

Ms. 16

MARY BARKER,

BY

CHARLIE VERNON.

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SECOND EDITION.  
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MARY BARKER.

CHAPTER I.

DUSKY DELL, the name given to my father's residence, is the strangest, most weird and ghost-like place to be found in Randolph county. The location is in a valley enclosed by steep, rugged hills; up the little stream is a dark pine forest, that perpetually sends a melancholy moaning along the hills like some wailing spirit, seeking rest and finding none; down the valley is an extensive view of rolling country, covered with a low, scraggy, copse-wood, having an occasional pine tree, that in the dusk of evening looks like some dark-robed spirit meditating evil. The place is not without a certain species of beauty, but it is a beauty so spectral and unearthly, that it has no gladness in it. Then the house adds to the sombre, haunted, dreary aspect of the scene. It is a large old-fashioned establishment, begun long before the Revolution, and apparently not finished yet. Some chimnies are stone, some are brick; one part of the house is made of logs, another is framed and ceiled, and

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yet another is plastered. One of the large rooms with a great curtained bed in it, has always been said to be visited in the night time by a tall lady in white, who would put her icy hand upon any sleeper in the great bed, and then go away. So firmly established was this belief, that none of us children would ever go there alone, even in the day time. In another room could always be heard the strangest whisperings, a kind of gibbering, muttering, chuckling, diabolical mirth, that made all the hair on your head rise in horror. Then it was said that an Indian had been killed in the backyard in the olden time, and we often thought we could see his wraith standing there in dark nights, making queer signs with his long, bony hands. But above all, it was a well established fact, that at the graveyard, which was not distant, the strangest sights had been seen for at least two generations. To go by the graveyard was the great trial of courage, and we had no greater boast than to say, "I went by the graveyard by myself the other night, and did not run one step." This terror, however, received a slight check finally in the following simple manner. An old gentleman, an unbeliever in ghosts, was riding by the graveyard late one night, when directly before him, on a level with his horse's head, he saw something white, about a foot long, precisely in the shape of a man. His horse stopped and would go no further. The strange thing began to grow, and rapidly in-

creased till it became full six feet high, and the old gentleman's rising hair pushed his hat off his head. Finally, in a fit of desperation, the old man attempted to ride round the goblin, when the whole was dissolved and explained. Another horse was standing in the road before him, having a white or blazed face. But neither experience nor philosophy could take the ghostliness away from Dusky Dell. We were a sober family, we learned to walk lightly and even to cough with caution. The chickens have the strangest fashion of crowing, a kind of long, tapering, quivering wail, that had no comfort in it. All the dogs we ever had would howl at any hour of the day, but especially about dusk, would they lie under the projection of a certain large rock and howl doleful beyond all description. Then they would come whining and scratching at the door, but would never bark at people with good, vigorous bow-wow. It was a most melancholy, weird old place; we all loved it and yet spent our days in a kind of solemn dread, that moulded and fashioned our lives, and made us to some extent unlike other people. For it is certain that local traditions have a tremendous influence upon any people, and upon none whom I have known more than upon the citizens of Randolph. Almost every neighborhood has its own indigenous ghost stories, its legends, its old heir looms. It is a section emphatically local. Covered generally with thick forests, traversed by seve-

ral large upland streams, preductive agriculturally, remote from cities and railroads, it is peculiarly adapted to grave and mysterious reflection. The early history of the county was full of stirring events, and many of these still linger in the traditions of the people as rare, rich old legends. My old uncle, the finest specimen of a past generation, was the oracle of the section in which he lived. He gave us the following, which in its essential facts is known to be true:

A company of young people had been having a rather merry time, and were just at dusk laughing at some local traditions, when the said "old uncle," coming up, bade us be quiet and come into the house, as something strange was about to happen.

"Come, come, uncle," we replied, "our college life has raised us above these follies."

"Follies, a fiddle-stick," said the old gentleman, somewhat testily, "listen to sound sense, and guide your learning by good old experience."

"But, uncle, you do not believe that chickens know any thing about coming events, or that half these old tales told and believed in this section are true?"

"Faith! but I know chickens do just what God made them to do, and when they act in an unusual way, it is because something unusual is on foot."

"But, these old tales, do you believe them, do you not think they are fictions?"

"Every one is founded in fact. For instance, the story of Mary Barker is in all essentials true. The Cravens, the Barkers, Gatlins, &c., are well known, some of the persons mentioned in the story are yet remembered. Then the localities are as well known as any places can be."

"Well, uncle, tell us that history to-night, as some of our party never heard it."

Having assented to our proposition, the old gentleman gave us the following, only his eloquent manner was beyond the power of our prose description:

"When my father first came to this country, he settled near Deep river, about twelve miles east of Asheboro', in Randolph county, as it is now called; there were no other settlers within twenty miles, except three families, and they were within two miles. We had no mills nor meeting houses, nor any thing except four good log cabins, a few horses, cows, hogs, &c. About the middle of the neighborhood we made a large pile of wood, with the agreement that whenever the Indians should be seen in or about the settlement, that whoever saw them should as soon as possible set fire to the pile as a warning to all. This little precaution having been taken, all went to work to clear fields, build stables and arrange whatever might be necessary. Things had thus progressed for more than eighteen months, when my brother in passing near the pile met a strange white man, who seemed

very friendly, and asked a great many questions, but would give no account of himself as to his name or destination. The occurrence was soon known over the neighborhood and occasioned considerable uneasiness, and the same evening it was particularly noticed that the *chickens crowed* upon the roost throughout the settlement. About an hour after dark my sister ran into the house with the terrible news that the pile was on fire; instantly all the doors were bolted and propped, and my father took his station in front in order to fire the alarm gun if an Indian should be seen about the house; having held his gun for some time, and becoming weary, he tore off some hooks from the wall and nailed them over the door to lay his gun upon, and this was the origin of gun-racks over the door. Prior to this time houses had latches on the outside, but they were now placed within, with a string attached, in order that the inmates might be apprised if an enemy secretly attempted to gain admission. During all that night we kept watch, but no Indian was heard; in the morning search was made but no enemy could be found; a deep calamity, however, had fallen upon the neighborhood; Mrs. Mary Barker, the wife of one of the settlers was gone; not a vestige of her departure could be obtained. In the early part of the night she was with her husband in the house, about midnight her absence was discovered, but no window, door, nor other means of escape could be found by

which she seemed to have gone out. The family consisted of herself, two sisters, three small children and her husband; Mrs. Barker was a woman of more than ordinary strength of body as well as courage of mind, and was not only the life of her own home, but of the entire settlement. The intelligence of her absence fell like thunder upon the astonished neighbors, a deep gloom rested upon every thing, the rain-crows cawed in the tree tops, and the *chickens crowed* with a peculiar loneliness. A short distance from the house one of Mrs. Barker's shoes was found, close by it a bloody handkerchief, different from any thing known in the settlement, and a few yards farther on, a letter from a merchant of Philadelphia to Wm. Gatlin of Jamestown, Va. Except the above not a trace, trail, track, nor sign of any description could be found, all hope of recovering the lost lady was given up.

That evening as John Barker and Peter Craven were returning from a search, and within two miles of home, just as they were crossing a branch at the upper part of a plantation now owned by James Curtis, they distinctly heard a female voice cry out, "Oh! my husband and my children." Alarmed and excited, they searched in every direction, but could neither see nor hear anything. They at length sat out for home, hardly knowing what to think or how to act, and not a little inclined to think the whole land haunted. But before they

had proceeded far, and near what is now called the "cross road school-house," Craven stopped short with the exclamation, "What's that!" Directly in the road before them stood a tall Indian with Mrs. Barker by his side. "My God!" exclaimed Barker, and instantly fired at the Indian's heart, and both ran forward to rescue the lady. Horror struck, the blood chilled in their veins, they stopt short, neither of them able to speak nor move. Neither Indian nor lady was there, nor were they any where to be seen; though dusk, yet could they see sufficiently well to know that no mortals could have escaped thus. They were convinced at once that it was the ghost of Mrs. Barker, and that in all probability, she was that very evening dying by Indian torture; for according to a popular belief that prevailed at that day, the ghost of a person might always be seen about the time of the person's death; nor has the belief subsided yet, many are afraid to travel about at night where there is a corpse in the neighborhood; they scarcely know why, but the reason is evident. Formerly it was believed that on such occasions ghosts were sure to be met, and though that belief is no longer indulged, fear, the effect of the belief, still reigns.

Before Barker and Craven had proceeded three hundred yards, down in a low and rather dark valley, they were alarmed or rather scared worse than ever, for there stood the Indian and lady be-

fore them; they attempted to go round, but when they moved the ghosts moved, and when one stopped so did the other. At length Craven recollected, that if one could repeat a verse of scripture the ghost would leave; he accordingly repeated one and the Indian and lady vanished away. These things convinced all the settlers that Mrs. Barker was murdered, and every man, woman and child learned and had perfectly at command a verse of scripture, with which they might drive away ghosts, if at any time they should see one. For many years after that time, a lady could be heard calling to her husband and children, whenever any one crossed that branch about dark, and an Indian and white lady have often been seen standing in the road a mile further on.

