

DRAPER MSS

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CHAPTER  
VOLUME

REV. JOSEPH ALEXANDER  
+  
HIS SON-IN-LAW  
REV. WALKER

wrath was loud and strong, and for weeks after he carried a gun to kill Lacey. However, Lacey died out before he met the General, and it all at last passed, in its proper light, as a drunken humor.

I cannot say I commend this scene above the doings of the present generation. It will, perhaps, be hard for my readers to credit me that two of the prominent actors were of the highest respectability in fact, among the leading men of their community—considered themselves as gentlemen and were deemed so by every one. With McCarran it was different. He had been a higher vocation, and this he had forfeited by his own weakness. Not preserving the elevated standard of morality usually practiced by the clergy, which raised them so far above common men, they were revered as those to whom "it was given, to be called the sons of God;" while he was deemed fit to give vent to an inebriate's glee-fancy. He was a talented reprobate, and had he been true to himself and his calling, the record of his name might have been one of merit and honor, instead of the mournful memorial, "An unfaithful Shepherd."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

realize the difficulties which lay in the way of obtaining even a common school course, at the close of the last century.

The latent ferocity of the animal man seems never, except in civil war, to culminate in its cruelty. We read the record of his crimes in history, and shudder to know our natures may be so abused. The Tories of the Revolutionary war, with a sense of hatred ever sharpening their thirst for every petty injury possible to visit on the patriots, destroyed books wherever they found them, full well knowing how irreparable was the loss to their possessors. Even when by some unwonted pity they spared the home-roof, the precious feather-bed was ripped up, and its contents scattered by the four winds of heaven; other articles of household comfort and all provisions, printed volumes and papers, were committed to the flames. No matter if it were the "Book of Books," still more refined was the cruelty. No pleading of the helpless woman would avail to save the volume, whose inspired word taught her to "sing songs in the night."

Boys who were not able to bear the hardships of camp-life and the burden of a day's march with the clumsy musket, sustained a part little less severe at home. Striving, with earnest effort, to fill the absent father's place, they helped their mothers till the soil, as best they might, with the rude implements of husbandry they could procure and devise. In spite of these difficulties, the virgin soil yielded a subsistence for themselves and the younger children, with a spare morsel, now and then, to share with those on whom a harder lot might fall. The devoted women of those times were compelled to plough and spin, brew and bake, and nobly did they perform their mission. But work done, there was no spare hour for imparting the little book-knowledge they might have to the children, who were required, too, in their round of allotted tasks. It required incessant toil for daily bread and a garb to cheat cold wind. 'Twas wisely ordained: for this ordering of Providence kept them alive to the powers that were in them, and sustained them; whereas, if they had indulged in one moment's idleness, they would have faltered and fallen.

Thus, when the struggle ended, the victorious backwoodsmen, worn, though they were, with the weary strife, were buoyed up by the thought of their glorious success, and were urged on by that proud remembrance, to build up fortunes in the land they had freed from foreign masters, and stimulated to rear sons for a place in the councils of a country, where mind and merit—not rank and wealth—gave the pre-eminence. Naturally they began to bethink them of schools and scholars.

Out of some well-secrested hoard, here and there, a book crept to light; but alas! where were the teachers? Most of those who had received such opportunities of instruction as our infant settlements possessed, had laid their lives on Freedom's altars, and "the places which knew them, knew them no more." The ministers of the gospel were the usual resource; and, generally, the spiritual teacher became the daily instructor. These were Presbyterians in all the upper districts, as the descend-

ants of the first settlers of their fathers. denominated, then as vines and learned men were afterwards seminologists, Doctors and to them for their instruction and science by their ordination fe yet by words of encouragement and well quotes and strength, they i their families, in hour to the end. The tor vader visited them i and they, like their burnt out, and some their homes—Ead suffering, revered fo superior attainment a selection could ha college of the molhi dates for the pedago

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The earliest of in the up-country, Joseph Alexander Bullock's Creek was founded a few Revolutionary w (Dr. Abner Pyle's sons) were for schools in the upy stood, for years, fi institutions of the ward distinguishe The course was m and Latin langua Geography; and tion attained in t pills, he was an ir tion he enjoyed. taste "the Pieria

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### The Yorkville Enquirer



YORKVILLE, S. C.:

THURSDAY MORNING, FEB'Y 17, 1870.

