

(Written for the WATCHMAN.)

ARCHY DALE.

BY N. B. ILM.

'Twas known to all the country round—
A hut of slabs and poles,
Built with a hatchet and a saw
And full of cracks and holes.

A garden round it filled with care,
And fruit trees vary fine—
Red with cherries, and blue with plums,
In the golden summer time.

Here, Archy lived, for twenty years
Although it was so small,
The people wondered, how he stood,
Or turned in it at all.

He lived alone, but in his barn,
That stood across the lane—
With lustrous eyes, and heaving breast,
Lived Mary, Fan, and Jane.

They did not wear false waterfalls,
Or dress in crinoline;
But every night, they filled the pail,
With mother nature's wine.

And they were dear to Archy's heart,
And when he milked and fed,
Morning and night, he talked to them,
And they knew what he said.

Age comes to all, in hut and hall—
Old time with eagle eye,
Reas every one beneath the sun,
And rich and poor, must die.

One night, when Archy lay alone
In the silent midnight gloom,
He saw the face of death peer out,
From a corner of the room.

And another night when sleep had tried
To close his eyes in vain,
Death, came to the middle of the room
And then, went back again.

Then Archy knew that he must die,
He told his friends, and said,
When you shall miss me passing by,
You will look and find me dead.

The weeks went on, 'twas a winter's morn,
The snow lay on the ground,
A neighbor came to Archy's door
And found no tracks around.

No tracks around, although the snow,
Had lain a week or more—
The smoke was gone that o'er the roof,
Had always curled before.

And all was still—as still as death,
After the dying groan,
And while in awe, he held his breath,
From the stable came a moan.

Like a sound of sorrow and distress
Shut upon prison walls,
And Mary and Fan and Betsy Jane,
Were starving in their stalls.

The news was told, the neighbors came,
From every house in dread,
And marched to the out of Archy Dale,
With slow and solemn tread.

And entered in, but found no one,
Until they saw the bed;
The boldest pulled the quilt away,
And there was Archy—dead.

There were trembling hearts, and frightened souls,
And praying sinners that day,
And Archy was laid in his narrow bed
And covered up with the clay.

MOHAWK, Pa., Feb. 15 1868.

(Written for the WATCHMAN.)

The Chronicles of Tattletown.

BY VIRGINIA

CHAPTER II

Miss Peck's gratuitous contribution of news, for the benefit of the Mrs Grundies of Tattletown, being, not only highly colored, but slightly (?) exaggerated withal, the historian begs leave to put before her readers the few facts, upon which Miss Nancy's imagination has built so largely. True it was that fortune favored her during her journey, and little did Charles Compton suspect, as old Mrs. Peck said so truly, "who sat within earshot," or perhaps his low-toned conversation would have been much lower spoken.

If there was one thing he disliked more than Miss Nancy's mischief making propensities, it was to know that his family affairs were the topics of charitable (?) remark by the aforementioned Mrs Grundies, and as his family had always discouraged any effort made to bring them into the charmed circle of busy-bodies, and declined all proffers of information in regard to their neighbor's affairs, they had, by this breach of the laws regulating the society of Tattletown, been voted a "stuck-up" proud and aristocratic set; the latter consideration being a "stench" in the democratic nostrils of said Mrs. Grundies, consequently they considered it their especial calling to purge the society, and morals of Tattletown of it, by all means, charitable, or otherwise.

But in order to set those few facts before my readers, I must go back to the week previous to Miss Nancy's visit to the city; for having introduced them to this paragraph, it will only be necessary to take her surname for what it is worth. It was at the close of a disagreeable evening, a week before my story opens, that Mrs. Compton sat before a bright fire, whose lustrous logs, blazed, and crackled, merrily, although bidding defiance to the storm without, and the rain pattered against the windows, and on the snow without, freezing as it fell, while the wind blew in angry gusts around

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the corners, and shook impatiently the bare branches of the old oaks on the lawn before the door.

The little room was a picture of comfort and might be formed both sitting room, and library, as the well filled bookshelves that lined one side of the room, and the little articles of feminine industry lying about, in the form of work basket and embroidery frame indicated. There pervaded the room an air of refinement, notwithstanding the evidences of what is called shabby gentility, as seen in the ingeniously patched carpet, the old, but wonderfully preserved damask curtains, and table cover, to say nothing of the cushioned arm chair, whose threadbare appearance, was mysteriously concealed with dainty cover of network, wrought by the fair hands of "those Compton girls," or in more polite phrase Miss Augusta Compton, and her less queenly, but equally lovable, and beautiful sister Daisy.

