The Port Tobacco Times,

AND CHARLES COUNTY ADVERTISER.

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Selected Poetry.

Pre-Existence.

BY PAUL H. HAYNE.

While sauntering through the crowded street,
Some half remembered face I meet.
Albeit upon no mortal shore
That face, methinks, has smiled before.
Lost in a gay and festal throng,
I tremble at some tender song—
Set to an air whose golden bars
I must have heard in other stars.
In sacred aisles I pause to share
The blessings of a priestly prayer—
When the whole scene which greets mine eyes
In some strange mode I recognize
As one whose every mystic part
I feel prefigured in my heart.
At sunset, as I calmly stand,
A stranger on an alien strand,
Familiar as my childhood's home
Seems the long stretch of wave and foam.
One sails toward me o'er the bay,
And what he comes to do and say
I can foretell. A prescient lore
Springs from some life outlived of yore.
O swift, instinctive, startling gleams
Of deep soul knowledge! not as dreams
For aye ye vaguely dawn and die,
But oft with lightning certainty
Pierce through the dark, oblivious brain,
To make old thoughts and memories plain;
Thoughts which perchance must travel back
Across the wild, bewildering track
Of countless æons; memories far,
High reaching as yon pallid star.
Unknown, scarce seen whose flickering grace
Faints on the outmost rings of space!

Selected Miscellany.

A TALE OF THE CATACOMBS.

The traveler who visits the Rome of to-day, if a classic scholar and antiquarian, occupies himself with the ruins of ancient Rome—that "mother of dead empires." The artist who visits Rome spends his time in the galleries of pictures and statuary. He cares little for the Rome of two thousand years ago, or the Rome of to-day, except in so far as they contribute to the enjoyment of his favorite pursuit.

While there is a Rome for the artist, and another for the antiquary, there is a third Rome for the Christian visitor—a Rome of three hundred churches, with St. Peter's, a world in itself, and the treasures accumulated through fifteen centuries in the Vatican. In this he finds a world which occupies all his attention. And when he has seen all that presents itself upon the earth's surface, he fin[illegible] other Rome beneath [illegible]—the Rome of the Catacom[illegible]

Why these excavations were made originally, no history tells us. But in the second century of our era, they were used by the Christians in Rome as places of refuge from persecution, of secret worship, and for the burial of the dead. Here were deposited the martyrs, the bones of those who were devoured by the wild beasts in the amphitheatre, and the ashes of others.

These catacombs are of great extent. There are long galleries, with recesses on each side for burial. When the bodies, or relics, were deposited, the recess was walled up, and plastered over with cement, and the inscription, giving the name and age of the deceased, and commending his soul to the prayers of the faithful, was carved in stone, or traced in the soft mortar. The lamps are found which were kept lighted before the graves of the martyrs, either as a mark of veneration, or to light those who came there to pray; and in many of these tombs are found vials of martyrs' blood, and the instruments of their torture.

Our story opens in the second century. Marcus Aurelina Antoninus, the philosopher, was Emperor. A fierce and general persecution drove the Christians to the catacombs. The necessities of gaining a livelihood compelled them to attend to their business and labors; but their churches above ground were deserted, and the mysteries of religion celebrated by the graves of the martyrs in the bowels of the earth. Many were thrown into prison—many were tortured and slain.

At this period, and at frequent intervals during the three first centuries, the pagan was zealous in his own worship; the malicious man who wished to gratify a spite against his neighbor; or the plunderer, who coveted his worldly possessions, had only to denounce him to the public authorities, if he was a Christian, to satisfy his zeal, his malice or his cupidity.

Octavian, an officer of the Emperor's household, proud of his rank, his wealth and his position as a favorite of the philosophical sovereign, distinguished himself by his talent and zeal, and in no way more than by the activity with which he pursued these enemies of the old religion enshrined in history, literature and arts of Rome.

In one of his expeditions against the Christians, he entered the house of Agrippa, a citizen of high position, who had been accused as a convert to the new and despised faith. He did not find him. There were Christians everywhere, even in the imperial palace—and one of them had warned Agrippa of his danger.

But in place of a Christian, whom he would have joyfully dragged to prison, to be consigned, in turn, to the torture and the wild beasts, Octavian found a young lady, whose beauty was accompanied by a sweetness which charmed the young and susceptible officer.

As he knocked for admittance she met him at the gate. His soldiers were scattered about the mansion to prevent escape. Calm and sweet, with an air of purity and resignation, the maiden met him.

