

CAROLINA CENTINEL.

VOLUME V.]

NEWBERN, N. C. SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1822.

[NUMBER 228.]

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
PASTEUR & WATSON,
At \$3 per annum—half in advance.

MISCELLANY.

BLIND ALLAN.

ALLAN BRUCE and FANNY RAE-
BURN were in no respect remarkable
among the simple inhabitants of the
village in which they were born.—
They both bore a fair reputation in
the parish, and they were both beloved
by their own friends and relations.
He was sober, honest, active, and in-
dustrious,—exemplary in the common
duties of private life,—possessed of
the humble virtues becoming his hum-
ble condition, and unstained by any
of those gross vices that sometimes
deform the character of the poor.—
She was modest, good tempered, con-
tented and religious—and much is
contained in these four words. Beauty
she was not thought to possess—nor
did she attract attention; but what-
ever charm resides in pure health, in-
nocence of heart and simplicity of man-
ners, that belonged to Fanny Ræ-
burn; while there was nothing either
about her face or figure to prevent her
seeming even beautiful in the eyes of
a lover.

These two humble and happy per-
sons were betrothed in marriage.—
Their affection had insensibly grown
without any courtship, for they had
lived daily in each other's sight, and
undisturbed by jealousy or rivalry, by
agitating hopes or depressing fears,
their hearts had been tenderly united
long before their troth was solemnly
pledged; and they now looked for-
ward with a calm and rational satis-
faction to the happy years, which
they humbly hoped might be stored
up for them by a bountiful Provi-
dence. Their love was without rom-
ance, but it was warm, tender, and
true; they were prepared by its
strength to make any sacrifice for
each other's sake; and had death taken
away either of them before the wed-
ding day, the survivor might not per-
haps have been clamorous in grief, or
visited the grave of the departed with
nightly lamentations, but not the less
would that grief have been sincere,
and not the less faithful would mem-
ory have been to all the images of the
past.

Their marriage day was fixed—and
Allan Bruce had rented a small cot-
tage, with a garden sloping down to
the stream that cheered his native vil-
lage. Thither, in about two months,
he was to take his sweet and affec-
tionate Fanny—she was to work with
needle as before—and he in the fields.
No change was to take place in their
lives, but a change from contentment
to happiness; and if God prolonged
to them the possession of health, and
blessed them with children, they feared
not to bring them decently up
and to afford sunshine and shelter to
the living flowers that might come to
gladden their house. Such thoughts
visited the souls of the lovers, and they
were becoming dearer and dearer to
one another every hour that brought
them closer to their marriage-day.

At this time Allan began to feel a
slight dimness in his sight, of which
he did not take much notice, attribut-
ing it to some indisposition, brought
on by the severity of his winter's
work. For he had toiled late and
early, during all weathers, and at every
kind of labour to gain a sum suffi-
cient to furnish respectably his lowly
dwelling, and also to array his sweet
bride in wedding clothes of which she
should not need to be ashamed. The
dimness, however each succeeding
day, darkened and deepened, till even
his Fanny's face was indistinctly dis-
cerned by him, and he lost altogether
the smile which never failed to bright-
en it whenever he appeared. Then
he became sad and despondent, for the
fear of blindness fell upon him, and
he thought of his steps being led in his
helplessness by the hand of a child.
He prayed to God to avert this calam-
ity from him; but if not, to bestow
upon him the virtues of resignation.
He thought of the different blind men
whom he had known, and as far as he
knew, they all seemed happy. That
belief pacified his soul, when it was
about to give way to a passionate des-
pair; and every morning at sunrise
when the fast advancing verdure of
spring seemed more dim and glimmer-
ing before his eyes, he felt his soul
more and more resigned to that final

extinction of the day's blessed light,
which he knew must be his doom be-
fore the earth was covered with the
flowers and fragrance of June.

It was as he had feared; and Al-
lan Bruce was now stone blind. Fann-
y's voice had always been sweet to
his ear, and now it was sweeter still
when heard in the darkness. Sweet
had been the kisses which breathed
from Fanny's lips, while his eyes de-
lighted in their rosy freshness. But
sweeter were they now when they
touched his eyelids, and he felt upon
his cheeks her fast trickling tears.—
She visited him in his father's house,
and led him with her gently guiding
hands into the adjacent fields, and
down along the stream which he said
he liked to hear murmuring by; and
then they talked together about them-
selves, and on their knees prayed to
God to counsel them what to do in
their distress.

