

The Torch-Light.

DAVIS & ROBINSON, Prop'rs.

Variety is the Spice of Life, that Gives it all its Flavor.

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BENNY'S KISS.

"I will send a kiss to mama,
And the little orphan smiled;
"She will know it comes from Benny,
She will whisper 'My sweet child.'
When some little one is passing
To the Saviour's arms of love,
I will press its white lips softly;
It will bear the kiss above.

"By this token I shall send her,
She will know that I am good;
That I care for little brother,
As I promised her I would;
That I say my 'Now I lay me,'
And 'Our Father,' and will try
To be ready for the angels
When they want me by and by.

"She is watching for my coming,
She is looking through the gate,
When the happy spirits enter;
But our Father bids her wait.
They have buried her in Graceland,
And the angels spread the snow;
But I'll always send her kisses
By the little ones that go."

For the Torch-Light.

THE BROKEN VOW.

A Story of the Olden Time.

BY JAMES A. DAVIS,
Of Flat River, North Carolina.

CHAPTER I.

"Thank Heaven for the blessings we enjoy," exclaimed Mr. Howardton, drawing his chair up nearer the fire. And as the wind sounded in hollow blasts around the house, with cheerful gratitude and honest exultation he surveyed the comforts of his richly furnished dwelling.

"Father," questioned a sweet voice, "why is it that people are so differently situated? We are surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries of this life, while there are many others who are probably exposed to the terrors of this night on account of being so poor as not to have the means to procure shelter.

The father looked up proudly and affectionably on his daughter, whose beauty was of the most exquisite and unsurpassed order and answered: "Well, maybe the natural tendency of property, like political power, is from the hands of the many to the hands of the few. There always are a set of sharpers upon the alert seeking opportunities to defraud the rightful owners of their property and in many cases succeed in appropriating it to their own use, regardless of either law or equity. The same kind providence that blesses the efforts of the industrious portion of mankind, places His blessings in the reach of all classes, but few avail themselves of them."

It was one of those nights in the month of March when the equinoctial winds howl in the rocky cavities and the waves in tempestuous violence dash tremendously against the cliff, when the terrified beasts trembling at the conflicting elements, rush for shelter to their coverts. And men less timid, talk over the havoc of the storm. It was on such a night as this when pitying those unfortunate beings who might be exposed to its violence, Mr. Howardton, his wife and daughter, sat

listening to the distant roaring of the sea.

For a few moments the wind abated and a deep moan sounded through the house. Mr. Howardton started. Again the winds arose, and again the pitiless rain beat in torrents against the window. "Hark!" exclaimed Mary, as a faint murmur reached her ear. It was the voice of distress. Never had her father been deaf to its call. He sprang from his chair and taking a light approached the door. Mary trembling with terror and dismay, closely followed, but the strong current of air extinguished the light. Regardless of the entreaties of his wife and daughter, he proceeded and in an audible voice demanded if any one sought refuge in the house. A deep sob which sounded near was the only answer he received. Again he repeated his inquiry when a voice breathed in the accents of inevitable suffering, "Help! for heavens sake, help! or I will perish." He approached the spot from whence the voice proceeded and distinguished a figure leaning against the wall for support. He extended his arms to assist the stranger who cold and wretched had nearly sank to the earth. Mary meeting them at the door started at the appearance of a tall figure, supported by the arm of her father. She recognized at once her lover, Edward Raymond, the man to whom she was engaged. His appearance had been reduced so ghastly by the intense cold and rain that she almost fainted and had to hold to the door for support. He being by this time no longer able to stand was conducted to bed, and such remedies administered as were necessary to invoke a speedy recovery. It was the fortunate circumstance that nothing except over exertion was the cause of his weakness, and on the following morning he had regained his former strength and activity.

Edward and Mary were almost constantly in each other's company when children, and their friendship in childhood had ripened into love in their maturer years.

Mary had promised to become his wife as soon as her education was completed.

On the day following she was to leave for the metropolis to enter a female seminary at that place, which was then conducted by a selection of the most eminent teachers.

This was the cause of Edward's misfortune. Leaving home at about sunset en route for Mr. Howardton's, he was overtaken by the storm; had it not been that he reached there as soon as he did he would most certainly have perished, as the cold was almost unendurable.

"To-morrow," said Edward with a dejected air. "To-morrow you leave for New York. Alas! how solitary will everything appear.

Mary forced a smile but a tear quickly followed.

He seemed not to notice her emotion. He took her hand. "Every aspect will be changed," he continued. "The shades will no longer soothe; the birds will

no longer enliven; nature herself will droop, for Mary will be absent."

"Yes," repeated Mary, "I shall for a time abandon this endeared spot. I shall leave behind dear friends and acquaintances, but I feel it my duty to submit to the will of my parents, which I am aware will be for my own benefit. And those charming objects," pointing to the surrounding scenery, "will be hid from view."—"Time has been," she artlessly proceeded, "when to go to school was the high of my ambition, but now I feel strangely depressed and dread the hour of my departure."

"Charming simplicity," inwardly whispered Edward, as his heart bounded at the solution he could have given. "How often when you are absent, Mary, shall I visit this spot?" he answered as they ascend a little hill. The spot where first his love was made known. They had wandered thither in the pleasant spring and played together in the cool shade of the great oaks. "How often will my thoughts dwell upon this interview! How often will they wander to the college that contains the dearest object on earth to me—the ideal of my heart!" Mary sighed, her eyes rested on the ground, a tear trickled her cheek, "but I shall have time for thought," she continued, "and in my hours of retrospection I will ponder over in my mind the pleasant hours spent together and my heart will yearn for the time to come when the fulfillment of my vow will be our happiness and the joy of our parents."

