an aged matron, and placing her in the chair, spoke as follows: My friends, behold the mother of Alamance! She lost an only son in the war, and lo! she has found a host of children!

Hail, mother of Alamance! cried the assembled multitude; and each one pressed forward to kiss her hand.

When they had all paid this tribute of reverence to their adopted mother, she arose, and, with a trembling voice and outstretched arms, exclaimed My children my children, the blessing of God be with you all! She could say no more; and, completely overcome by her emotions, was supported into the house. There was now a loud cry of Edith Mayfield! Edith Warden! and, trembling and blushing, she was led by the master and by her husband upon the platform. Her appearance was greeted with a tremendous shout; and, amid cries of crown her! crown her queen! a band of ladies ascended the platform and placed a beautiful coronet of flowers and evergreens upon her head. Three cheers for Henry Warden! were next called for and given, whereupon Ben Rust mounted the platform, and, calling for silence, said, My Christin friends, you've all heern of the history of Edith Mayfield, that was, and how she was saved by the beautiful Flora M'Donald. I told her when we all got to Alamance we'd give her three everlastin cheers; and I want you all now to holler as if you were hallooin to some one in the moon! The injunction was obeyed, and then came three shouts for General Greene, and three times three for General Washington. The shadows of evening were dispersing into darkness, rows of suspended lamps and candles began to twinkle through the grove, and the master, with a long manuscript in his hand, rose upon the platform. All hats off, said he, while I now read over this immortal list this scroll more honourable to those whose names are on it than the lying pages of heraldry or the Golden Book of Venice. Here my friends are the original resolutions signed at the memorable exhibition at the old field school; and now we will see who has fallen

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

in the strife, who proved recreant, and who still live to reap the glorious rewards of their deeds. The names of the miscreants who broke their solemn pledges are marked with the word *traitor* after each, and those of our friends who are now no more with stars or asterisks. My own name it is unnecessary to call, for I stand here before you.

We'll cheer you though, some one said, and at it they went.

David Caldwell! said the master. Here! was the answer, and again three deafening shouts rent the air. The master continued: Edward Forbes! There was a deep silence for a minute, when the master exclaimed, Eternal honour to his name and everlasting peace to his soul! Amen! responded the audience; and at the next call groans and hisses resounded through the company. Thus the call was continued, the multitude sometimes hissing, sometimes shouting, and at others preserving a sad and solemn silence. When the names of Ben Rust and Warden's Ben were pronounced, those two worthies were first cheered separately and then together, and finally forced upon the stage, where their awkward appearance was greeted with shouts, laughter, and a variety of expressions indicating their great popularity. And now, said the master, solemnly, I will call one for whose name you have all been listening. I have reserved it purposely for the last, that meet and proper honours may be paid to the memory of the heroic dead. Brave in battle, constant in friendship, just and generous in all the relations of life, that mighty heart is now cold forever! Cornelius Demijohn!

Here! thundered a sonorous and portentous voice in the direction of the gate, and the multitude, looking round, were astonished and confounded at what they saw.

Notwithstanding the unspiritual tramp of Uncle Corny's feet, the Alamancers were inclined to the belief that they saw a ghost, and shrunk shyly from the approaching apparition, until Henry Warden, calling for immediate attention, said: You need not be afraid, my friends. Uncle Corny was with me in the army of General Greene; he returned with me; and, as we came to his mother's first, and there learned that he was generally mourned as dead, it was agreed that he should remain secluded at home until some public gathering should take place, when he was suddenly to make his appearance. I assure you that you see no ghost; and if you will handle him, you will find he is a most substantial mass of living flesh.

They did handle him now, much to the amusement of some, and greatly to his own fatigue; for, what with the hugging and kissing of the ladies, the shaking of his hands by the men, and the annoyances of the children who swung by the skirts of his coat and climbed up his legs, he was soon completely out of breath, and panted more fiercely, and sweated more profusely than he had done in the hottest engagement on the field of battle. Next, in the fullness of their hearts, the Alamancers called for Donald M'Leod; and, as he rose upon the stage, he was saluted with enthusiastic and prolonged applause. The tears started down the young soldier's face; and as he said, I know to whom I am indebted for this nevertheless, I am now an American in heart and soul, the uproar became tremendous. At length, the Rev. Dr. Caldwell was brought upon his legs; but had he spoken in trumpet-tones, nobody could have heard a word he said, so great had become the excitement of the multitude, and so furiously did they shout around him. Supper was now announced, and was duly honoured in an arbour constructed for the purpose. After this, to the tune of Auld Lang Syne, was sung a beautiful song of the master's composition.*

* This song, which was long a favourite one at Alamance, is among the master's papers. We have preferred to leave it out, as well as that on the death of Lucy Neal: 1st, because there are innumerable sets of words to both airs, and we might, therefore, be accused of plagiarism; and, 2nd, because we have already given, perhaps, too many specimens of the master's verse, and prefer to keep these, the best, till they are called for in another edition. ED.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Those who could, and those who couldn't sing, joined fiercely in the chorus, and it is impossible to say how many absurd and foolish things were done while all hearts were in a state of fusion. Old ladies and young were very passive husbands were not particular as to whose wives they hugged and kissed, and the master he confesses it himself even the master embraced at least a dozen with the most affectionate fervour before he knew what he was about. There were two persons, however, whom the music caused only to think of each other. Their eyes met, and their hands were joined when the song commenced; and long before it was over, Edith was weeping in the arms of Henry Warden, who was straining her to his bosom, and kissing her as tenderly and incessantly as if he had not seen her before for years. But this was done in a corner; and every body was too busy with his and her own emotions to observe it. What other things were done, and what said, lo! they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of Alamance.

Letter from the Master to his friend, J. R., of Philadelphia.

Mountain Home, December 1st, 179—

MY DEAR SIR When you were at Alamance, you seemed pleased with the perusal of my 'Notes,' and were good enough to express a desire to hear the future history of some of those who had been so happily reunited. The task is a grateful one to me, for I am about to record what should make the heart of every philanthropist throb with pleasure. My friend, there is yet hope for the world; our race may yet be happy. I have seen with my own eyes two things which, from the beginning, our fathers wished in vain to see two things of which much has been said and more written since the foundation of the world, but which have been reserved for this our blessed day and generation. *I have seen a great man and a happy love;* with my own eyes have I seen them. That part of this is true you will not dispute; that you may know the other part is equally certain, I will detail to you some particulars that must interest every lover of his race. My opportunities for judging have been good; for though all Alamance is my home, and though I have furnished apartments and keep a servant at George Warden's, Esther Bell's, and here, most of my library is at this place, where I spend the larger portion of my time. I have been, too, a curious observer, and you know on which side my prejudices leaned.

