

Literature, &c.

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THE ELDER'S DAUGHTER.

A TALE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY IN 1707.

By Miss Martha Russell.

[Continued from our last.]

The stars were bright in heaven and the rim of the rising moon was just becoming visible in the East, when they emerged from the trees to walk homeward. They parted at some distance from the garden gate. Faith hastened onward and sprang through the gate. As she turned to secure the clumsy wooden fastenings a heavy hand was laid on her arm, and the voice of the elder struck her ear.

'Girl,' he said, 'who is the man from whom you parted just now? Speak, he continued, grasping her arm still more sternly, for surprise and fear had for a moment kept her silent.

'Walter Cary,' she replied, in a quiet, firm tone, looking up in his eyes with an expression of fearless innocence.

'Have I not said he must be as a stranger to you? Have I not commanded you to see him no more?'

'Yes, father, but I cannot—must not do what you require.'

The elder relaxed his grasp as if unnerved by sudden astonishment. It was the first decided movement of rebellion he had ever encountered in his own family. Seizing her arm again he rather drew than led her across the garden into the house. He seated himself in his arm-chair and groaned aloud. At length he turned toward her and his voice was strangely flexible as he said:

'My daughter, you are awfully deluded. Seemeth it a small thing to you to despise the commands of your father?'

Faith bowed her head and wept as if her heart were melted to tears. Controlling herself at last, she replied:

'Father, I have never been disobedient, and Walter Cary was not just as good and worthy now as you thought him a year ago. I should feel it wrong to refuse what you require. But you do not think him less worthy. Our present relation to each other was not formed without your knowledge. Now, he is to me what no other man can ever be. I have duties to him as well as to you, and I cannot obey your command to see him no more.'

Elder Judson was sorely troubled. Stronger and more imperious men than he have felt that the earnest, decided resolution of a pure mind is very powerful and very difficult to control. He groaned and said:

'Oh, what delusion! Verily I have sinned, in suffering you to go astray and consort so much with those who are not followers of the truth. These carnal feelings are of the devil. They have banished your reason. They must be put away. You must be watched until you return to your sober senses. I command you not to see this man again, and not to leave the house without permission.'

Nearly a week after this occurrence, Walter Cary called one day toward evening. The elder was in the fields, and Faith and he after strolling awhile in the garden, walked on to the old trysting place by the spring. On her return Faith was met near the house by her father, who seized her rudely and without speaking, drew her up stairs to a small room seldom used except as a store room. The large veins in his forehead were swollen almost to bursting, and the muscles of his face were tense and rigid with the excitement of anger.

'The disobedient and rebellious child shall be punished,' he said.

Then he left the room and fastened the door. Faith stood a moment immovable as if listening to his heavy footsteps. They did not return and presently all was still. Then she opened the little window and gazed out into the holy night. When she knelt in the mellow moonlight at the foot of the low bed and uttered her earnest prayer, the tears were in her eyes, but she grew calm. Blessed sleep hovered over her pillow and breathed in her ear a dream of gladness and joy.

From this time she was under a species of interdiction. She sat at her father's table and slept beneath his roof; but she was a prisoner, and neither by word nor sign did her father ordinarily intimate a consciousness of her presence. The gentle, timid Susannah tried in vain to persuade her sister to submission, and could only weep and pray in silence. Mahala's bright, flashing eyes were observant of all that passed, and her hand ready to undertake any thing Faith required. Weeks passed and there was no change. Elder Judson seemed resolved to compel her to submission by employing all the fearful power of his anger.

Meanwhile Walter Cary tried to soften the elder's heart and win him to their wishes. He tried to soothe his religious prejudices and gain his confidence, but in vain. All his advances were repelled, and he was told briefly and sternly that Faith would never be permitted to marry a prelatist nor the son of a prelatist.

It must be confessed that Elder Judson's inflexible will was now quite as much excited as his prejudices.

The quiet, unobtrusive Walter Cary had never designed to become the patroness of a religious party in Fairfield, or anywhere else. Deeply wounded by the persecuting coldness of her former friends, she went to spend the winter in Virginia with her brother.

Faith's health suffered, but otherwise she

remained unchanged. When her father occasionally introduced the subject, she steadily persisted in saying to him:

'My relation to Walter Cary is too sacred to be trifled with. I must not, cannot, will not consent to see him no more.'