Peter Craven was in a superstitious community, and lived in a superstitious era; he possessed a rough, stony, uncultivated mind, and was by no means, disposed to be led captive by every foolish or whimsical idea; though he might listen to reason and might yield to plain, common sense suggestions, he was not disposed to yield to what weaker minds might term good arguments. This characteristic of his influenced the further experiments upon the cross-road ghosts. The fogs of excitement having cleared away during a night's sleep, Craven's first words to John Barker and William Allen on the next morning were:—"Well, do you think them were real ghosts?"

"No doubt of it," said Allen, "its jist like I've hearn my father tell a thousand times. Why! in Ireland, I can tell thee, ghosts are seen in the dusk of evening almost as thick as bats."

"Yes," said Barker, "and once I was crossing the great bogs of Munster in Ireland, near lake Killarney not far from the very head spring of the Lee, as I was passing the Little Neck about daylight-down, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty-one, when Walpole, in the reign of George the second, was punishing George Robinson for separating unto his own use the money of the CHARITABLE CORPORATION, right under a — 'twas an alder I believe; well right there with these very eyes, as plain as daylight in the fifth month where there is not a cloud to be seen, right there I saw my own dear father, one of the best men in Ireland, and a long tried member of the society of friends; I saw him riding his own fine bay horse, that was colted by the animal my mother inherited from my unele James. O he was a splendid horse; under the saddle all life, in the gear all gentleness; well, my father was riding that horse with a large hog across before him. No sooner did I see him than he stopped, put his hand into his bosom, pulled out his heart and offered it to me. Horrified, I ran to him and just as I reached forth my hand to touch him he vanished away. I knew what it meant and hastened home, and when I got there, what I expected was too

true; my father was dead; a large hog had killed him, and torn his heart loose from his body; and now friends, I tell you, I know my wife Mary is dead, an Indian has killed her, I see it, I feel it, I know it."

"Ah!" exclaimed Allen, "what is to be will be."

"But," said Craven, "I can't understand how it is after all; suppose an Indian had killed her, why should her spirit come back, or if hers came, why did the Indian's come, unless he also has died?"

"Man's wisdom," said Barker, "is as foolishness when such things are to be considered. But it's strange somehow or other, I noticed that very same chicken on that pole crowing yesterday, and now he's at it again; I don't like it, it means something of no good."

Every thing passed on after this as usual; in a few days the great pile of wood was rebuilt, the houses were made a little stronger, and every necessary precaution that could be supposed of use, was attended to.

On the next Sunday, the chickens perched upon the fences crowed all day long; after going to roost, they crowed with peculiar sadness, until a light larger than a torch was seen by two of the families, when instantly all the crowing ceased. The light when first seen was about the middle of the river, and seemed to be fifteen or twenty feet

high; after remaining there a short time, it moved slowly to the bank in a wavering line. Two or three young men started to it; before they could arrive at the point the light was crossing a creek; eager to overtake, for the light moved slowly, they rushed through the water and continued to pursue. Onward they went, through bamboo briars, poison vines and every imaginable obstruction; all fear, all thoughts of bear, panther or lurking Indian were forgotten, their excitement increased as they proceeded, and their hearts exulted with the determination to see what the light was. In the course of a half hour, they came to a strange creek, one they had never seen before, though well acquainted in that direction. What added no little to their astonishment was, that the stream ran in the wrong direction; the creek they had crossed first, and with which they were well acquainted, ran to the left, but they now approached one that was moving sluggishly to the right; they knew also that they could not possibly be very far from the river, and how the creek could be running directly from it they could not imagine. They wished now to stop, but found it impossible, a strange power drew them onward; nor were they able to turn their backs to the light. For many hours they followed on through briar thickets, across creeks, and over worse places than they had ever seen before. At last the light stopped over a house which they at once recognized to be John Barker's. The light

turned to the shape of a boy and went upwards out of sight. Arousing Barker's family, one of his children was missing, it had gone to bed with the other one, but was now absent.

CHAPTER II.

The consternation and grief of Barker, and indeed of the whole neighborhood, was immense, when it became evident that little Enoch Barker was gone. After careful search in all directions, after continuing the search for several days, and after trying every possible means of detecting any imposition, all hope was given over. The tone of the community changed; the light laugh that formerly rang clear upon the evening air, the rustic song that once made the fields resound, were hushed; the shrill whistle that in days gone by had beguiled the slow moving hours as the plough boy pursued his daily task, was heard no more. The inhabitants had vague suspicions that in this wild, unexplored land, some evil spirits might carry off people soul, body and all together; they thought it might be possible that they were trespassing upon the rightful domain of the Red man; that the great Spirit might avenge the people of his care by destroying the aggressors. While in

this doubtful condition, this suspense that kills, the high blazing of the great wood-pile in the dead of night again startled their wildest apprehensions; every one kept his wife and children in some corner. The fear of the Indians was at an end; no one barred his door, none now stood with rifle in hand; all looked to see the dark paw of the Indian god reached forth to grab a loved child; as each one peered into the surrounding darkness he expected to see the glaring eye-balls of Whor gleaming with fury, and eager for human victims. At this juncture loud cries and screams were heard in the direction of Barker's. The hair of the stoutest men stood upright, their flesh twitched convulsively; the women were hushed in terror, and the children scarcely drew breath. Every man felt that he ought to rush to the relief of his neighbor; their blood froze at the probable fate of the Barker family; yet who could go? Who could leave his own family exposed to some dread danger, in order to protect another? In fact, who could muster courage enough to go a mile through dark woods on such a night? But now a terrific explosion at the great burning pile made the very earth quiver, and sent the burning limbs and sticks to the vault of heaven; then followed such an unearthly howling, groaning and squalling, as if all the fiends and elves in the universe were croaking the prelude of destruction. What that explosion could be no mortal in that community could tell; the sound

and the effect were like powder, but nothing short of a whole keg was adequate, and that quantity of powder was not in the settlement. All at once concluded that it must be the work of the Devil, and that the horrific noise that followed was the wailing of the lost. The three families—for there were but three besides the Barkers—started as if by concert all together, women, children and all. They all arrived near the same time, and found Barker and the two sisters of his wife in the house, but so terrified that they were well nigh crazed. The other two children were gone. They both stepped out of the house, one scream was heard, father and aunts dashed to the door only to see them borne off by a nameless monster, that seemed to be neither man, brute nor devil. It seemed to be a huge something with several human heads, in each of which were two eyes that glared like balls of fire; it had several tails, on each of which blue blazes were burning; it had apparently about fifty long legs armed with nails like scythe blades, and these legs it could make longer or shorter at pleasure, so that it could stand off entirely out of sight, and poke in its paw at a window or down a chimney and drag out a child or even a man. Finally, it had large wings, and after holding up the children in its great scaly clutches, pushing them close to their parent and then pulling them back several times, it rose up, and, flapping its horrid wings with a low moaning sound, sailed off towards the

river. Barker and the two women were stupefied and benumbed by a strange sensation, their heads swam, their sight grew dim, their power of hearing was nearly destroyed, and in this state they were by something, they knew not what, carried into the house. The doors seemed to slam to, of their own accord, the fire went out, the gun, hanging upon the door, fired with a heavy boom, the dog ran and hallooed, a heavy rattling of chains was heard without, and a strong stench of sulphur became suffocating. In a short time the neighbors arrived, and found the scared trio as above named; they could tell the circumstances as just related, but they had heard no persons screaming, they knew not how the water-pail came to be in the fireplace, nor how the numerous fires about the yard came to be there.

All were alarmed, every one thought that such things were most certainly the work of demons, or awful judgments sent from God as marks of his displeasure. The whole community, numbering only eighteen persons, went to Peter Craven's to spend the night. None, however, thought of sleeping; sleep was as far from their eye-lids, as they were from knowing how to act in their present circumstances. They knew not how to act or how to protect themselves from a monster that seemed proof against all ordinary modes of protection; they had reasons to expect that the winged fiend would drag some of them up the chimney, or per-

haps pull them through the key hole. All were afraid to sit next the wall, across the house or next the fire; they were afraid to go to bed, and afraid to sit up. If the house creaked, a foot moved, or the fire popped, all jumped and repeated verses of scripture.

Towards day Barker rose and said: "Friends, I was one of the first to propose coming here, I loved the thoughts of being far in a wild country, where the foolish ways of worldly-minded men would not disturb me. I thought the hand of our great Creator was every where to protect, but either he has no power here, or I have greatly offended him. My wife is gone, my children are gone, and it seems probable that I must follow. I now propose to return to Pennsylvania, the land of my fathers; there I know the Lord of mercy resides. Let us pack up our goods, it is now the middle of Spring, and we can reach our native country in time to plant a sufficient crop."