I look upon Henry Warden and his accomplished lady as the most remarkable people I have ever known. They have now been married several years, and, will you believe me, he is as gracious, attentive, and tender, and she as affectionate, gentle, and devoted as on the week of their nuptials. With the native modesty, diffidence, and sensibility for which each is remarkable, they studiously avoid all found displays in public, and yet it may be observed that in all places and at all times their eyes, full of soft meaning, will steal towards each other, and that their souls are thus in constant and secret communion. On all subjects, from the greatest to the smallest, they think exactly alike, and while he regards her as the perfection of all that is chastely fair, purely innocent, discreet, and tender, he is, in her eyes, the mirror of all the heroic virtues, of manliness, generosity, and intellectual beauty. They are kind to their neighbors, social in their dispositions, and dearly beloved through all Alamance; yet it is evident that that their own inclinations would lead them to seek only the society of each other, and that they are happiest when by themselves. She is his confidant in all things, his counselor in all things, his most desired companion and his fastest friend; to him are all her thoughts, feelings, and emotions imparted, and to him, and him only, does she reveal all she hears. Their sensibilities, so far from becoming blunted by familiarity with each other, become daily more refined, each one improving by the union he in gentleness and purity of manners, and she in intelligence, prudence, and matronly grace and dignity. His honor and his welfare absorb her existence; her happiness is the chief end of his. They never separate, even for a day, without a most affecting leave-taking; he writes to her every day while absent; and when he returns, which is always punctually at the hour agreed, she hangs fondly about his neck, kissing him as tenderly and sometimes weeping as joyfully as if she were a bride of ten days' standing. They sit in church, and walk, when by themselves, with hands locked together; and often, when he stays longer than usual in his study, she will steal softly to the door, and, if no one is present, will throw her arms about him and embrace him with the greatest playfulness and most tender affection. She is a most tidy

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

housekeeper; personally superintends all her household affairs, and, studying her husband's tastes, arranges every thing exactly according to his notions. When company is present, she lets her husband lead in the conversation, and it is gratifying and amusing to see how her eyes sparkle and her cheeks glow at every witty or eloquent sally that falls from his lips. Occasionally she reads to him, and copies letters and papers for him; but at such times she makes little progress, being perpetually interrupted by the amorous caresses of her lord. When they did not know there was a looker-on, I have seen them sitting together in the great arm-chair, reading out of the same book, and being affected by the same emotions at the same time: they would, every now and then, look into each other's eyes, smiling or shedding tears, touch their lips together, and then, without saying a word, continue to read. They have two children two scions worthy of the parent stock. The oldest is a bright-eyed, sturdy, manly boy, who is the constant companion and sworn friend of your servant, with whom he has some of the rarest frolics. Henry wished to name him Washington M'Bride, but Edith would have him called Henry Washington. The other is a girl a real gem a sweet blossom and the exact miniature of her mother. Her Edith desired to name after the lamented Lucy Neal; but the husband's wishes now prevailed, and she was called after her whose name is to him the sweetest of all sounds. It is agreed, however, that I and Lucy shall be remembered, and, in the mean time, I may observe that I have been duly honoured by others, and particularly by my plain friend, Rust, who calls his boy Young Prox, or Proximus, though his baptismal name is Benjamin Warden Hector M'Donald Rust. Ben and Nannie live very quietly and contentedly; he looking up to Henry Warden as the central moral sun of the universe, and she being always happy, at any hazard, to pleasure Edith. Donald M'Leod and Kate are quite happy, living yet with George Warden and his wife, who are diligently employed in spoiling their grandson, George Washington M'Leod. It is settled, however, that Henry is to live at the old place, taking with him his mother-in-law, and that Donald and Kate are soon to remove to a place near by, where buildings are going up. As to Uncle Corny, I am happy to inform you that, a year or two ago, he laid regular siege to the fat widow with whom he had the adventure at the exhibition at the old field school; and thus, it is to be hoped, the race of the Demijohns will not become extinct. The widow, as I opine, would be glad to have him any day; but Uncle Corny began at the beginning and carries on his approaches with great exactitude, after the most ancient and approved forms and precedents.

I could tell him of a Hudibrastic maxim about the proper way of courting widows; but he is a grave and punctilious man, and withal a good listener, and I would not wound his sensitive feelings for the world. He is a great friend of George Warden; looks on the father as Rust does on the son, and will resent instantly the least reflection on his friend. The old field school is in a flourishing condition, being under the care of an estimable and learned man of my selection, and subject to my constant visitation and supervision.

Nathan Gluston, as I have heard, with all our other unworthy characters, settled in the West, where, it is said, he is now a leading, influential, and violent politician, professing to be an extreme republican, and having supplanted more worthy men who had served their country faithfully, but who are not so fluent nor so liberal in their indelicate professions of love for the people. This is a very probable story, for I have myself seen something like it. The Alamancers and many worthy citizens of the county wished Henry Warden to represent them in our State Assembly. Opposed to him was a young man whose father I knew to be one of the vilest Tories, but from a proper feeling, I and others who knew the fact, said nothing about it. Would you believe it? this worthy scion of a traitorous father declaimed furiously about British influence, and had the unblushing impudence to arraign Henry Warden as a friend to England, because his sister had married Donald M'Leod! My young friend, whose refined sensibilities were shocked at such demagogueism, withdrew from the canvass, and resolved to live a private citizen a resolution by which the public will lose infinitely more than himself. But such things are natural enough, and must, I suppose, be common every where. Those whose love of plunder destroyed all their patriotism and their honesty, drowning conscience and all sense of shame, and made them take sides against their country in the day of her trial, still true to their ruling passion, will now out-Herod Herod, bid adieu to decency, belie all history, and, with the most brazen effrontery, clamour for the emoluments of office. To what, my friend, will such things lead? What will be the result of the grand and glorious experiment we are beginning? Will the people be bestrode by demagogues, and our government follow in the track of all republics? Oh, that I could live to witness the solution of this problem! But I am in the autumn of my life; I have fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, and,

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

according to the course of nature, must soon be gathered to my fathers. Well: I have seen Washington, and surely his mission was not in vain; surely, as the Latins have it, '*Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit.*' This reflection is a consolation, for he must have been sent for a mighty purpose.

