

The Sumter Banner.

DEVOTED TO SOUTHERN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, NEWS, LITERATURE, AGRICULTURE, SCIENCE AND THE ARTS.

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"God and our Native Land."

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From the Columbia Banner.
FIRST PRIZE TALE.

MICHAEL ALLSCOT;
—OR—
THE SHOT IN TIME.

A STORY OF MARION'S MEN.

BY J. W. ERVIN.

CHAPTER I.
[CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE.]

CHAPTER II.

"Oh that we, in these best woods where first you won my soul, had passed our gentle days far from toil and din of war! Such is the wish of love of love that with delightful weakness knows no bliss and no ambition but itself."

The evening repast was over, when Dora Singleton immediately retired to her apartment but not to sleep. Her pathway had ceased to wind among roses, and care and anxiety were heavy at her heart.

The old family mansion, where she still dwelt with her step-father—a man of moody and sullen temper, whose treatment was not always tempered by that kindness and consideration which should have been the lot of one so tender and young—was one of those picturesque buildings of that style so pleasing to our ancestors some generations ago, but which have altogether disappeared in this utilitarian age. It was a quiet and dignified looking old mansion, somewhat quaint in its appearance and style, yet sufficiently capacious to have conveniently sheltered under its pyramidal roof some two or three generations of those prolific days. Antiquated cupboards, with shelves well hidden by neatly panelled doors that reached even up to the ceiling, filled up here and there the corner of an apartment, while doors immemorially opened into mysterious closets on every side.

Dora had retired into her bed chamber in the second story of the building the walls of which were decorated with portraits of her father and mother, that seemed to look down fondly upon the beautiful and unfriended orphan. A small silver lamp of exquisite workmanship shed its clear light over her beautiful features, pale indeed, yet wondrously fair, so that she scarcely seemed a being of earth. Her glance had in it that strangely fascinating power that belongs only to beauty of a rare and high order of perfection. It was only such as could belong to a proud, and generous, and sensitive nature, that seemed without an effort to reach the hearts of all others, while it betrayed not even in a moment the secrets of its own. All the magic grace of nature lived with her and seemed to dwell in the air she breathed.

Her hair, of a very dark shade, yet not wholly black, was tastefully bound in the becoming Grecian knot, and where it was gathered from the neck it formed a lovely contrast with the dazzling white skin beneath. Her arms, left bare to the elbow, or but slightly concealed from view by undersleeves of a most delicate texture were full and most temptingly rounded, and her small hand, on the fingers of which glittered a single ring bearing a gem of the first water, was of aristocratic loveliness.

Dora had not lingered long over the trifle on which she was sewing, when she cast it aside with a sigh, blew out her lamp, glided across the apartment and throwing open the casement, stood upon the balcony on the front of the mansion. There, leaning upon the slender railing which encompassed it, with her cheek upon her palm, she looked abroad upon the dim landscape which spread out before her.

All was now peaceful and serene. The howling storm, which had hovered above but a few hours before with wings of appalling blackness, had passed away with his host of sulphurous clouds, and the bright stars were shining calmly on the sky, while the bright moon, rapidly ascending the eastern horizon, poured down a mellow flood of light upon forest and field, marking the rain drops on each blade

and leaf to glisten like burnished silver. The prospect before the maiden was beautiful indeed. The house, which was situated upon a gently sloping hill, commanded a fine view of the surrounding country, and on every side but one, lay extended fields, with nothing to impede the view. To the left of the avenue, which led off directly from the noble mansion, was an uncultivated forest, which extended to the east and the north as far as the eye could reach, where the pine and the oak mingled their foliage together, and where many a gentle stream curled on over snowy sands under the impenetrable shade. The landscape that spread out before the maiden was quiet and lovely. A flood of yellow light rested upon the broad scene, and reflected back from field and forest in soft lights and shadows.

It was one of those calm and glorious nights of oriental brightness, when every sound is still, and every voice hushed to repose—when the beauty of Eden seems to revisit the earth, and banish for a season its corroding cares and consuming sorrows.