Of the chairs around the fire, only one was occupied, and Mrs. Compton glanced impatiently at one on the opposite side of the fire, upon which a crimson dressing wrapper was thrown, keeping company with a pair of slippers near by, while awaiting the arrival of its owner. Presently a step, quick, but firm, and manly was heard on the portico, and soon after the sitting room door opened, and a gentleman entered, and divested himself of overcoat, and comfart, came up and kissed affectionately the lady, who seem to take it as a matter of course.

"You are late, my son. What detained you—are there any letters from the girls?"

"The mail was later than usual, mother, but to recompense you for such patient waiting, there is letter for you, and, to judge from its size, quite an important document."

Mrs. Compton took it eagerly, "I will only glance at it," she said; to see if the girls are well, I can read it after supper, which has been waiting half an hour, and I will not try old Mollie's patience any longer. Come! she added as she bell rung. "I know you must appreciate Mollie's effort, after so long and cold a walk," and she led the way into a cozy little dining room, where a simple meal was served up in antique silver, and rare old china, retained when the Hall and its content had been sold by Mrs. Compton, who felt reluctant to part with every thing that reminded her of happier, and more prosperous days.

Too was soon over, Charles having, for once lost his appreciation of "Aunt Mollie's" culinary genius, while his mother seemed equally indifferent to all save the letters lying beside her plate, of whose contents she was almost ignorant. Her anxiety regarding the news from her daughters, may be more easily accounted for by the fact of this absence being their first from home, for although Augusta Compton was nineteen years old, and consequently supposed to have arrived at years of discretion, at least in this fast age, she had never been beyond the precincts of her native village, until this winter, when their mother, although reluctant to give them up, decided to accept, for them the pressing invitation of an old school-mate of her own, who was now living in the city of —, and who, knowing Mrs. Compton did not mingle in gay society, begged the privilege of matrimony them, for one winter and with her own daughters, make their debut in the gay society of which she was the acknowledged leader.

Mrs. Compton felt that though she sacrificed her own happiness, she could but admit the mistaken policy that would shield them still a little while longer, from the temptations with which she feared to subject their young, and defenseless girlhood.

Daisy was but a mere child as yet and she hesitated some time 'er she consented to her accompanying her sister, but she finally yielded, and for two weeks their humble home had lacked the sunshine of their bright and happy hearts, their sweet, girlish laughter, and their mother yearned for the loving, and caressing words that formed such sweet music to her partial ears, and comforted the sad years of his widowhood. No marvel that the happy tears filled her eyes, and brought a smile to the tremulous lips as she thought of their love, and tenderness, that remembered her amidst the gaieties in which they participated.

patiently waiting to hear the contents of it; and when she looked up she smiled pleasantly.

"What do the girls say mother? I have waited for fifteen minutes now for the revelation of its mysterious communications, when may we look for their ladyships home?"

"They make no mention of returning very soon, though there are frequent allusions to 'when we come.' The dear children are enjoying themselves so much, that I cannot find it in my heart to insist upon a return, at least for some time yet. By the by, they mention having met with Claudia Henry! Perhaps you remember her as the little girl who visited with her father at the Hall seven years ago! Judge Henry was a partner of your dear father when they began the practice of law. You remember her—do you not?"

"I have an indistinct recollection of a combination of sunny curls, soft muslin and lace, blue eyes, and rihons, and a bird-like voice, that constituted what Judge Henry loved, to call, my little Claudia, and 'Birdie,' with a thousand pet names that she readily accepted as a substitute for her real name, and her right? It seems but yestday that she dashed through the corridor, and hall to the time of her own sweet songs," and he sighed as he added:

"Time flies swiftly in the retrospect, yet what changes have occurred."

Mrs. Compton smiled, "You are growing sentimental, and, from your description, seem to have retained undimmed by the clouds of sorrow that hovered over us for so long, a bright recollection of the young lady in question. Augusta tells me that the Judge is dead." I grieve truly to hear it, as he was an esteemed friend of the family. I wonder if the Hall will change hands again! It has always been a comfort to me that he purchased it, though it was strange he never occupied it. I should be sorry to see it go into a stranger's possession now."