I spend my time agreeably, conversing gravely with my reverend friend, Dr. Caldwell, gossiping with my neighbors, superintending the school, correcting my 'Notes,' romping with the children, and poring over *Cicero de Senectate*, Aristotle's Politics, Seneca's Morals, and Tristram Shandy. If you see , present my best regards to him, and accept for yourself assurances of my kind esteem. I should be pleased, at all times, to hear from you, and remain,

Your friend,

HECTOR M'BRIDE.

CHAPTER LVIII. CONTAINS MORE SENTIMENT THAN INCIDENT, AND NOT MUCH OF EITHER.

THOUGH the gentle pressure of Edith's hand, and the soft whispers of her voice, were to Henry Warden like a draught of Lethe's waters, rendering him oblivious of care and sorrow, they did not cause him to forget his duties. Now that his own happiness was secured, he more than ever compassionated the ills of others, and found, in the breast where his own anxieties were buried, a sweet sympathy with all his generous wishes and designs. And, first, he remembered the Scotchman whom Ross had injured; and, fearing that age and want might be pressing hard on the old man, he prepared to pay him a visit. The country was still in an unsettled state, and the roads dangerous; but Warden, feeling bound to undertake the journey, tore himself from the arms of his fair young wife, and with his accustomed confidence in the special care of an overruling Providence, assured her that they would soon and happily meet again. He was accompanied by his servant Ben, and by his friend the master, who expected to be able to add a new chapter to his singular experience.

I have thought much upon the story of Ross, said the last-named, when they were on the road, and it strikes me that there are some plausible propositions in his remarks.

Warden. To what do you allude? You surely do not wish to discuss with me, a married man, the subject of love?

M'Bride. God forbid! You are indeed married, my friend, and I would not deserve the name of man or Christian could I be guilty of using in your presence language calculated to weaken in your mind the sacred obligation which you have contracted. Marriage is a divine institute; and, besides this, you are wedded to one whom none but the steeled philosopher can see and not adore.

Warden. I would join in that praise, but I cannot speak of Edith to my nearest friends. I have often thought that those who talk freely of their wives, even in compliment, are brutes.

The Master. And I think so too. I must, however, make one remark about my sweet friend, and that is this: I ascertained, before the day of your nuptials, that she was all you had fancied her such a being as I once vainly hoped to find. Now, what is the inference to be drawn? Some accident *must* happen, otherwise it would seem that God's curse upon Adam and his seed was intended with exceptions. If two such beings as you and Edith are allowed to live prosperously together, you will enjoy an Eden equal almost to that from which all are excluded.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

The curse is on our race to the latest posterity; at least, till the 'millennium.'

Warden. How fallible are men's opinions! How can mortals be wise, when their reasoning depends entirely on their physical organization and on their experience? Now, here are you and myself; both are dispassionate, both honestly desirous of arriving at truth; and yet how widely apart are we in opinion! You are forever desponding I am always hoping. Indeed 'Hope on, hope ever,' is my motto; and in the darkest hours I ever believe there is a good time coming.

The Master. I can demonstrate that you are mistaken. Has not God cursed the race, and allotted to us here toil, disappointment, and sorrow? Now if *one* individual can escape this doom all the race may also.

Warden. Premises and conclusions are conceded. Although in Adam's fall the perfect fidelity of the race here was wrecked, yet all was not lost. We cannot be perfectly happy until we are perfectly good, and I very willingly agree that none are or can be righteous. Yet we may, as individuals, or as a nation, approximate the standard of righteousness, and our happiness will be proportioned. For instance, are not you a pious, lettered, and temperate man infinitely more happy than the beastly, vicious, and ignorant sot who wallows in filth and sin? Even so the man who is better and wiser than you may be proportionably happier. But, as I said before, none can be entirely blest here, for if no other evil were to befall us, death death the most awful calamity, is the portion of us all. I expect to be contented and happy; yet I also expect occasional disappointments, mortal pains, toil, the decrepitude of old age, and the pangs of dissolution. Still I will be happy; a good, greater than the evil, will follow me, and in the very hour of death my soul will dilate with glorious anticipations of a blessed immortality.

M'Bride. I acknowledge that there are degrees in happiness, and that we are blest according to our deeds; but is it not ordained that no one shall go beyond a certain point? I think so, and I believe that individuals and nations have heretofore been as happy as they will be hereafter. If you will look back on the course of things, you will find that there is a certain point of improvement beyond which we are not allowed to pass.

Warden. So the ancient navigators thought in regard to the ocean. For ages and ages no one crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and it was supposed that no one could. To attempt it was believed to be a rebellion against the decrees of the Almighty; and yet the madman Columbus sailed fearlessly over the forbidden line, and discovered a glorious new continent. So will it be with our political Columbus; and as much as this continent excels the old ones in the fertility of its soil, the wealth of its mines, and the beauty and grandeur of its scenes, so much shall the wisdom and excellence of our government excel those of all other forms. I tell you there is a good time coming.

The Master. So thought the fabled Sisyphus; so man has thought since the day of his fall, and yet every successive generation has followed in the beaten track. There is, indeed, a good time coming; He that cannot lie has promised it, but it will be after the head of the Serpent has been bruised after the old Dragon, man's immortal enemy, has been seized and bound.

Warden. But will we not conquer him by degrees? gradually narrow the limits of his dominion?

The Master. He will, I fear, still reign in the hearts of a majority, and while that is the case, what hope is there? The fairest, most honest, and best form of government is the democratic; but suppose we had a democracy or republic. For a while the memory of the glorious revolution through which we have passed, and of the virtues of its actors, would keep alive a patriotic spirit; but this cannot long survive. The world is certainly divided into two great classes, and the evil ones are in the majority. These latter will be forever seeking, in all sorts of ways, *per fas et nefas*, to promote their own peculiar interests, regardless of the rights of others. The others the minority, who do not so desire, will not be let alone cannot remain fixed in one position. The man who resolves to attend to his own business, and to be disconnected with the affairs of others, makes a foolish resolution. Even an armed neutrality would be dangerous, for, while he stands with his arms folded, his rights, reputation, and fortune will be leaving him.

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Warden. Then you think man is the common foe of man?