He had not dreamed of encountering such incorrigible rebellion. He was baffled. He could not understand it. One day a certain spinster cousin, whose spirit was as sour as Susannah's was gentle, and who was somewhat noted as a news-monger, was discussing Faith's unaccountable perverseness in the presence of the elder, and intimated that she could if she chose explain the whole mystery very easily.

'What do you mean, madam?' inquired the elder.

'I mean that you are all blind. I generally keep my eyes open, and where my family are concerned I can see as far as some others. They were married, secretly married before Cary went away on that visit to Virginia. He would naturally fear a storm, and no doubt persuaded Faith, and that the popish priest has married them. I noticed them about that time and thought they had something unusual on hand. Now she will not give him up, you see because she is his wife.'

Elder Judson despised this woman as he despised all news-mongers. But her suggestion had its effect upon him. Here was a clue to the mystery. This would explain Faith's unfaltering steadiness under the power of his anger.

He now recollected how constantly she had said that her relation to Walter Cary was too sacred to be trifled with. Yes, there might have been a secret marriage. Still he did not believe it; somehow his sense of Cary's character as well as that of Faith interfered. That they should have taken such a step, or at least that having taken it, they should studiously conceal it, was as surprising to him as Faith's obstinacy. Yet the more he considered the matter, the more he inclined to believe a clandestine marriage had taken place. He resolved to discover the truth by forcing Faith to make a full confession.

Accordingly, the next morning, when Faith was summoned to attend family worship, she entered the sitting-room, and found her father seated at the table, as usual, with the great Bible before him. Near him sat Susannah, pale and thoughtful with apprehension. On the left arranged according to their respective ages, were the members of the household, consisting of hired laborers and slaves, for he was a man of substance. By the side of Susannah there was a vacant chair. Faith advanced to take it but was suddenly arrested by a gesture from her father, who said:

'Let the transgressor make confession.'

Faith replied with a look of wonder and doubt. He continued:

'Let the transgressor make confession. I begin to understand what you mean by your sacred relation to Walter Cary. Come not to this altar until you have made open confession of your hidden wickedness.'

The blood rushed to her cheek and temples and her eyes seemed melting into flashes of light. After standing still a moment she turned and left the room. Susannah involuntarily moved to follow her, but restrained by a glance from the elder, she sank back in her seat, terrified, not less by her own temerity than by the manner of her sister.

But Elder Judson was now determined to bring matters to a crisis, by compelling Faith to confess her marriage, by forcing her to another step which would terminate the controversy.

During the last eighteen months, a young man by the name of Ithiel Spaulding had been a frequent visitor at the house of Elder Judson. He was evidently attracted by Faith. The sisters had always received him kindly, for he was the son of their father's friend. They did not know that during that time he had asked their father to give him Faith in marriage, for at that time of this asking the elder was inclined to favour young Cary, and accordingly put off Ithiel on the plea of Faith's youth. Of late he had encouraged this young man to come, and induced him to stay longer than ever. True he did not always see Faith, but this seemed to make no difference.

Susannah had been confined to her room with illness, and was still too weak to leave it for the whole day. Faith's imprisonment had not been such as to prevent her from passing most of the time there. The night had set in, and a wild storm of wind and snow was rising. Faith sat by the window in Susannah's room watching the storm and thinking of the vessel in which Walter Cary had two days before embarked for Virginia, to be with his mother, who was ill, and as it proved, dying. She was roused by a summons to attend the elder below. She went down, and he immediately told her, with considerable formality, that he had accepted proposals for her marriage with Ithiel Spaulding, that the bans would be published on the next Sabbath, and that the marriage would take place on the Wednesday following, which would be the first day of the new year. She stood at first as if she could not believe him in earnest, then she became pale and faint, and sinking at his feet, she besought his pity, wept and entreated, and pleaded as only the miserable can plead. But he was immovable, and raising her to her feet, he said that what he had announced was settled and bade her prepare herself to act accordingly.

'I cannot marry Ithiel Spaulding,' was her reply. 'I would not marry him under any circumstance, and I will not; cannot do it now.'

'You cannot perverse girl? Why can you

not do it? What is there in the way?'