"You seek my father?" she said.—"He is not here."

"Do you know where he is?" asked the officer, gazing at her with an admiration he cared not to conceal.

"If I knew, would you ask a daughter to betray her father?"

"That father is accused of being a member of an infamous and superstitious sect, which is endeavoring to undermine and destroy our ancient religion."

"My father," said Claudia, "belongs to no sect, and nothing infamous can attach itself to the name of Agrippa."

"Is not your father a Christain?—Does he not worship a man who was executed as a malefactor?"

"Again you ask a daughter to betray her father. When you have found him, he shall answer for himself. He is a man of truth, and will not deceive you."

Surprised at the mingled dignity and sweetness of the beautiful maiden, Octavian was forced to withdraw, baffled in his search. But he could not forget her. She came like a vision.—He could see the flush of her face as she had defended her father; and he asked himself the question, which he had not been able to ask her, so awed had he been by her presence: "Can she, also, be one of those Christians whom we have undertaken to exterminate off the face of the earth?"

The persecution raged on. Octavian was not so zealous as formerly; but the taunts of his companions spurred him forward. One day a spy brought him word that he had found the entrance to one of the secret hiding-places of the Christians. Losing no time, he took a band of soldiers, and, following his guide, came to the entrance of one of the catacombs. They descended to the dark passages, their steps lighted by torches. Octavian read the inscriptions on the graves of the martyrs of the past eras of persecutions. He heard music in the far distance, sounding as if it came from the bowels of the earth. Then came the smoke of incense. Following the guide with stealthy steps, they came to a subterranean chapel crowded with worshipers. They were all upon their knees in a posture of adoration, while a white-haired priest, robed in flowing vestments, stood before an altar made of a martyr's tomb.

The armed men gathered in the dark space, in the back of the chapel, for the altar was lighted with tapers, and lamps were suspended from the ceiling. All was hushed in a profund silence for a few moments. Then the worshipers arose; and a woman, turning her head, discovered the soldiers, [illegible] surprised into a cry of alarm.

The venerable priest turned from the altar, and approached Octavian.

"Is it I for whom you search?" asked he. "I am ready. Lead on."

But before Octavian could give an order to his soldiers, another form stood before him. Claudia, in her more than mortal beauty, it seemed to Octavian, threw herself between him and the aged priest, and said:

"I am the one he seeks. Look upon me. I am a Christian. Carry me to the judges; bring me to the Emperor. You will need no proof—I avow it.—I am a Christian. Leave this old man—leave them poor people. You want a victim—I follow you."

Agrippa, her father, took her gently by the arm, and said, "Not so, my child; what can he have against thy youth and innocence? It is I for whom he has come. This is he who sought for me at home. Here I am, sir; you shall not a second time be disappointed."

Alas! for Octavian. The spy who brought him was also a spy upon him, and would not fail to give notice of any lack of fidelity to the Emperor and the laws. The soldiers, too, acting under his orders, might report against him. He had no choice but to arrest some one; and how could he refuse those who offered themselves?

With a pang, which went to his heart, Octavian ordered the soldiers to arrest the priest and Agrippa.

"Will you not arrest me, also?" asked Claudia. "Where are my fetters?" said she, holding up her little hands, with a smile.

"Let men answer for their deeds," said Octavian. "We need not burden ourselves with women."

"I go with my father and my priest," said the heroic girl. "Who will hinder me?"

She knew that it was to the prison. If she refused to sacrifice to the gods, it was to torture. And there was death—she knew well. All knew it; and yet there ensued this extraordinary spectacle. Men, women and even children pressed forward, and said. "Take me, also!" and held up their hands for the chains.

Octavian drove them back, and ordered the soldiers to take the prisoners he had selected. He could not hinder Claudia from going by the side of her father. If he could but have taken her and flown—there was no such possibility! He was compelled to lead on to the prison; and he had no power to resist, when the peerless

Octavian filled with love, remorse, and despair, went to the palace of the emperor, and made his report. He could not stay the course of what Rome considered justice. He knew the course of the trial, for he had been a witness to many such. He knew the tortures that would be applied to that delicate woman, scarcely more than a child!

The trial was over. The aged priest, the father of his beloved, and she, whose image never left him night or day, were sentenced "to the lions!"—What a joy to Rome—*Christianos ad leones!* The old cry rung out once more from the ferocious Roman mob. "The Christians to the lions."

Claudia, holding the hand of her father, said to the gaoler, "I, also, am a Christian; lock me up with my father!"