Charles did not answer immediately. He seemed distant in manner, an unusual thing to him. His mother looked up from her knitting and was on the point of inquiring as to the reason of his silence, which he said:

"The old Hall, dear mother has changed hands. A letter received to day from the executors of Judge Henry's will, informed me of the fact," he paused on seeing her agitation, and taking her hand, held it, while speaking. "Can you bear good news, mother dear? I have in this letter that which will make your sad heart happy," and he held up a letter that he had been reading, while his mother was so deeply absorbed in her own.

"What is it, Charles? Tell me! can I bear joy, as well as sorrow? Ah! would I could believe the future of my beloved children could be brightened—as for me, there can be no silver lining to the cloud that has darkened, not only my own life, but I fear of those, who if I could so will it, should see only the bright side of life's picture," and the lip quivered and tears gathered slowly in the soft eyes.

"But mother you must see the silver lining that this letter displays. I can hardly realize that it is so myself, yet listen! This letter is from the executors of Judge Henry's will—who have enclosed a copy in which he has remembered the widow of his best friend, and given her back her old home, on one condition only, that you will take to your heart, and home, his only and beloved child, Claudia, and do for her as you own; while to me he bequeaths a legacy, not only sufficient to complete my studies, but to settle me in the practice of his chosen profession."

Tears—grateful tears stood in Mrs. Compton's eyes, when he finished speaking, and sinking back in her chair, she murmured, "Truly he has remembered the fatherless, and the widow! How sinful has been my murmuring heart, that doubted his love, and here! I can see it now in the light of this comfort!—I can see it in all its base ingratitude towards my Heavenly Father, who has cared for me, and mine for so many sorrowful years."

She silently assented, and carrying the letter to her chamber there read it, and there in solemn prayer took upon herself the obligations to perform a mother's duty to the orphan Claudia, and that responsibility was all the more cheerfully assumed, for Claudia Henry, because she was the daughter of a cherished friend, and before her marriage a ward of Mrs. Compton's father.

On her return to the sitting room, Charles informed her of the necessity of visiting B — on the following day, and if she agreed to it, to bring his sisters back with him, also Claudia Henry, if she wished it. To this Mrs. Compton consented, yet making it optional with the girls, to remain until the winter was over, as she was unwilling to have her own preferences weighed in the balance with their inclination.

The morning after he left for the city; but not until he had been called upon by the foreman of the workman engaged by the executors to put the Hall in complete repair, for any commands.

Their presence, and business, was as yet, unknown to the Mrs. Grundies of Tattletown, owing undoubtedly to Miss Nancy Peck's absence from home; for so well known was her dexterity in ferretting out news, that they had resigned their interest in the business, fully satisfied she would do justice to them in keeping them posted in every one's affairs, her own included.

Mrs. Compton went to and fro, from the Hall, superintending the improvements being made, on the beautiful house, for "Compton Hall," or the "Hall" as it was more familiarly known, was one of the finest estates in the neighborhood, the natural advantages of which had been rendered more attractive still by the antique mansion, that for three generations had been the pride of the Compton family, who spared no expense or care in keeping it in such splendid order. Since Mr. Compton's death the place had suffered very little from neglect, but the only repairs needed, being in and around the house, which he remained unoccupied, save one wing in which the servants, and a house-keeper lived.

There was a sad pleasure in thinking she should return to her old home around which lingered so many hallowed associations. There she had spent the joyous days of childhood—the happier days of her married life, and here known her first, and her last great grief. Well might she say as she roamed again over the scenes, that brought back, so vividly obsequered life—

"Therefore a current of sadness deep;
Through the strain of my triumph is heard
To weep,
Like a moan of the breeze through a summer's sky—
Like the name of the lost, when the wine foams high"

"Yet speak to me still though thy tones be faint
With vain remembrance and troubled thought—
Speak! for thou tellest my soul that its birth,
Links it with regions, more bright than earth"