'Can you need to ask, father? I might tell you the contemptible soul of the man himself who thinks to marry me without my consent is in the way. And it is right to satisfy you. But I cannot marry him because such a marriage would be sacrilegious. He is nothing to me, and if I did not despise him it is too late to think of marriage with him. I belong to Walter Cary and I cannot become the wife of another.'

'I thought so!' exclaimed the elder, almost choking with passion. 'You have not hesitated to disobey and dishonor your father, and now, at last, you acknowledge your wickedness. Leave my house! I disown you utterly. Go to those you belong to, and let me never see your face again.'

And opening the door he thrust her forth into the bitter storm.

Bewildered and fainting she sank on the snow covered steps. But in the house there were quick ears and wakeful eyes that were never weary in the service of Faith. She was not there long before the dark form of Mahala was bending over her. Mahala's arms were very strong, and taking up her young mistress she went toward the forest. Here, where there was shelter from the wind, she sat her down and wrapped her in a cloak. Then saying she would soon find a shelter, she was about to take her in her arms again, but Faith refused, saying she could follow. They went on into the forest. The snow was deep and the sounds of the storm as it swept through the leafless branches of the trees were fearful. Confused, frightened and exhausted, Faith at length sank in the snow and could go no farther. They had walked a mile and still the place toward which Mahala was directing her steps was farther on. Taking Faith in her arms again she went on until she came to an open space near a rocky bluff. Here stood a hut, whose rude bark-covered logs were now loaded with snow and ice. The Indian girl seemed perfectly familiar with the place, and setting down her burthen she knocked at the door and called:

'Father! Good father! wake and let us in.'

'Who calls?' asked a voice from within.

'Neuqua speaks; father help us.'

This hut was occupied by Adam Rainer and his wife, who were peaceable, kind-hearted Quakers. They lived apart from the world happy to escape violent persecution. Neuqua had often visited them, and their character had won her confidence and inspired her with a kind of reverence.

'Come in,' said Adam Rainer, opening the door.

'I am afraid she is dying,' said Neuqua, pointing to Faith.

'You are wise—save her.'

The good man was surprised to see Faith, but she was soon under his roof and properly attended to. Faith was quite exhausted and very wretched both in body and mind, but she was in the hands of as kind and skillful nurses as could have been found in the colony.

'Poor child!' says the old man. 'Verily, He tempests the wind to the shorn lamb, or thee must have perished in this fearful storm.'

'Dost thou think she is in danger, Adam?'

asked his companion.

'Nay, Mercy, I trust she hath only fainted from exhaustion. These must remove her wet garments and replace them with some of thy warm flannels. I will look in thy store-case for some of that sovereign cordial which was given thee by that excellent woman, Deborah Green of London, for the damsel needeth it sorely.'

Before morning the poor girl slept, and the next day Neuqua, in great joy, declared that she seemed almost well again.

The next evening Neuqua was despatched to the village for some articles deemed necessary to Faith's comfort. As she approached the house of Widow Cary she saw three gentlemen ascending the steps. She was sure that one of them was Walter Cary, and hastening forward she addressed him. It was Walter. The vessel in which he was to sail had been detained. While waiting in Stratford he met Col. Heathcote and Mr. Muirson who were on the way to Fairfield, and recollecting some important papers which he wished to carry to his mother, here turned with them. He was told all that had happened to Faith, and not long afterwards he was following Neuqua to the Rainers.

Was he excited and earnest when he arrived there? Was Faith glad to see him? I will only tell you, that when he insisted that she must immediately become his wife and go with him to Virginia, she answered:

'It shall be as you say, Walter. It cannot be wrong now to act without my father's consent, for he has cast me off. If I do not go with you, where shall I go?'

So they were married that night by Mr. Muirson, and the next evening were sailing toward Virginia, and with them was the faithful Neuqua.

Let us return to Elder Judson's. When Faith left her sister and went below in obedience to the summons of her father, Susannah waited and listened anxiously for her return. At length she caught the sound of her father's voice, and heard a noise of the heavy shutting of the front door. But she knew not what it meant. She wondered why Faith should retire to her own room without coming to her. At last the good sister slept.

After closing the door on his own child the elder paced the room with heavy strides, but presently his anger began to give place to disquietude. He tried in vain to feel satisfied with himself. He listened to the storm; it was fearful. He wished Faith would come back. He thought he had acted hastily. He might

have sheltered her until the morning. He opened the door and sought amid the darkness to distinguish her form, but she had disappeared.