The Master. He is, not by design, but made so by the ends he aims at. The greater number are aiming at pre-eminence; at the possession of peculiar power, fortune, and privileges. Hence mankind consist, and will consist, of the suers and the sued, of plaintiffs and defendants, oppressors and oppressed. There is no medium class, and those who attempt to form one, and to go harmless through the world, are common spoil, saved only by the contentions of the pirates who may fight among themselves over the prize. It will not do to retire modestly within yourself, hang your head meekly, and shrink timidly from the world. Go where you will, to the most remote and secluded islet on the globe, and some roving plunderer will find you out and spoil you of something, money, lands, name, or position, with which to enrich himself. I tell you, sir, you are on a hostile coast a great highway of robbers, as old Burton has it, and at every step you must fight or pay tribute to save your skin. Thus it has been, thus it is, and thus it ever will be; the industrious lowlanders, the honest citizens in the quiet vales of life, must be subject to the blackmail levy. Sometimes as in our own recent case a whole nation, like a rare individual, will resist this tribute, but, before it is aware of it, will be paying it to others. We refused to be taxed by England, and yet, before your hair is gray, we will be tributary to a host of politicians and demagogues, compared with whose exactions the Stamp Act, and all its concomitants, would have been an easy burden. Alas for the world! I must write a book.

Warden. I have often thought that, of all the professions, an author's is the most pleasant. He stands aloof from the world for whose good he is labouring, and with whose evil passions he never comes in contact. The statesman, the lawyer, and doctor, in the prosecution of their callings, and the farmer and mechanic in making a profit on the produce of their labour, have to combat with keen-witted and insatiable avarice, treachery, envy, and detraction. The author is happily freed from this evil.

The Master. You were never more mistaken in your life. First, there is the publisher, who wishes to make a fortune out of the hard service of your brain, and many of whom, totally without conscience, would, for a mere pittance, take from the needy son of genius works whose value all the precious contents of Peru's mines could not express. Secondly, there are rival authors who are mortal, and who scowl with the green eye of envy on a rising star; and, lastly, there are your professed critics, the selfish land-sharks in literature, the thievish highlanders, piratical rovers, who scour the seas in search of plunder, making a living by destroying others.

Warden. You are too hard on the critics, who, as I had supposed, subserve a most useful purpose. They are the censors of the press, public benefactors whose vocation it is to purify the literature of a nation from impurities and immoralities.

The Master. Stuff! stuff! Who's to purify the critics? If these men were exempted from mortal infirmities if they were the best, the wisest, and discreetest of mortals, there might be some reason in your argument. But who are they, these self-constituted censors, these awful judges, who are to direct and instruct authors and tie up the hands of genius? Miserable scribblers, who, unable to succeed as authors, become the plunderers of authors. They have an origin in common with the footpad and the pickpocket, having turned their wits to the reputable calling of preying on others. This is the true history of your professed critics, and it illustrates my theory of the two great classes of oppressor and oppressed.

Warden. You cannot make me believe that they are not a useful class, and subserve, in fact, a most invaluable purpose.

The Master. So does the buzzard and the carrion-crow; and still they are very filthy birds. When did the critics ever discover the merits of an author before the public found out his worth? Even your honest critics are often at fault; for genius is not measured by square and compass. Genius scorns all rules, and yet the critic judges by rule. What would the critics have thought of Shakspeare, who violated all their sacred canons? What did they think of Dryden and Pope? What were their judgments on my late friend I call him my friend the author of Tristram

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

Shandy?

Warden. I have never read the work to which you allude; but from what I have heard, it is by no means creditable to a minister of the Gospel. It is said to abound in low and vulgar wit, and licentious allusions and remarks. Such things are unbecoming in such a character.

It is impossible to describe the effect which this speech produced on the master. He pulled off his hat, heaved a deep sigh, and then covered his head again; spurred his horse so furiously, that the animal reared and plunged, and came near breaking the neck of his rider, who at last, placing himself by the side of his friend, and looking him mournfully in the face, exclaimed, My friend, my friend, you have sent an arrow through my heart! Oh God, that I should have heard you say so!

What on earth is the matter? cried Warden. I am astonished, and can hardly believe what I see and hear.

And well you may be, said the master; for of all the things you have ever done and said, your opinion of Sterne of my friend Sterne has hurt me most. I do not regard the censure he has been used to that but to hear it from *you* from my favourite pupil, my bosom friend, the man whose heart and mind I have trained, and in whom I have so justly gloried! But there is one consolation you have not read Tristram Shandy, and you have formed your judgement from the opinions and the miserable canting of the critics. The first thing I shall do on our return will be to put Sterne into your hands; and I know you will give him a fair and a patient hearing. He *was* witty; he did lash vice with an unsparing hand; boldly unmask the hypocrite, and call things by their proper names. But cannot a clergyman be pleasant, and smile oftener than frown? His heart was gentle and as kind as melting charity; his wit sparkling; his humour boundless and inimitable; his taste pure; his sentiments tender, just, and fearless; and his mind bright as yon glowing sun. Oh, glorious and immortal Sterne!

Here the master, overcome with emotion, pulled his hat over his eyes, spurred up his horse, and began to whistle snatches of a sad and pathetic air, when a sudden turn of the road brought him in contact with a company of soldiers.

CHAPTER LIX.

Haply some hapless man hath conscience,
And for his conscience lives in beggary. *MARLOWE.*

WELL-BRED gentlemen recognize and trust each other whenever and wherever they meet. The man of truth, honour, and cultivated sensibilities is never long a stranger to those of his kind when accident throws him with them, and, in fact, he is known as soon as he is seen. Thus it was with Warden, the commander of the soldiers, and myself, though perhaps I should let another say it. I was, I hope, and had always striven to be, a Christian gentleman; my young friend, Henry Warden, was undoubtedly one in its noblest sense, and such proved to be our new companion, the officer alluded to, and in whom I was glad to find and make the acquaintance of Captain Alfred Moore, a patriot partisan—leader of note, the descendant of an ancient and honourable family, and worthy himself to be the founder of an illustrious house. I found him to be what all leaders, civil and military, ought to be, a thorough scholar and well-read man; and his manners and conversation fully sustained the character he has borne in the annals of the state.