Octavian resolved to make one effort to save them. He threw himself upon his knees before the Emperor, and begged him to pardon these three Christians.

Three Christians!" said the philosophic Marcus Aurelius. "Why should we forgive three Christians? Have they been tried?"

"Yes, sire."

"Condemned?"

"Yes, sire."

"Then they must be punished.—Whoever hears of a Christian being pardoned? The religious tranquility of the empire requires that the impious sect should be exterminated."

No more hope. The day came; the Emperor went to the amphitheatre, and Octavian attended him. The old priest standing in the midst of the arena, his hands spread out in prayer, was devoured by a great Numidian lion. Agrippa, father of Claudia, sank under the spring of a ferocious tiger! and as he fell, seventy thousand Romans sent up shouts of applause.

But even this cruel mob was hushed to silence, which gave place to a murmur of admiration, when Claudia, pale as a lily, but with a higher beauty than ever, walked with a graceful dignity into the arena. She gazed around a moment, her eye pausing with a look of tender pity on the group of officers behind the Emperor. Then she looked up to that heaven in which alone she trusted, and which now seemed open to receive her.

Two lions bounded forward from the two sides of the arena. But they had not half way reached her, when an officer of the imperial suite sprang into the arena, and placed himself at her side! The people were paralyzed. The Emperor, who was not a cruel man, made a signal to rescue them.—It was too late. Before the guards could gain the arena, two more martyrs had moistened its sands with their mingled blood—two more souls had ascended to heaven.

Hygeia.

EXTRACT OF BEEF.—Take one pound of rump steak, mince it like sausage meat, and mix it with one pint of cold water. Place it in a pot at the side of the fire to heat very slowly. It is well to let it stand two or three hours before it is allowed to simmer, and then let it boil very gently for fifteen minutes. Skim and serve. The addition of a tablespoonful of fresh, sweet cream to a teacupful of this beef tea renders it richer and more nourishing. Sometimes it is preferred when thickened with a little flour or arrow root. Children, and even adults, will frequently take the raw meat simply minced when they are suffering from great debility. One tablespoonful of such meat should be given every three or four hours. If found disagreeable, all unpleasantness may be removed by thoroughly mixing in a mortar two parts of pounded white sugar with one part of meat.

ESSENCE OF BEEF.—Take one pound of beef free from skin and fat, chop it up as fine as mince meat, pound it in a mortar with three tablespoonful of soft water, and let it soak for two hours. Then put it in a covered earthen jar with a little salt, cementing the edges of the cover with pudding paste, and tying a piece of cloth over the top. Place the jar in a pot full of boiling water, and keep the pot on the fire for four hours. Strain off through a coarse sieve so as to allow the smaller particles of meat to pass; the liquid essence will amount to about five or six ounces in quantity. Give two or more teaspoonful frequently. Useful in great debility, diptheria, typhus, exhaustion from hemorrhage, etc.

BEEF ESSENCE—*Another Mode.*—Take a pound of good beef, free from fat, cut into small bits, and put into a porter bottle, loosely corked. Place the bottle in a kettle or pan of boiling water, and keep it there until the water has been boiling at least an hour. As the boiling goes on the cork may be made a little more secure to prevent the contents of the bottle from escaping. The juices of the beef are collected in the bottle, constituting the essence. This is to be seasoned with salt, &c., as may be most agreeable. It is exceedingly nutritious and was a favorite article of diet with the late Dr. Parrish.

BEEF TEA.—This should not be confounded with the essence, as it is a much weaker or far less nutritious preparation, yet often found useful. It is made by boiling beef without fatty portions in a given quantity of water—say a pound to a quart—for the space of an hour. The resulting fluid, though far below the essence as a means of nutrition, is taken in much larger quantities, and with grated crackers or toasted bread makes a pleasant kind of soup.

PANADA.—This is ordered by Dr. Warren to be made thus: Take white bread, one ounce; ground cinnamon, one teaspoonful; water, one pint. Boil them until well mixed, and add a little sugar and nutmeg. Wine or butter may also be added, if desirable. Or cut two slices of stale bread half an inch in thickness; toast them to a nice brown; break them up, place them in a bowl, sprinkle a little salt over them and some sugar, and pour on a pint of boiling water; grate a little nutmeg.

An Irishman with a heavy bundle on his shoulder, riding on the front of a horse-car was asked why he did not set his bundle on the platform. He replied: "Be jabbers the horses have enough to drag me. I'll carry the bundle."

