

The Hornets' Nest

Ypht Charles L. Com

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NO. 1.

LOVE AND WAR!

OR

The Bride of the Catawba.

BY J. L. BADGER.

DEDICATION.

TO GOVERNOR SWAIN:

To you, sir, who perhaps more than any one else are interested in the reputation of our State, in the prosperity of her institutions, and in perpetuating the memory of our illustrious ancestors, who were the first to declare their independence of British rule and dared bid defiance to the execration of her unjust and impious laws:—a poet who from the elevated position you occupy, with all the eye of prophecy and the ear of a seer, and whose name is a pledge to the patriot and the just, and whose name of party I will pleasure, inscribe these simple tales—summarizing in the guise of fiction, some of the most important events of our early history.

J. L. BADGER.

NO. 1 OF A SERIES.

LOVE!

How holy were the loves of Clara and Bertrand!

—what a volume in a word an ocean in a tear.

A seventh heaven in a glance, a wailwind in a sigh.

The lightning in a touch, a millennium in a moment.

What concerns the joy or woe in blest or blighted love?

Clara Birlock and Bertrand Davidson were the children of amiable gentlemen of the olden time; who lived in Mecklenburg County, N. C. before the celebrated Declaration made the British Lion shake his mane with anger and contempt, and while the august animal yet had his foot upon the crippled limbs of prostrate America.

Clara was one of several children; Bertrand one of two himself and sister being the only offspring of their loving parents. Bertrand and received the best education the country afforded, having graduated at Queen's Museum—a college at that time situated in Charlotte-town; His mind was naturally brilliant, and with assiduous self-culture he had, with the advantages of youth. Clara had not equal opportunities for obtaining an education, but her mother—an English lady of considerable accomplishments, whom her father had married in Charleston, South Carolina, took more than ordinary pains to give her the private instruction that lay in her power, and Clara with mental gifts which nature had bestowed, with a sanguine lively temperament, was not excelled by many of the females of the day. In person Clara was as pretty as any of the sixteen ladies of the county.

Her heart was also, it gave a perpetual sunlight to her face; those who met around her were but lightning to the one she loved.

Well were it for the belles of modern days, if they could carry in their cheeks beneath the transparent skin, the rosé current of health that manna Clara's, the use of rouge would become an obsolete fashion, an ennui be stricken from the list of sentimental diseases.

Bertrand was a sturdy young man; not an effeminate and delicate prototype of the scented glove and perfume haired dandy of the present day, but his was the figure of a stout handsome youth, such a looking man as the daughters of chivalry days would have chosen for their Knight; such a one, as could valiantly defend the honor of his lady-love.

It is not necessary to tell under what particular stars their love commenced. It is sufficient for the proper appreciation of this story for readers to know, that when introduced to their notice, they were passionately fond of each other. And if they were not, in the extravagant language of the Novelist, Live in the light of each other's eyes," they lived in the enjoyment of those attractions which are for their possessors.

How was a bright sun illuminating the sky above them, love was the pure atmosphere they breathed; and as a small cloud lay like a suspended mass of water on a verge of the horizon, it was all unperceived by them. There was no concealment then, as now, days when parties were appointed. Every one acquainted with them knew that they were fond of each other, and that when arrived at a proper age, would marry. Bertrand had no jealousy, as Clara reposed in him the same confidence she did in her brothers. There were none of those suspiciousable "marriages of convenience" in those simple juvenile times of our pure-hearted ancestors, and wealth was not esteemed the principal jewel adorning the female's betrothed. So their loves were as we see in the beginning holy, such as angels might look down upon and bless:

Oh, when the heart is full of sweets to o'erflowing
And ringing to the music of its love,
Who but an Angel is a hypocrite,
Could speak of thin or happier states?

To reciprocate this unalloyed, this unselfish feeling in those days of unaffected simplicity and truth, was an enjoyment, which in our day may be written on the pages of Magazine romance but which can never be experienced by those in whose hearts guile or worldly selfishness have lodging.

Such were the loves of Clara and Bertrand—pure, unadulterated, holy.

WAR!

And War did glit himself again!" War! the other great theme of the world; whose author has been hate, whose ink has been the heart's blood of Nations, whose pencil has been the spear on the sword, and whose red history stands recorded in the blood washed soils of battle fields, and in the desolation of Nations. War breaks in upon our tale of love.