#### REMINISCENCES OF YORK.

The usual weekly instalment of "Septuagenarian's" reminiscences did not come to hand in time for publication in this number.

### The Yorkville Enquirer



YORKVILLE, S. C.:

THURSDAY MORNING, FEB'Y 24, 1870.

#### REMINISCENCES OF YORK.

BY A SEPTUAGENARIAN.

Institutions of education grew up with such rapidity in our State during the fifteen or twenty years prior to our late civil war, that we almost felt as if the power of Aladdin's lamp had been elicited to rear the piles, whose halls are those of learning. With such facilities for the acquirement of knowledge and accomplishments on every hand, it is very hard to

dents of the first settlers still adhered to the faith of their fathers. The preachers of this denomination, then as now, were all able divines and learned men. Many youths who were afterwards eminent as Statesmen, Theologians, Doctors and Lawyers, were indebted to them for their induction into the paths of literature and science. Although prevented by their ordination from being men of blood, yet by words of encouragement, acts of endurance and well quoted promises of divine help and strength, they incited the patriots and their families, in hours of darkness, to endure to the end. The tory raider and British invader visited them in their day of visitation; and they, like their flocks, were plundered, burnt out, and some, for a time, had to flee their homes.—Endeared by their common suffering, revered for their sacred office and superior attainments, perhaps no more happy a selection could have been made, had every college of the mother country offered candidates for the pedagogues' chair.

To show the scarcity of books, I remember being told by Mrs. Judge Nott that she learned her letters, and to read and spell, in "Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding," and was proud to be the possessor of a volume of her own, as many of the children in school had to borrow from their more fortunate mates, a book from which to learn their lessons, as they were not able to procure one of their own. The same lady told me the mode of instruction to her in writing was, the master, with a pointed stick, wrote a copy on an even spot of earth; below which, she, with a like instrument, imitated him as best she could.

The earliest of the Academies of learning in the up-country, was that of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Alexander, of York, the pastor of the Bullock's Creek congregation. This school was founded a few years after the close of the Revolutionary war, and it, with one other, (Dr. Abner Pyles' Grammar School in Laurens) were for some time the only grammar schools in the upper portion of the State. It stood, for years, foremost among the classical institutions of the day, and many men, afterward distinguished, knew no other *Alma Mater*. The course was mainly confined to the Greek and Latin languages, Moral Philosophy and Geography; and we may judge by the position attained in the world by some of his pupils, he was an instructor worthy the reputation he enjoyed. Here did Andrew Jackson taste "the Pierian Spring," and Judge Smith

"Lay foundation for renown,  
And all the honors of the gown."

William H. Crawford, Gov. David Johnson, Rev. Mr. Walker, Col. Thomas Taylor, Isaac Sadler, (the poet) and innumerable others, who have played their parts in life's drama, and played them well—*exeunt omnes!* I know not that one survives, who studied at the feet of this Gamaliel.

Dr. Alexander was a Scotchman by birth, and a staunch Whig from the beginning of the contest. All through the struggle, he was prominent in his section for his efforts in the cause. When the Rev. Mr. Tennent was sent on his tour through the upper country in 1775, Mr. Alexander was one of his active assistants, by calling his congregation together for him to address. He rested a night at Dr. A.

residence and the men of the vicinity listened to

—"the sermon  
Battered by the speaker's eloquence."

This was so irresistible in its flow, few could withstand its influence; and when the eloquent oratory of the public speaker failed, he would afterward converse individually with the most prejudiced, and the clear argument and winning manner usually converted the obstinate. Mr. Tennent visited a congregation of Dr. Alexander's on Thicketty. An extract from his quaint journal says: "Rode thirteen miles—crossing Broad River at Smith's Ford—to a meeting-house of Mr. Alexander's on Thicketty, where I found him preaching to a crowd of people assembled to meet me. When he had done, I mounted the pulpit and spoke near two hours. The people seemed convinced and after writing an Association from memory, refreshed myself, and drank out of a cow-bell. They signed the Association and retired seeming contented."