Barker sat down; a deep silence prevailed for some time; all were thinking, but none seemed willing to speak. Finally, a very timid youth by the name of Spinks, arose and said: "Most of you are older than myself; I speak not to influence you, but I can tell you what I am. I came here trusting in God, and all the many-headed, burning-tailed, limber-clawed, black-winged devils in creation can't scare me away. Great evil has come upon us, but I don't believe God's to blame; I tell

you, some wicked, soulless rascals are engaged in this work; and if you will all stand up to me, I'll kill the whole pack, or if I don't, the flying fiend is welcome to my bones." Raising himself to the highest pitch, with an eye and voice that made the whole group quake, he exclaimed, "in the name of God and the Holy Prophets, I dare, threaten and defy Indians, ghosts, satan and all other wicked spirits of every grade and station. If every body else leaves this place, I never will, no never." This little speech had a tremendous effect, every one felt stronger; the young man threw open the door and walked the yard, went round the house, came in and kept moving from point to point. The idea of returning to Pennsylvania was at once abandoned. They agreed to go early next morning and examine Barker's premises, in order to determine if possible, the cause of so much disturbance.

CHAPTER III.

On the following morning, when the sun appeared over the eastern hills, and the heavy fog that hung over the river's channel, rolled off to the southeast, every thing looked so clear and bright;

the deep green foliage looked so flourishing, and the birds chirped so merrily, that each one almost felt ashamed of his alarm on the preceding night. In spite of clear sun-shine, however, it was evident that the alarm was not fiction; for two stout children were gone; this was a real, unmistakable matter, and stood as a witness of contradiction to any conclusions of humbug. At an early hour all proceeded to Barker's to investigate by daylight the horrors of darkness. The appearance of things about the great wood pile, where the explosion was heard the night before, proved that an explosion had actually occurred; sticks of wood were scattered in all directions, and the ground upon which the wood had lain, was swept perfectly clean. Nothing but powder, or some infernal agency equal to it, could have produced such an effect. But whence the powder came, who placed and fired it, or for what purpose it was done, no person could even conjecture.

Proceeding on to Barker's house, things seemed not greatly out of fix; but minute examination showed a number of the most hideous tracks ever made by man, beast or monster. The tracks were roundish, nearly a foot in diameter, and seemed to be surrounded with claws. But the most remarkable matter was a letter, or sheet of writing which was lying between two small boards on the door-step. The writing was upon a thick, tough substance, unlike any thing the beholders had ever

seen before. It purported to be a letter written by Mary Barker, the woman whose absence was the commencement of troubles; the contents were as follows:

"To Hannah Mollitt on Earth, the third first attendant orb of system Seraphous, no. 22384, now in section Gemini, direct over Enoch's palace, across by Pearl gate 143. To be carried by one of Gabriel's attendants.

"DEAR SISTER—I am safe in heaven. I am now sitting in my emerald colonade; on the eastern wing of my mansion are the plains of glory: on my head is a crown that would dim the little sun that rules your day; I am robed in white glory, the texture of which I cannot describe, and I have just laid down a harp that is so constructed that all I have to do is to blow upon it, and it sings all the songs of heaven. We all sing the same thing; the great melodium of God sets the tune, and all our harps instinctively follow. Before me is the throne reaching higher than I can see; on my left is the river of life, and on my right is the grand museum. I never knew till I came here why Elijah was taken up alive; the Lord has placed him in his great museum, and all nations flock to see a specimen of man purified by the blood of Christ.

But, my dear sister, I have a tale of woe to unfold. I was murdered, cruelly, brutally murdered, and that by the last person in the world you would

suspect. I was murdered by John Barker, my husband. He produced all that disturbance, and he is still at it; he has murdered three of my children, and before long he will murder you. You know in my young days, I was promised to William Gatlin, and that Barker continued to break it off and then married me himself. But before this took place he was also engaged to a woman in Pennsylvania; on the day before he murdered me, Gatlin brought him a letter from this woman. This letter informed him that the woman was nearly deranged about him; and that she would still marry him, if he would have her. He immediately laid his plans to kill his wife and children, and so manage as to keep the affair in the dark; this he has done, and so soon as he has killed you, he will go back to Pennsylvania. Barker is the meanest man upon earth; he blew up the wood pile with a keg of powder, and if you will look under the old root just below the spring, you will find the keg with some powder still in it. He made those huge tracks with a great block which he fixed for the purpose, and the block is now under a brush-heap below the house. He killed me with a large knife, and he has killed all the children with the same knife. The light which those young men followed, was fire that Baker carried himself, all of which he has done to deceive. If you will look under a large rock, near the river, at the mouth of the branch, you will find our clothes, some bloody

and some with holes stabbed through them. I advise you to show this to the neighbors and let them seize the wretch; it is the will of heaven that he should be burned alive. I am only allowed to send this in order to spare the innocent and punish the guilty. Act quickly.

MARY—A SPIRIT."

All former astonishment was nothing to what now seized the hearers; every eye fell upon Barker, and beneath that concentrated look he quailed. When asked what he had to say to this, he merely remarked that they all knew it was false, and demanded that they should search for the powder and the clothes. A few steps brought them to the old root, and to the utter surprise of all, the powder and keg were there. Barker said nothing, but simply mentioned that they should go to the river and search for the clothes. Within fifteen minutes they were at the designated rock, and there were the clothes and a huge knife with John Baker engraved upon the handle. This was conclusive. Barker turned white as cloth, reeled and fell. In a few minutes he recovered; then raising his hands and eyes to heaven, he said, "Great God, thou knowest I am innocent. The Devil has taken my wife and children, my heart is broken, my soul bleeds; if it were thy will I would die. Oh! God, this is a bitter cup, how can I bear it?" He fell back senseless and knew no

more for ten days. Peter Craven carried him home and nursed him during his illness.

On the next day after these events, an informal assemblage was held to determine what disposition should be made of Barker. All seemed to be fully persuaded of his guilt. Numberless circumstances confirmed the statements of the letter. They could see that he had not been much affected at the loss of his wife; he had been but little disposed to search either for her or the children; he had seemed to express no astonishment at the light the young men saw vanish over his house. The powder, the clothes, and especially the knife, confirmed the matter beyond dispute. He was a base, malicious murderer; he was certainly the blackest criminal in the catalogue of crime. But what should be done to him; how should he be disposed of; these were questions more easily asked than answered. They had no law, no magistrates, no officers, and no legal means of inflicting punishment. After much consultation, it was determined to take him as he then was, in an insane condition, and hang him. As none other than Lynch law could be used, it was thought best to use it when the guilty man would know nothing of his degradation. At this juncture, Spinks again rose with the same earnestness that marked his manner on the night above described. He spoke as follows: "Friends, you seem to act rashly; it may be be-

cause I am an ignorant boy, but I think you determine without reason. There is indeed much that is strange in what has happened; I am unable to understand or explain it, but I have no confidence in it. Can you believe that letter was sent from heaven? If you do, I do not. We are told that the last revelations have been made; why then should one so specific as this be sent down? Or was there ever since the world began, any writing sent from heaven? No, and never will be. I tell you again, some deep, infernal plot is at work. I charge you not to stain your hands with innocent blood. I feel a deep impression that I shall yet be able to expose the whole matter." The old men shook their heads, talked of boyish notions, &c., and seemed disposed to act upon their own counsels. The speech, however, cooled their ardor, they agreed to let Barker alone for a time, and closely watch his movements. The two young women went to Allen's, and as soon as Barker recovered, he returned to his own desolate home and seemed content to live there. Things again progressed quietly, and affairs began to look prosperous and peaceable, when Barker himself was missed. After waiting and looking for several days, all were convinced that he had returned as the letter predicted. The young man was much blamed for his counsels, and indeed some surmised that he was concerned in the matter himself. All shunned him and looked upon him with deep sus-

picion. To confirm the conviction, Spinks, in about two weeks, disappeared: none doubted that he was an accomplice of Barker's, and that both had returned to Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER IV.

We must now change the scene, and narrate the actions of other places and times. Wm. Gatlin, as above intimated, had been engaged to the lady John Barker afterwards married; Gatlin was supplanted and that seemed to be the end of his pretensions. But in fact, it was not; deep, silent and eternal in his hate, by a horrid oath, he had sworn that Barker should rue his conduct. Gatlin was a scholar and a man of decided talent; and a man of such firmness of purpose, that time, the destroyer of all things mortal, seemed to have no power over his resolves. When Barker migrated to Carolina, Gatlin followed him; like a fierce tiger, he kept his eye upon the booty. Having associated much with the Indians in his earlier days, he could, to some extent, converse with them; roving about the new settlement, he at length met with a large encampment of Indians at what is yet called the Indian spring, near the plantation of Jesse Bray,

about one and a half miles above the Buffalo ford on Deep river. This was quite a village; the fountain is to this day renowned for its beauty and excellence; the land about it is rich; the resources for fishing were then excellent, and game of choice quality was abundant. That neighborhood, composed of Coxes, Brays, Popes, Carrells, Allens, Moffitts, &c., is now one of the wealthiest in Randolph.