Our Colonies had suffered the oppression of the Mother Country, until the burthen which when first laid upon their shoulders, was a calf, had grown to the full size of an ox. Men began to talk about it as no longer supportable, and began openly to debate whether endurance had not ceased to be a virtue that loyalty dictated, when nothing but oppression was returned for obedience and fealty to the Crown. It had arrived to this state of aggravation, that when the Colonists laid in any complaints, the complaints were stigmatized treason; when they had asked for redress, their grievances were treated as rebellious; and when they asserted their claim to be treated as citizens of equal rights with resident English Islanders, they were spurned as no better than felons, and examples were made of them upon the public gibbet.

The Protection of the British Crown had been withdrawn, yet England claimed the allegiance of the Colonists; who were left to the tender mercies of Governors whose arbitrary will was the supreme law, and whose cruel exactions were the blessings of Justice. Not only were they taxed without representation, but onerously and unequally taxed. No matter how hard they toiled, no matter how cheerfully they had paid their taxes, it brought them no immunities. It elicited no smile of approbation from the throne, whose crowned head only looked on and frowned. Of all the Colonies North Carolina had been the most wretchedly oppressed, and the most despised. Tryon in this State is but another name for tyranny and cruelty, and the mention of it excites the apathy of every hearer.

Clara and Bertrand were quite young, when the patriotic citizens of Mecklenburg began to manifest an unequivocal disposition to resist the tyrannous usurpations of Governor Martin. But young as Bertrand was, he had been among the foremost to ratify by his approval, the power delegated to Col. Tom Polk to call a convention of the people.

The history of the day's proceedings of the memorable 20th of May 1775, is too well known to most readers, to require a repetition of the details here: A spark was struck that day which kindled into a blaze, that burned and burned on, until Tyranny was consumed, and in its stead with expanded wings there arose over a free people, THE PHOENIX OF LIBERTY!

A few days after the 20th of May, Bertrand sat with Clara under a superb holly, whose aged evergreen boughs had for nearly a century shaded the summit of a beautiful romantic knoll on a high bluff bank of the Catawba. From this knoll which was about two hundred and fifty feet above the river level, and near what is now known as Mountain Island, there was a charming prospect: For miles down the river, its serpentine course could be traced until it lost itself behind some curved bluff, then again it would appear like a vast mirror set in a frame work of emerald, while far in the distance, it looked like a silvered ribbon carelessly thrown upon the green earth. Since that time, down the sloping sides of the eminence some pines and other growth have sprung up obstructing the view, and rendering it less lovely than it then was, but it is even now a place of commanding beauty, and with some labor bestowed in felling the timber next to the river, would make a delightful spot for a summer residence.

Often on that knoll had Clara and Bertrand sat together beneath the picturesque holly, on a rude stone seat, and would awhile breathe into each other's ear the fervent recital of affection, and awhile enjoy the beauty of the scenery. Sometimes the unaffrighted deer would in full view go to the river, bathe himself in its pellucid current, cross over and dash up the steep banks of the opposite side, flinging high and proudly his antlered head—the hound with his long straight neck stood almost motionless in some shaded covert—such a king among the fish as Jupiter's stork among the frogs; large flocks of water fowl floated undisturbed upon the bosom of the noble stream, while high above, would shriek the large fish hawk, the most graceful sailing of all birds.

It was familiarity with such scenes as this that had a share in making Bertrand so determined a foe to oppression; among them he had drunk in deeply, as from a pure fount, the love of liberty. It looked to him a land of freedom and its "sky cleaving hills" were the sacred altars upon which he swore with more than a Hannibal's sincerity eternal resistance to the oppressor. He could not conceive how a distant King, through a deputed

W. W. Badger, of Charlotte, intends building a new residence, which is yet...

tool in the shape of a despicable governor had a right to manacle a sovereign people and exact from them what their position did not warrant, and this too when the people were unwilling, for any return of protection or safety they had yet received, to delegate to their rulers the arbitrary power exercised over them.