A darkey called at Owensboro' Ky., the other day, and wanted to know, "Does dis postorfis keep stamped anteleopes?"

THE BOY AT THE SODA FOUNTAIN.

A Startling Tale that he Told to a Poor Old Lady who was Thirsty.

He was rinsing the glasses when the old lady entered the store. It was hot weather, and the soda fountain looked so tempting that she conquered her avarice and walked over and told the boy that she would take a glass.

"Do you wish for a fly in it?" he inquired in a whisper.

"A fly?" grashus! no!" she replied, a look of disgust on her face.

"Just as you say, madam," he went on as he drew some lemon syrup. "People are so different in tastes, you know. Some object to flies and some don't. I'll mix some pineapple syrup with this lemon, and now will you have a great deal of gas and a little water, or a great deal of water and a little gas?"

"I'm purty thirsty," she said.

"Well, then you want more water than gas, and there won't be so much danger of an explosion."

"Explosion?" she queried.

"That was the word, madam. We have had but few such accidents here this summer, and I truly hope that we may have no more."

"Does soda water blow up folks?"

"That depends on the state of their health. Some people could stand here and drink all day, while others might get the glass tipped up this way, and boom! they'd go!"

"Bust?"

"Yes'm—fly into a thousand pieces. You never saw a human being explode, did you?"

"Mercy, no!"

"Well, you don't have the least warning. They may be laughing or talking, and all at once the store is filled with false hair, monogram garters, bustles, corsets, feet, teeth, and rolled plate jewelry. It makes a great muss around here, and if we hadn't three of the smartest negroes in town to pick up and sweep out we'd have to shut up the store for a whole afternoon after an explosion."

He stood with the glass in his hand agitating the syrup and waiting, and she said:

"I didn't suppose it was dangerous stuff."

"Well, as I told you, it depends on the state of the system. If your liver is torpid and your digestion impaired, one glass of soda water would blow you higher than Gilderoy's kite, and the coroner would be lucky to find as much as your spectacles to hold an inquest on. If your system is all right, you might drink a hundred glasses and feel no disastrous effect. Now, then, you'll have a good deal of water and but little gas, eh?"

She made a deprecatory motion and asked:

"How's the stuff made?"

"Well, I can't go on and explain all the process. There's marble dust, acid, gas, sugar-coated pills, giant powder, cologne water and kerosene all mixed together and then distilled. The distilled liquid is placed in a retort, where a chemical action separates it, and the gas forces it up separate pipes."

"Kerosene and pills!" she gasped.

"That's what I said, madam. You look innocent and honest, and I hope you won't say anything about it. I tend this fountain in order to support a widowed mother and seven fatherless children. If you should say anything I'd be discharged, and if I were discharged I should commit suicide. You'll have plenty of water, eh?"

"No, sir, I won't," she replied. "Do you suppose I'd drink acids and kerosene?"

"Not in their crude state, madam, but this process——"

"I don't care for the process!" she snapped; "I wouldn't touch the stuff!"

"It is a mild beverage, madam, and the doc——"

"Well, I don't want any. When I go to swallering tar and lard and kerosene you'll know it! S'posen I drank some and exploded!"

"Don't mention it!" he whispered. "Don't speak of it!"

"I'm sorry for you, young man, but there's a constable living right in sight of our house, and I think I—I—!"

"You'll drive me to a suicide's grave, you mean!"

She lowered her spectacles, took a long look at him, and went out without replying.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Burning Friendship.

He was a young man, and was coming down Main street last evening smoking a short cigar. He was stopped by an elderly party to inquire after his family, and he took the cigar from his mouth and held it unostentatiously in his right hand by his side. The elderly party was one of those quietly impulsive and deeply affectionate men. He wanted to press the young man's hand, and he unobtrusively felt around for it, his face all the while beaming with an elevated love and a most tender sentiment.

"How's your father?" he asked.

"Pretty well, thank you," said the young man, not noticing what the elderly man was doing.

"And your dear mother? Is she ——" and just here the young man felt his hand with the lighted cigar suddenly pressed, and then immediately let go of again, and on the countenance of the affectionate elderly party stole a dreadful expression of shrinkage, while his right hand silently but swiftly stole to his side, and was softly but feelingly rubbed up and down that limb several times. The health of the rest of the young man's family was temporarily neglected.—*Danbury News.*

The Sun Cholera Mixture.