These meetings were always happy
meetings to them both, notwithstanding
the many mournful thoughts
with which they were necessarily ac-
tended; but to Allan Bruce they yielded
a support that did not forsake him
in his hours of unaccompanied dark-
ness. His love which had formerly been
joyful in the warmth of youth, and in
the near prospect of enjoyment, was
now chastened by the sad sense of his
unfortunate condition, and rendered
thereby a deep and devout emotion
which had its comfort in its own un-
witnessed privacy and imperishable
truth. The tones of Fanny's voice
were with him on his midnight's bed,
when his affliction was like to over-
come his fortitude; and to know that
he was still tenderly beloved by that
gentle and innocent friend, was a
thought that gave light to darkness,
and suffered sleep to fall balmily on
lids that shut up eyes already dark as
in profoundest slumber. The meek
fold of her pitying embrace was with
him in the vague uncertainty of his
dreams; and often he saw faces in his
sleep beaming consolation upon him,
that always assumed at last Fanny's
features, and as they grew more dis-
tinct, brightened up into a perfect like-
ness of his own faithful and disinter-
ested maiden. He lay down with her
image, because it was in his evening
prayers; he rose up with her image,
or it came gliding in upon him as he
knelt down at his bedside in the warm
beams of the unseen morning light.

Allan and Fanny were children of
poor parents; and when he became
blind, they, indeed all their friends
and relations, set their faces against
this marriage. This they did in kind-
ness to them both, for prudence is one
of the best virtues of the poor, and to
indulge even the holiest affections of
our nature, seems to them to be sin-
ful, if an infliction from God's hand
intimates that such union would lead
to sorrow and distress. The same
thoughts had taken possession of Al-
lan's own soul; and loving Fanny
Ræburn, with a perfect affection, why
should he wish her, in the bright and
sunny days of her youthful prime, to
become chained to a Blind Man's
steps, kept in constant poverty and
drudgery for his sake, and imprisoned
in a lonesome hut, during the freedom
of her age, and the joyfulness of na-
ture ringing over the earth? "It has
pleased God," said the Blind Man to
himself "that our marriage should
not be. Let Fanny, if she chooses,
some time or other, marry another,
and be happy." And as the thought
arose, he felt the bitterness of the cup
and wished that he might soon be in
his grave.

Fanny Ræburn had always been a
dutiful child, and she listened to the
arguments of her parents with a heavy
but composed heart. She was will-
ing to obey them in all things in
which it was her duty to obey—but
here she knew not what was her duty.
To give up Allan Bruce was a thought
far worse than to give up life. It was
to suffer her heartstrings to be hourly
torn up by the roots. If the two
were willing to be married, why should
any one else interfere? If God had
stricken Allan with blindness after
their marriage, would any one have
counselled her to leave him? Or pitied
her because she had to live with
her own blind husband? Or would
the fear of poverty have benumbed
her feelings? Or rather would it not
have given new alacrity to her hands,
and new courage to her heart? So
she resolved meekly and calmly, to
tell Allan that she would be his wife,
and that she believed that such was,
in spite of this infliction, the will of
God.

Allan Bruce did not absent himself,
in his blindness, from the House of
God. One Sabbath, after divine ser-
vice, Fanny went up to him in the
church yard, and putting her arm in
his, they walked away together, seem-
ingly as cheerful as the rest of the
congregation, only with some what
slower and more cautious steps.—
They proceeded along the quiet mead-
ow fields by the banks of the stream,
and then across the smooth green
braes, till they gently descended into
a holm, and sat down together in a
green bower, a place where they had
often met before Allan was blind, and
where they had first spoken of a wed-
ded life. Fanny could have almost
wept to see the earth, and the sky, so
beautiful, now that Allan's eyes were
dark; but he whispered to her, that
the smell of the budding trees, and of
the primroses that he knew were near
his feet, was pleasant indeed, and that
the singing of the little birds made his
heart dance within him—so Fanny sat
behind her blind lover in serene hap-
piness, and felt strengthened in her
conviction that it was her duty to be-
come his wife.

"Allan—I love you so entirely—
that to see you happy is all that I de-
sire on earth. Till God made you
blind—Allan—I knew not how my
soul could be knit unto yours—I knew
not the love that was in my heart.—
To sit with you with my work—to
lead you to take care that your feet do
not stumble—and that nothing shall
ever offer violence to your face—to
suffer no solitude to surround you—
but that you may know, in your dark-
ness, that mine eyes, which God still
permits to see, are always upon you
—for these ends, Allan, will I mar-
ry thee, my beloved—thou must not
say nay—for God would not forgive
me if I became not thy wife." And
Fanny fell upon his neck and wept.