This evening was an epoch in the lives of Clara and Bertrand and their loves were connected with an epoch in Earth's memoirs not less important upon the destiny of the world, far more so, than that of Anthony and Cleopatra's upon the Roman and Egyptian fortunes. Bertrand bent fondly over Clara and explained the nature of a paper which she appeared to be earnestly engaged in reading. There was no newspaper in the County at that early day and no post office communication with Mecklenburg; but printed cards with the latest news of any importance sometimes found their way to Charlotte and other public places where they would be read to crowds that collected at stated times for the purpose of hearing what was going on in the big world, without the boudoirs of their retired back woods. These cards would be frequently again copied in manuscript and thus their intelligence more widely disseminated.

On the 19th of May the day previous to the ratification of the Declaration, during the early proceedings of the Convention, a handbill received by express was read, announcing the Battle of Lexington which had taken place that day a month previous. Bertrand had taken the following copy of a part of the handbill.

"FREEMEN TO THE RALLY."

"Yesterday by a Packet direct from Boston which made a prosperous and quick trip, we have the following extraordinary and alarming intelligence. A battle has actually been fought between the Continentalists and Armed British soldiers. On the 19th ultimo, at Lexington, this bloody engagement took place. It appears that military stores had been collected at this place some 18 miles from Boston and that General Gage determining to take or destroy them had sent out some 800 men on the evening of the 18th, about 11 o'clock, not anticipating a fight; but the Provincials scented their approach and some 70 men collected by 2 o'clock who dispersed and assembled again by day light 140 strong. They were met by the soldiers on the morning of the 19th, and being shot upon, 4 or 5 of our number were killed. The British then the command of Major Pitcairn meeting with a disposition than they anticipated and being fired upon by the Continentalists, proceeded on to Concord, where they committed sundry depredations, destroying a quantity of flour &c. Being warmly repulsed here, they returned to Lexington where they were joined by 900 fresh troops and two cannon under Lord Percy. The Provincials in the mean time had rallied in stronger numbers, but without assuming any regular order of defence or attack. A very warm engagement now took place, the Regulars exhibiting much coolness and excellent discipline; but the cause of our country triumphed over discipline, order, numbers and superior officers. Not more than 400 of the Provincials were at any one time engaged against 1700 of well drilled Regulars but they fought with a bravery worthy of their cause and drove the enemy off to Boston. Great excitement prevails at Boston and in the country surrounding. At this place the excitement is intense, but no violent and open demonstrations of feeling are made. Every man tho' should brush up his firelock and be in readiness for any emergency."

"The sun spark behind a small mountain distant on the opposite shore, tinged its summit with a purple halo, and gilding with golden hues the clouds which hung like rich tapestry across the glowing west: The river flowed on in romantic grandeur through the cloven hills, and the whippoorwill whistled plaintively from its snug covert. It was a beautiful evening, and for the first time in their lives when at that spot, Bertrand and Clara allowed the gorgeous sunset, the theme of poets and the admiration of painters, to pass unnoticed. They arose and slowly walked towards the house, her father's residence being about a half mile distant.

CHARLESTON, May 13 1775.

"That is a spirit I admire Clara—said Bertrand—the militia of Lexington have nobly sustained themselves. They have shown what a strong arm nerved by right, can accomplish. Like the first important move on a chess board, which decides the game to the mover of it, so if we do get into a war with England, Lexington has insured us success."

"War Bertrand—replied Clara—I hope there will be no war."

"Yes perhaps so. It is too bad dear Clara that we should ignominiously bear the yoke of Foreign oppression when we might be free. Look at this grand scenery, this broad stream, beside which the Thames would appear insignificant. You mountains in the distance, and all the varied prospect before us; I tell you oppression is the bane which poisons our enjoyment and takes from us the delight we might otherwise experience in enjoying our beautiful country. We cannot walk over these grounds with the same firmness, that elastic tread, that proud consciousness of being exalted in the scale of being, that we could if the galling restraints which make our existence a servitude were removed."

"You may exaggerate the case Bertrand; the eloquent addresses you heard in Charlotte the other day, have perhaps excited you and made things appear much worse than they really are. I trust that such is the case, and that you may yet be happy under a continuance of the Mother Government."

"No, no Clara, never! Tryon can never be forgotten: The spirits of the six men that he strung up like rebels and outlaws near Hillsborough, hover around us, and whisper to us vengeance, vengeance; and no kindly star in the heavens, as you have read in annals of superstition, surely no such stars beams above the head of the odious tyrant!"