Dora had a heart to feel all the beauty of the hour. The poetry of love was with her, and her thoughts were away with the young soldier of her country, who had been content to turn away even from her, and undergo the toils and privations of the camp for the noble cause of independence. She loved him with that generous and uncalculating devotion, that in one of her temperaments and blood, almost amounted to idolatry. Though meeting but rarely, and latterly only by stealth, yet his image was continually present to her mind.

Of late there had been many causes at work to diminish the peace and happiness of the maiden. The country was overrun by prowling bands of Tories, and nowhere throughout the whole State was there a band of patriots sufficiently formidable to stand against the invader or to appear in arms. The body under Marion, which still refused to disband, could scarcely be called an exception to this rule; for perched up in the fastness of the swamp it lay hidden from the enemy, while its locality was a mystery even to the most undoubted patriots of its own party.

As the maiden leaned over the balustrade, the full light of the moon shining down softly upon her beautiful figure, that seemed still more voluptuous as she stood exposed to the influence of that bewitching light that softens even the downy cheek of beauty, and gives perfection to its loveliness, one might almost observe the tear drop flashing across her bright eyes, while she mused alone on her young hopes, the fruition of which seemed yet so distant. Around her, throughout the whole land, the foot of the invader trod triumphantly upon the soil, and even the most hopeful of the patriots began to tremble at the prospects of subjugation. Well did she know the fate that awaited her lover should the invader finally triumph over a prostrate country. Her hopes would then be but a delusive dream, and her heart, widowed in its affection, break with its burden, or beat on through a sad existence, maddened by its bereavement.

Besides these anticipations of evils, as yet distant and only conjectural, there were more immediate causes of anxiety and annoyance which harassed her peace, and were fruitful of much uneasiness and distress, from which she determined to free herself, even though it should be necessary to resort to the most energetic measures. Her home had of late been frequently visited by the leaders of the royalists—mostly, if not altogether, men of abandoned characters and dissolute habits—who could now with impunity venture abroad, and boldly, too, in a country where there was no longer power to keep them in wholesome awe; and more than one of these military freebooters had cast glances of admiration and covetous expectations upon the rich heiress of Sumter.

Foremost among these, and especially detested by Dora, was the tory leader Harrison, who regarded her as a prize well won by his unscrupulous devotion to the cause of the mother country. Patiently had he borne her withering scorn and her freely manifested detestation of his character, in the presumptuous hope that the final hour of triumph would bring from her however reluctantly, a consent to wed him. He had become a frequent guest at her father's house, who courted the society of the bloody and wicked man whom his more courageous daughter abhorred.

The gentle Dora was leaning over the balustrade and musing upon the mournful circumstances that darkened the sunshine of her happiness, and bitter were her meditations as she called to mind her unfriended and desolate situation since she stood isolated from the world, and with scarcely one friend

to whom she could unburden herself with a hope of sympathy. As she stood looking out upon the scene before her, suddenly the neighing of a horse reached her ears from the road which passed along at right angles to the avenue about half a mile distant. Again the sharp shrill neigh rose upon the air like the clear blast of a clarion, and Dora imagined she could almost hear the tramp of her lover's steed along the firm and trodden highway. She gazed intently down the long avenue, taxing her eye-sight to the utmost to distinguish the horse or rider through the gloom as he passed the point where the avenue intersected the highway.

"It is the day," she should have come," murmured the maiden, as with her hand she shaded her eyes from the strong glare of the moon, and gazed intently down the avenue. A moment more and she beheld the moonlight glistening upon the sleek coat of a powerful animal, as he turned off from the highway, and entered the avenue leading to the house.

"God be praised, it is indeed he," she exclaimed, as she recognized the well known steed of her lover. "Michael comes," and retiring to her chamber, she relighted her lamp, and waved it thrice joyfully at her window, to tell her lover that she had watched for and discovered his coming. Then casting herself upon her knees and burying her face in her hands, wept tears of thankfulness and joy, for the safe return of one who was dearer to her heart than life itself.

