

# The Carolina Watchman.

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## The Carolina Watchman,

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### BEHIND MINERVA'S SHIELD.

Homer Ashton one autumn evening listened to stories of witches and ghosts told around him, and joined in them, until he felt an occasional shiver creeping down his back. Not that he believed in the supernatural, but the fright, into which he sat looking, grew pleasanter to him than the corners of the great room, for lamps had been banished to accord with the subject under discussion, and it seemed that the shadows flickering behind the young people grouped about the grate of blazing coal were massive and weird, and that when one glanced at them sideways suddenly, there was something about them like ghostly visitors. When he faced them, to be sure, they were only ordinary shadows. Homer was ashamed of himself, he was afraid his nerves were unsteady, and resolved to test them. He knew a way to test them. He knew a way to do it.

Near the place at which he was staying, an English country house, were the ruins of the older part of a castle said to have been built in the time of the Crusades. The whole castle was at present uninhabited, but the part which had been allowed to fall into hopeless decay was the width of the courtyard away from the rest of the house. Probably it had once been connected with it by buildings which had formed three sides of a hollow square, but if so it had been left out in the changes made at different times, and now it was roofless, the walls were crumbled, and the underground portion was all that made any pretense to a habitation, and offered a suitable home to the unearthly beings who were said to roam in it; for a dampness covered all the stones and the air had a deadly chill. But these facts seemed conclusions from the nature of things rather than the results of observation, for Homer could not find anybody who had explored it.

He had done all he had resolved to do and was free now to get out of this dreadful place. He hurried toward the entrance, urged on by the unreasonable sense of pursuit that comes over one when he turns his back upon danger. All at once he lost his footing and lay at full length on the slippery floor; the shock, however, only jarred and bewildered him. As he put out his hands to rise he touched something from which he drew back instantly with a stifled exclamation; he thought it must be one of the reptiles likely to be crawling in this den. But he recollected that it was small and hard, perhaps it was a curious stone which would prove his night's excursion if the strangers he was with should be tempted to doubt it. After a little groping he found it again; it felt like a stone covered with slimy moisture, and putting it into his pocket he made his way out of the ruins as best he could.

When he returned to the house his friend was alone waiting for him, and sleepy, as Homer could see, consequently a trifle annoyed at being kept up so late. The guest said nothing that night of where he had been. In his room he took out the stone. It was not a pebble or a piece of the pavement, as he had supposed, but an oval of gray lava that had once been a brooch or part of a bracelet. As he cleaned it with his penknife and pocket handkerchief he saw that the work upon it was beautiful; it was a figure of Minerva, the very folds in her tunic carefully cut, and as he saw by his magnifying-glass, with a light tracery of carving on her helmet and shield. On the opposite side, just under the shield, was the word "Violet."

It was evidently the owner's name, but who was she? Where did she live, and when? The pin, if it were a pin, had not lain in its last hiding-place long, he thought, it was not enough stained by the dampness, yet he was not sure about that. "Violet" might belong to a former generation or might have been sleeping the sleep of the just for a century. But suppose not, suppose she were a young lady beautiful as her name, wealthy and high-born? Well, what then?

down the stone stairs into blackness to which the night outside was twilight. Sometimes he seemed to hear a sound, but when he stopped to listen it was the beating of his heart. When he reached the foot of the stairs he still went on; every now and then his outstretched hands struck against a wall or pillar, for he was passing through an arched hall that ended in a narrow passage. He next entered what he thought must be a large room, for the air had an indefinable difference and the blackness seemed that of space instead of substance. As he stood there uncertain which way to move and the very echo of his footsteps ceased, the horror of darkness and silence which had been growing upon him reached its height. He tried to utter his challenge, but his dry lips would give forth no sound, an abyss of night seemed to swallow him up.

