The Port Tobacco Times

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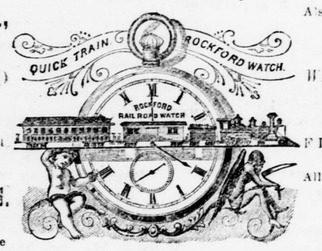

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Select Poetry.

A VIOLET

BY MRS. SARA WOLVERTON.

Dost ever sit at twilight's hour,
And meditate alone,
And think how many, many friends
From life's long way have gone?

Dost ever see thy childhood's friends
Within that shadowed light,
And list them tell the olden tales—
See olden pictures bright!

And then the friend of girlhood's years,
You used to love so well,
Whose ever pearly ear was lent
To list what you would tell?

And then that other, dearer friend,
Whose hand enclasp'd your own,
Whose whispered word so very low,
None heard but you alone?

And then the friends of later years,
Who round your hearthstone came,
And taught you friendship oft can boast
Of else beside a name?

And then the years that came between
And blotted all away?
Some lights went out, but some in heaven
Still burn with steadfast ray!

The backward path I love to tread,
Its joys are ever mine;
The future may be rayless night,
The past through it shall shine.

A Select Story.

Old Peter's Story

All was excitement in the great house on the hill, for so Chalmers Hill was known for miles around. I had not served the family, boy and man, for thirty years, without sharing it to a certain degree not incompatible with my butler's dignity, and all evidence of which I strove sedulously to conceal.

It was occasioned by no less an event than the return of the young lady of the house—the only daughter and sole heiress of all these broad acres—from the finishing school in Paris, to make her formal debut in society.

The suit of rooms assigned to her had been thoroughly renovated and refurnished in a manner widely different from the solid English comfort which prevailed throughout the house; but to look through them was like a sudden glimpse into the nest of some humming bird, which had imparted all its own brilliancy to its belongings.

Only a few days before the expected arrival came a letter, begging permission to bring with her, her dearest friend—a young lady whose father was an East Indian officer, and whose return had been postponed a couple of months.

Of course the petted daughter's wish was law; and though the fond father, reading aloud the letter preferring this request at the breakfast-table, exchanged a glance of disappointment with his wife that soon the privacy of their little circle must be disturbed, a formal invitation to Miss Aline Revere to the hospitalities of Chalmers Hall was dispatched that very day.

I shall never forget the evening of Miss Chalmers' return. Her cheery, "How do you do, Peter?" thrilled my old bones, as did the touch of the little hand she kindly offered me, in memory perhaps of my long service and the many rides up and down the broad walls she had on my shoulder, screaming the while with glee.

She flitted about all evening, like a bee, from flower to flower, and it was as though a burst of sudden sunshine had illuminated the old house. She was a fair sweet English girl; but, as all were seated around the dinner-table, I could not but acknowledge the palm of beauty must be awarded to her friend. I had never seen a more exquisite face. It fairly haunted me; it held in it the fire of the tropics, the ice of the Arctic, the light of the heavens, the shadow of the night—each expression in contradiction of the other, each tending to produce harmonious warfare.

I did not think this all out myself, but some one, long after, in describing Miss Revere's face, thus worded it, and I knew then they made clear the enigma my old brain had so long tried to solve. I would even then have been envious, for Miss Chalmber's sake, but that she seemed so fond, so devoted to her friend, that her very gladness was an unconscious rebuke to me.

It was not long before the house was filled with guests—ladies and ladies-maids, gentlemen and their valets, coming and going, filling the place with gaiety and excitement. Then came the announcement of a grand ball, with invitations to all the county. Glad enough I was when the evening it was to take place actually arrived, and I could feel that the bustle of anticipation was at an end.

On her way down to the drawing room, Miss Flo peeped in to see the tables, and I thought for that once we might compare her to Miss Aline. She was dressed in white, her arms and neck bare, but glittering with precious stones. Some of the family jewels her father had reset, and presented to her that very morning at the breakfast table. I was not likely to forget the circumstance for the old feeling of half dislike, with which I had at first regarded Miss Aline, swept over me as I fancied an envious glitter sparkled in the great black eyes, as they rested on the white, glittering gems.

"Will I do, Peter?" asked my young mistress, sweeping me a mock courtesy as she had done when a tiny girl; and I half believe instead of answering her I brushed away a tear.

The ball had been a grand success, and the sun had risen ere the sound of the wheels of the large carriage filled with departing guests had died away.