Gatlin joined the powerful Indian tribe that then owned those lands; he pretended to be a deserter from the white man. By his skill and good conduct, he soon became a favorite; the red sojourners of the forest loved him and made him a chief of one division. He told the Indians, that a white-man had stolen his wife and carried her off, and for that reason, he, Gatlin, had left his brethren and sworn eternal hate against them. He often related to them how he would like to scalp the white foe, and burn their dying bodies to cinders. He had not been in the camp more than a month, before the return of a hunting party brought intelligence, that a settlement of white men was forming a few miles up the river. Gatlin, though knowing it well, pretended to be much astonished and expressed great anxiety to see who they were, and whence they come. As chief he had command of a small band of young men, and on the next morning he started with these for the purpose of making such investigations as he chose. Hav-

ing left his young men at some distance, Gatlin prowled about the settlement until he finally met one of the settlers near the great wood-pile, as detailed in chapter 1. His object was not to learn, for he already knew all the localities, but he wished to make the Indians believe that he was truly in earnest. Returning to his comrades, he informed them that he had discovered his wife; that the wretch John Barker, who had married or ran off with her, was one of the new comers, and that since she had left him she had become the mother of three children. The savage young warriors urged Gatlin to simply shoot Barker, and take his wife to the Indian camp. Gatlin waved his hand as a token for silence, and said, "My wrong, like a slow rising thunder storm, has been gathering strength for years, and must not be exhausted by one lead ball. I will torture Barker with every pang of human suffering, I will then commence at his toes and take him to pieces joint by joint, until the operation kills him, and after that I will burn his d—d remnants to ashes. As to that woman, I will bring her away alive, I will treat her as I like, and I will then put her to death with my own hands. Those three children shall be shot to death with sharp arrows. I swear by this wampum belt, that this shall be done."

Gatlin's object was to entice Mary Barker from her home; he knew that by so doing, he could torture Barker and her both much more, than by

offering any violence. His plans had for some time been laid; he intended to convince her that her sister whom she had left in Pennsylvania, was then among the Indians. Being a ready scribe he counterfeited a letter in the following words:

"DEAR SISTER MARY:—I am a captive. The Indians have killed our father and mother, and all the family except me. I am to be burnt to death to night unless I am redeemed. It is an Indian law, if my sister lays her hand upon my head, that I and my sister too are forever safe after that. Wm. Gatlin was captured also, but has his liberty by giving his word not to go away; I pray you to come with him to night and we will both return in the morning. Come, O! come. Think of the burning stake! Mr. Gatlin has happened to find out your settlement, and is willing to bring you. You must not let any of your folks know it.

Your sister,

SARAH."

After giving his companion some instructions, Gatlin went to Barker's spring and took his station by an old root. In the space of an hour Mary appeared with the water pail. Gatlin stepped off a little and then advanced toward the spring in haste. Mrs. Barker was so affrighted at his unexpected appearance, that she was about to retreat to the house, but he called to her with a kind voice, and without any explanation handed her the letter.

She was completely deceived. Tears gathered in her eyes as she thanked Gatlin for his kindness. Having no ground for suspicion, she indulged none; she had known Gatlin from childhood, and had always considered him a very genteel person. She inquired if her husband might not go at least a portion of the distance to the Indian camp; the vile deceiver replied that Mr. Barker must know nothing of her intentions. Having agreed, according to his suggestion, to steal out during an uproar which he should raise by firing the wood-pile, they parted, he to chuckle over the success of his villainy, and she to spend her last happy evening of life.

Under a bed in the house, was a loose plank, the existence of which was totally forgotten by all the family except Mrs. Barker; by this means during the alarm at night, she escaped without difficulty, as the door was nearly two feet from the ground. She met Gatlin but a few yards in rear of the house; he advised her to change her shoes for a pair he had; she did so, and he dropped one of hers purposely; a little further on he dropped a handkerchief which he had carefully bloodied during the day, and in drawing the handkerchief from his pocket, he unintentionally dropped the letter before mentioned. Having proceeded about a mile, just after crossing the river in a canoe, Gatlin remarked: "Mary, you had better pass for my wife, while you are among the Indians."

"Why so," replied Mary, in evident alarm?

"Because," said the fiend, "you can do more good by that means; and in fact, you can just change the matter for a short time; you know I wanted you once."

Deep emotion and black suspicion choked Mary for a moment; she then said:

"Take me back to my own family."

"You will never see them again," answered Gatlin.

CHAPTER V.

ABOUT the year 1710, the Tuscarora Indians became displeased with the settlers in North Carolina, and laid a deep plot to murder the whole population in one night. The better to effect their measures, they pretended great intimacy and friendship, visited the whites more frequently than usual, and used all ordinary Indian methods of showing attachment. The fatal day arrived that was to be the last to many men, women and children; nature seemed dressed in her most lovely attire, and held out to her creature man every prospect of peace, happiness and plenty. In the afternoon, twelve hundred Indian warriors se-

lected from the whole Tuscarora nation, armed with the murderous tomahawk and ponderous war-club, but without the usual war paint, moved towards the unsuspecting whites. They marched silently on, not intending to give any alarm, and dispersed themselves over the entire colony: about dusk, in a very friendly manner, they entered the dwellings of the whites, and asked for something to eat. Food was placed before them, but they could not be pleased; they faulted their entertainers and seemed to be inclined to be uncivil. In a short time the far-sounding, deep-toned, ominous war-whoop rang from hill to dale; the whites sprang to arms and resistance, but it was too late. The whole country was illumined by burning houses; the yell of furious savages was terrific beyond description; the startling shrieks of innocent victims in the agonies of death, were sufficient to have arrested the howlings of the bottomless pit. Fathers were cut down and scalped, mothers were slain begging for mercy, and children were thrown into the blazing remnants of their homes. But few escaped that dreadful night, especially in that part of the colony nearest the Indian encampment. A rendezvous however was effected, and a check put to the massacre; a messenger was despatched to South Carolina, and in a very short time a sufficient force arrived to repel the invaders. In the midst of the carnage an Indian leveled his tomahawk at an old lady who

attempted to screen or hide two small children under her apron; as the weapon whirled through the air, a boy about ten years of age leaped before it, hit it with a stick and turned it aside; the exasperated Indian raised his war-club to crush the boy to the earth, but with great skill the little hero parried this also. The Indian, struck with the boy's magnanimity, laid his hand upon his head and promised to spare him and those whom he had protected, upon condition that he—the boy—would go and live with the Indians. The little fellow accepted the offer, and after attending his grandmother and the children to a place of safety, set out to his new home. The chief named the boy Brave, which continued to be his name as long as he lived. The tribe by which Brave was adopted lived in Chatham county, and had their encampment on Hickory mountain. There were at this time few whites in all this part of the State; Brave consequently saw no more of the pale faces until he was fifteen years of age; at that age he went with the calamut of peace to the neighborhood where he was raised. He desired to see his relations, especially his grandmother; he did not go as a white man, but as an Indian chief. His robe was a well dressed buffalo skin ornamented with porcupine quills, his head dress was of war-eagle quills hanging down his back, his moccasins were of buckskin richly embroidered, and his necklace was an otter skin hung with eagle's talons. In his

hand he carried a long spear and a bow tipped with horn, and round him was girded the broad belt of peace. None of the settlers knew him, so changed was his appearance by age and still more by his Indian dress. He inquired for his grandmother; she had died more than two years before; his two sisters yet lived, and were at a house a few miles distant. Hither he directed his way; his sisters, after a moment's hesitation recognized him, and poured profusely upon his neck the tears of joy; they had long thought him dead, when suddenly he stood before them a strong, beautiful youth of fifteen. Scarcely had the joy of meeting subsided, when five huge Indians, in all the decorations of war, were seen approaching the house; coming up to the door, they laid upon the sill the calamut and the tomahawk. Brave well knew the meaning of these things; walking quickly to the door he laid his own calamut (which is a pipe of peculiar fashion,) upon that of the Indians; then returning to his sisters, he inquired who in that house had slain an Indian. They protested that no one had, the family consisting only of themselves and an elderly uncle. Brave frankly told them that such declarations were vain, that Indians never made the proposal of peace or war until they were positively certain of the grounds upon which they acted; that the calamut and tomahawk were laid at the door to signify that the inmates might have peace, if they would surrender

the murderer; and if the surrender was not made war was thereby declared against the house; that the time given for decision only lasted while the chief smoked out the contents of his pipe. The elder sister, in great trepidation, confessed that two days before, during the absence of her uncle, she had shot an Indian, whom she at the time thought trying to enter the house by stealth: she added that she had since been convinced that the Indian meant no harm. Brave replied that the Indian law was "blood for blood," that no palliating circumstance could avert the doom, and that nothing short of her death would give satisfaction. Looking at his sister for a moment, and exhibiting terrible agony in his countenance, Brave went out to the Indians and gave himself up as the murderer. He was caused to stand erect, his calumet and tomahawk by his side, and the ordinary pipe in his mouth: two Indians stood before him at a distance of ten paces, with their rifles pointed at his heart. Proudly the young hero stood, determined to die as became an Indian chief; becoming impatient he waived his hand to the marksmen to do their duty. His sister happening to look out and see him, with a loud shriek darted between him and the guns, declaring herself to be the murderer. The chief raised his finger, the gunners lowered their pieces; he then inquired of Brave who he was, and who was the murderer. Brave replied:

"I am a pale face by birth, and an Indian by life; this girl has rashly shot one of your men, she is my sister, and I offer my life for hers."