Suddenly he fancied he heard a movement, he thought that something like palpable blackness flitted about him. He turned to fly and took a few hurried steps in the direction of the entrance. Then he stopped. It was no ghostly presence that arrested him, but the iron hand of his resolution; he had come here to do a certain thing and was not to be cowed by a feeling of which he would be ashamed to own to himself in the daylight. He faced about and went forward quickly a few steps.

"If there is any ghost let him now appear," he called loudly.

The dreary walls answered his cry with a dull reverberation. With arms folded he stood a moment—the hardest thing of all to do—awaiting results. If there had not been a roar in his ears, if the beating of his heart had not made even his vision unsteady, he would have said that he heard subdued laughter, or moaning, it was impossible to tell which as the sound rolled toward him from the hollow sides, and that he saw something like a whiteness in the distance, while a sense of presence made him cold with horror.

He had done all he had resolved to do and was free now to get out of this dreadful place. He hurried toward the entrance, urged on by the unreasonable sense of pursuit that comes over one when he turns his back upon danger. All at once he lost his footing and lay at full length on the slippery floor; the shock, however, only jarred and bewildered him. As he put out his hands to rise he touched something from which he drew back instantly with a stifled exclamation; he thought it must be one of the reptiles likely to be crawling in this den. But he recollected that it was small and hard, perhaps it was a curious stone which would prove his night's excursion if the strangers he was with should be tempted to doubt it. After a little groping he found it again; it felt like a stone covered with slimy moisture, and putting it into his pocket he made his way out of the ruins as best he could.

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Homer put out his light and went to bed, but not immediately to sleep. The affair seemed to promise an adventure; as such it would have been interesting to any young person. But Ashton, in addition to being barely twenty-five, had been obliged to make his way for the last ten years; for though he was of good family, Dame Fortune had started him in life with no more than one of her pennies, which, however, every time a man turns it, as in the legend, leaves a gold piece in his hand.

The next morning but one a tall young man with dark hair and eyes and expression amused, yet resolute, flanked in his card at Grantham hall and asked to see its owner, Sir Gresham Laud.

"Dr. Homer Ashton," cried Sir Gresham, looking up from his letters, displeased at the interruption. "Who's he? I don't know any such person. Beryl, to the servant, 'what does he look like?'"

"As well, Sir Gresham, only spyer." "Oh, 'spyer,' is he? In his head or his heels, I wonder? Well, I suppose I must see what the fellow wants; one of those genteel sponges come to suck up as many pounds as I'll give to their deuced charities," he muttered. By which speech it is fair to conclude that Sir Gresham had been sponged in this way more than once.

But when Homer, who was admiring the view from the drawing-room window, turned and bowed as the baronet approached, Sir Gresham perceived nothing of the suppliant about him and began to doubt whether this elegant stranger did mean to make him a few pounds the poorer by his visit. He came forward and requested his visitor to be seated. Ashton spoke of the beauty of the country and Sir Gresham answered him, but at the moment curiosity was evidently his ruling passion.

"You are wondering why I came," said Homer. "Certainly it was not to tell you, what everybody knows, that this is the finest situation about here. But I have in my possession part of an ornament which, I believe, belongs to Miss Laud."

"You! What is it?" Ashton bowed and smiled also, as he handed the other his discovery of the night but one before. "Does it belong to your daughter?" he said.

But Sir Gresham was too bewildered to answer him.

"That?" he cried. "Good heavens! that? Where did you find it? It's a clew."

"A clew to what?" cried Homer, eagerly. He felt on the brink of discovering how a lady's ornament could come in so strange a place.

But Sir Gresham was too excited by some suggestion awakened by the sight of the stone to have an idea of trying to satisfy any curiosity but his own.

"Where did you find it?" he repeated.

"Is it your daughter's?" returned Homer.

"Yes, it must be hers," and remembering at last to thank the young man for returning it, he stood with the stone in his hand waiting impatiently for a full account of its recovery.

