Port Tobacco Times

AND CHARLES COUNTY ADVERTISER.

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BY E. WELLS,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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Original Poetry.

For the Times.

MR. WELLS: The following effusion is respectfully dedicated to DR. GRAVISIMUS, the able and much venerated President of Stag Hall Club. It is the request of the contributor that it be sung at the next general meeting of the Club. Would that I were there (says I to *myself*) to join in the chorus, if nothing more!

GEE UP, DOBBIN.

In a Charles county lane as I trotted along,
Much in want of a subject for piquant song;
Thinks I to myself, perhaps inspired by the rain,
Sure marriage is just like a Charles county lane.
Gee up, Dobbin; gee up, Dobbin;
Gee up, Dobbin; gee up and gee ho!

In the first place 'tis long, and once you are in it
It holds you as fast as a cage holds a linnet;
For, however rough and muddy the road may be found,
Drive forward you must for there's no turning round.
Gee up, Dobbin, &c.

But though 'tis so long it is not very wide,
And two are the most that together can ride;
E'en then 'tis a chance that they get in a pother
And jostle and cross and run foul of each other.
Gee up, Dobbin, &c.

Oft Poverty greets them with mendicant looks;
Care pushes by them with o'er-laden crooks;
Strife's jarring wheels strive between them to pass,
And Stubborness blocks up the way on her ass.
Gee up, Dobbin, &c.

Then the banks are so high both to left and to right
That they shut out the beauties around from your sight,
And hence you'll allow, 'tis an inference plain,
That marriage is just like a Charles county lane.
Gee up, Dobbin, &c.

But, thanks to these banks within which we are pent
With bud, blossom, and berry are richly besprent;
And the "congugal fence," which forbids us to roam,
Looks lovely when decked with the comforts of home.
Gee up, Dobbin, &c.

In the rock's gloomy crevice the bright holly grows,
The ivy blooms fresh o'er the withering rose,
And the evergreen love of a dutious wife
Soothes the roughness of care, cheers the winter of life.
Gee up, Dobbin, &c.

Then, long tho' the journey and narrow the way,
I'll rejoice that my purse (stings and all) is empty from pay,
And, what'er others think, be the last to complain,
Tho' marriage is just like a Charles county lane.
So, gee up, Dobbin; gee up, Dobbin;
Gee up, Dobbin; gee up and gee ho!

Washington, D. C., May 13, 1857.

An Original Story.

Written for the Times.

MARY EMERSON.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY JUNIUS.

The sun was just setting behind the western hills, throwing a clear, bright, crimson light upon the yellow autumnal foliage of the few shade trees in the little yard around Mrs. Emerson's lonely cottage, as Mary, her only child, a lovely girl of sixteen years, opened the little wicket gate and passed through towards the door. Little Mary, as she was called by the neighbors, was, as we have just mentioned, sixteen years of age; slender and of medium stature. She was handsome, aye, she was beautiful; her features as regular as though they had been chiseled by an artist for the Godess of Beauty herself. But Mary's beauty consisted not in this alone. No—she was good; she was noble, and in her bosom throbed a heart as pure as could ever be found. She paused a moment on the threshold and gazed in admiration at the melancholy sunset, gloomy as it appeared at this season of the year. Yet to Mary there was in the sight something beautiful—it spoke of a God.—She paused but a moment and passed on to find her mother in her usual place, seated at the little window of her room, her head resting in her hands, lost in deep thought. At the approach of Mary, she lifted her head and turned her face which spoke in language too plain to be misunderstood, informing the observer that she had seen better days. That she had once been handsome no one could doubt, for although the hand of time had rested heavily upon her and withered the bloom of youth, yet the traces of early beauty were still visible. The ravages of disease too might there be seen pictured in unmistakable characters upon the sunken, pale and emaciated cheek—her marble and prominent brow—her dark and almost flashing eye, too, told of "good blood coursing in her veins." Turning to her daughter who had just entered, she said:

"Well, my daughter, you are home earlier than usual this evening, are you unwell, or what is the matter?"