"But Bertrand are we not happy. Is there any thing to prevent our spending the days allotted to us by providence, quietly and pleasantly, happy in each other and enjoying the consolation

"Clara you do not appreciate the circumstances of your position so fully as you would had

you been mixing with the rougher elements of society. But of Tryon's cruelty you are aware, and you know that in the MOTHER COUNTRY turns a deaf ear to all of our complaints and earnest entreaties for redress. Besides, when they change our Governors they only send one man to rivet the chains which his predecessor had wrought and fettered us with. For Tryon they have given us Martin—a Caesar Borgia for a Nero. Has he not attempted to prevent the assembling of the Provincial Congress at Newbern?—Did he not dissolve the last Legislature in four days, before any important business could be done? When the Congress did at last assemble, it had to do so in open violation of the arbitrary edict of this dastard ruler, that it should not meet. No Clara, I do not exaggerate, and though you and I may be secure in person and enjoy ourselves in each other's society, yet every day as a spider entangles his victim, the meshes of slavery are being wrought around us, and if we do not break them apart soon, we will find ourselves after a while like the fly, too much weakened, to closely crumpled to make even an effort."

"You do not think any thing serious will come of it do you? Do you have any apprehensions that blood will be shed?"

"Serious—said Bertrand, warming with his subject—Yes serious Clara and that blood will be shed. The Regulars will try to retrieve their character from the disgrace of their retreat from Concord, and the shame of their defeat at Lexington: That will continue disturbances at the North. At the Convention in Charlotte, just held the cry was raised in which we all joined, 'Let us be independent. Let us declare our independence and defend it with our lives and fortunes!' That independence was declared. To give up our position now, would be to declare in advance that we have not the spirit to defend it. And the names of Brevard, Kennon, Polk, Bulch, Ganhum and Davidson, names which should hereafter live in history, would only become by-words of reproach and contumely. No Clara dear, we cannot recede; and I fear the crisis is approaching which will determine our freedom, or draw the cord of slavery around us so tightly as to place it beyond the power of valor to extricate ourselves."

Clara raised her head and gazed fondly in the eyes of her beloved. A tear bedewed her bright eyes, and hung like tiny dew drops upon their long silken lashes; she brushed it away, and leaned her head confidently upon Bertrand's shoulder: for some moments the two sat in silence.

The sun spark behind a small mountain distant on the opposite shore, tinged its summit with a purple halo, and gilding with golden hues the clouds which hung like rich tapestry across the glowing west: The river flowed on in romantic grandeur through the cloven hills, and the whippoorwill whistled plaintively from its snug covert. It was a beautiful evening, and for the first time in their lives when at that spot, Bertrand and Clara allowed the gorgeous sunset, the theme of poets and the admiration of painters, to pass unnoticed.

They arose and slowly walked towards the house, her father's residence being about a half mile distant.

But why that tear?

(CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.)

Sunday Reading.

"Virtue in itself commends its happiness."
"Of every outward objection quit."

(The following beautiful piece, from some of the most talented writers in the New England States, must be appreciated by every reader who admires a style at once glowing and highly descriptive.—Ed. Hornets' Nest.)

The First and Last Blow.

BY REV. E. WINCHESTER REYNOLDS.

Beauty oppressed by Weariness, but strengthened by Love, watching at the Midnight hour— She was a young wife, richly and neatly attired, and gifted with natural attractions of person such as Art vainly sought to rival. She was a young wife, and the hopes and joys that sanctified her womanhood were in their may-blossoms, whose spirit-fragrance was exhaled in each gentle breath that heaved her snowy bosom.

She was a young wife, whose eyes of cloudless lustre roved over an elegant apartment, of which she was the sole occupant, with that restless air which denotes earnest and fond anticipation of a pleasure which has been unreasonably delayed.

Seated by a table covered with books, whose gilded bindings glittered in the lamp light, with one hand upon the page of an open volume, while the other toyed with a jet black curl of her luxuriant hair; with head thrown slightly back, the slender neck of spotless white fully revealed, and the full bosom thrilling with the fire of expectancy, the young wife glanced over the apartment.