Edward imprinted a kiss on her sweet brow that was to remain as his only token of remembrance.

All things were arranged preparatory for her departure. All hearts beat high with bright anticipations for the future, as she was whirled off to the station.

But alas! how uncertain is fate. Happy season of our life; days of our youth; hours of enjoyment, when nature's unsophisticated spirit speaks in every look is visible in every action; when the heart panting with newborn ardour pictures the idol, happiness and springs to enjoy it. It is then that the gay scenes of life dance before us. It is then by yielding to credulity we implant thorns which springing up wound our own bosoms, for disappointment with all its horrors treads on the heel of hope and extinguishes in despair the light which has dazzled in anticipation.

(Concluded in our next.)

An exchange says: "Keep an eye out for the early resumption of payment." Both our eyes are already out looking for it, and so are our elbows.

Old mines are like old horses; you must exercise them if you wish to keep them in working order.

Moderation is the silken string running through the pearl chain of all virtue.

This is the best advertising medium in Granville.

For the Torch-Light.

"ANTIQUARY."

Messrs Editors:

In the 4th number of the *Carolina Herald* I see an article from the pen of our old friend Antiquary. He seems disposed very properly, to give expression to his dislike of Harper's "imagery." I have no objection to his pointing out to the minds of young readers the dangers and defects of Harper, and other writings and paintings of a trashy nature. It is a privilege he has, if not a duty, of harping on Harper, and if Harper don't harp better he ought to be harped upon, and who so well prepared to harp on his errors as our friend Antiquary? whose mind has so long been placed on the "history of ancient things," and is so well "versed in antiquity."—When a writer of long experience and observation, like Antiquary, feels it to be his duty to direct and warn the youthful mind from off the dangerous breakers in life's voyage, his advice and warnings should not be disregarded.

In the outset he gives evidence of antiquarian research, by quoting from an author whose writings should be sought and read by every youth of the land. I think he calls his name Ezekiel. If the quotations he makes is a fair sample of the book referred to, young men would find it more instructive than trashy novels, with their caricatures of sacred things. Having been taught from boyhood to notice what older persons are saying (hope the printer will not obscure the new article so) I carefully read the article of Antiquary through, and found it characteristic of the writer.

Brother Antiquary! I like the firm stand you have taken against corrupting and trashy writings. Like Hercules, who effectually wielded his weapon to the discomfiture of wild, untutored foes, put forth thy strength to the dismay and overthrow of the mercenary corruptors of the youth of our country. Hurl them from their heaven-daring position, prostrate on the field of contest, "heap upon heap," powerless for evil. Antiquary dislikes Harper's caricature of the "venerable old gentleman," Time, with his scythe looking "as though it never had been sharpened since it made its first sweep at Able." When, from mercenary motives, the minds of writers of ability, who might adorn the pages of sacred literature directing the thoughts of youth in ways of truth, become oblivious to higher sentiments of christian duty, they deserve the scorn and contempt of purer intellects. The efforts of weaker heads are too palpable and puerile to infuse their poison in the minds of youth with such demoralizing effect as the writings of Shrewder, and abler ones.

The mind of youth needs christian culture—salutary food to nourish and strengthen it for responsible duties of life. The eagerness with which the desires of youthful minds reach out after trashy, truthless productions, suggests strongly to our minds the importance of counteracting influences. It is a sad commentary on the degeneracy

of the age to see the book of Ezekiel, and other sacred writers, rest beneath accumulating dust, while the covers of paper book novels are soiled or worn off by frequent use. Happy he! who sends forth the steady light of a consistent course—directing the mind of youth high above obscuring influences, to the purer atmosphere of christian light and love.

In conclusion, may we not hope for future emanations from Antiquary's pen? Men are commanded to let their light shine, and in the absence of correcting light darkness prevails. Minds capable of dispensing salutary light should not feel at liberty to withhold it from those needing mental and moral illumination.

Oxford, N. C. AMICUS.

SOME WEATHER SIGNS.

There are many people who scoff at the idea that one can tell what the weather is going to be by observing certain signs of nature, but I know that such things can be done. Here are a few signs which I never know to fail:

If white muskrats are unusually thick in September, and the currant bushes lean to the north-west it is a sign of a hard winter, with lots of sleighing.

If the moss grows heavily on the north side of the ax handle, and black rabbits make their burrows in the open fields, it can be taken for granted that there will be no cold weather for ten years.

If there is a sighing and a whispering among the cucumber vines and sunflowers bend to the South, look for a good deal of rain in December. If horse-radish tops turn scarlet the same year there will be a January freshet lasting five weeks.

If you notice the bees idle in September, and bob-bail foxes swinging on the limbs of cranberry bushes, and the gatepost perspires at sunset, look for a bountiful yield of buckwheat.

If pear trees blossom before the 20th of March, and you notice the cows and horses rubbing themselves against the meeting-house door, and the top-rail of the fence casts two separate shadows, it argues well for the coming wheat crop.

If the clouds all move one way during November, and big girls go barefoot, and tin-peddlers are numerous, and your wife wants a new pair of shoes, and plum trees grow the most branches on the west side, the next year will be prolific of thunder-storms and lightning-rod agents.

There are many others signs, equally as valuable as those above given, but these few, if carefully studied and strictly investigated, will be found all that are required by any respectable family.—Ez.

A domestic having been sent to purchase a bottle of capers forgot her errand and asked for a bottle of frolics.

Happiness is often at our side, and we pass her by. Misfortune is far off, and we rush to meet her.