"I am well, mother," said Mary, "but we had not much work in hand this evening and I thought as you were alone and no doubt lonesome, I would return earlier and come and sit by you and read some instructive book for our mutual advantage and thus cheer your sad heart, for you have been remarkably sad of late, mother.

"Did your employer give his consent to your leaving so early?"

"He was not in, mother, but Miss Austin, whom you know is our directress, gave me permission," said Mary.

"Sit down beside me then and read a chapter from the Bible."

Mary did as directed—and then hastened as it grew darker to arrange her table for tea. While the two thus sat alone at their frugal repast, a brisk rap was heard at the door. Mary rose, and taking the lamp, opened the door, and Laura Stanwood, a gay, lively girl of Mary's own age, entered, and crying, as she took a seat in the cozy little parlor,

"Oh, Mary, an exhibition takes place to-morrow evening and we shall have a splendid time no doubt, all our pieces are committed perfectly. Our good superintendent gave us great praise at our last rehearsal, and said he never in his life knew anything so handsomely done, or heard pieces more perfectly and accurately recited. I am going to wear my white swiss dress, trimmed with pink and blue, which must certainly attract attention from all sides, and I am determined none shall excel me. I have my part perfect, and Prof. Lightthought has taken much pains in teaching me my proper address as well as attitude—and he thinks I am perfect. You know he is a very celebrated tutor; I engaged him because I wished to shine on this occasion and perchance make Mr. Frank ———"

"Laura, permit me to interrupt you for a moment," said Mary, kindly, "I have no doubt your Sunday school exhibition will pass off well and you will acquit yourself in a manner which will cause your friends much pleasure, but I fear you are overlooking many important considerations. For what purpose, dear Laura, are you to exhibit yourselves before the public? For what purpose are you to display your talents in the delivery of your pieces? For what purpose have your friends selected from rusty volumes and modern writings, pieces appropriate for you to speak and perform? For the display of your dress—for the love of popular approbation and empty praise? Or for some purpose other than a trivial and vain sportive spirit, of worldly show and empty passing praise, in words light and trifling, soon to be forgotten? Why all this preparation—all this study—all the arduous pains taken by kind friends and your good superintendent? Pray tell me, dear Laura, for what purpose?"

"Why," said Laura, slightly blushing, "for the purpose of raising money for the purchase of new books for our library. Our old library is getting stale and we want new books—and I do hope Mr. Collins will see to our having more interesting books in our new library. I am worn out with such books as 'Poor Joseph,' 'Alice Ashdon,' 'The Golden Chain,' and scores of others such as these, in which poor children and old women, worn down and hidden in some unfashionable part of our great cities, so largely enter. Why not speak of the lives and adventures of those who have seen fashionable and respectable lives? and——"

"Laura, you forget," said Mary—hurt at the thoughtless and giddy manner of her companion—"that these same persons have given every evidence of christian endurance and faith, and their examples, while they show us the goodness of God in his kind providences over them, teach us to love him and obey his law. You forget that these books, which you seem so to dislike, are but collections of good examples for our improvement, and will, if properly followed, lead us to a happy hereafter. But there is another object in view—you expect to raise funds for the purpose of spreading the Gospel and furnishing Bibles to these very poor of whom you were speaking in terms so slight. Is it not so?"

"Yes, the superintendent said so, I believe," said Laura, carelessly playing with several objects upon the centre table.

"Then here is a wide field for charity, and while you are exhibiting your talents before the admiring audience, you should be inwardly breathing a prayer to the Giver of all good, that he loosen the purse strings of the rich, that your treasury should swell to such fullness that not a hovel be without the Bible and the Gospel of Christ."

"But, Mary, none in our church are so poor that they are without the Bible, or at least have the means of procuring it or any other book they desire."

"Are there not many of other denominations, Laura, who not only want for the bread of life, but who want for daily food and raiment, and should you not look after them if you expect God's blessing to follow you?"