"Where your camp," replied the chief, "and who your people?"

"My camp," said Brave, "is on the mountain of hickories; my people the Tuscarora. But this has nothing to do with 'blood for blood,' 'let vengeance be paid.'"

"Were you," said the chief, "in the battle of streams?"

"I was."

"Did you see a pale face save the life of an Indian?"

"I did the deed myself."

"That Indian is the one whom your sister has killed; as you offer 'blood for blood,' and saved his life, you are free."

Brave and the Indians smoked the pipes of peace; and during their conversation, the chief informed Brave that his (Brave's) tribe had bought a captive white girl, and that the girl had affirmed that she had a brother living with the Indians.

Brave having arranged all matters, hastened home to investigate the report about the white captive; he imagined there must be some mistake, but still he was certain the report must be true. Arriving at the camp of his tribe, he found a beautiful young lady who said her name was Gatlin, and that she had been carried by a party of Indians

from Pennsylvania. Brave knew that a white man by the name of Gatlin was in the tribe at the great Indian Springs near Deep River; filled with compassion for the disconsolate condition of the young lady, Brave resolved to visit the Spring camp, and inform Gatlin that his sister was at Hickory mountain. Early in the morning he set out, and arrived at the Springs in the afternoon. He was received with great courtesy by the old chief Hiday, and presented with pipes and food. Brave was astonished at the extent of the village. The great Springs were in a deep, broad valley that terminated in Millstone creek; on each slope of this valley were innumerable tents arranged in regular order; on a steep bluff in the immediate vicinity of the fountain, stood the grand tent of the chief. To the east opened an immense plain variegated with small rolling hills upon which a vast number of ponies were feeding. While Brave was admiring this magnificent village, his attention was arrested by a sweet strain of rude music, and looking towards the creek, he saw a company of Indian damsels advancing and singing the unnoted carols of the forest. In their midst he described one of singular beauty; she proved to be the chief's daughter. Her beautiful figure, full smooth forehead, long, black hair adorned with feathers, her sparkling eyes shaded by a witching brow, and her deep orange complexion, all combined in singular harmony to finish one of nature's

loveliest pictures. By her acquaintance with Gatlin, she had learned a smatter of the English language, and was consequently able to impart some information. She told Brave that Gatlin was not good; that he at first had asked her to marry him, and afterwards had confessed that he had a wife who ran off with a man called Barker; that a few days ago he had discovered that she was living but a few miles from the camp, and that with a few warriors he was then gone to take her away from Barker; that he would be back in a few hours with her.

CHAPTER VI.

MARY BARKER was not only virtuous and sensible, but she was a woman of the most determined courage, and at the same time of the greatest prudence: she was a pure Quaker, a real Christian and a devoted wife. No combination of difficulties could unnerve her energy; no chicanery could throw her off her guard; no wary foe could deceive her by false alarms. When Gatlin, as detailed in chapter fourth, told her she would never see her family again, she saw at a flash the whole manœuvre. Her first thought was to refuse to advance further,

and to reproach the wretch for his villainy; prudence whispered that such a course would be folly, that her safer way would be to admit as far as honor would allow. She consequently made no reply, but moved onward with as firm a step as possible. After moving on at a brisk walk for near an hour, Gatlin motioned to the Indians to go on, and stepping before Mary, said "stop."

"Tell me now whether you are willing to pass as my wife in all respects; or would you rather suffer my pleasure first and then try the tortures of an Indian victim? I will give you five minutes to think; and I warn you neither let backwardness nor presumption shape your answer; your life depends upon the resolve of this moment."

"I want no time to consider," replied Mary, "I am with an old acquaintance, an honest man, one whom my father has befriended, one who once respected me, and one in whom I had all confidence. I know thou art in one of thy old playful moods, and not at all in earnest."

"You play the game well," returned Gatlin, "but you cannot get me on that hook. Those tender cords upon which you think to play, have long since been destroyed by the monster revenge. No motive can or will influence me but my own will. I once asked you to have mercy upon a devoted lover; you turned a deaf ear; you are now in my power, and I shall yield no entreaties."

"But I rely upon thy honor as a man, and——"

"Sing me no such Psalms; take your choice quickly."

"But I came at the call of my sister, wait at least till I see her safe."

"Your sister the d——; she is not within five hundred miles of this country. That letter was written by my own hand. I say again choose quickly."

"But would thee deceive an honest——"

"Stop your suasions, and choose life or death, I say."

"Friend Gatlin, I am in thy power, for I perceive I have no friend near except my Father in heaven. If thee is disposed to harm me, and break the bruised reed, I am unable to prevent it; but if, as thee says, I have a choice, I make free to tell thee that I will never pass as thy wife while life lasts. I have nothing against thee nor any one else, but I am not thy wife, nor will I say that I am. Thou may burn me, torture me, kill me with all thy malignant cruelty; I have no fear of these things, and only now ask thee to remain true to thy promise, that I may have my choice."

Gatlin had not expected this firmness; therefore murmuring out something indistinctly, he bid her follow him, and led the way rapidly towards the camp. Mary was conducted to a large, well furnished tent or wigwam; in it she found some implements of civilized life, and some things that deeply touched her heart with painful recollections

of home. Gatlin bid her be seated on a finely ornamented wicker chair, offered her water from a curiously carved goblet, and proffered her the perfumed calumet. In a few minutes two Indian damsels, with the royal feather in their long flowing hair, and beautiful scarfs pendent from their shoulders, entered, bearing the great Indian waiter, in which were the well cooked products of earth, forest and stream. They seated themselves in front of Mary, holding the waiter in their laps; they tried every imaginable means to induce her to eat, but in vain. Gatlin approached and prefaced his request by saying "My Dear." Mary suffered him to proceed no further; it was simply the eyes of a mild, amiable woman that silenced him; but from those eyes darted rebuke and power before which a reckless villain quailed. The warriors in front of the wigwam stepped suddenly aside, and a tall young chief entered carrying in one hand a huge tomahawk, in the other a long staff, upon which was a tuft of feathers; having spoken a few words to Gatlin, both retired, leaving Mary and the young squaws in the tent, and several warriors in front and around. From the deep roaring of something like a great fire, the hum of voices, the heavy tramp of men, the stealthy word of command that immediately followed the departure of Gatlin and the chief, Mary became sensible that something unusual was at hand. In about fifteen minutes a richly dressed young squaw entered the wigwam,

and, to Mary's great surprise, spoke very good English. Without hesitation she informed Mary that Gatlin had entered the death belt against her in the council of chiefs; that they were kindling the fire, and that in a short time she must die. Mary with great composure motioned her to a seat, and then told her that she was not Gatlin's wife, and that her own husband and children were not far away. She told the damsel all the circumstances, and asked her to intercede with the chief, that the white settlers might be sent for. The conversation lasted so long that Gatlin became impatient, and entered the tent in a rage; as he approached Mary, the Indian girl stepped before him and drew her finger across her forehead. He stopped, turned white as cloth, motioned the damsel aside, and was about to accompany his command with force: Velna—for that was the girl's name—drew from her bosom a whistle, and put it to her mouth as if to sound an alarm.

CHAPTER VII.

WE left Mary Barker in the wigwam with Gatlin and Velna. Just as the damsel was about to give the alarm to repel the insolence of Gatlin,

Mary learned the meaning of the uproar that reigned without; for the far-sounding warwhoop of the red man rang over hill and dale. Gatlin darted from the tent, and Velna motioning Mary to a place of concealment behind a couch of skins, followed him. A hostile tribe from the west side of the pilot mountain, had approached so near, before the sentinel of the Springs had perceived them, that the old chief had barely time to call his warriors to ranks before the charge was made. The onset was like the bursting of a volcano; the discharge of rifles, of which most of the Indians at that time had a small supply; the twang of the deadly bow, the whiz of the death-dealing tomahawk, and the incessant yell of the attacking party, were truly terrific. Mary could perceive that the spring party was driven back beyond the great tent; the bright flaming of a wigwam showed many warriors lifeless upon the ground; every moment she expected the one in which she was concealed would be fired. The advancing foe was at the very entrance, when opening the back part in order to fly, she discovered a white man, unknown to her and of powerful form, advance with a chosen band, and with ten fold fury the combatants fought and fell on all sides. Soon the whole spring tribe rallied and advanced to sustain the daring white. The assaulting tribe were in turn driven back, and as the sounds of strife became more and more distant, an aged white man, his snowy locks resting

upon his shoulders, and his beard equal to that of Abraham's, entered the wigwam from the rear. Mary was about to speak, but instantly pressing his finger upon his lip as a token of silence, and bending till his beard rested upon her head, he said in a low voice, "My daughter, fear not, move not, speak not, but follow the one that presents thee this token," holding out at the same time a curiously formed stall. He quickly departed, leaving Mary in a situation compounded of firmness, fear, and hope. In less than an hour, she heard the sounds of victory; the warriors returned in great joy; a grand camp fire was kindled around which the Indians collected to count their scalps and pass sentence upon the only captive they had been able to take. He was a large handsome warrior, in the full dress of a chief, and bore himself as proudly as he would have done in the midst of his own tribe. His condemnation was speedily passed, and with the pipe in his mouth, he seated himself upon the pile of brushwood, and calmly awaited his fate. In the meantime Brave, for he was the valiant white champion, was pleading with the council; his pleading, however, seemed to be in vain, for a torch bearer drew near to fire the pile. Brave instantly seated himself upon the wood beside the condemned, and said in a clear and strong voice:

"I call upon the great Spirit of the red man to bear witness, that the law of war has been violated,

When I was about to die in the place of my sister, this chief saved my life because I had done one of his people a kindness. I have to night conquered this same chief in fair fight; I spared him, because he spared me. Brave will never be guilty of ingratitude; no, never; if this warrior dies, he will die with him; we have been fair foes; now we are firm friends; we will burn together. But proud chief of the Springs, remember, that when you fled an hour ago, I met, and stopped the raging foe; I now die in the bond of friendship; *bring on the fire.*"

The fireman stepped forward to perform his duty; but the dark maiden, Velna, intercepted him and forbade his farther progress; she beckoned the old chief to her, and falling upon her knees, implored him to spare both the chief and Brave. For some time he seemed unrelenting, but finally granted the boon. At this juncture, Gatlin came forth in a frenzy of passion, and demanded that the decree of the council should be obeyed; the stern warriors murmured their assent, and soon a menacing shout invoked immediate vengeance. As they were again applying the cords to the captives, Velna, who had retired to her wigwam rushed into the throng, and drawing from her girdle a well polished steel dagger, declared she would defend Brave and the chief with her life, and if they prevailed by force, she would end her life with her own poniard. She demanded

that Gatlin should come forth into her presence; having come, she ordered him to be seated. With the dignity of a queen and a bearing seen only in the daughters of the forest, she spake as follows:

"Fox in council, wolf in peace, and dog in war! why have you dared to plead against my request? Your hands are stained with blood and your heart is filled with poison; too mean to live with the meanest of white men, too cowardly to meet a foe in fair combat, and too selfish to feel for others, you have come among the red men, to stab in the dark, to waylay your enemies, betray your friends, and to defile the daughters of Tuscarora. The daughter of a chief needs no defence but her father, when her own person is assailed; the damsels of Deep Spring practice neither war nor the chase; and if you are a warrior good and true, the Great Spirit would be angry if I should speak against you. But you are not a warrior, the Great Spirit tells me so; I feel power in my heart; though but a weak maiden, I feel myself like a great mountain rock defying the roaring storm. I stand here in defense of two noble warriors, and before the bright fire burns round them, my arm shall fall and my heart shall be still; if they this day fly from the burning stake to the tall groves and broad streams of the good, I shall go with them. Remember forever, that Velna of Deep Spring lives for the good and dies for the innocent." When she ceased, a loud yell of assent

rang over the hills, and with Brave, the chief and her father, she returned to the tent.

Mary Barker, from her wigwam, watched these proceedings with an intensity of feeling indescribable; but when she saw the noble Velna prevail, a gleam of hope illumined her own breast. She could but think the hasty visit of the old man betokened some good; Velna was certainly her friend, and Gatlin, her direst foe, was publicly thwarted. All was now still in the camp, but Mary was unable to sleep; she feared nothing so much as the appearance of Gatlin. Silently and softly a young Indian chief entered the wigwam, and held towards Mary a staff, which she at once recognized as the pledge of the old man. Mary hesitated not; she arose and followed her guide. Tonlin, for that was his name, placed his finger upon his mouth and pointed to something a little off, which Mary perceived to be a sentinel. He then drew from his blanket the robe, sandals and head dress of Velna, and by signs requested Mary to put them on. She did as intimated. Tonlin held out his arm that she should lean upon it. Thus going forth as the son and daughter of the old chief, they approached the sentinel, who let them pass without a challenge.

Hastening off in a northwest direction, and crossing the creek on a trail-log, Tonlin assisted Mary with all the minute attention and delicacy of a well bred gentleman. They had proceeded about

a mile, when Mary perceived a man standing at a little distance from the path along which they were moving; a nearer approach showed the stranger to be a white man, and apparently the man was Gatlin. Mary's last ray of hope fled; her bright anticipations were clouded over; she doubted not that the Indian who was conducting her was an accomplice of her enemy, and that a dark purpose was in contemplation. She thought of home, of a kind husband and of her own dear children; she had nearly fallen with a desponding heart, when Tonlin, leaving her side for a moment, approached the stranger, and speaking in a low voice a few words, he returned, and supporting Mary with much care, pursued the silent journey. Gaining the high ridge that stands as a barrier between the river and creek, the view was magnificent. A long sloping woodland extended towards the river, the deep vale of whose bed showed itself as far to the northwest and southwest as the eye could reach; opposite and far off, some bold hills gave a graceful outline to the distant view. The deep roaring of the river as it sped onward over light cascades, the low snappish howl of the wolf, an occasional scream of the panther, and the ominous hoot of the owl, all conspired in connexion with recent occurrences, to impress Mary with sensations of approaching danger. But when was an innocent woman ever known to despair? The modest, harmless matron may startle at the rust-

ling of a leaf, but let real danger arise, and her spirit is the last to quake. As Mary lifted her eyes from the impressively grand but threatening world below to the silent moon, as she through the pure blue vault of heaven sailed amid the twinkling stars, her courage revived, and she moved on with a firmer step. They had not advanced far into the lowlands before her Indian guide appeared apprehensive of danger; he moved stealthily along with great caution; and motioned Mary to walk close behind him: gaining the shadow of a large tree, Tonlin exchanged robe and head dress with her, so that she appeared to be the Indian and he the lady. She could by no means divine the object of this manœuvre, yet she faltered not; though some danger evidently threatened, onward went this brave woman, her guide following close in the rear. They had not advanced more than a few hundred yards, ere a keen shrill whistle sounded behind them; Tonlin sprang forward, beckoned her to stop, and before he could unsling his tomahawk and raise his rifle, two powerful Indians sprang upon him, and a powerful voice, in good English, cried: "Mary, run backwards for your life!"

But before she could even start, a tall form swept by her, and joining in the tremendous struggle which Tonlin still maintained, soon overpowered and slew the two Indians. The unknown champion then said to Mary, "Sit still, good mother,

till we return." He and Tonlin then took up the lifeless forms of their foes, and departed in the direction of the river. Mrs. Barker, thus left alone, she knew not where and by whom surrounded, remained, in silence; she knew not whether the conquerors were friends or enemies; she knew not but that eternal dishonor or instant death awaited her; but with calm confidence she resigned her safety to "Him who is able to save to the uttermost." Soon Tonlin returned unattended by his comrade, and exchanging dress with her again, conducted her towards the river. They soon arrived at the river, at a point where the stream making a bold sweep westward, forms a large bend; they stood for a moment upon a bold promontory of rock that projecting far into the river, perhaps originally caused the curve; then descending by a pathway on the south side of the ledge, they walked round its base upon huge fragments of stone until they arrived at what seemed to be the mouth of a cave; advancing in total darkness they groped along until Tonlin tapped something sounding like a door. Very soon the rude door opened, and what was Mary's surprise to see within a considerable room or vault illuminated by a bark-wick candle, and near the entrance the white-haired old man, who visited her in the wigwam! On a rough table of stone lay a Bible with two or three other books; on a projecting crag hung a broad-brimmed Quaker hat; on the opposite side,

near something like a fire-place, were two or three cooking utensils of Indian fashion. The old man, a hand on each of their heads, said: "My children, I feared you were slain. I knew an enemy beset your way, and I sent my faithful Sunfish to give you timely notice."

Tonlin replied in Indian, so that Mary knew not what he said; but tears streamed down the old man's wrinkled face as he replied:

"Tonlin, thou art a good boy, but may be thy resistance has gone too far. May an Allwise Being bless thee and guide thy steps."

Tonlin, taking the dress of his sister, the noble Velna, departed, and meeting with Sunfish, who waited his return, the boy was dressed as an Indian maiden, and the two entered the camp without suspicion.

So soon next morning as Gatlin discovered that Mary Barker was gone, burning with rage and thirsting for vengeance, he called a council of warriors; he knew not in fact what became of his victim, but determining to turn her absence to his own advantage, arose and said:

"Chief and warriors, you were last night attacked by the Pilot tribe; they slew your brothers and sons and they carried off my wife. Barker, my deadly foe, caused this; he is leagued with them; he was with them last night; I saw him and should have killed him, had not a limb turned aside my tomahawk. Allow me then with these

young warriors to watch, pursue and kill that base dog." The war council immediately gave consent, for they were as much surprised as Gatlin; they believed what he had said, and their creed was, "let foe kill foe."