Thus speak the master's notes as he begins to sketch another portrait, and to illustrate it by a variety of anecdotes and incidents, which at any time and in any place would be interesting. The course of our narrative compels us, however, to skip the pages devoted to Captain Moore, and to follow the thread of the story. Moore and his

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

soldiers were in quest of forage, and as he and the Alamancers were going in the same direction, they travelled together for some time, when they overtook an old Scotchman on the road. They were among a Tory people, and only the age and humble condition of the old man shielded him from being harshly questioned. He was plainly dressed and poorly mounted on a small, lean horse of a peculiar species, known as Sandtrotters, and which manifested little sympathy with the aspirations of the rider, who maintained a proud reserve and courtly air. His manner, contrasted with his situation and dress, struck all the company as somewhat ludicrous; but the old man was with gentlemen, and thus protected from the rude jests of the soldiers. He was still suspected, however, of being a Tory; and though no injury was offered to his person, nor any insult to his feelings, he was ordered by Captain Moore to lead him and his men to some place where they could be supplied with what they needed. The aged Scotchman bowed slightly his stately form, saying he was ready to assist the patriots to the utmost of his ability. Though not in the field against him, he continued, I am no friend to the usurper on the British throne, nor to any of his race. True, I am one of a suspected race and in a suspected country; but if these locks had not been whitened, and these arms stiffened by the blight of age, there would have been in all the American army no soldier more zealous than I.

These words seemed fair enough; they came from an honest-looking face and were uttered with apparent sincerity of manner, but still the conduct of the Scotchman was very singular. He was in the midst of a fertile and plentiful country, and smiling fields, well-stored barns, and neat farm-houses were on every side. These were regarded with wistful eyes by the soldiers; but as their guide passed them by in silence, they followed on wondering what country could be more abundant. All became impatient at last; but still they rode on, waiting for a signal from the venerable Scotchman, who pressed forward, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left at the handsome residences and the wilderness of luxuriant grain that waved on the sides of the road. At last, in a poor neighbourhood, and opposite to a shabby residence in a small field of stunted corn, the old gentleman halted, and waving his hand as if he were dispensing the bounties of a prince, There, captain, said he, is a plantation, the contents of whose barns, cribs, larders, and fields are at your service. The brow of Moore darkened, and, turning fiercely to the Scotchman, he said, sternly, Old man, I am not to be mocked with impunity. Tell me instantly why you have thus trifled with me in bringing me from well-stored farms to this miserable and wretched abode of poverty. Think you that I would take the means of one so poor?

The places we have passed, answered the old man, straightening himself upon his horse, belong to other men, and I have no right to dispose of their harvests, abundant as they are. This is my land these are my fields and houses, and their scant bounty I freely offer you.

Unbidden tears instantly bedewed the manly cheeks of the gallant officer, and, seizing the old man's hand, he exclaimed, Sir, your humble garb has deceived me. You appear to be indeed poor, and your garments bespeak not the man of rank; but in your breast, humble as your condition seems, there glows the royal soul of a gentleman! God forbid that I should touch aught of yours except, in friendship, this honest and honourable hand!

The eyes of the Alamancers were also moist, and even the rough soldiers shared the generous emotion of their leader, when Warden exclaimed to the Scotchman, Your conduct has betrayed you: you are Duncan Stuart!

I have no reason to be ashamed of my name, replied the old man, though it once shone more brightly than it now does, and those to whom it belongs have all seen better days. I am Duncan Stuart, and now, permit me to ask, what am I to you?

A friend, I hope, said Warden, for certainly I am a sincere one to you. I have come from a distant country expressly to see you, and I bring good tidings.

I am too old to be surprised at any thing, said Stuart, and yet your words puzzle me. The present, however, is not a proper time to unriddle the mystery; for if you are all as hungry as I am you will, just now, prefer a different sort of discussion. Gentlemen and soldiers, alight, and Duncan Stuart will endeavour to provide refreshments for

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

all, men and horses.

The Alamancers instantly obeyed the friendly summons, and Stuart pressed Moore also to partake of the hospitality of his humble board, but that active officer, pledging himself to remember his aged friend, and wishing him a better fate, was too intent upon the discharge of his duties to tarry longer. Warden, remembering the villainy of Ross, and the calamities it had caused to Stuart, was at a loss how to disclose the object of his visit, until the blunt candour and simplicity of the master solved the difficulty. He, M'Bride, at once informed his host of the occasion of his visit, and the latter heard it without exhibiting the emotion which Warden had feared. Perhaps his heart was silently breaking within him; perhaps it had already been withered, and he was now incapable of excitement. He manifested but little feeling at what he heard, except that his noble form expanded and his faded eyes kindled with unwonted fire as he quietly said, I shall never touch the accursed bounty. True, I was injured by that Ross you mention, and am now extremely poor; but my pilgrimage is nearly finished, and I have enough to last me till I drop, like ripe fruit, from the tree of life. My tenure is already frail, and the slightest blast will break the fragile stem. Let the wealth of which you speak be given to his poor relations and to his wretched female victims; and thus I would advise you to dispose of your own portion.

So I have intended, replied Warden; but I see no reason for your refusal. The testator has injured you you are old, and, as I fear, nearly destitute. I shall return with a sad heart if I have to leave such an honest man in distress.

If such were the feelings of the few honest men who are prosperous, answered Stuart, how miserable they would be, did they only know what a vast proportion of their kind of the just, I mean are pining with hopeless penury and want! The ways of Providence here are inscrutable, and it is not for us to complain. Behold me, the son of a long line of kings, and, I trust, an honest man, living here in a rude hut, supporting myself in my old age with the labour of my own hands, an exile upon a foreign soil, and an ocean between me and the graves of my kindred. Look at this picture, and then see the Guelphs, an upstart race, the heirs of petty German princes, lording it in the regal palaces of the mighty kingdom of Britain, and ruling with a rod of iron my own beloved Scotland Scotland, where at the very name of Stuart every gallant and noble heart thrills with emotion! But 'the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor riches to men of understanding; but time and chance happeneth to them all.' Still, I may hope that with me will expire the curse that follows to the third and fourth generations the descendants of them that do evil. Some of my kindred had their faults, but their descendants have expiated them; and with my sons brave and noble lads I hope a better fortune will commence.

CHAPTER LX.

DUNCAN STUART manifested some curiosity to hear the story of Ross; and the master, whose reading propensities needed but a slight touch of the spur, was soon midway in the history alluded to. To the surprise of the Alamancers, their host exhibited little emotion at what he heard, and Warden was emboldened to ask the story of Louise.