Laura's attention was for a moment fixed upon some object found on the centre table—the daguerreotype of a wealthy young man, whom Laura had for sometime striven to win. Charles Ingram was now in College, and the sight of his daguerreotype, and that in the possession of Mary Emerson, fired Laura up in an instant with jealousy against poor Mary, and with a sarcastic curl of the lip, replied,

"Mary what a preacher you'd make—you ought to get license and turn preacher at once." Then carelessly placing the daguerreotype upon the table, she took her leave and hastened to her own home of luxury and wealth, there to meditate upon what she had seen, and form some plan for the prosecution of her ambitious undertaking, even though it worked the ruin of her pure and innocent rival—the good—the gentle Mary Emerson.

Deeply pondering upon the light, thoughtless and giddy manner of Laura, and in her heart earnestly praying and fondly hoping that e'er long Laura might see such all-important matters in a different and better light, Mary wended her way to her mother's presence—and resuming her seat, took up a copy of the Life of Hester Ann Rogers and for sometime read aloud to her mother—then, laying aside the book, they both fell upon their knees and sent up a heartfelt petition and thanksgiving to that ever benificent Providence who had so kindly provided for the widow and orphan. They retired to bed, as happy as two could be and sweetly slept in conscious innocence.

The morning sun was just above the horizon, as Mary entered the workshop of Mr. Langdon. The other girls were not yet arrived—and Mary seated herself by the dim window, awaiting the arrival of Miss Austin, in order to obtain her day's work. Mr. Langdon, a rough, uncouth personage, a matter-of-fact man of the world, who could see nothing save through the medium of dollars and cents, entered the room, and calling to Mary, peremptorily informed her "that he had no further need for her services—he wanted no female preachers about him—more especially one, who could leave her work before the accustomed hour for the purpose of delivering lectures to her superiors;" and so suddenly left the room that Mary had no opportunity to speak. When she was thus left alone, she knew not what to think, much less what to do. At this moment Miss Austin entered and with a tear of grief on her cheek confirmed Mary that what Mr. Langdon had said was really meant in good faith, and revealed to her own mind the fact that she was without employ, thrown upon the world with her invalid mother—alone! helpless!! poor!!! Oh, what a world of sorrow—pain—misery—deep agony in these three little words; how many have realized their force while a frowning world of wealth and luxury scoff at the poor, forlorn creature and cry out in stentorian voice against them, because forsooth of their poverty; branding indeed their fair names with shame—and their only crime *poverty!*

Mary returned to her home with a heavy heart, weighed down with the reflection, that while she was without employ and liable herself to suffer, yet there was another—her own mother must needs partake of her privations. She almost feared to meet her mother: How should she break to her this new misfortune?—for be it known, this was not their first. The death of Mr. Emerson two years previous, had been a sore trial, and Mary had since supported herself and mother by her own labor. Now she was deprived of this, and at the very season of the year when they most needed it—the approach of winter.

But Mary still had hope. She should find work no doubt in doing fine sewing, &c., for the ladies of the village, and her friend Laura—yes, Laura would aid her in finding employ in the circle of her rich acquaintances. Thus hope sprang up in her bosom and with light step she hastened to her mother's apartment to inform her of this new plan as she broke the sad news of her dismisal from the employ of Mr. Langdon.

But a new trial awaited her. Since morning her mother had been taken much worse—her nerves so long depressed had yielded to the gradual inroads of disease and now failed to sustain her. She was even now suffering greatly; a high fever, bordering upon delirium had set in, and as old Doct. Coats entered her room an hour later, a deep gloom overspread his countenance and caused an involuntary shake of the head. His practiced eye told him that the time so long looked for had at length arrived, and the good Mrs. Emerson must die. All that day and the succeeding days, for more than a week, Mary spent by the bedside of her mother.—A few poor neighbors called to see her, but could render her no assistance—the death-king was present, awaiting the moment to seize upon his prey; his grasp was upon her and soon she must yield to his iron will.—On the ninth day of her sickness, Mrs. Emerson seemed to revive. She called Mary to her bedside and taking her hand affectionately, said, scarcely above a whisper,

"Mary, your mother is near the portals of glory. Soon she will leave you, my child, to join your father and the countless host of angels round the throne of that God in whose keeping she must leave you. Be firm in the faith, my child; pray earnestly to God, and he will never forsake you.—Sing those beautiful lines, Mary, of which you used to be so fond, beginning, 'Softly now the light of day.'"