Dr. Alexander established a hospital at his residence. I understand this place is now owned by Jack Smarr, Esq. My information may be incorrect as to locality. This infirmary was of great benefit, especially when the scourge of small pox prevailed. Many, after preparing their systems for the disease, were taken to Dr. Alexander's to be inoculated with the pox and would remain under his care till well. This was before the wonderful discovery of Jenner's mode of vaccination was introduced, and Dr. Alexander's beneficent establishment was much valued and esteemed by the surrounding country. His strong efforts for the Whig party made him so very obnoxious to the opposite side, that he deemed it a necessary precaution usually to ascend the pulpit, gun in hand, to have it ready for self-defence, in case of any outrage. What a picture to the mind's eye! The rude place of worship amid the primeval forest—the few aged men all armed to some extent—the anxious-faced women—the pale, care-worn children, and the frail, lame preacher—who, with rifle in hand, limps up the aisle and ascends the pulpit! The carnal weapon is put aside, and the voice of supplication is heard, for spiritual weapons to fight the good fight of faith; to be of good cheer through evil as well as good report. Amen. A hushed silence throughout the little group, as the words of the chapter are read; for precious food are they for week-day memory. Then comes the text, followed by the brave exhortation to endurance, trust and faith in God's love, for he will surely avenge his elect; who cry to him day and night. The services ended, a few words to one another about absent husbands and sons, an interchange of the latest news from the battle-field, camp or prison, a warm pressure and shake of the hands in farewell, and they take the paths to their several lonely dwellings, encouraged by the word preached that day for the onerous trials and duties of the week begun.

Dr. Alexander continued in the exercise of his ministerial functions until very aged. His mind was weakened, and his articulation so indistinct, from feebleness and loss of teeth, that one could not understand what he said, sufficiently to keep the thread of his discourse.

I remember seeing and hearing him. He was a small old man, with nothing which struck me as remarkable in his appearance, except that he wore a close-fitting white linen skull cap. After he relinquished his school, the Rev. George Reid took charge of the academy at Bullock's Creek for a few years, but soon removed elsewhere.

I have tried, but without success, to learn the period of the Rev. William Cummings' labors at Bethel. This church was organized as early as the year 1764, by the Rev. Mr. Richardson, though they did not have a regular preacher until in 1770, when the Rev. Mr. Balch took charge. The troubles of the war, it is probable, caused his removal, for during the Revolution he emigrated to East Tennessee. I think Rev. Mr. Cummings preached in this congregation soon after the war. This is conjecture merely from concurrent testimony. While living in the Bethel congregation, he opened a school of good standing, and numbered among his pupils, too, the future hero of New Orleans, Gen. Andrew Jackson. I know this from his own lips. I dined with General Jackson in 1832, and the pleasure of my entertainment at the White House was greatly enhanced by the President's lively recollections of his school-boy days in York, and the enjoyment he evidently derived from our mutual reminiscences, and my ability therefrom to give him the later history of many of his early friends. In his enquiries the old veteran used a vernacular very familiar once to my ears, but now so obsolete I will have to explain his meaning: "Can you tell me anything," he asked, "of Dr. John Allison, who married Miss Betsy Hill, while I was at Bethel, going to school to the Rev. Mr. Cummings? He was but nineteen, she only seventeen, and they were the handsomest couple I ever saw make their appearance." When I was young, a bridal pair's attendance at church, on the first Sunday after marriage, was always called *making their appearance*, and ever afterward the expression was applied to designate that particular Sunday in their lives. I know literally nothing of Mr. Cummings individually, more than after preaching, and teaching some years at Bethel, he removed to Georgia and there died.