It's a long and tedious tale, said the old man, and as it has been written, and Mr. M'Bride seems to be fond of such things, the manuscript is his. Here it is, and you can both read it at your leisure.

Have you ever heard of the lady since she left you? inquired the master.

Only by rumour, answered Stuart, of which many strange ones have reached me. That cottage, of which Ross speaks, is, I suppose, the haunted house near the river of which I have often heard, and in regard to which the superstitious Scotch, my countrymen, circulate and believe the most incredible and astounding stories. It is said to be just such a place as the fairies would love. The little palace is embosomed among huge old cypress-trees, and surrounded by a wilderness of flowers of every hue and from every clime, and adorned inside with the most costly

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

and elegant furniture. It sits in a small, solitary, and secluded vale, just on the river bank, and is overhung by huge mossy rocks and jutting precipices. I believe, from what I have heard, I could find the place, for, I doubt not, it is in a certain unsettled part of the country, through which I passed years ago; but as Louise has not been in want, I care not to see her. Poor thing, how dearly has she paid for her folly! When you read my manuscript you will weep floods of tears for the fair mad muse of the woods, whose plaintive songs echo along the unfrequented vales like airs from a spirit land, and the occasional sight of whom, in her fantastic robes of royalty, with a crown of evergreens on her head and a flowering sceptre in her hand, has alarmed the timid fisherman and belated traveller.

I must see her, was the silent resolve of the master and of his former scholar; and as they sat pondering on her probable history and destiny, a new guest arrived. He was a small, spare man, with a deeply-embrowned skin, and showed, by the brevity of his sentences and his military air, that he must have been a soldier and an officer. As it was late in the evening, the stranger, in few and simple words, asked permission to spend the night where he was: a request which greatly embarrassed old Duncan Stuart, for his means were not equal to his princely desires. Observing his anxiety, Warden said, Let the stranger stay. I am used to the life of a soldier, and should prefer the floor to a bed.

And so would I, said the new-comer, and I shall not be choise about my diet. I know you're poor, old gentleman, and I know your hospitable wishes. Fear nothing, for I had rather take any fare with you than travel farther. I will now look to my horse, and then you will see how I can make myself at home.

My servant shall attend to your horse, said Warden.

I had rather do it myself, replied the stranger; and he and Stuart left the house. The curiosity of Warden and the master was excited, and they had a prodigious desire to know the stranger's name; but while they were still consulting about the proper mode of ascertaining what they wished to learn, the person spoken of came in. What has become of Louise? asked he, turning to Stuart.

I have no right, answered Stuart, to ask your name, stranger; but your question rather surprises me. Still I have no desire to keep secret what I know about the poor girl. Hereupon the old man related what he had already told to the Alamancers, and the master soon afterwards read over the history of Ross.

The villain! I knew he was such, exclaimed the stranger; but the register, where is that?

I have purposely kept it sealed till now, said the master, and I will now open it.

Do, if you please, replied the new guest, and let us see how many worthy men sought to make happy a woman who chose a scoundrel.

Upon my soul, cried the master, this must be a fiction. It is not possible that she could have turned off so many illustrious suitors. See what a list is here.

The list's a true one, said the stranger, for I see my own name and those of several of my friends upon it. We were all her suitors.

May I ask you which is your name? enquired the master.

It is the first, replied the stranger.

What! exclaimed Warden, is it possible I see before me that gallant leader and glorious patriot, FRANCIS MARION! Yes, I know you are Marion, and God be praised for the hour that brought us together! All the

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

company, except the South Carolinian, were fairly electrified with pleasure, and the noon of the night was passed before any eye was closed in sleep. The master and Stuart did, at last, sink to rest in the arms of Morpheus, but the sun of the next day found Marion and Warden still awake and talking. Each learned many curious incidents from the other, and their relative histories were spiced with profound observations upon the course of things. The partisan leader having learned enough of Louise, was, early the next day, on the road for South Carolina, and the Alamancers at the same time set out to look for the haunted glen. They were soon in a wild, unsettled country, and their farther progress along the river bank impeded by a thick undergrowth of bushes, and by luxuriant vines. If you will hold my horse, I will see how far this thicket extends, said Warden to the master; and, dismounting, he soon disappeared in the woods. Half an hour passed away, and M'Bride and Ben became extremely uneasy. During the next half hour they kept up a continued shout, and, at last, the master, leaving the horses with them, went himself into the woods, searching them for miles around. The sun was just setting when he returned to the servant; and now, securing their horses to trees, both men beat through the woods during the whole of the night, shouting and hallooing as they went. They still continued their search on the following day, until, worn down with fatigue and hunger, they were compelled to discontinue their labor of love. Exhausted and frantic with grief, they found their way back to Stuart's, where they took a hasty meal, provided themselves with provision for several days, and again, and in the night, set out to recommence the search. Duncan Stuart, exhibiting more emotion than the master had seen him display before, insisted on being permitted to accompany the Alamancers, and through him the whole neighbourhood was set in motion. Day after day, and night after night, the forest was examined, till, at last, one of the parties found a hat upon the margin of the river. The master knew it at once, and the melancholy conclusion that Warden was drowned or murdered was forced upon the minds of all. So, alas! I knew it would be, thought the master, and he and Ben commenced their melancholy journey to Alamance. The master's heart was sad enough in its own reflections; but when he heard old Ben, as he often did, break into fits of hysterical weeping and lamentations, and noticed the led horse and empty saddle, he was overpowered with emotion, and the stern philosopher was lost in the helpless man of grief. All the other misfortunes of his life now seemed light as air, and, with a smothering sensation, he found that his theory had proved true. He had cherished a secret hope that he might yet be deceived; but, alas! that hope was gone forever. What a curse, thought he, is one evil man! how does his villainy entail wretchedness on whole families and generations! This man Ross was born for a scourge, and how fatally has he fulfilled his mission! Oh, would to God my reasoning had been false! Would to God it had been proved so by the loss of my own life! Cursed forever be the name of Ross and Stuart! Next rushed upon him the memory of Edith and of his own unhappy fate, in being the bearer of such mournful tidings. Long did he ponder as to the best means of communicating the sad intelligence to Edith, and, at last, resolved to go first to the parents of the deceased. He was aware that the bearer of bad news had a losing task, but he made an effort to brace himself for a proper discharge of his duty, and intended gently, and by degrees, to perform it. But then there were the led horse and empty saddle how eloquently would they tell the tale of disaster in advance of the master! The horse, after a consideration, was left in the woods, and M'Bride and Ben approached the Warden mansion. All about it, to the master's eyes, wore an air of peace, of serenity, and contentment he had never observed before; and even unconscious nature seemed to be smiling with unwonted beauty. Ben, preserving a sad and gloomy silence, walked moodily off to the kitchen; and the master, with a throbbing heart, and wishing he never had been born, entered the hall. To his surprise, he found there the wife of Henry Warden, who, with her mother-in-law, were the only persons that met him. They saw the shadow on his brow the devoted wife and the tender mother knew, intuitively, what had happened, and they seemed afraid to ask a question. How beautiful did Edith then seem to the master! how his heart smote him as he looked on her sweet and innocent face, all beaming with love and goodness! He turned from her, and she, at last, in faltering, tremulous accents, pronounced the name of her husband. Despite all his philosophy, and all his previous preparation, the master was as much confounded as if a mine had suddenly exploded under his feet; and, losing all self-possession, exclaimed, He is gone! Oh God, he's lost forever! A wild scream burst through the hall, and the bewildered master, rushing first to assist the fainting wife, gathered in his arms Henry Warden, on whose breast his wife was weeping and laughing by turns!