"Does Sir Gresham Laud suppose that I came here for the purpose of telling a midnight adventure to him?" thought Homer, as a look of amusement flitted across his face. "If you will be so kind," he answered, suavely, "as to ask Miss Laud if she will do me the favor to identify her ornament, I shall be most happy to tell you, and ask her if she cares to know, how I came by it."

Sir Gresham hesitated only an instant. "Assuredly," he said, and sent for his daughter.

where did you get it? Have they found out the robbers?"

Homer's eyes opened wide at her words.

"Robbers?" he repeated. "That's it, then? Perhaps I really did hear and see something after all." And after a moment in which three people stood facing each other with looks of inquiry he began an account of his expedition to the ruin. He was truthful in every detail, yet the story sounded remarkably well as he told it, watching Violet's face and seeing her shiver and grow pale in imagining the blackness of the old cellars. If she would but "love" him for the dangers he had passed; he knew nothing of wars to be sure, except of personal struggles with misfortune, out of place to be told here, yet having left their mark upon him in a consciousness of power to dare and conquer adverse circumstances.

"I've no doubt they carried their booty there," exclaimed Sir Gresham, his thoughts still in the ruins an infinite distance behind the young man's winged fancy and supplementing the narrative which Ashton had just finished. While Violet was listening to her father's account of a daring burglary committed the winter before while the family were in the house, Ashton had an opportunity to study her face more critically, or, rather, more admiringly. It was possible he did not drop all the admiration out of his expression as from time to time she turned to him to explain more fully something that her father was saying.

"I've no doubt the villains bring their booty miles to hide it in the ruin," said Sir Gresham. "This medallion was the clasp of a heavy gold bracelet. It was given to my daughter by a friend and she is much obliged to you, I am sure, for finding it."

"Indeed I am," said Violet, coloring a little as she spoke.

"It is I who am under obligation to fate," answered Homer; "I have found something that Miss Laud values."

"The rest of the bracelet has been melted down long ago," pursued Sir Gresham. "That place ought to be searched."

"Yes," said Homer; "when will you do it?"

The baronet looked somewhat taken aback at this energetic suggestion.

"No doubt," he answered, "and perhaps, Dr. Ashton, you would like to be one of the party if I go with some of my neighbors? I suppose it ought to be done as soon as possible—within a day or two," he went on, as the other assented, "lest they should take alarm at your intrusion upon them. When should you advise going?"

"This moment," cried Homer. "It's a wonder that we Americans have any grass in our country," he added, smiling, "we are so averse to letting it grow under our feet."

He met Violet's eyes as he finished and read in them an admiration and interest. In another moment she had turned away on some trifling pretext, but, undoubtedly, she was blushing. How was Homer to know that she had once declared she would marry the man who brought her back her bracelet clasp? That, however, was when she was quite sure it would never be found.

"Not until after luncheon, papa, will you?" She said. "You'd better not take Dr. Ashton until after that."

Several years later when the medallion had led to more than the finding of stores of plunder in the old ruins which a gang of thieves had taken care to make appear haunted, Homer Ashton, a physician of high standing, was living in a large American city. A schoolmate whom he had not met for years said to him one day at dinner as they were talking of marriages and deaths among their comrades:

"By the way, Ashton, you never told me where you first met your wife. I only know that it was in England."

Homer laughed.

"I first met her," he said, "behind Minerva's shield. Did I not, Violet?" —Our Continent.

### "A Skeleton to Sit at Your Banquet."

SAN FRANCISCO, April 26.—A Tucson dispatch says: At a meeting of the several thousand citizens last evening, it was unanimously decided that the following be telegraphed as an open letter to the President and his cabinet, and to both houses of Congress: "During the rejoicings incident to the grand military display announced to take place at Fortress Monroe Thursday, we beg to offer you a skeleton to sit at your banquet, the fact that nearly one hundred of our pioneers have within a few days been wantonly murdered in cold blood by the devilish Apaches, whom a cruel and mistaken policy permits to survive their crimes. If some small portion of the expenditure incurred in your grand display could be devoted to such measures as would preclude the probability of an increase in the list of our murdered dead, we could send you greetings of gratitude and cheer in the place of this message revealing our sorrow, helplessness and our desolation. Signed, James H. Toole, chairman; L. C. Hughes, Secretary."