Three months—how quickly the time had sped!—she had been mistress of the splendor she surveyed. (Three months had she revelled in the light of expanding affection, tenderness, adoration, elevated and glorified by the Bridal Tie. And the sunshine of her soul had remained unclouded; the tides of her love had swept smooth by on through verdant valleys unopposed by those mountain-hills of selfishness and egotism which so often so darkly veil the sun.)

There were many who envied Clara Lincoln the quiet and holy beauty of her life. But none

ever affirmed that she was undeserving, for God had blessed her with a nature to be loved, and over the light of its presence went.

The Husband was absent later than usual. Could business have detained him so long? He always closed his store at nine o'clock. Could pleasure have detained him. The source of his greatest pleasure was at home. Yet he came not. So, with something of impatience and rage of apprehension—

Beauty oppressed by Weariness, but strengthened by Love, watched and waited at the midnight hour.

Without, the heavy notes of a gathering tempest broke harshly from drifting clouds. All other sounds were hushed in the shadowy quiet, save the echo of an occasional footfall, as some belated form, hurried along, eager to gain the shelter of a joyous home, or driven by the fierce lash of Necessity to some den of wretchedness or crime.

To the young Wife's ear came the echo of a footstep from the marble threshold. There came the sound of a bolt forced from its socket, and the heavy door swung upon its hinges. There was a sound, slightly varied, yet well remembered, in the broad hall, as the door swung back with a crash.

The husband had come; and the Wife flew to meet him with her welcome, with the story of her weariness and her apprehensions, with her gentle inquiry and her tender rebuke.

The parlor door is opened for his entrance, but the young Wife starts back, with a disappointed, an angry, and a terrified look.

The husband is there in the broad hall—the form of a man—tettering to and fro with a strange and silly air. But the Husband who left the young wife a few hours before was nowhere to be seen.

And yet the outlines of the Form and the features are strangely familiar. There is the well-remembered garb and—most inexplicable of all mysteries—there is the identical ring the young Wife bestowed a month before the dawning of her Bridal Day. But still the Form could not be that of the Husband; for he had never met her with the idiotic stare, the trembling nerves, the unsteady step, and the mad smile she now beheld.

Who can explain the mystery that lurks in this strange Form? Who gave him the features, the garb, the ring of the one beloved?

There stands the Form in the broad hall, fully revealed in the light of the Midnight Lamp, and there mingles with an air of pitiable confusion, a look of recognition, and even of affection, which rests on the young Wife.

The two stand gazing upon each other, separated by the threshold of the parlor door. No word has passed the lips of either. There is the softened idiotic look on the one hand, and the look of surprise and indignation on the other.

In the young Wife's bosom there is a throbbing of wild and unknown emotions, which chain the power of utterance, and congeal the warm pulse of joy. There is a tremor like that of some spiritual agony, which pervades the slender, beautiful, expectant being; she sinks back into her chair; and, while her jewelled fingers are pressed against her pallid fair face, she calls upon the name of God in broken prayer.

The strange man—the Form—who presided himself there at the Midnight hour, staggers, totters, and sinks down upon a sofa in a distant part of the room, still directed that look of mingled shame, indignation and love, toward the beautiful unpleasing young Wife.

And while the Form sits thus on the yielding sofa, and while the young Wife gazes in her agony—a strange and shadowy substance glides in from the broad wall, skipped lightly over the gorgeous carpet on the parlor floor, and then dissolved in a dismal mist, that threatened to extinguish the Midnight Lamp. The face of the Form blanched at the view of this singular and fearful phenomenon, and the young Wife prayed more ardently, though her tones were more broken and more rife with pain.

Finally the Mist gathered deeper and darker behind the suppliant. It gathered there, from every quarter of the magnificent apartment, and soon became again embodied—a Shape. It took the Form of a man, diminutive in stature, malignant in mien, cruel in practice.

This Shape, or rather this Curse—for he was nothing less—perched upon the marble mantel-piece, immediately above the young Wife; and from this elevation surveyed the pair below with a singularly cold and malicious smile.

The Form of the Husband was there; but the young Wife had loved and wedded was prostrate and invisible! Manhood, Nobility, Humanity—these were hidden by the Power of him. And in their places were revealed Folly, Degradation, and Lust!

So the Husband was not there. And in the fear that he might never return—might never appear again, the Wife bowed beneath her agony, and prayed.

