

The Courier.

ROXBORO, N. C., March 15, 1899

A VISIT TO HEAVEN

(Marie Annie Henson.)

In a doorway alone he was sitting,
As if in thought was the gray
head bent low,
And the beard on his bosom was
rested
Was as white as the new fallen
snow.

As I watched him, a great flood of
pity
Filled my heart and a shadow was
thrown
O'er the future's bright picture I'd
painted,
Would I some some day be old and
alone?

"Say, grandpa," (for thus 'twas the
old man
Was called by his old friends and
new.)
"Of what are you thinking," I
questioned.
"As you sit here the dreary days
through?"

"There are so many good things, my
girlie,
That I could scarcely tell you
them all,
But the thing that I think of, now,
mostly,
Is my visit to heaven last fall.

"Yes, you look surprised like the
others,
But child, it's as true as can be;
Though it does seem so strange that
the Master
Should let in an old fellow like
me.

"You see, 'twas in this way it hap-
pened:
We've been close friends for many
a year;
The Master and me and the old wo-
man—
When my old woman, girlie, was
here.

"'Twas soon after I found Him we
married,
Were baptized together, you know,
And He's loved us and stood by us
always,
Since those old days, so long, long
ago.

"Well, the boys soon grew up and
married;
The girls went to homes of their
own;
Then we were more to each other
than ever—
The old woman and me—when
alone.

"She was always a frail little creat-
ure—
A wee little woman like you,
And often, so often, when ailing,
I'd sit by her all the night thro'.

"And I'd pray the good Lord that
power
To the 'Postles He gave, He'd give
me,
And holding her hand in mine,
girlie,
The old woman'd get better, you
see.

"But she couldn't stay here with me
always,
No matter how good she was
nursed,
And 'twas better, yes best, that He
left me,
And to heaven took the old woman
first.

"Then the children all begged me to
break up,
And come live with them, but you
know
'Twas useless for them to be talk-
ing;

'Twould almost break my heart,
child to go.

"From here where her light step, I
fancy,
I hear in the hall—on the stair;
And once, I was sure that I saw her,
In her blue speckled dress, stand-
ing there.

"'Twas upon the hillside, they laid
her,
And oftimes at night do I go
Up there and talk to the old woman,
Just like I used to, you know.

"Last fall 'twas, that I, too, was ail-
ing;
I was home-sick for heaven, I
guess—
When, at once, I don't know how it
happened,
Such a sight as my old eyes did
bless!

"'Twas glorious!" The old man
lauged softly,
"The prettiest thing to behold,
The city a little way off, dear,
The streets, the purest of gold!

"Toward me, I saw coming a car-
riage,
Drawn by horses as white as the
snow,
Strange I didn't know where I was
at, dear,
But as I stood there a wondering
so.

"A voice from the carriage cried
gladly:
'There he is! You've come at last
Pa!"
In a moment I was clasped in strong
arms
Of my boy who was killed in the
war.

"AM dressed out he was in fine broad
cloth—
Finer far than on this earth is
bought;
The carriage was pure gold and sil-
ver,
And all was the prettiest sort!

"We dashed up the street, and 'twas
somehow
That the first house I saw took
my eye.
I'll know it again—on the corner—
All white, dear, and three stories
high.

"Oh the porch," again he laughed
softly,
And dashed off a tear, "what was
best!
'Twas the sight of my little old wo-
man,
In her blue speckled calico dress-
ed.

"She floated down into my arms,
dear,
In the gracefulest way as could be
And onto her skirt there was cling-
ing
The babe that I never did see.

"'Twas born when away at my
daughter's,
Who was sick unto death, so they
said,
But when I come back to the mother
I found that our baby was dead.

"There 'twas with its white wings so
little,
Just fuzzing up soft as could be,
And there, locked in each other's
arms, dear,
Was the little old woman and me.

"Then we went in the house and I
rested,
On a bed, dear, so soft and so
white,
With my loved ones all sitting around
me;
Oh, child, 'twas the prettiest sight!

"In a second somehow it all van-
ished,
Old neighbors stood there 'round
my bed,
Bending o'er me with kind, anxious
faces,

And I had fainted, they said.

"Course it seemed hard to b'lieve
what I told them,
But the Master, who's so good to
me,
Just knew how I'm homesich for
heaven,
And took my soul on a visit, you
see.

"'Tis enough now to sit here a-
thinking
Of his goodness and how glad I'll
be
When I see Him in His beauty up
yonder,
Where the old woman's waiting
for me.

"He knows how to comfort us al-
ways;
What? I'm sorry, dear child, you
you must go;
We'll finish our talk up in heaven—
First house on the corner, you
know."

As the train sped away from the
mountains,
A hush over my spirit was cast,
A sweet, soft m'n hush, as if angels,
Had brushed with their wings as
they passed.

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