Some ten or fifteen minutes had elapsed, and this beautiful woman still knelt with her face buried in her hands; when suddenly a rustling was heard among the leaves of the oak that grew near her window to the right of the portico, and a slight jar against the trunk, such as would be caused by one climbing from below. She rose to her feet, and a glance through the open window served to reveal to her the figure of a handsome man, who had ascended the tree to the height of the window, and was now making his way along a bough that projected to within a few inches of one of the corner pillars of the balcony.

In her surprise, her first impulse was to scream aloud; but the voice of her lover, whose quick eye had already discovered her, disarmed her fears for herself, and she now began to be seriously alarmed for the peril in which his seeming rashness had involved himself.

The limb upon which he was slowly making his way to the balcony was near thirty feet from the gravelly court beneath, and seemed quite too frail to support even the weight of a slender stripling, much less one of the robust frame of Michael; but while she stood petrified by astonishment and terror, great was her delight to find her lover gradually nearing the column, then casting his arm around it, and finally releasing his hold of the bough, leap lightly to the balustrade, and at length stand safe and secure upon the balcony. With a cry of joy she flew through the open door, and falling into his arms, relieved her overwrought feelings by a flood of tears.

"I am come," were the first words of her lover, as he pressed her to his bosom, "but as seldom as we meet, dear Dora, I find the country so unsafe for me, that we must meet to part almost in one breath."

"Not so soon, I trust, Michael," answered Dora hastily; "I have so much to say to you, and am so unhappy here, that I would follow you to the camp, and be even your servant there, rather than we should part again."

"I hope, my dear Dora," answered Michael, as he led her from the balcony into her chamber, "that old Isaac Whorton has not forgotten the kindness due you?"

"Not that, Michael, not that," she responded quickly, as she marked the flush of anger and surprise that flashed over the earnest features of her lover, "but our neighborhood is no longer what it once was. Traitors walk openly abroad now, and even here in this stronghold of whiggery as it once was, but five miles distant from this very spot, the Tories are to have a grand meeting on the day after tomorrow."

"Hah! say you so?" replied Michael eagerly, while a gleam of joy flashed from his eyes. "Where meet they, and how heard you news so important and welcome as this?"

"Welcome! indeed to me it is far otherwise!" responded the fair woman, while her cheek grew a shade paler. "I myself heard their leaders under this very roof, when they boastfully told of the preparations they had made for the rendezvous of their tagged followers at the old field on Tarcoote. A grand supper is to be prepared for their traitorous guests. New weapons are to be distributed to their followers with an unsparring hand, and provisions, clothing and money bestowed

upon all who will join them. The whole country is astir; and the notorious Tynes, who is to take command, is already in the neighborhood with a number of active and audacious followers."

"On my soul, Dora," exclaimed Michael, with an animated gesture, "this will be noble news for my commander. But had the rascally Tories no fear that Marion would hear of their gathering, and be an unbiased guest?"

"Indeed they do not," replied she. "Nor do they dream of danger now. Marion is believed to be far distant, and too feeble, even if aware of their purpose, to venture abroad to oppose them."

"On my soul they are fools as well as cravens!" muttered Michael, disdainfully. "No longer since than morning I left my brave general with two hundred as gallant soldiers as ever fought under the banner of freedom. Conyers, panting for the fight, is in the camp with a full troop, and we hear ready at a word to rush down upon the enemy like a thunderbolt. But I am astonished beyond measure that our scouts, ever wont to be prompt and vigilant, failed to gather and transmit to Marion intelligence of this gathering."

"Perhaps they may have been among those good and reliable whigs who were captured and sent off under guard to Camden," answered Dora. "Before a word was whispered abroad of the intended gathering, every man even suspected of being friendly to his country was at once sent off to prison."

"If all have indeed fallen into the power of the Tories, there is an unappreciated traitor in our camp," answered Michael sternly; "Marion has scouts abroad that you would scarcely dream of, and such as the Tories could never suspect, unless they are betrayed. None but his officers are permitted to know the names of his scouts, and they are only trusted with the secret when the good of the public service requires it. I would have you know that I must trust you with their names, which otherwise not even torture could wring from my lips. I trust you, but let the silence of the grave forever at rest on their names."