Charles, on reaching the city, called on his sisters, and found them still fresh, and blooming after their winter campaign, and on venturing a hint relative to their return with him, met with a volley of objections, and entreaties from their hospitable host and his lady, not to mention the young ladies of the house who had only to bring the battery of bright eyes; and a sweetly pleading "Please Mr. Compton! do let them stay," that he favored "discretion the better part of valor," and surrendered accordingly. The more weighty reasons of their hostess, that "it would be unsafe to return at this time of the year to the colder climate of the valley," finally decided him on leaving them and banished all hopes of seeing their bright faces at home, for some time yet. A pressing invitation to Charles was given to remain until the sisters should be permitted to leave them, and the before mentioned bright eyes pleaded eloquently; but he knew how impossible it was to do so, and him compelled to divulge his object in visiting the city, and consequently the necessity of returning, before they consented to reconsider the matter, and bid it under the table.

The next day Charles, accompanying his sister Augusta, and their accomplished hostess, Mrs. Mason, rode out to S — Seminary, where Claudia Henry had been for several years a pupil. On enquiring for her, they were informed that the young lady was not well, and begged to be excused, Mrs. Mason,

however, took a card from her card case wrote a few hurried lines on it, and handed it to the servant, saying they would wait an answer.

Claudia was standing alone at the school room window, watching her companions as they engaged in a noisy game of snowballing; not a very dignified amusement, perhaps, for the very lady like pupils who had won the admiration of said school managers, and propriety loving maidens Aunts; but a very healthy one nevertheless, and the model principle Mr. Bell, had seen nothing to condemn in it; therefore, it had become quite the thing among the fun-loving portion of his pupils.

Claudia stood looking at them, and pressing her aching temples against the cold window panes. Their voices grated harshly on her heart, sweeping roughly the cords of memory, as they carried her back to her own happy childhood. She turned from the window, and seated herself before the fire, now almost burnt out. A servant entered a few moments after.

"Two ladies, and a gentleman, Miss, who wish to see you."

"Albert you must excuse me, really I am not well enough to see them. Be so kind as to give my excuse, and say I regret not seeing them."

The servant left the room, and Claudia was crossing the corridor on the way to her own room when he overtook her, and handed her a card. Glancing hastily at it, she put it into her pocket, and passed on to the drawing room.

She received her visitors with grace and dignity, but her sweet face wore a sadly weary expression, while her deep mourning dress, only heightened the fairness of her exquisite beauty—Charles could not recognize in the beautiful woman before him, the picture of Claudia Henry as he had seen it seven years ago.

The visit was short, but Charles found he should be obliged to return without her, as she was really not well enough to undertake the journey; but Mrs. Mason, and Augusta assured him they would take the best care of her, and have her sufficiently restored to accompany them back in the latter part of March, and with this, he was compelled to content himself. He remained only a few days, but during that time he, in company with his sisters, visited Claudia often, endeavoring to establish the sisterly regard she was hereafter to claim, and which she so gratefully accepted, and returned. Five days after his departure, he found himself again homeward bound, but disappointed in securing the consent of the girls to accompany him. At B — he met with a friend of his, and an intimate acquaintance of Judge Henry, to whom he related the facts, that Miss Nancy contributed to the *Niles Bulletin* of Tattletown, on her arrival.

Mrs. Compton was much disappointed on his arrival to find he had fallen in bringing not only her own daughter; but Claudia, with whom he was so anxious to become acquainted, and whom she longed to take to her heart as a daughter.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

A NICK LITTLE ROMANCE.—In 1864, one of Price's rebels got left behind after a raid near Glasgow, Mo., being dangerously wounded in the neck. Miss Sarah J. Smith, a school teacher, happened to pass by, took pity on him and staunch his wounds, probably saving his life. She remained with him till near nightfall, when the soldier advised her to leave, saying that his companions would probably come in the night and take him away—if not, she would find him there in the morning. He told her that his name was H. C. McDonald, and that he was from Louisville, Ky. The next morning he was gone, and Miss Smith did not hear from him again until a few days ago, when she received a letter from the administrator of H. C. McDonald, senior, informing her that she was named in the will of the deceased as the legatee of \$50,000, in consideration of her having saved the life of his nephew and only heir, the H. C. McDonald named in connection with the incident of 1864. The Glasgow Times voted for the correctness of this story.

—A Mr. Thompson living in East-Carbon, Schuylkill county, and employed in a moulding shop, was killed in a pool of molten iron into which he had fallen. When taken from it he made but one sigh and expired.