God and his angels preserve us! cried the master; am I in the land of spirits?

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

You've been in Dreamland all your life, my friend, answered his ancient student, and it is my purpose to awake you.

Such scenes might well awake the dead, said the master, but they confound the living. Tell me in one minute how you came here, or my brain will crack.

Know, then, in one minute, replied Warden, that when I left you in the woods, on Clarendon river, I saw a strange vision which avoided me. I at once gave chase, and the singular creature who avoided me darted into a cave. I followed This cave was an artificial one, and its entrance was so formed that you would hardly observe it did you not suspect its existence. You passed over my head several times; and in the night, emerging at another door with my new acquaintance, she carried me to the fairy palace a sweet, romantic place, fit for the residence of the queen of the fairies. Here my wild companion told me her story, and well will it become your notes. It was a history of facts more startling and more intensely interesting than the wildest fictions in prose or verse, and at a more convenient time you shall hear it all. Well, while at the Glen an idea struck me, and as every thing seemed to be there in abundance, I obtained a hat, borrowed a horse, and secretly passing down the river, left my own hat on the bank, and hurried off to get here before you. My conscience upbraided me for playing you such a trick, but I wished to cure you of your malady. I knew, when we left home, you expected an accident to befall me. I knew your attachment to your theory, and I thought that the only way to make you abandon it was to let you see it carried out. Did you not say to yourself, over and over again, as you returned, that you had secretly hoped you were wrong? Did you not begin to murmur against Heaven for doing what you had predicted ought to be done? In a word, did you not conclude that God was unjust? He is not. His Providence is still over us, protecting the innocent, and guiding the good to their own happiness, for not a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge. Now look at this face upon my shoulders: do you not see in *that* face a hope inspired by Heaven itself?

The master glancing at the swimming eyes of Edith, in each of which shone a promise fairer and sweeter than the bough seen by Noah, replied, I give it up. I think, however, you might have used a more gentle remedy, for salvation is nothing to the pangs I have endured; and I have grown ten years older by the regimen.

And fifty wiser, rejoined Warden.

And have become fifty times happier, I hope, said Edith, with a smile that took off twice ten years from the master's heart.

Violent maladies require violent remedies, you know, continued Warden; and here the conversation was interrupted by Ben, who, having got drunk in one minute after he heard of his young master's safety, now came rushing into the hall, followed by a troop of servants, and kicking up such a fuss as was never before heard but in Bedlam.

CHAPTER LXI, AND THE LAST.

WHEN the author, or, rather, editor of these memoirs, was a boy, he went to school at Alamance. There then lived in in that community a bland old gentleman, somewhat short in stature, and always dressed in knee-pants and buckles. His hair, which was as white as cotton, and which was thinly sprinkled over his temples, was always nicely combed and smoothed, and never so arranged as to conceal the bald patch upon the crown of his head. The curve of his lip, and a very slight and peculiar turn of the nose indicated a disposition somewhat satirical, but you soon forgot the scarcely-perceptible acidity of his features when you heard the mellow tones of his deep-bass voice, and beheld the mild twinkle of his kind, gray eye. Fond of locomotion, yet extremely averse to exercise on horseback, the old gentleman could be seen almost every day of the week, except on the Sabbath, with his staff in

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

his hand and a little dog behind him, wending his way through the fields and along the shortest by-paths that led from house to house at Alamance. He was generally met by the children some distance from the house, and he invariably addressed every member of the family by his or her Christian name, and never was known to say Mr. or Mrs. to any one. With boyish curiosity, the editor observed minutely all his habits; noticed that he conversed much more freely after taking his grog (by which name he always called his dram), and that it was his invariable custom to sit with one leg crossed over the other, and, when he was not going to tarry long, with his hands, and sometimes his chin, resting on the head of his stick. Having been a careful observer of men and things, he was a living chronicler of the past, and was particularly pleased when the young, as they often did, would cluster round him and ask him questions concerning the events of by-gone times. On such occasions he was entertaining, instructive, and pathetic, and would talk, if not interrupted, and if occasionally refreshed with a sip of grog, the livelong night. He was universally respected by the old, revered by the young, and esteemed by all as an oracle of wisdom and truth. He had, however, his pets and favorites, and among them was our humble self, whom he often dandled on his knee and took with him in his rambles over the fields, answering with equal simplicity and hearing our multitudinous questions about the various operations of Nature, and filling our youthful mind with admiration and amazement, as well at the immense stores of knowledge he had garnered up, as at his astonishing acuteness and sagacity. This was Hector M'Bride, the former master of the old field school, and then in the winter of his days. He had a residence in the mountains, his old friends, Abraham Neal and his wife, having left the world together, and bequeathing to him all their estate. At this mountain residence he spent part of every summer in study and meditation, and, it may have been, in composition also, for he was a most voluminous writer. In the course of time, the editor left Alamance, and was advancing on towards man's estate, when the following note, sent by express, was put into his hands:

Mountain Home, June 4, 18 .

DEAR SIR I am requested by our mutual friend, Hector M'Bride, to desire your immediate presence here. The good old gentleman is failing rapidly in health and strength, and cannot, I greatly fear, long survive. Come immediately.