In a sweet, musical tone, intermixed with sobs of grief, Mary joined her few friends and sang—

"Softly now the light of day
Fades upon our sight away;
Free from care, from labor free,
Lord, we would commune with thee.

Soon for us the light of day
Shall forever pass away,
Then from sin and sorrow free
Take us, Lord, to dwell with thee."

They had but just ceased when she replied in a clear, full voice, "Take me Lord, to dwell with thee," and the spirit of the good old lady had fled;—and Mary was beside a lifeless mass of clay, which a few moments previous had been her mother. Now her mother was in heaven—a saint—in that land where "Sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more."

On the third day, her remains were consigned to the earth, and as the cold, damp clods fell upon the coffin lid—oh! awful sound—Mary realized that now she was indeed alone in the world. Who can imagine her grief—her deep anguish? Almost two weeks of deep, earnest watchfulness and prayer for the recovery of her only earthly friend, a longing, ardent hope that she might be once more restored to her, and now that last thread of hope sundered and she left—fatherless—motherless—friendless, in the world. Picture her thus lonely, ye who have stood by the bedside of a fading friend, unconscious that the cheek's bright crimson, lovely to the view, like night-shade, bloomed with unwholsome beauty—like moulding wood, owes to decay alone its wondrous lustre. Ye who still have hoped, even in death's dread presence, but at length have heard the summons, (oh, heart-freezing call,) to pay the last sad duties and to hear upon the silent dwelling's narrow lid the first earth thrown—(sound deadlike to the soul; for strange, strange delusion, then and then alone, hope seems to forever flee and the dread pang of final separation to begin)—ye who have felt all this, can drop a tear of grief and hear a sigh of sympathy for Mary Emerson in her sad—sad bereavement.

Two months have passed away and Mary's first grief, having been somewhat softened, and her little stock of worldly wealth almost exhausted, she, too independent to remain under a roof where all were alike poor and possess no possible means of aiding the family, whose bounty and hospitality she had shared since her mother's death, resolves that she must work; and 'hope, the anchor of the soul,' supports her as she leaves the little cottage of her kind, poor friends and hastens to the lordly mansion of Laura Stanwood, hoping to find in her a friend in this her greatest hour of need. But little knew Mary of the heart beating in the bosom of this gay child of the world. Little dreamed she of the cold and heartless reception awaiting her from her supposed friend Laura. With heart full of hope, she rings the bell and soon she is ushered into the costly furnished parlor by a servant. Presently Laura appeared, and with a cold, formal bow, motioned her visitor to be seated. Mary at once made known the purpose of her errand, and in a plain unvarnished manner told her of her sad condition and begged that Laura would give her work and aid her in finding more among her numerous wealthy friends.

"Where is Charles Ingram; why not apply to him in your hour of need, Miss Emerson?" was Laura's haughty and sarcastic reply.

"Charles Ingram is a charitable young man, Laura," said Mary—a deep blush mantling her till then marble cheek—"but for two reasons I can receive no aid from him. Having no claim upon his generosity, it would be very unbecoming in me to apply to him; and again, he being far away, he cannot possibly know of my necessities."

"You astonish me, Miss Emerson; rumor says you and Charles are to be made one flesh when he returns from College, and he surely should be informed of your misfortunes. If all the rumors I hear be true, I think you had best address him a line or two on the subject. I assure you I am very well pleased with my seamstress and feel no disposition to change;" and a spirit of fire spoke from out those eyes of Laura's at this moment, while her limbs shook with concealed rage.