Gatlin accordingly departed to watch round the plantations of the white settlers; intending to satisfy himself whether or not Mary had returned, and if so, to seize her by force. He was soon satisfied that she had not returned; he then continued to harass John Barker by every possible means; to frighten him by strange appearances, and finally to kill him and his children. He was near Craven and his companion at Curtis's branch as they returned home, and in order to frighten them, uttered the cry they heard at that time; one of his warriors ran round and hung a bush in the road near the school house, which the terrified whites thought to be an Indian and Mary; knowing they had no loaded arms after the discharge, Gatlin and an Indian stood before them in the valley, which confirmed the ghost.

In order to gain an opportunity to carry off the children, Gatlin sent an Indian with a fire brand on a long pole, thinking thereby to draw the attention of the settlers, while he should execute his purpose, and at the same time to still further impress them in the belief of supernatural agency.

Perceiving his purpose likely to fail, one of his followers stealthily entered the house and carried

off one child in its sleep. The child was carried to the camp, and lest it might escape also, he kept it in his own tent. Velna no sooner perceived this than she determined to liberate the little captive in spite of precaution: she was aware, however, that it must be done secretly or else her purpose would fail. Approaching it one day when Gatlin with the rest was gone to the chase, she asked the little innocent if it knew where its father and mother were. It answered: "Buggar carried mother away, and father's at home!"

"Do you want to see them?" asked Velna.

"Yes, but I can't," answered the child.

"Do you like Gatlin?" inquired Velna.

"No; he hurts me," replied the harmless little creature, the tears beginning to roll down its cheeks.

Velna wiped her own eyes, and kissing the child, told it she would carry it to its mother. She told it to keep awake that night, and she would come to the wigwam after a good while, and thump with her finger; if Gatlin was awake, which it could tell by shaking him, it must neither speak nor move, but if he was asleep, to get up easy and come out without speaking.

Late at night, Velna approached the tent in breathless silence and thumped with her finger; then waited in an anguish of uncertainty. In a minute or two, the fair haired child came forth and stood before her; she caught it up in her arms and

hastening away, gave it to Brave and Tonlin who carried it to the old man and its mother in Aaron's cave.

Gatlin did not miss the child till morning, nor did he then speak concerning the loss; he suspected intrigue of some kind; he believed that some one in camp was the agent by whom his designs were frustrated; but who that person could be, he could by no means divine, unless Brave was the one. This belief was soon fixed, and by the reserved, cold intercourse he maintained with the white warrior, Velna readily perceived the complexion of his thoughts. Without delay, she taxed her ready and active mind to learn his intentions, in order to frustrate them; by the agency of her brother, she learned from one of Gatlin's band, that murder was intended, and that the chase on the following day was the time appointed. She forthwith advised Brave to depart, justly conceiving that his services could no more be available, as he would be too closely watched. The white chief obeying her admonitions, announced his intention to depart on the next day; and in less than an hour, Velna learned from her faithful spy, that Gatlin had gone out with a chosen band, with intention to waylay and kill Brave. Velna informed the chief of his danger, and advised him to take a circuitous rout, which he did, not through fear so much as policy. Gatlin again frustrated, determined to carry on his designs against the Barker

family to the uttermost; he tasked every resource of vengeance. He accordingly made powder to blow up the wood pile; he made a most terrific spectre of skins, which monstrous fabrication three Indians could carry; he then shaped a block of wood and armed it with claws in order to make a track unlike any living creature.

For the purpose of forcing credence to his fiendish appearances, he wrote the letter purporting to be from Mary in heaven. Then, placing the powder under the wood, and having all other matters properly arranged, he played the part spoken of in a former number. The children which were seized at the door, were carried to the camp as the former one, and placed in Gatlin's wigwam. These were taken from him and carried to Aaron's cave, in the same manner as the first had been. Gatlin's wrath was now at the highest; he determined therefore to seize Barker himself, carry him to the camp and have him executed immediately. With three chosen companions, he went to John Barker's a little after night, and peeped through a crack to see with what the lonely inmate might occupy himself. Barker at the time was reading from a large Bible, with a loud tone in the manner of the Friends; he finished the chapter and leaning his head upon his hands, indulged the following soliloquy: "Once around this hearthstone I was happy; my Mary and my children were with me; they loved me and soothed my sorrow; they pitied my

distress and cared for my sufferings. The Lord hath sorely chastened me; he hath taken from me all earthly comfort; I have surely drunk the cup of sorrow, and mourning shall finish my days. If I have knowingly injured any man, I am ready to restore fourfold. May the Lord's will be done."

"You are a base scoundrel and liar," said Gatlin, rushing into the house with his comrades; "I am come to drag you to justice."

"Thee speaks harshly," returned Barker nothing daunted: "Surely I see W. Gatlin, an old friend of mine, and right glad am I to find in this forsaken house, one true as thee is. Thyself and these, I suppose thy guides, I bid welcome, and hope we may have mutual comfort." "You are a bigoted hypocrite," returned Gatlin; you are a liar, thief and ranting fool; to night you die! seize him! my friends."

Barker waved them off with his hands, and with a look such as comes only from a good man's eye, then meekly said:

"These charges I understand not; thee knows, W. Gatlin, I have always been an honest man; I have neither touched the person nor goods of any man, and in the manner of my sect, I have tried to serve my maker." "Your sect, the ———! sneered Gatlin; warriors, I say seize him."

The rude sons of the forest still hesitated; the man was so meek, so calm and so peaceful in the panoply of virtue, that they refused to touch him.

Gatlin, stamping violently on the floor, ordered them to cut him to pieces, and as they moved not at this command, he raised his own tomahawk, but ere it flew to perform the bloody deed, some one caught his arm saying "hold, not so yet;" and the noble Tonlin was in the midst. Gatlin glared upon him with the fury of a tiger; and with a husky voice said:

"Warrior, what do you here, why have you followed me, and how dare you stop my arm?"

By this time Tonlin stood by the side of Barker and boldly replied:

"The chief's son goes where he will, and commands Gatlin at this time to do our white brother no hurt."

"Proud stripling," retorted his opponent, "you crow not over me; instantly leave this place or you die as you deserve!"

"I leave not," said Tonlin, "till we all go together, and think not to assume too much authority."

Gatlin stepped back and whispered to his comrades; Tonlin perceived they were about to attack him, but before they had time to advance, he drew from his blanket the great war-head dress of his father and placed it upon his head; before this well known emblem of authority, the comrades of Gatlin recoiled, and perceiving the odds would be against him, he smothered his resentment, and demanded that Barker should be led before the war council.

Tonlin whispered a word to Barker, and immediately all of them started to the springs. According to usage and by command of Gatlin, Barker's arms were bound with a bark-rope, passing from one elbow to the other. The river was to be crossed in a canoe at a point where the water was very deep; as they were stepping into the unsteady trough, for Indian canoes were hollowed trees, Tonlin, who warily watched every motion, saw Gatlin and his comrades unsling their arms and unite their blankets. He was aware that this manœuvre boded some evil, but he knew not what; he therefore seated himself by the side of Barker, at the same time slipping his hunting knife from his belt; he held it in his right hand. About the middle of the stream, the steersman dropped from the stern of the canoe into the water, then seizing the side as if endeavoring to climb in, he quickly overset it. Tonlin at once saw that the intention was to drown himself and Barker; as they struck the water, by a skilful thrust with his knife, he cut the chord that bound Barker's arms, and both, being good swimmers, reached the bank before either Gatlin or his crew could overtake them. When the wretch came to land he apologised with apparent sincerity for the accident, and threatened the steersman with punishment; Tonlin affected to believe it an accident and accepted the apology.

So soon as they reached the camp, a council was called, and as Barker was accused of the greatest

crimes, and no one plead his cause or bore testimony in his favor, he was quickly condemned. Gatlin demanded that he should be burned in an hour, and after some hesitation the council assented. Barker was about to speak, when Velna came forth and motioned him to silence; she was arrayed in the full dress of a chief's daughter, and bore in her hand the wand of peace; mildly but firmly she spake:

"Great chief, and brave warriors; the white man has always given bad counsel; well you know that no man must die according to the law of our fathers, till another moon. The great spirit looks upon the pale face as well as the red man, and will not allow noble chiefs to do wrong. Six suns must pass by, before our white brother dies."

The council confessed that Velna had spoken truth, and deferred the execution for six days; meanwhile Tonlin pledged his wampum belt for the safe custody of Barker.

We leave John Barker till the day of trial, and return to Aaron's cave. On the night aforesaid, when Tonlin had retired, the old man seated himself by the side of Mary, and with much kindness said:

"Friend, I pity thy distress and feel for thy sorrows; tell me who thou art, and how thou came to the springs."

"My name is Mary Barker," she replied, "the wife of John Barker; we came from Pennsylvania

and settled somewhere in this country, and by deceit one W. Gatlin took me to the springs."

"What was thy father's name?" inquired he with tears in his eyes, and hesitancy in his voice.