The Origin of "Dixie."

The writer in the *New Orleans Delta* says: I do not wish to spoil a pretty illusion, but the real truth is that Dixie is an indigenous Northern negro- refrain as common to the writer as the laury posts in New York City, seventy or seventy five years ago. It was one of the every day allusions of boys at that time in all their out door sports. And no one ever heard of Dixie's land being more than Manhattan island, until recently, when it was erroneously supposed to refer to the South, from its connection with a pathetic allegory, when slavery existed in New York, one Dixy has a large tract on Manhattan island, and a large number of slaves. The increase of slaves and the increase of abolition sentiment, caused an emigration of the slaves to more through and secure slave sections and the negroes who were thus sent off naturally looked back to their old homes, where they had lived in clover, with feelings of regret, as they could not imagine any place like Dixie's. Hence it became synonymous with an ideal locality, combining ease, comfort and material happiness of every description. In those days negro singing, and minstrelsy were in their infancy, and any subject that could be brought into a ballad was eagerly picked up. This was the case with Dixie. It originated in New York, and assumed the proportions of a song there. In its travels it has been enlarged, and has gathered moss. It has picked a note here and note there. A chorus has been added to it, and from an indistinct chant of two or three notes it has become an elaborate melody. But the fact that it is not a Southern song cannot be rubbed out. The fallacy is so popular to the contrary, that I have thus been at pains to state the real origin of it.

The *Pittsburg Commercial* of the 14th inst., says: John W. Steele, formerly known as Johnny Steel, and somewhat distinguished as an "oil prince," having for a considerable length of time enjoyed the princely income of \$2000 per day, yesterday filed in the U. S. District Court a voluntary petition in bankruptcy. Many of our readers will remember the romantic history of his exploits in the East, published some time ago, during which he is reported to have squandered several hundred thousand dollars. After having "sowed his wild oats," and losing his oil farm, he found himself in rather a straightened circum stance, and was recently compelled to earn his living by driving an oil team. His indebtedness, as set forth in his petition, amounts to over \$100,000. Some of the items are quite heavy, a few of which we note: To Henry W. Kanaga, of the Girard House, Philadelphia, he owes \$19,824; to Wm. A. G. Leitch, attorney at-law, Erie, \$10,000; J. E. Caldwell & Co., Philadelphia, for jewelry, \$5,805; John D. Jones, for harness, \$1,250; Wm. Horn & Co., for cigars, \$562; E. A. Conklin, Philadelphia, liquor, \$2,024; Phelan & Collender, Philadelphia, for billiard tables, \$1,500; to an unknown creditor for oil paintings, \$2,200; to the account for hats, \$300. A considerable amount of indebtedness, in for money borrowed, notes, judgments, &c. When "Johnny" took a notion to rent a hotel for a few days he would do so; and whenever he saw anything that pleased his fancy he was bound to have it, regardless of cost. Perhaps no man in the United States ever squandered so much money in the same space of time.

CURIOUSITIES OF A CONSTITUTION.—It seems a paradox to say that those people who shout loudest for liberty are commonly the most illiberal; but the world abounds in proofs of the assertion. The telegraph brings fresh evidence from the State of Arkansas. The convention which has been incubating at Little Rock for a long time past has at last hatched out a constitution which combines the extremes of freedom and tyranny to an extent hard to be paralleled in history. After giving the ballot to women and negroes, it proceeds to declare how voting shall be done on the new constitution. "Voters are required to swear that they have never given aid to secession in any State. This offers a premium to perjury, or shuts the door of repentance and reformation against those who have erred, and is of itself a monstrous instance of injustice. Not satisfied with this, the framers of the constitution clap a muzzle upon every man's mouth, by requiring him to swear that he accepts for all times the social and political equality of the white and black races; not merely the "political," observe, but the "social!" But the essential despotism of this new constitution reaches the climax when, after insisting on all these qualifications for voting it disfranchises all persons who shall vote against the new Constitution. We watch this against anything that can be found in the previous history of the world.—*New York Journal of Commerce*.

—A rich gold mine has been discovered near Tyrone, Blair county. The ore is said to stand all the tests, and is pronounced genuine gold and no mistake.

—CUMULUS to animals.—putting negroes in a jury box.