

# THE ALAMANCE GLEANER

VOL. 33. GRAHAM, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 1880

## THE CLEANER

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY ELDREDGE & KERNODLE, Graham, N. C.

One Year \$1.50  
Six Months .75  
Three Months .50

Advertisements payable in advance.

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WIFE the events above narrated were transpiring, a young man, possessing a dignified bearing and eighty-five cents in his pocket, was just entering the brightly lighted town of Coupsville in search of his level. It was a large town, and he had never seen before, and he was somewhat disoriented and bewildered. He began to look about him, finding his level at night, as the evening was rapidly wearing away, and another question was beginning to trouble him: namely, "How was he going to reach the higher walks of life without money?" How was he to be a high-toned gentleman and live in a lofty atmosphere of mental "shops" with so small a sum as eighty-five cents in his pocket? He looked gloomily through the strange thoroughfares, but with these troublesome reflections, he heard loud voices leading from a mansion which he was passing. A moment later the door opened, and a slight female figure hurried silently out into the street, and passing by him with a quick determined tread, was soon out of sight.

When Maud recovered from the shock which her father's angry words had given her, she immediately determined upon a course of action. She resolved that she would consent to go to the opera with the autodeliviano relic, who waited for her in the parlour. She called her father back and told him her determination. The result was that the proud young beauty was promptly ejected through the main door, for she it was who had passed George Adolphus as he wandered, on in search of his level.

When Mr. Muggleton had called to Maud until he was "fired" and on the point of leaving, Mr. Muller entered the room and apologizing for the non-appearance of his daughter by saying that she had a violent headache, begged him to come again in a few days. Maud would then be delighted to see him. The truth was that Mr. Muller had a idea of punishing his daughter's disobedience with permanent banishment. He reasoned that she would surely go to some of her friends and return in penitence in the morning.

George Adolphus followed swiftly on after the young lady hardly knowing why he did so, but feeling irresistibly drawn by some unaccountable prescience that all was not well with her. In a few moments he came up with her and followed her a little distance, watching her movements with the keenest interest. But Maud was so intent upon some purpose which lay deep hidden in her heart that she did not notice him. The street now began to be deserted, but still the resolute girl walked rapidly on. At length a small foot bridge across the canal was reached. The girl paused. Was her purpose a desperate one? George Adolphus asked himself this question, and none were beside as he lingered in the shadows close behind her.

Maud Muller was the only child of a retired banker in the sleepy town of Coupsville, an aristocratic village in one of the eastern counties of Ohio. Maud's charms, both physical and mental, were the rarest ever lavished upon woman, and she had been furnished with every advantage of education that money could purchase. Her beauty and accomplishments had made her the idol of a large circle of young men, to not one of whom she had ever given the slightest encouragement. They swarmed under her chamber windows on moonlight nights and made the long hours hideous with their catwaulings, until old Muller got tired and stole around the house with gun and rod, killing three outright and wounding four others so that she died on the following morning.

George Adolphus Clarendon was a young man of pleasing presence whose age was not far from 20 years. His father had long and successfully conducted a most exemplary meat-market at the corner of Market and St. Clair streets in the thriving village of Westford, in Central New York, and possessed a competence by fair and honorable means. But the son held the meat business in abhorrence, and steadfastly refused to entertain the thought of following it for a livelihood. He conceived himself to be formed of a quality of clay quite above the average, and was often heard muttering incoherently in his sleep about the "higher walks of life." Old Mr. Clarendon was a stern father, and he determined that George Adolphus would not sell meat, he should engage in the distribution of tractors, with the heel toward the paternal mansion. George Adolphus accepted the proffered alternative with cheerful alacrity, and went on an immense tramp. He said he was going in search of his proper level.

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