### Killing of a Convict.

News-Observer.

Yesterday morning about 10 o'clock, Nat Hill and Rufus Holeslaw, colored, members of a gang of convicts employed near the North Carolina Railroad bridge, south of the city, attempted to make their escape. When called on to halt, Holeslaw stopped, but Hill ran at his best speed. A guard, whose name is Johnston, fired on him and killed him at the first shot, the ball passing entirely through his body just under the left shoulder blade, and probably striking the heart. He died as soon as he was hit.

Hill was a negro, aged 27 years, and was from New Hanover county. His sentence was for six years, his crime being larceny. He was placed in the penitentiary in February last. It was learned yesterday by the authorities that Hill had told some of the other convicts that he had made up his mind to escape, and that if he was overtaken outside the walls he would either go away or be killed.

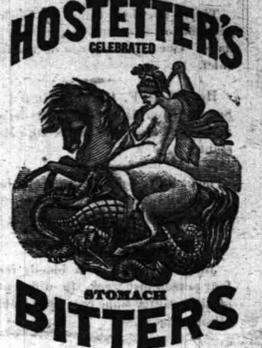
### The Profits of Silk Culture.

Mr. S. A. Lanier in an interesting article in the March number of the Industrial Review, on silk culture as adapted to the Southern States, makes the following statement of the profits that may be realized from cocoon, the production of which will require only a few weeks attention each year:

"The following estimates will indicate the profits of silk culture, and based upon the actual experience of those engaged in the business. One person can attend to and feed 40,000 silk-worms, although two persons can very easily attend to 120,000. Forty thousand worms will, (in five or six weeks from the time they are hatched) produce at least one hundred and twenty-five pounds of cocoons, worth from one dollar and one-half to two and one-half, depending upon the quality. Owing to the fact that the eggs raised in this country are free from disease, it will be profitable, for many years to come, to raise the eggs alone.

"In 1877, France paid over a million francs for eggs exported from the United States. With a climate especially adapted to silk culture, and with a great abundance of the silkworm, food at nearly every door, and with the fact established beyond any question of doubt that the business is profitable, the people are blind to their own productive resources if they do not engage in it. The business enables a class of people, the ladies and children, to whom few avenues of employment are open, to profitably employ their time and add no little to the income of the family. We have the name of a lady who made over five hundred dollars last year in silk culture, and we think this ought to cause every lady in the South to investigate the subject."

It is reported that a dialogue somewhat to the following effect took place between a spectator of the present political trials and Mr. District Attorney Melton: "Spectator: 'Why, Mr. Melton, if you go on getting up your juries in this way you would convict the Apostle Paul himself!'" Mr. Melton: "Yes, but if I did not get them up in this way I could not convict Judas Iscariot." This is very clever, but it is open to the criticism that Mr. Melton has reversed the old maxim of the common law, and obviously thinks it better that eleven innocent men should be convicted than that one guilty one should escape.—Charlotte News and Courier, Dec.



Among the medicinal means of arresting disease, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters stands pre-eminent. It checks the further progress of all disorders of the stomach, liver and bowels, revives the vital stamina, prevents and remedies chills and fever, increases the activity of the kidneys, counteracts a tendency to rheumatism, and is a genuine laxative and solvent to aged, infirm and nervous persons.

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**PRICES 35 to 50 Per Cent CHEAPER** than ever offered in this town before. Call at once or send for price list and designs. Satisfaction guaranteed or no charge.  
The erection of marble is the last work of respect which we pay to the memory of departed friends.  
**JOHN S. HUTCHINSON.**  
Salisbury, N. C., Nov. 1, 1881.