This was the first blow that the beautiful temple of hopes had received—the first blow aimed at her wedded liberty.

The Curse who sat upon the marble mantel-piece, stepped every where—that is ever perched above the forms of suffering wives, groaning at the door, and crying out in agony—this Curse of Rev.

And thus the Night wore slowly, drearily, hopelessly away.

And, though the Morning lit up the material world with a blaze of unspeakable glory, in the solemn realm of souls there was one buried in the shadow.

Nine weary years were recorded in the volume of time. Nine years had traced the deep lines of care and sorrow on the bright beautiful brow of Clara Lincoln.

During all this time she had seen her husband but seldom—only a few hours, sometimes only a few moments, at a time. But his form was before her often; that Form in which Shame, Brutality, and Vice so mightily predominated over every virtue.

That Form which so constantly reminded her of the Beauty, the Love and the Greatness that had disappeared; and yet mocked at every effort, which her womanly perseverance and trustfulness ever made, to win those divine qualities back.

And even those rare seasons when the Husband was recognized in the Form he had been wont to inhabit, to her were pitiful with agony of reflection, because they passed before her in living colors, the picture that had won her love, only to make her more wretched by their removal.

And the Curse had haunted her during all this period. For nine years it sat continually on the marble mantel-piece, mocking the weariness of her night vigils, and beguiling the many-tinted thoughts that availed her bosom. When she cradled her first-born in her dim and trembling arms—when she hushed his plaintive wailings by the notes of her low sad voice—when she prayed Heaven that its mother's deity might be brighter than the shining host—when it sickened, and chartered his angel eyes with the cold wing of death—when she thought that its bright and gentle spirit might still linger around the gulf of her sorrows—

The Curse equaled still in its immovable malignity, to might get another bitter drug in the cup of her death!

When, at last, poverty compelled her to say farewell to the magnificent apartment, the Curse followed her to her more humble abode, and beset her with a host of ordinary beams, where he could manifest his malignity by night and by day.

Nine years—and it is Midnight again. In a small ugly room, scantily furnished and imperfectly lighted, toiling with a needle over a piece of fine linen, which is wet with the constant dripping of tears—alone, bowed and exhausted—the taper of life ready to expire in its rusty socket—behold Clara Lincoln!

It is the saddest spectacle you would wish to behold at the Midnight hour.

She is alone—her children—three black-eyed boys—are asleep. The turf is green above her bosom but their spirits are away with God.

She is alone—she is alone—even the Form is there—alone, save the presence of the Curse.

There are heavy steps coming, echoing from the long dark passage that leads to this miserable room. The steps rapidly approach, the door is thrust rudely open, and two dark men enter, and deposit upon the floor—the Form of the Husband.

The Form is mangled and mangled, fresh from some terrible broil; and you can see that life is departing.

The sorrowful one lays aside her needle and loom, and kneels by the Form—takes the bloody hand in hers—bends over the torn breast and face—and—knows that all will soon be over.

There was a misery given her; for in the last light of that blasted countenance; in one gush of nature's feeling; too impetuous for calm death to restrain; in the grasp of the hand, that seemed like a memory of sunny days—she received back the long-lost Husband again; received him but to resign him forever.

That was the last blow—THE LAST; for her spirit had departed from the sorrowful realm. And as the two dark men exchanged a glance, which gave the mutual information that they were in the presence of death—the Curse departed from that wretched habitation, and was lost in the starless night—*Quidam Cuius*.

President Taylor and Lady, ex-President Polk and Lady, and Gov. Shackelock of South Carolina, have been made life members of the American Sunday School Union, by the Sabbath School children in Charleston. The children of Richmond Va. have made Gov. Floyd of Virginia also a life member.

The *Star* in Raleigh, the oldest religious newspaper in the world, and the *New-England Christian*, a very able and judicious journal of the same class, have been embodied, and under the name of the *Patrian Recorder*, the new paper, with a list of nearly 10,000 subscribers, promises to become of the most influential and valuable journals in the country.

If there be a pleasure in earth which angels cannot enjoy, and which they might almost envy man the possession of, it is the power of relieving distress. If there be a pain which devils might envy man for enduring, it is the death-bed reflection that we have possessed means of doing good, but that we abused and perverted it to purposes of ill.