Mary arose, and with a heavy heart left her, till then, supposed friend. The mystery was now cleared up. Here was the cause of her dismissal from Mr. Langdon's employ. The remarks of that gentleman about female preachers, coupled with the circumstances and words on the occasion of Laura's visit, and Laura's remarks this day, made the whole matter clear as day. Deeply absorbed in such reflections, she mechanically wended her way to the lowly cot, and entering her little room, she threw herself upon the bed and there wept bitter tears of grief—till sleep, sweet restorer of tired nature, came. Ah, how soon sleep will come as a messenger of mercy to the innocent and virtuous! God, in his wise providence, drops the curtain between the eye of his children and misery, and sends the angel repose, who transports their senses from the scenes of earth to the balmy groves of elysian bliss, that they bask for awhile, alternately in the sunshine of bliss and the fragrant shades of comfort. Here then we will leave Mary for awhile and stop for a moment with Laura.

As Mary leaves the house, Laura casts after her a withering glance of hate.

"She is handsome and intelligent; no wonder that Charles Ingram should admire her—but I have foiled her so far and I will yet crush her out entirely, if by so doing I sink my own soul to perdition; Charles Ingram shall be mine."

This last she almost screached, and fell back upon her lounge in a fit of passion, where for the present we will leave her.

Mary awoke late in the afternoon, and the events of the morning appeared as a confused dream, but her mind was wandering. Calm as was her sleep, quiet as was her repose, a high fever had set in, and when the kind friends of the house came to the room, she was quite delirious—calling often upon the name of Laura and begging that she explain the cause of her offence; and before many hours had passed, the family had learned the whole of her interview with Laura from her incoherent speeches.

For many days she continued in this state, and when she awoke, from what to her had been a sleep disturbed by many frightful dreams, she fixed her eyes upon a strange lady who was seated by her. Having satisfied herself of the reality of her existence, she attempted to speak to the stranger, but her weakness overcame her and she was compelled to desist; she closed her eyes and fell into a sweet refreshing sleep. When she awoke some hours later in the day, the strange lady had gone, and on inquiring of the family she learned that it was a kind lady from Virginia, who was visiting a friend in the village and who, having heard of her illness, had come like a good angel to visit her, and had learned her sad story of loneliness, which at once enlisted her good feelings in Mary's favor, and that she would return the next day. Once more, weak and faint as was Mary, hope sprang up in her bosom—hope that the same good Being who had put it into the heart of the kind lady to visit her and minister to her, might, in the plenitude of his wise mercies, make her an instrument through which she might find employment, and hence, worldly comfort. When told that many days had elapsed since she had been stricken down, she could scarcely believe it, for it seemed to her as but yesterday that she had been to the house, and in the presence of the proud, haughty, and, worse than all, cruel Laura Stanwood. And when she thought over the trying interview, the scornful look, the sarcastic and cruel manner of Laura, her heart sickened and her brain reeled—all hope seemed for the time to forsake her; but God was her trust. He was her stay in affliction and upon Him she threw her hopes and her cause. Oh, how the heart is lightened of its burden—the soul bouyed up—and the body strengthened, when we can lay hold of the promises of His word as the man of our counsel and the rock of our hope—and this satisfaction did Mary now experience amid her sad afflictions.

On the next day, Mrs. Randolph called upon Mary and found her, though weak and unable to sit up, yet much improved and strong enough to give her history and desire to obtain work—of her failure to find it in her native village, but not one word of Laura or the interview with her did this forgiving, generous girl mention.

Before the conversation had ended it was fully agreed that Mrs. Randolph was to take Mary with her to her Southern home as a teacher at her own residence, fully seeing that could she have such a patern for her three sweet little girls, there could be but little doubt that their after life would be secure from evil or the contaminations of the world, as too frequently are engendered in the minds of the young by foolish and giddy tutoresses such as too frequently find their way into the families of those who were better without them.

Mary rapidly recovered, and in three weeks was on her way to her new home in the sunny South, where in a month she was fixed as tutor.