Mary answered; "his name was Aaron Moffitt."

"Didst thou leave him alive?" inquired the venerable man.

"No," replied Mary, "many years ago, wicked men conspired against him because he was a good man, and coming to our house in the night, they tore him from his bed, carried him off and killed him."

The old man after a moment replied; "Wouldst thou know thy father, though changed by age and affection?"

"I should know him anywhere," replied Mary, "a plain scar on his face, if nothing else would be proof enough."

"I am," answered he, "Aaron Moffitt thy father," at the same time exhibiting the scar on his face. We make no attempt to describe their recognition, or the conflicting emotions that followed, they may be better imagined than described.

The next day Moffitt narrated to his daughter his adventures after he was dragged from his house: "My enemies intended to kill me not a mile from home, but before they proceeded that far, they met a band of Indians who bought me for a war victim at an approaching festival. For three days, I was compelled to walk at a rapid rate between

two stout warriors; on the fourth, we arrived at the great camp, when I was eyed with no less curiosity than pleasure. When the great day arrived, and all the tribes had assembled to honor the great spirit of the Western waters, according to usage, if any captive was in their possession, he must first be burned. As I was the only one, I was fixed to a stake and the brush wood piled around me; then came forward the oldest chief to pronounce my doom."

"White man, said he, you came in power from the rising sun; you offered peace to our chiefs, arms to our warriors and bread to our children; none of these have you done. You told us lies, cheated us in trade, sold us fire-water, and dug up the tree of peace. The thundering of the great spirit, the roaring of streams, the howling storms, groaning trees, and rumbling earth, all call with a deep and revengeful wrath for your destruction."

I knew pleading was in vain, and said nothing; but as the chief turned away, he discovered this scar on my face, and asked how it came there. I told him I received it in defending an Indian at Tolland, and by that means saved his life. "Ugh—sogger," murmured the chief, 'I know you well, your name is Moffa; you saved the life of my son.' He then ordered me to be unbound, and lead to his wigwam, and thus you perceive, my child, this good deed long since done, saved me from a horrid death and the bloody hand of murderers. After

supplying my wants, and allowing me time to refresh myself, he dismissed me to seek my friends and home. But alas! I knew what awaited me should I ever return; I therefore traveled onward, I knew not where. In the midst of my uncertain wanderings, I chanced upon one occasion to be standing near this very place when I saw two Indian children, a boy and a girl, attempting to cross the river; when they were near the middle of the stream, the little girl slipped from a rock and fell into a strong current; the boy fearlessly leaped into the foaming waters to rescue his sister, and after making efforts worthy of a man, he raised her head above the waters, but he was unable to advance or even to maintain his position. At the minute they were both sinking, a powerful wolf dog that had accompanied them in their expedition, but had loitered behind, plunged in after them; before he could reach them, they had both sunk, but instantly diving, he brought them up and started to the bank. The children were too much exhausted to hold together, and the noble dog was unable to grasp them both; the little girl floated away from him, and uttering a loud howl of despair, he started to the bank with the boy; perceiving that the dog would safely land the boy, and knowing that the girl would speedily drown, I plunged in after her at the peril of my own life. Though aged and feeble, I rescued her, and after hours of nursing in this very cave, I so restored

them that they were able to go home. That boy was Tonlin and that girl was Velna. From that day to this, I have remained here, unknown to all, except these two children, Sunfish and the old chief; they have supplied me with food and I have taught them much of our language. Last night when Velna heard thy report she believed it, and forthwith sent Tonlin to inform me of thy presence in the camp, requesting me to come and give thee such assurance, that thou mightest without fear accompany Tonlin, when he should find occasion to lead thee forth. But thy deliverance was well nigh frustrated by the attack of this powerful tribe, and had it not been for the white chief, Brave, our tribe would have been conquered. He had already retired from the ranks when I met him; he was surprised to see me, but when I told him that a suffering white woman was in the second tent, and that Gatlin had brought on this attack in order that the Spring tribe might be conquered, so that he could then obtain Velna, the chief's daughter; that noble chief waited for no more, but with a resolution and power never surpassed by mortal man, he drove every thing before him.

When I came back, I placed Sunfish out to watch, and in less than an hour, he returned and informed me, that two Indians came down to the river, and after remaining awhile went back. Having no doubt these were spies sent out by

Gatlin, for I thought he saw me when I was at the camp, I sent Sunfish round in another way to inform Tonlin and Brave that spies were out. The man you saw on the hill was Brave, who came before you to reconnoitre; it was he that gave the whistle and cried out for you to run back."

Mary and her Father remained for some time in this cave supported by Tonlin and Velna, and as the children were successively stolen away from Gatlin they were sent to their mother and grandfather. Velna determined that Gatlin should be condemned in public council, and to effect this much maneuvering was necessary, as well as a great deal of caution. Gatlin constantly affirmed, that Mary was his wife, and that Barker had now stolen her a second time and married her; he also declared that a young chief who had been missing for some time, was slain by the same means. The time fixed upon for overwhelming Gatlin, was that on which Barker was to be burned; one difficulty still remained, and that was to prove to the great council, that Mary was really John Barker's wife, and as yet they had no means to effect this. Finally Mary thought of young Spinks, who knew the whole matter, and Tonlin undertook to find him out and bring him to Aaron's cave. This he effected after ~~several~~ days' watching, and then by a messenger informed Brave at Hickory mountain, of the time. One important point still remained to complete the arrangements, viz: to obtain proof

from the Pilot tribe, that Gatlin instigated that assault. The noble Tonlin took that mission upon himself, and with infinite difficulty, succeeded in bringing over a chief, whose assertion could not be doubted.

On the day appointed for Barker's execution great preparations were made, according to Indian custom, for display and torture; a high stake was erected in the midst of the camp, and a large ring of brushwood so formed, that the victim might die by the heat rather than the flames. Barker was led forth in the midst of yells, hisses and every kind of insult, and slowly but firmly took his position of death; after he was fastened, Gatlin asked and obtained permission to take off his lower limbs joint by joint to the knee.

As he stepped forth to accomplish his bloody purpose, Velna appeared, unlike all other Indian maidens, arrayed in a most superbly ornamented dress, with the wedding feather in her hair; every one was mute with astonishment, while many looked with evident discontent. Bowing to the grand council, she called upon Gatlin to stop; but determined to execute his design he heeded her not, and had already taken Barker by the foot. Velna drew from her robe the great eagle signal, rushing forward with twenty warriors at her side, (for that number was compelled to follow the noble virgin upon the appearance of that signal,) she arrested

Gatlin's hand, and bid him stand back. Maddened to desperation, he was about to slay even the CHIEF's daughter, but the warriors closed around her crying, "WANSA VELNA"—SPARE VELNA. She then appealed to the council, and moving respectfully forward, declared herself able to prove that Barker had not killed Mary and the children. Gatlin defied her to do it. Raising her whistle, she gave a sharp call, and in a few minutes Mary appeared with her children. The Indians were confounded, and Gatlin frothed with rage. The council waited till the affecting scene of the family meeting had somewhat subsided, and then demanded what more Velna had to say. She then declared that Barker did not steal them away; this Gatlin again defied her to prove. Velna and Tonlin affirmed the part they had acted, but Gatlin refused for their evidence to be taken; another shrill call and Brave with twelve powerful warriors, came up and affirmed upon his wampum belt, that he had assisted. The old chief of the Springs declared no warrior must dare question the word of Brave. Velna then offered to prove that Mary was Barker's wife, and by another whistle called up Spinks and Aaron Moffitt, the gray old man. Their evidence settled that question beyond all dispute. Velna next declared that Gatlin had instigated the assault made by the Pilot tribe to prove which, the chief of that tribe was produced. Ton-

lin and Velna related all their proceedings, while the whole assembly listened in astonishment. The chief was greatly affected and asked his council how he ought to proceed; all the warriors answered that the whole affair should be disposed of as Velna desired.

"Then," said Velna, "let us feast Barker and all his family for six suns, and afterwards send them home with the belt of peace, and once every moon I will go to see them; Gatlin I leave to my warriors; as for Brave my father will honor him."

Instantly the warriors bound Gatlin, and tied him at the stake he had prepared for Barker; the chief then turning to Brave, bid him ask any favor and it should be granted. "I ask a great boon," responded the white chief, "in a few words." "Give me the noble Velna." The old chief seemed a little confused, and asked Brave for what reason, he demanded a chief's daughter.

"Because," said Brave, "I am a chief; I love Velna and Velna loves me; I saved her life on that night of the Pilot charge, and I assisted her in saving a good family." "The great Spirit wills Brave to be my son," responded the chief, and joined their hands.

When the week of feasting was over, the Barker family, Spinks, and the venerable Aaron Moffitt, were escorted to the white settlement, and a treaty made which was never broken. Once per month,

Brave and Velna visited Barker, nor was this friendly intercourse ever broken off while the parties lived. Many years after a son of Brave returned from the far west to see the descendants of his father's friends, and a worthy son was he of his noble sire.


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