In haste, yours truly,

HENRY WARDEN.

We hurried off as fast as a swift horse could carry us, and was soon by the bedside of the master, and found him surrounded by his friends Henry Warden, Donald M'Leod, their wives and children, George Warden, Ben Rust, an old slave named Ben, and a huge gentleman known as Uncle Corny, were there. His manner was cheerful but sedate, and his conversation partook of that gravity becoming his character and his situation. He could not, he said, be indifferent to the pangs of death and the doubts that hung over the grave; still, he had a rational and abiding hope, and looked with Christian fortitude on the deepening shadows of that valley through which all have to pass. Of all things he was wont to say, the idea of annihilation is the most awful that can be presented to a living soul, and it is terrible to think of ceasing to exist, even for a moment. With a severe scrutiny, he revised his whole life, and one day said to us all, My manner of life, from my youth up, is known to you all. I cannot recollect that I have ever coveted any one's goods; oppressed the poor, the widow, or the orphan; done injustice between man and man, been awed by the rich and powerful to pervert judgment, or spurned from me the friendless wretch. In all cases I have looked to the man and his cause, and not to his circumstances or his influence, and have ever sided with him whom I truly believed was in the right. I have been devoted to liberty and the emancipation of my race; I have constantly had before my eyes the fear of God, and have endeavoured to keep his statutes. I will not deny that I shrink from the horrors of the grave; I will not deny that I feel some apprehensions as I go to take my stand at the dread tribunal, where the secrets of all hearts are known. But we must all die; it is a debt we contract the moment we enter upon existence. 'All flesh is grass, and all the godliness

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

thereof is as the flower of the field,' yet to all inanimate nature the spring returns, and surely man, the glory of the earth, shall yet be renewed in perpetual youth. I trust in the mercy of God; such is the staff of my hope as I pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

With such discourse he passed the time, his body sinking daily, and his mind seeming to grow brighter, calmer, and steadier. On one occasion, desiring to be alone with us, he took us by the hand and said, My young friend, I am going to show you how much you have won upon my affection. Here is a key that unlocks a square hair trunk which you will find in my study, in the opposite chamber. That trunk and its contents are yours, with this injunction: You are not to open it till after my death, and then you are to make such a discreet use of what you find as will redound most to the public good and the honour of my memory. A great charge is confided to you act worthy of my confidence.

We expressed, in proper terms, our sense of the obligations conferred, and went out to take a stroll. In a niche, a shady niche, in the side of a mountain, we had often heard the innocent prattle of children, and had noticed them every morning strewing flowers upon a green hillock there that was covered over with ivy and violets. We had also seen Henry Warden and his lady going often to this place, where, from their manners, their conversation seemed to be of a sad and affecting character. Our curiosity had been awakened, and going to the place we saw, on a maple that stood at one end of the little knoll, and in letters that had been nearly effaced by time, the simple words, Lucy Neal. We were musing on what we saw, observing that the alcove had once been trimmed and cultivated, but that its seats were now crumbling away, its paths choked up with grass, and its beds overgrown with weeds and wild flowers, when Henry Warden accosted us. He gave us a brief sketch of the life and death of Lucy Neal, and called our attention to the fact, that every thing about her rustic bower was still left exactly as it was when she died, excepting only the changes produced by Nature herself. About this time, the Rev. Dr. Caldwell arrived in the mountains, and the master seemed much edified by his discourse, and got him, in presence of us all, to read his will. He left a considerable sum of money to Alamance church, for the purpose of buying a library, and with the will was a catalogue of the books to be purchased; there were a number of charitable bequests to the poor, and particularly to children whose parents were not able to give them an education. The new teacher was also remembered; for to him was left his classics, and to every Alamancer he bequeathed some memento. To his friends Rust, Caldwell, and Uncle Corny, he left liberal legacies: but the bulk of his property was settled on the children of Warden and M'Leod, leaving to a little daughter of the former, named Lucy, his mountain estate, and to her father the balance of his books. His strength now failed rapidly, but he still was fond of company, and was particularly gratified by the affection of the children, whom he kept constantly about him. One day he had himself turned with his face to the wall, and, while holding the hand of a little boy who sat on the bed, the latter uttered a playful exclamation about the coldness of his skin, and we found the master was no more. According to his request, we buried him at the foot of a mountain, carving his name on a huge overhanging rock, and leaving him with that mighty hill for his monument, where none but the feet of the free shall ever tread upon his grave, and where, as he said, he should rise by the side of the pure spirit of Lucy on the morning of the resurrection.

Leaving his friends to lament his death and pay proper honours to his memory, we hurried home and impatiently awaited the arrival of the trunk. It came at last, and, eagerly unlocking it, we found it crammed with the master's manuscripts, and our eyes sparkled with pleasure as they ran over the various titles of the rare collection. There were essays on various subjects; a large bundle of maxims, bonmots and pithy sayings; a book of tabletalk; The Log-Book of a Lady's Whims during One Month of her Earthly Voyage; a great number of sonnets, epigrams, songs and poems, amorous, didactic, and satirical; a curious work called The Rise and Progress of a Politician, another entitled The Universal Vanities of Men, and a production headed, A Dissertation on the History of Woman, Natural, Moral, and Political, with an Attempt to elucidate the Mysteries of her Heart, and to account for and reconcile the Inconsistencies of her Character. But that which we were most delighted to find was a large and ponderous mass of papers carefully written and stitched together, and forming several volumes. These were labeled, Notes, taken on the Wayside of Life, by Hector M'Bride, Schoolmaster, and to them was pinned a card, with the sentence, A wait the proper time. For long months our leisure time and our hours of rest were

Alamance; Or, the Great and Final Experiment.

consumed in poring over them, for they contain, in a style chaste and elegant, the narrative of many surprising adventures, family histories, and amusing incidents. For years long, long years, carefully have we guarded the rich treasures confided to our keeping, and drawing from them instruction and amusement in seasons of trial and of sickness. We have believed that the proper time, alluded to by the master, has come at last; and, so thinking, we now send forth to the world a selection from his Notes. As to the taste displayed in arranging, and the ability in revising these memoirs, the reader must decide; of our motives we must be permitted to be ourself the judge, and to say that, with these, we are so well satisfied, we shall little reckon of the hoarse croak of the literary vultures who feed upon the offal of authors.

THE END.