There had been many made welcome that night, but none, I well knew received a warmer one than young Mr. Earle, who had returned home from a year's absence in foreign countries twenty-four hours before.

I caught a glimpse of him once, as he was dancing with Miss Flo. Even in that fleeting moment I saw how tenderly his handsome eyes looked down upon her—how flushed with happiness was her own face, half hidden on his broad shoulder; and my heart gave a glad, exultant leap that so joyous a future was assured her.

I well knew what was the unexpressed family wish, for young Mr. Earle's estates adjoined our own. They were unfettered, unencumbered, and in every way a splendid patrimony.

I had turned away from this fleeting glimpse among the great folks, my old brain filled with its idle dreams of the future, when my eyes chanced to fall upon one who, like myself, was engrossed in the animated scene beyond us. It was Miss Flo's friend, but oh how changed!

The mask had fallen from her beautiful face. The black eyes fairly scintillating with suppressed feeling were fixed upon the two who moved in such perfect harmony with the music. A drop of blood was on her scarlet lip, where her little white teeth had rested. One small hand was involuntarily clenched. Her mouth moved, but no sound issued from it.

I stood transfixed, a cold shiver running through me. It was this fury whom Miss Flo, gentle and unconscious, regarded as her dearest friend.

Of what stuff might be made her dearest foe? I remembered then the look I had seen these same eyes fix upon the jewels. Was she envious of my young lady's fortune? What danger might not threaten her through this beautiful pantheress? And yet, how dared I, a humble servant, utter a word of warning?

Even with these thoughts, passing in quick succession through my mind, there was so sudden and instantaneous a change swept over Miss Revere's expression that I could scarce recall the other, except as the result of some hideous conjuring of my own fancy.

Miss Flo was coming toward her, leaning on Mr. Earle's arm.

I returned to my duties with a heavy heart. I felt a shadow of ill was pending over us, yet I almost forgot it next day, when my young lady's formal engagement to Mr. Earle was announced. So loved and protected, what possible harm could come to her, even through a woman's malice?

Ah, my unspoken question remained not long unanswered. It had been all too natural for those two young hearts to flow toward each other, obeying the life impulse of both. They had loved each other as children; they knew each other as though the bond of brotherhood and sisterhood united them; their memories circled around the same spot, were haunted by the same objects.

It was the natural sequence, which all had anticipated. Therefore, save Mr. Earle was with us more constantly than of old, and that there was a new flush on Miss Flo's cheek, a softer, a tenderer light in her blue eyes, it was hard to realize any change. But one was pending lest difficult of realization. The lovers had a constant companion in the person of my young lady's friend. At first Mr. Earle seemed to dislike her, but Miss Flo's sweet influence and his own courtesy led him first to conceal this, and later to overcome it.

Miss Flo's sweet influence and his own courtesy, I have said; but there was a more potent reason still in Miss Revere's marvelous fascination. There was not one in the whole household it escaped, save myself, and even I had to pull myself up many times with a sharp turn, lest I, too, should be blinded by its glamour. But it was not my old eyes with which she had to deal.

Miss Flo, all trusting and unsuspicious, threw the two she loved constantly together.

"You must like each other for my sake," she would say.

Is danger ever so threatening as when it falls on those who dream not it is near? The sorceress had the young master tightly in her coil ere dreamed that even a silken thread had enfettered him. The full horror of it all overwhelmed him; he grew pale and haggard eyed.

But tighter and tighter she drew the bonds, and, like a bird fascinated by the serpent, step by step he approached the magic influence of her sway.

Sometimes she would flash a sudden bewildering smile into his eyes; sometimes she would assume a pensive coyness; sometimes a strange thrill of passionate grief would seem to sway her.

One of her most wonderful attractions was her voice. Even in speaking, one seemed to listen to low music but in singing it reached the gamut of human emotion.

One evening—it was in the twilight—Miss Flo and Mr. Earle were sitting together, on the broad piazza outside the long French windows leading into the drawing room, when just within, from the music room beyond, arose the words of an impassioned song.

From the dining room across the hall, I could hear the measure, in its wonderful melody; and knew that she who sang it was singing to but one, who could not be dead to the appeal the words conveyed.

Higher and higher rose the exquisite voice trembling with its weight of passion; and her for whose ear alone it was intended, sat without a girl's fair hand clasped—a girl's fair head resting on his shoulder—a girl's light heart filled with his image.