'Well,' he said, 'consoling himself, 'It is not far to Cary's house. It will not harm her to go there through the snow. She has been very perverse.'

Next morning when the family were assembled, he made known what happened. 'It is a dreadful dispensation of Providence,' he said. 'I exhorted and wrestled for her in prayer. But Satan hath prevailed, and I have been compelled to disown the perverse child and drive her from my house. Henceforth let her be anathema—'

'Father, father, curse her not! For the love of Heaven, curse her not!' shrieked Susannah. She started for the door, but fell senseless into the arms of a domestic and was borne to her chamber. Elder Judson himself could not quiet the misgiving which worked in his heart. Stern as he was, he loved his children. About noon there came intelligence that Faith had not been seen at the house of the Carys, and that Walter had started for Virginia two or three days before. The elder was sadly troubled; nor was his trouble lessened by Susannah, who was no longer timid and shrinking. She spoke to him of Faith's mother, and of the hour when that dying mother gave the child to her; and of the days and nights Faith had lain in her bosom; and declared that if measures were not taken to find her sister and bring her home again she herself would leave the house forever. The gentle Susannah seemed suddenly to have taken a new character, and every eye in the house bade her 'God speed.'

'Poor child!' she continued, turning to the domestics. 'Perhaps she has perished in the snow! Go all of you and search for her.'

'They were all ready enough to do so, and, as her father continued silent, they obeyed her at once.'

It was some relief to the general anxiety that the Indian girl had gone with Faith. But no one had seen them. The neighbourhood was searched, but no trace of them could be discovered. Elder Judson went to his bed that night, sick and sleepless with mental suffering. The sweet and gentle voices in his soul had prevailed, and when such souls melt, it is like the thawing of icy mountains; floods follow.

The next day they were relieved by the arrival of Col. Heathcote, who brought a letter from Faith, and told them all he knew of the events of the previous night, and gave them an account of Faith's marriage, of which he had been a witness.

'God be praised!' said Elder Judson. 'If he were not better than I, what would have become of my poor child. I have been to blame. I have wronged her. I have been harsh and have acted sinfully. Even the heretical Quakers were kinder and better than I. The faithful Mahala! My anger hath often been sore upon her, but if she ever returns I will reward her forever. That savage was better than I.'

Susannah was happy again. She went to the Rainers to thank them for their kindness to her sister, and hear all the particulars of her reception under their roof. She loved them before the interview was over, and ever after they were among her most esteemed friends. Even the elder was glad to see them visit his house and treated them with great kindness. Elder Judson was indeed changed. He had thought as well as suffered, and it was observed by his neighbours as remarkable, that during the rest of his life, he was an advocate for tolerance and charity toward those whose views of religion differed from his own. 'Our godly councils must be tempered with kindness,' he would say, 'or they will do no good.'

The next Spring when Walter Cary and his wife returned to Fairfield no one was so glad and eager to receive them as the elder, and the joy in his house was as fresh and sweet as the vernal atmosphere around it. It is almost needless to say that Walter and Faith never forgot the Rainers, nor failed to befriend and protect them. Cary and his wife continued to reside in Fairfield, and as there are many generous, noble-minded people at the present day, I suppose some of their descendants are living there still. As to Ithiel Spaulding there is a tradition that he married the ancient spinster whose sharp swift tongue had suggested the notion of the clandestine marriage. His wife has descendants still living there. It is said he was killed in the old French war, having gained great reputation for his patriotism by manifesting an invincible desire to enlist.

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A FEARFUL SCENE.

BY HENRY S. RANDALL, ESQ.

The miners and laborers are almost exclusively foreigners, principally Irish and Welsh. Among this heterogeneous population it would be expected, perhaps, that immorality and disorder would prevail. Such is not the fact, apparently to a greater extent than in any of our manufacturing towns of the same size. I did not see a drunken man in Carbondale. I strolled round among the laborers' huts at twilight and some were working in their gardens, some quietly smoking their pipes in their doors, rarely more than two or three congregated in a place, and I heard not a loud or angry or improper word—nothing like strife or confusion during my stay.

Much of this, as well as those systematic arrangements in and about the mines which render the Delaware and Hudson company one of the most successful in the United States, is due to the officers of the company. A more