"Speak on, Michael," answered the maiden, "I would die sooner than betray them."

Michael drew yet nearer to her, and sinking his voice to a whisper, as though he feared the walls had ears, spoke slowly and solemnly.

"Richbourg, Jamison, Ames—can you tell me aught of them? They are our scouts, loyal and trusted. God grant they may be safe!"

"No wonder that you failed to hear from them," replied Dora. "Jamison and Ames have been sent in irons to Camden; but poor Richbourg preferred a better fate. He died at his own door battling like a lion with those who were sent to arrest him."

"May he rest in peace," responded Michael solemnly; "he was a brave soldier; and an honest man. But we have one scout yet left, a brave and loyal old man, as true as steel to the cause of his adopted country. What had tidings have you to tell me of old Archy Kerr?"

"Old Archy Kerr!" asked Dora, with a start of surprise; that taciturn, moody and selfish old man, whom no whig will trust, and whom tory as he is, even his own party avoid and dislike? You jest, Michael, indeed you do, but just in speaking thus of that misanthropic reclusé."

"On my word I do not," responded her lover gravely. "Old Archy Kerr, for reasons that do honor to his heart, has been content to endure the ill will and contempt of those whose devotion to their country does not even equal his own. Too proud, indeed too much of a Christian, to practice imposition or deceit, even for the promotion of a righteous cause, he would sooner tear his tongue from his throat than suffer it to belie his convictions. Thus his honesty has kept him aloof from the Tories, though reputed as such himself. And he will not consort with our own party, lest he may draw the suspicion of the royalist party upon himself, and thus diminish his opportunity of rendering assistance to Marion. The leading whigs of the district have a hundred times denounced him to Marion as one well worthy of the halter, but our general has only smiled in the quiet way peculiar to him, and Oh! believe me, one of the noblest hearts that ever beat, one the most stern and unyielding in its integrity, throbs under the course jerkin of that devoted patriot. Tell me, Dora, has he too fallen into the power of the tory party?"

"No, Michael, no!" answered she. "Archy Kerr is so cordially detested by the whigs, that he would be the last man the Tories would suspect. Three weeks since he was taken down by a fever, and now lies dangerously sick, and so unpopular is his name,

that I believe—nay, now I fear—he is left to die almost companionless."

"God forbid!" ejaculated Michael fervently; "he is too firm a friend to his country to merit such a fate. Were it not that what you have told me renders it necessary that I should return to the camp without the loss of an hour, I would even hasten to his bedside this night. I conjure you, by all you hold sacred, suffer not that noble servant of his country to feel that he is neglected; visit him yourself; tell him that like himself you live but for your country. He is the friend, the confidant and the scout of our general, and never does our general change his camp without directly informing Kerr by a trusty messenger of his change of quarters. He would part with his last morsel of bread to feed a suffering soldier, and as his means are scanty, the old hero may even now feel the pinchings of actual want. You should go provided with such things as a sick man may actually need, and whisper this in his ear, that in forty-eight hours Marion himself will stand by his side. Ah! Dora, devotion like his should not go unrewarded."

"Indeed it shall not," answered she, with much emotion. "For the love he has borne his country, I myself will watch over him as a daughter, and see that his wants are all supplied."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Boyhood of Distinguished Men.

Dryden displayed no evidence of more than ordinary intelligence until he reached mature manhood; Johnson says of Goldsmith that he was a very idle scholar, and much fonder of ball and leap-frog than of books. The most interesting thing told of him as a child by his biographer is, that once, in the midst of a storm of thunder and lightning, he climbed a tree, and when asked by his parents why he did so, replied, whispering, "The lightning was so beautiful, and I wished to see where it was coming from."—This story, if correct, furnishes us with an illustration of the manner in which the young mind delights to seek information for itself in its own way. Perhaps a still more characteristic anecdote is that told of Smeaton, the architect of the Eddystone Light-house, who, when a boy in petticoats, was one day discovered on the top of his father's house, in the act of fixing the model of a windmill, which he had constructed.