There was something in the quiet
tone of her voice—something in the
meek fold of her embrace—something
in the long weeping kiss that she kept
breathing tenderly over his brow and
eyes—that justified to the Blind Man,
his marriage with such a woman.—
"Let us be married, Fanny, on the
day fixed before I lost my sight. Till
now I knew not fully either your
heart or my own—now I fear no-
thing. Would—my best friend—I
could see thy sweet face for one sin-
gle moment now—but that can never
be!" All things are possible to God
—and although to human skill your
case is hopeless—it is not utterly so
to my heart—yet if ever it becomes
so, Allan, then will I love thee better
even than I do now, if indeed my
heart can contain more affection than
that with which it now overflows."

Allan Bruce and Fanny Ræburn
were married. And although there
was felt by the most careless heart, to
be something sad and solemn in such
nuptials, yet Allan made his mar-
riage-day one of sober cheerfulness in
his native village. Fanny wore her
white ribbands in the very way that
used to be pleasant to Allan's eyes;
and blind as he now was, these eyes
kindled with a joyful smile, when he
turned the clear sightless orbs towards
his bride, he saw her within his soul
arrayed in the simple white dress
which he heard all about him saying
so well became her sweet looks. Her
relations and his own partook of the
marriage-feast in their cottage—there
was the sound of music and dancing
feet on the little green plat at the foot
of the garden, by the river's side—the
bride's youngest sister, who was hence-
forth to be an inmate in the house,
remained when the party went away
in the quiet of the evening—& peace,
contentment, and love, folded their
wings together over that humble
dwelling.

From that day Allan and his wife
were perfectly happy—and they could
not help wondering at their former
fears. There was, at once, a general
determination formed all over the pa-
rish to do them benefit. Fanny, who
had always been distinguished for her
skill and fancy as a seamstress, be-
came now quite the fashionable dress-
maker of the village, and had more
employment offered than she could
accept. So that her industry alone
was more than sufficient for all their
present wants. But Allan, though
blind was not idle. He immediately
began to instruct himself in various
departments of a blind man's work.
A loom was purchased; and in a few
months he was heard singing to the

sound of his fly-shuttle as merry as
the bull finch in the cage that hung at
the low window of his room. He was
not long in finding out the way of
plaiting rush-rugs and wicker baskets
—the figures of all of which were
soon, as it were visible through his
very fingers; and before six months
were over, Allan Bruce and his wife
were said to be getting rich, and a
warm blessing broke from every heart
upon them, and their virtuous and un-
repining industry.

Allan had always been fond of mu-
sic, and his voice was the finest tenor
in all the kirk. So he began in the ev-
enings of winter to teach a school for
sacred music—and thus every hour
was turned to account. Allan repined
not now—nay at times he felt as if
his blindness were a blessing—for it
forced him to trust to his own soul—
to turn for comfort to the best and pur-
est human affections—and to see God
always.

Whatever misgivings of mind Al-
lan Bruce might have experienced—
whatever faintings and sickenings and
deadly swoons of despair might have
overcome his heart,—it was not long
before he was a freedman from all
their slavery. He was not immured,
like many as worthy as he, in an Asy-
lum, he was not an incumbrance upon
a poor father, sitting idle in the
way of others, beside an ill-fed fire,
and a scanty board; he was not forced
to pace step by step along the
lamp-lighted streets and squares of a
city, forcing out beautiful music to
gain a few pieces of coin from pass-
ers by, entranced for a moment by
sweet sounds, plaintive or jocund; he
was not a boy-led beggar along the
high-way under the sickening sun-
shine or the chilling sleep, with an ab-
ject hat abjectly protruded with a cold
heart for colder charity; but he was,
although he humbly felt and acknowl-
edged that he was in nothing more
worthy than these, a man loaded with
many blessings, warmed by a constant
glee, laughed round by a flock of joy-
ful children, love-lighted by a wife
who was to him at once music and ra-
diance,—while his house stood in the
middle of a village of which all the
inhabitants were his friends, and all
of whose hands the knock was known
when it touched his door, and all of
whose voices the tone was felt when
it kindly accosted him in the wood, in
the field, in the garden, by the river's
side, by the hospitable board of a
neighbour, or in the Church-yard as-
semblage before entering into the
house of God.

Thus did years pass along. Child-
ren were born to them—lived—were
belthy—and well behaved. A bless-
ing rested upon them, and the name
of "Blind Allan" carried with it far
and near an authority that could be-
long only to virtue, piety, and faith
tried by affliction, and found to stand
fast.