More than forty years ago, when it was found that prevention for the Asiatic cholera was easier than cure, the learned doctors of both hemispheres drew up a prescription, which was published (for working people) in The New York *Sun*, and took the name of "The *Sun* Cholera Mixture." Our contemporary never lent its name to a better article. We have seen it in constant use for nearly two score years, and found it to be the best remedy for looseness of the bowels ever yet devised. It is to be commended for several reasons. It is not to be mixed with liquor, and threfore will not be used as an alcoholic beverage. Its ingredients are well known among all the common people, and it will have no prejudices to combat; each of the materials is in equal proportion to the others, and it may therefore be compounded without professional skill; and as the dose is so very small, in may be carried in a tiny phial in the waistcoat pocket, and be always at hand. It is:

Tinct, opii,
Capsici,
Rhei co.,
Menth pip.,
Campho.

Mix the above in equal parts; dose, ten to thirty drops. In plain terms, take equal parts tincture of opium, red pepper, rhubarb, peppermint, and camphor, and mix them for use. In case of diarrhœa take a dose of ten to twenty drops in three or four teaspoonfuls of water. No one who has this by him and takes it in time will ever have the cholera. We commend it to our Western friends, and hope that the receipt will be widely published. Even when no cholera is anticipated it is an excellent remedy for ordinary summer complaint.—*Jour. of Com.*

CONCRETE TO EXCLUDE RATS.—A correspondent of the *Building News* says: "Nothing can be better to exclude rats than to concrete the surface of the ground beneath wood floors; not only for this, but also to prevent the growth of vegetable matter, and to prevent, as well, damp rising. All ground floors, whether wood, paved, or tiled, should have a layer of concrete, 3 inches to 4 inches thick, between them and the soil. I have been in the habit of doing this for years, and all such houses have dry floors, and are vermin-proof, as far as the latter are concerned, as rats cannot disturb well made concrete. The concrete should be made of moderately fine gravel (broken flint or glass added to it is an improvement), mixed with Portland cement, in the proportion of 1 of cement to 7 of gravel. Not too much water should be used, but the cement must be thoroughly mixed with gravel, and, when deposited in place, well trodden or beaten with a grass beater. Three or four inches, at most, is sufficient in thickness."

ASHES FOR PEACHES.—A correspondent of the New York *World* writes: "I find it pays to put wood ashes and lime and a light sprinkling of salt around each peach tree. The top earth should be removed from the trees before the ashes, lime, and are put around it. If the trees are not all unthrifty it will restore them to life again, and in a short time they will look as thrifty as if nothing had been the matter with them. I think this helps to make the fruit stay on. I would advise every one that has a few trees to try what I recommended, and if their fruit does not ripen better and grow finer than when they are left to have their own way.

Humorous.

Milk punch is now recommended as a cure for diptheria. It has always been considered good for the throat.

A Long Branch baker has received news of a ten thousand dollar legacy. He'll probably knead it.

A Milwaukee lady, who paid $50 to have a wart removed from her nose, now wants to know what has become of the nose.

A Kentucky coroner has purchased a silver ball to be presented to the base ball nine that shall show the highest death rate at the close of the season.

An Ohio woman rises and says: "I've been married thirty-four years, worked like a negro, and never lived in a house which had parlor folding doors." Pass around the hat.

Mary Ann Smith, of Vermont, arises and says: "Am I not justified in disregarding laws which neither myself or any other woman has had a hand in making?" Not much, Mary Ann.

A Western editor insists that he wrote the word "trosseau" as plain as a pikestaff, in connection with certain bridal presents. The printer, however vulgarly put it "trousers."

A Boston woman, gazing at Mead's statue of Ethan Allen on the portico of the State House at Montpelier, exclaimed: "Wal, I declare, that's about the meanest picture of George Washington I ever see."

A Vermont woman boiled, baked and fried some bananas sent her by a friend but couldn't bear the taste of them in any shape.

John Anderson, of Indiana, didn't win the prize at a spelling match, but he licked the man who pronounced the hard words, and that was consoling.

Winneshiek county Iowa, has never known such a smell as that caused by the recent burning of its only Limburger cheese factory.

A Green Bay mother won't leave the room when Sarah's beau calls, and Sarah's beau makes a remark or two on navigation, slides along to his hat and says it's nice weather.

A newspaper biography trying to say his subject "was hardly able to bear the demise of his wife," was made by the inexorable printer to say, "wear the chemise of his wife."

A printer out West, whose office is two miles from any other building, and who hangs his sign on the limb of a tree, advertises for a boy. He says, a boy from the country preferred.