But the great majority of the most distinguished men—especially those distinguished for their power—have been altogether undistinguished in their boyhood. Sir Isaac Newton, perhaps our greatest man, stood very low in his class at school though he was very fond of mechanical pursuits, and of drawing various natural objects. Sir David Brewster says of him, that "when he arrived at Trinity College, he brought with him a more slender portion of science than falls to the lot of ordinary scholars; but this state of his acquisitions (continues his biographer) was perhaps not unfavorable to the development of his mental powers. Unexhausted by premature growth, and invigorated by healthful repose, his mind was the better fitted to make those vigorous and rapid shoots which covered with foliage and fruit the general soil to which it had been transferred."

The distinguished Sir Humphry Davy said of himself: "I consider it fortunate that I was left so much to myself when a child, and put upon no particular plan of study; and that I enjoyed so much idleness at Coryton's school. I perhaps owe to these circumstances the little talents that I have, and their peculiar application. What I am, I have made myself. I say this without vanity, and in pure simplicity of heart. And it is so in fact. Every man who achieves greatness does so, not through his acquisitions under teachers when a boy, but through his self education after he has become a man."

We might adduce an immense number of instances of positively stupid boys who have become distinguished and highly useful men. For instance, Isaac Barrows, the great divine, was in his boyhood chiefly distinguished by his propensity for fighting, in which he got many a bloody nose; and his father used to say, that if it pleased God to take from him any of his children, he hoped it might be Isaac, who was the least promising of them all. And that prodigy of learning, Dr. Adam Clark, when a boy, was never happier than when "rolling large stones about," caring nothing for learning or reading of any sort. But at this kind of work he became "uncommonly hardy," though his father proclaimed him to be a most "grievous dunce." Thanks to Adam Clark's power of rolling about the large stones, in his boyhood, he was afterwards able to roll about large thoughts in his manhood.

Napoleon and Wellington were both dull boys. The former is described by

the Duchess de' Abrantes, who knew him intimately when a child, as "having good health, and in other respects he was like other boys." And she adds: "My uncles have a thousand times assured me that Napoleon, in his boyhood, had none of that singularity of character attributed to him."

Phenomena of Sleep.

Tartini, a celebrated violin player, is said to have composed his famous Devil's Sonata from the inspiration of a dream, in which the Devil appeared to him and challenged him to a trial of skill upon his own fiddle. A mathematician, in like manner, is often engaged in the solution of problems, and has his brain full of Newton, Euler, Euclid, and Laplace; while a poet is occupied in writing verses, or indeliberating upon the strains of such bards as are most familiar to his spirit; it was thus in a dream that Mr. Coleridge composed his splendid fragments of Kubla Khan. The following is the account he himself gives of the circumstance:

In the summer of the year 1797, the author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in "Purchas's Pilgrimage."

"Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall."

The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he had the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the corresponding expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort.

On awaking, he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole; and taking his pen, ink, and paper instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour; and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision; yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but alas! without the after restoration of the latter."

Dreams being produced by the active state of such organs as are dissociated from, or have not sympathized in, the general slumber, partake of the character of those whose powers are in greatest vigor, or fittest removed from the somnolent state.

A person's natural character, therefore, or his pursuits in life, by strengthening one faculty, make it less susceptible, than such as are weaker, of being overcome by complete sleep; or, if it be overcome, it awakes more rapidly from its dormant state, and exhibits its proper characteristics in dreams.

Thus, the miser dreams of wealth, the lover of his mistress, the musician of melody, the philosopher, science, the merchant of trade, and the debtor of duns and bailiffs. In like manner, a choleric man often is passionate in his sleep; a vicious man's mind is filled with wicked actions; a virtuous man's with deeds of benevolence; a humorist's with ludicrous ideas.

How to Breed Tattlers.