Ten years ago, when they married,
Allan Bruce and Fanny Ræburn were
among the poorest of the poor, and
had it pleased God to send sickness
among them, hard had been their lot.
But now they lived in a better house
—with a larger garden—and a few
fields, with two cows of their own—
Allan had workmen under him, a
basket-maker, now on a considerable
scale—and his wife had her appren-
tices too, the best dress-maker all the
country round. They were rich.—
Their children were at school,—and
all things, belonging both to outer and
inner life, had prospered to their
hearts' desire. Allan could walk a-
bout many familiar places unattended;
but that seldom happened, for while
his children were at school he was en-
gaged in his business; and when they
came home, there was always a lov-
ing contest among them who should
be allowed to take hold of their father's
hand when he went out on his
evening walk. Well did he know the
tread of each loving creature's
footstep—their very breath when their
voices were silent. One touch of a
head as it danced past him, or remain-
ed motionless by his side—one pres-
sure of an arm upon his knee—one
laugh from a corner, was enough to
tell him which of his children was
there; and in their most confused
noise and merriment, his ear would
have known if one romping imp had
been away. So perfectly accustomed
had he long been to his situation, that
it might almost be said that he was
unconscious of being blind, or that he
had forgotten that his eyes one saw.
Long had Allan Bruce indeed been
the happiest of the blind.

It chanced at this time, that, among
a party who were visiting his
straw manufactory, there was a sur-
geon celebrated for his his skill in op-
erations upon the eye, who expressed
an opinion that Allan's sight might
be at least partially restored, and
offered not only to perform the opera-
tion, but if Allan would reside for
some weeks in Edinburgh, to see him
every day, till it was known whether
his case was or was not a hopeless
one. Allan's circumstances were now
such as to make a few weeks, or even
months confinement of no importance
to him; and though he said to his
wife that he was averse to submit to
an operation that might disturb
the long formed quiet and con-
tentment of his mind by hopes never
to be realized, yet those hopes of once
more seeing Heaven's dear light gradu-
ally removed all his repugnance.—
His eyes were couched, and when the
bandages were removed, and the soft
broken light let in upon him, Allan
Bruce was no longer among the num-
ber of the blind.

There was no uncontrollable burst
of joy in the soul of Allan Bruce when
once more a communication was op-
ened between it and the visible
world. For he had learned lessons
of humility and temperance in all
emotions during ten years of blindness,
in which the hope of light was too
faint to deserve the name. He was al-
most afraid to believe that his sight
was restored. Grateful to him was its
first uncertain and wavering glimmer,
as a draught of water to a wretch in a
crowded dungeon. But he knew not
whether it was to ripen into the perfect
day, or gradually to fade back
again into the depth of his former
darkness.

But when his Fanny—she on whom
he had so loved to look when she was
a maiden in her teens, and who would
not forsake him in the first misery of
this great affliction, but had been over-
joyed to link the sweet freedom of
her prime to one sitting in perpetual
dark—when she, now a staid and
lovely matron, stood before him with
a face pale in bliss, and all drenched
in the flood-like tears of an unsupport-
able happiness, then truly did he feel
what a heaven it was to see. And as
he took her to his heart, he gently
bent back her head, that he might de-
vour with his eyes that benign beauty
which had for so many years smiled
upon him unheeded, and which now
that he had seen once more, he felt
that he could even at that very mo-
ment die in peace.

In came with soft steps, one after
another, his five loving children, that
for the first time they might be seen
by their Father. The girls advanced
timidly, with blushing cheeks and
bright shining hair, while the boys
went boldly up to his side, and the el-
dest, looking in his face, exclaimed
with a shout of joy, "Our Father
sees!—Our Father sees!"—and then
checking his rapture burst into tears.
Many a vision had Allan Bruce framed
to himself of the face and figure of
one and all of his children. One, he
had been told was like himself—another
the image of its mother—and
Lucy, he understood, was a blended
likeness of them both. But now he
looked upon them with the confused
and bewildered joy of parental love
seeking to know and distinguish in the
light the separate objects towards
whom it yearned; and not till they
spoke did he know their Christian
names. But soon, soon, did the
sweet faces of all his children seem,
to his eyes, to answer well, each in its
different loveliness, to the expression
of the voices so long familiar to his
heart.

FIFTY DOLLARS REWARD.

RUNAWAY, from the Subscriber,
on the 8th of April last, a Ne-
gro Man named BACCHUS, (calls
himself Bacchus Hill,) of light com-
plexion, about 30 years of age, five
feet six or seven inches high, and by
trade a Carpenter.

Fifty Dollars will be paid for his
apprehension and delivery, if taken
out of the State, Twenty-five Dollars
if taken in the State but out of the
County, and Twenty Dollars if taken
in the County.

Masters of vessels are cautioned a-
gainst carrying away or harbouring
the said runaway, as the law will be
rigidly enforced against them.

ABNER PASTEUR.
June 11, 1822.—211f.