**Blackmer and Henderson,**  
**Attorneys, Counselors**  
**and Solicitors.**  
**SALISBURY, N. C.**  
January 22 1879-11.

**MONEY SAVED IS MONEY MADE**  
Does not every body know that where a man has no house to sit, nor store rent, nor clerks to hire, he can sell for 100 to 150 per cent for cheap?  
**FAMILY GROCERIES,**  
such as Bacon, Lard, Sugar and Coffee, Molasses and Syrup, Peas, Beans, Crackers, Canned Fruits, &c., &c. East Corner of Lee and Fisher streets. Lewis Brown's late residence. **J. L. WRIGHT** Agt.

Schoolmates and friends, if you will listen to me, I will tell you of sights worth a sixpence to see. My story originated in the far sunny South. Where the people are happy, in flood or in drought.

Where the wild flowers grow, from the mountains to the sea, The land of the brave and the home of the free. But none to my story, for I think it is timely, And to add to my glory, I will tell it in rhyme.

One night in December, never mind the date, Some farmers met at their school house in the Old North State; The oldest man of the number was called to preside. You would have thought him a Beecher, he looked so dignified.

The chief orator of the house, was called to the floor, And said the object of the meeting was in defense of the poor. In his eloquent speech he tried to explain How his old woman had tried to raise chickens but found it in vain.

He attributed the cause to the hawks and the owls Which had become so numerous as to destroy all his fowls; His wheat, he said, would be totally lost, The ravage by rabbits was worse than by frost.

While the corn in the field never could grow, Before it was up it was eaten by the crow. The only true method of destroying the pests Was to cut off their heads and tear up their nests.

For this purpose they formed two bands To scalp every every hawk found upon their lands, Each company numbered fifteen strong, And each had a captain to lead them along.

The law affirmed, that the company that was bent, On the first day of New Year had the other to treat. Then the armies disbanded, each man to his post, To fight for his captain against the enemy's host.

The posts were hunted from far and from near— Any time you would listen a gun you might hear. They hunted at night as well as in day For they knew if beaten they had the forfeit to pay.

The carriage was dreadful and so it is said That the rabbits awoke with no scalp for their heads. On the first of New Year, at the dawn of day, The farmers came in from most every way.

The scalps were then counted, but I can't tell you the rest, For they had enough to fill the teacher's desk; The teacher was angry, but he said not a word, Of their doings on New Year he had already heard.

The scalps remained in the desk, day after day, And the pupils would laugh and have much to say, Until one little fellow, more wicked than the rest, Was ordered to remove every scalp from the desk.

Believe me or not, I assure you 'tis a fact He carried off seventeen loads in his hat, And at last overcome by fatigue and by snow, He measured himself full length in the snow.

But the school house was haunted, I tell you 'tis true, The victims assemble done night to see what they could do. One offered the resolution, and the vote passed around, And they unanimously agreed to burn the house down.

And on the next morn a house could be found, Nothing but ashes, lay scattered around; And now ends my story, and I leave it with you, To criticize as you wish, but it certainly is true.

JAS. W. LYNCH, Hillboro (Ill.) High School.

JACKSONVILLE, April 21.—Mr. Wood, a sugar planter in Cuba, employing 300 hands, has been examining into the capacity of Florida lands for the production of sugar, and is so well satisfied that he announces his determination of removing his entire plant to Florida as soon as the Okechobee lands are ready for cultivation. He states that many Cuban planters are watching the drainage scheme, with a view to changing their places to Florida. If it is successful they will then avoid the enormous Cuban taxes, as well as the duties now levied on sugar.

It is worth remembering that nobody enjoys the most surroundings if in bad health. There are miserable people about to-day with one foot in the grave, when a bottle of Parker's Ginger Tonic would do them more good than all the doctors and medicines they have ever tried. See adv. Oct. 18-19.