We must now pass over a period of two years, during which time Mary continued as we last saw her, with the exception that she became very popular with her female acquaintances and soon her society was sought by all who knew her. And on no occasion was there a tea party, or a social reunion but that Mary was numbered with the most welcomed guests. It was on the occasion of one of these reunions that Mary saw a gentleman whose features seemed familiar, but she was entirely at a loss as to when and where she had seen him, until presently she was introduced to Charles Ingram, Esq. At the mention of names each started, but soon the recognition was complete and the intimacy of youth justified mutual and instantaneous intimacy now.—That night Charles escorted her to her home at Mrs. Randolph's.

On the next day Charles called upon Mary and was soon made acquainted with all her movements, her trials and crosses—save those connected with Laura Stanwood. He listened with eager attention and a tear-drop coursed down his manly cheek at her simple recital; he told her how, about a year ago, he had returned to V——, found the little cottage of her mother occupied by strangers—learned of the death of her mother, and that Mary had left the village in company with a strange lady—but no one knew whither she had gone. Laura Stanwood intimated that she had most probably gone with a puffed nobody, and was from all accounts now in New York a most abandoned character. He told her how Laura had tantalized him on his galantry towards such a girl, and much of the same strain—how he had searched for a long time fruitlessly for a shade of intelligence from her, and ended by telling her of his extreme happiness in thus meeting her as it were by chance; that he was simply on a visit to one of his old college mates and had found his long-lost and much-prized treasure—how happy he was in thus at once finding an angel and escaping a woman who, from his own experience, had rendered herself unworthy his love. The lateness of the hour compelled him to leave for the present and he retired a thrice happy man—so also Mary a happy woman.

* * * * * * *

It is now ten years since Mary Emerson became Mrs. Charles Ingram; and the husband and wife, happy in the society of themselves and their two children, are seated beside the pleasant fire, in the comfortable and richly furnished room on one of the principal streets in New York—listening to the howling blast as it sweeps by and the hail as it patters upon the casement, thankful that they are protected from the pitiless storm raging without and pitying from their inmost soul the poor who this night may be hungry and exposed to the lashings of the merciless storm king, as a servant enters and informed them that a poor, half frozen woman and her child are upon the door step unable to move. In a moment Charles and Mary, moved by the sympathies of purely generous hearts, hastened to the door in order that such assistance as might be necessary be rendered the poor woman and child without delay. As the servant had informed them, there sat, or rather lay, the form of a woman covered but partially by rags and tatters, and by her side the nearly frozen child.

To lift them from the door step and convey their almost lifeless bodies into the house to a fresh and glowing grate of coals was but the work of a minute. Restoratives and cordials were promptly administered and in the course of half an hour they were fully recovered. The woman was about twenty-seven or eight years of age, and though covered by rags and worn down by care and poverty, exhibited every trait of one who had seen far happier hours. The little girl was about six years old and decidedly handsome, and even at her tender age and amid dire poverty shew signs of a haughty spirit within.

But hark! Is not the sound of these voices, though changed by time and circumstances, yet familiar? Are there not outlines in these features familiar to the eye of each as they intently, earnestly gaze each upon the other in mute wonder? Oh, the deep absorbing reflections of this moment! The going back into the past—the deep, agonizing research into the hidden treasures of old Memory's store-house for some solution of the dark mystery overhanging them. A rapid, further glance, and the recognition is complete—but what the effect?—Mary, true to her angelic disposition, with wide spread arms, rushes to embrace—the stranger woman?—no, not the stranger now, but Laura Stanwood, who, falling upon her knees, weeps loud, deep and long; for the memory of the past awakens the long slumbering and hardened conscience, and now proves a sting keener—an anguish greater, than she feels able to bear; but the warm, ardent, burning kiss of pure christian love, imparted by Mary, dries her every tear and soothes to calmness her troubled heart. The hour of retribution had come, and in permanently providing for, and comforting, the once proud and haughty, but now fallen Laura Stanwood, all her ill treatment received from Laura was at once canceled, and Mary's revenge was indeed sweet.

Subject for a Debating Club:—If a man had a grizly bear by the tail, would it be policy to hold fast, or let go?

First love is like a whooping cough we must all have it, and it is best to catch it young.

Ladies wear corsets from instinct—a natural love of being squeezed.