Mr. Reid taught but a few years at Bullock's Creek, and when he relinquished the school, Rev. Mr. Walker, a son-in-law of Dr. Alexander, opened a classical academy in the Bethesda congregation, about the year 1806. This he ably conducted many years. Most of those who were his pupils are gathered to their silent homes; but some live still who enjoyed his instruction, among them your Septuagenarian. There was a feature in his school very pleasing to both pupil and patron, which I recommend to principals of male schools now. It was called an Exhibition, and was much more agreeable, in its studied variety, than the examinations now in vogue. These consisted of dialogues, speeches, and several scenic representations, comedies, farces, and sometimes even a tragedy, acted by the boys, which used to draw a large concourse of people to witness them. Never lived there a better man than this good preacher and

scholar's sake, through the infirmity of the flesh, he sinned. I recall one Friday, when Mr. Walker stopped at my father's gate on his way to Chester. He refused the invitation to come in and take a social glass. My father, "on hospitable thought intent," proposed to bring out the decanter to him, as he sat on the horse. "No! no! as you insist, I'll go in; not take a drink on horseback." He was going to see a criminal who was to be hung the following Friday - a man named Floyd, who had killed the sheriff of Chester District, Colonel Nunn. My step-mother was much interested in the man's case, and begged her preacher to call as he returned, and tell her if the man seemed penitent and to have laid hold on the precious promises held up for his acceptance. He kindly promised he would gratify her. About an hour before sundown, I, with my father, was under the shade of a big chestnut tree which stood near the barn, he riving boards and I piling them, when Mr. Walker rode in sight at a full gallop; as the horse neared the gate, expecting to be checked up at the frequent stopping place, he fell into a long trot, which almost caused the rider to lose his perpendicular, but urged on he resumed the canter. Mr. Walker righted himself; for with the smoother gait he could retain the proper equilibrium - and passed with a dignified "Good afternoon, Squire." I lifted up my head, big with the discernment of a lad of ten. "Never stir! father, if Mr. Walker wasn't drunk!" My father turned sternly; "Let me ever hear of you saying such a thing as that again, sir, and I'll give you such a whipping as you never had in your life!" Mum! was the word after that. In a few moments my father threw down the frower and walked to the house. I followed, for my task was done when he stopped work. He walked through the hall where my step-mother and sisters were sitting at their sewing, and went into his own room. "Katie!" he called, and his wife followed. I crept near to the door, and heard him telling the mournful tale. How hard I felt it, I might not repeat my knowledge, gained, too, through my own penetration, to the girls; but the interdiction was too heavy, and when my step-mother came out with a face a yard long, I could only hug myself with sterile complacency that I knew, too. Day after the next being the Sabbath, in the pulpit the good old man confessed his fault with tears to the congregation, who wept with him in sympathy and love. Nor was there one to whom he was less dear or respected from the humiliating avowal; freely was his sin forgiven and forgotten, and not for one instant was his usefulness injured. I might, after this, tell the other arches what I'd seen; but the information had lost its zest, and I wondered vainly why my father issued so stern a mandate, when after all, Mr. Walker told about it himself in the meeting house.

I think it was in 1802, Mr. Walker visited Kentucky, and saw "the falling down exercise," as it was called. Soon after his return, he preached at a big camp-meeting in the Waxhaws, and described it to the people; how whole congregations were struck down by the

and praised the eternal drous redemption give large assembly, as they and here was the first stration of religion, so Not long after, the peri meeting at his own cl cured, and again many down by the power of its workings. Many nervous affection, aris undue excitement of but this I affirm, that ed, the profane became had been seuffers we believers. Mr. Fran that meeting with " and told me afters from the time of his one moment, doubt knew him for a man close of his life. Se ed; it is true, fell aw and returned to thei vomit." I rememb apathetic curiosity, take in its spiritual sophical to be carr agitation. I was George Dale, who ting scene, but stau he would peer am groaning multitud manner, "What r Methinks 'tis some run away, as if a Bethesda the "fal ed over the State, up dead men's be exhausted of its

Mr. Walker was pastor of the pe he determined on I heard him pre: the close of the gether, beneath trees," and sat d "silent city of th discerned any d truly told him " equalled those I gone by." "It ways determine Alexander's ten pulpit, I would but quit the m ability and imp He afterward there, full of ye "I venerate the Whose hands as Coincident, exhib That he is home [re

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REV. ROBERT  
2. 22. 1802