If you wish to cultivate a gossiping, meddling, censorious spirit in your children, be sure when they come home from a church, a visit, or any other place where you do not accompany them, to ply them with questions concerning what every body said and did—and if you find any thing in all this to censure, always do it in their hearing. You may rest assured, if you pursue a course of this kind, they will not return to you unladen with intelligence; and rather than it should be uninteresting, they will, by degrees, learn to embellish in such a manner as shall not fail to call forth remarks, and expressions of wonder from you. You will thus gradually render the spirit of curiosity—which is so early visible in children, and which, if rightly directed, may be made the instrument of enriching and enlarging their minds—a vehicle of mischief, which shall serve only to impoverish and narrow them.

A Ghost Story.

In all ages, persons of weak intellects have believed in apparitions, yet we may confidently affirm, that stories of ghosts are mistakes or impositions, and that they may always be detected by a proper exercise of the mental faculty. In all situations of this kind, there is manifestly an endeavor to make the events as supernatural, wonderful, and as well attested as possible, to prevent the suspicion of trick, and to silence all objections which might be made to their credibility. In coincidences with this custom, we will recount a story of a ghost, which seems to possess all the requisites.

At a town in the west of England, twenty-four persons were accustomed to assemble once a week, to drink, smoke tobacco, and talk politics. Like the academy of Raben, at Antwerp, each member had his peculiar chair, and the president's was more elevated than the rest. As one of the members had been in a dying state for some time, his chair, whilst he was absent, remained vacant.

When the club met on the usual night, inquiries were naturally made after their associate. As he lived in the adjoining house, a particular friend went to inquire after him, and returned with the melancholy intelligence that he could not survive the night.

This threw a gloom on the company, and all efforts to turn the conversation from the sad subject before them were ineffectual. About midnight the door opened, and the form, in white, of the dying or the dead man, walked into the room, and took his seat in his accustomed chair.

There he remained in silence, and in silence was he gazed at. The apparition continued a sufficient time in the chair to assure all who were present of the reality of the vision. At length he arose, and stalked towards the door, which he opened, as if living—went out and shut the door after him. After a long pause, some one, at last, had the resolution to say,

"If only one of us had seen this, he would not have been believed; but it is impossible that so many can have been deceived."

The company, by degrees, recovered their speech, and the whole conversation, as may be imagined, was upon the dreadful object which had engaged their attention.

They broke up, and went home. In the morning, inquiry was made after their sick friend. It was answered by an account of his death, which happened nearly about the time of his appearance in the club room. But now, nothing could be more certain than the apparition, which had been simultaneously seen by so many persons.

It is unnecessary to say, that such a story spread over the country, and found credit even from infidels; for in this case, all reasoning became superfluous, when opposed to a plain fact, attested by three-and-twenty witnesses. To assert the doctrine of the fixed laws of nature, was ridiculous, when there were so many people of credit to prove that they might be unfixed. Years rolled on, and the story was almost forgotten.

One of the club was an apothecary. In the course of his practice, he was called to an old woman, whose business it was to attend sick persons.—She told him that she could leave the world with a quiet conscience, but for one thing, which lay upon her mind.

"Do you not remember Mr.—, whose ghost has been so much talked of? I was his nurse. On the night of his death, I left the room for something I wanted. I am sure I had not been absent long; but, at my return, I found the bed without my patient! He was delirious, and I feared that he had thrown himself out of the window. I was so frightened that I had no power to stir; but, after some time, to my great astonishment, he entered the room, shivering, and his teeth chattering, laid himself down on the bed and died!"

Considering my negligence as the cause of his death, I kept this a secret, for fear of what might be done to me. Though I could have contradicted all the story of the ghost, I dared not do it. I knew by what had happened, that it was he himself who had been in the club-room, (perhaps recollecting it was the night of meeting;) but I hope God and the poor gentleman's friends will forgive me, and I shall die contented."

TECHNICAL OBITUARY.—An English paper thus chronicles the death of a printer, named George Woodcock: "He was the * of his profession, the type of honesty, the! of all, and although the * of death has put a. to his existence, every \$ of his life was without a |."

The exercises of South Carolina From Institute at Charleston, will be resumed on the first Thursday in October.