Did Miss Aline know that he would come in obedience to her call? Was it a mere accident which summond Miss Flo from his side?

However that might be, when left alone, with slow, reluctant movement he rose, and, passing through the open window, walked with uncertain steps to the room beyond. The singer sang on.

Did she see that figure standing still and silent just beyond the threshold? Perhaps the evening shadows hid him, as her voice suddenly died away in a choking sob, and her head bent forward on the keys.

Instantly he was by her side. Instantly he had raised her head to his breast, with his strong faithless arms clasped about her

"Aline," he said, "my love, my love!"

And then uplifting the crimson lips to his, he bent forward and kissed them.

And busy with my silver, knowing naught of this, but wondering how I might unfold to my young mistress my suspicions, when I heard close beside me a low startled cry. I glanced up. Miss Flo was standing on the threshold of the musice room. She had seen all. She would have fallen but that, springing forward, I caught her in my old arms, as Mr. Earle came hastily toward us.

I forgot his rank and my position, as I waved him off; but even in my bitter indignation against him, I felt for what he suffered when I saw the white look of misery on his young, handsome face.

Up the broad stairs I carried my young lady to her room, and laid her on her couch. Then her mother came, and I left her; but as I passed through the room beyond, I saw lying in the empty grate some torn scraps of paper. Mechanically, with a servant's orderly instinct, I stopped and picked them up, when my eye was caught by the meaning of a single sentence, "the heir of the adjoining estate—"

Of course a "gentleman" would have gone no further, but I was but a mere servant, with the interests of the family whom I had served more than two score years over and beyond all else.

I carefully carried the little handful of papers up to my room, and there, bit, by bit, with hard work and infinite spelling, I made them almost a perfect whole.

"Delay your coming a little longer, dear father," wrote the traitoress "The fish is already in my net. I could laugh at his weakness were there not such a stake. He is the heir to the adjoining estate, acres on acres of which I can see from my window as I write. I shall be a grand English lady yet; and then, who will taunt me with being the daughter of a circus rider? We will wipe out that stain, then, on my mother's side and you shall have your reward for all the sacrifices you have made for me."

Had I discovered a vein of gold I could not have gloated more than over these few words.

Ah, now indeed, I could avenge my young lady, and punish her recreant lover! But the time was not yet ripe; I would wait until he had given her his old and honored name, and then I would unmask her ere she had reaped the glory, and too late for him to retrieve the same.

With this determination, I went back to my duties; but passing through the hall, Mr. Earle's voice, low and yet excited, caught my ear.

"I have been mad!" he said. "Aline forgive me for the wrong I have done you; but you must hear the truth. I know how that feeling toward you has been the intoxication of your fascination. Never can I wipe from my memory my darling's white, unconscious face! I felt as though I had stabbed her to the heart; and I knew then that my soul had never wavered in its allegiance, though your beauty and your marvelous power had turned my brain. Aline, say that you do *not* love me! Do not make me feel that I have marred your life, too!"

A stifled voice replied, choked with feeling:

"I cannot Arthur—I cannot! Oh, do not turn from me! I am doubly hopeless now! Flo never again will care for you. Let me teach you the lesson of love for me, if, indeed, already you have not learned it!"

It was not my place—I know that; but I forgot my anger against him in listening to the few manly words which assured me his heart was Miss Flo's, and I strode into the room and put the paper in his hands.

"Read this Mr. Arthur," I said boldly, "before you answer her."

There is little more to be told. I myself, closed the hall door next morning, bright and early, as the carriage bore Miss Aline Revere on the first stage of her journey Londonward. We never saw or heard from her again.

For long weeks Miss Flo refused even to see Mr. Arthur Earle—for months to look upon him as a friend. Poor fellow! We were all sorry for him during this time, for he had spoken truly—his love had never wavered.

But at last there came a day when Miss Flo learned to do this, and then—ah, then light stole back into her eyes, and the color to her cheeks!

She's been a happy wife these many a years now, and old Peter is growing almost useless, save to ride her children, as he once rode her, through the old halls upon his old shoulders, to the echo of their childish laughter, which keeps his old heart young.

Select Miscellany.

A Story Told by Charles Dickens.

'I chanced to be travelling some years ago,' he said, 'in a railroad carriage between Liverpool and London. Besides myself there were two ladies and a gentleman occuping the carriage.—We happened to be all strangers to each other, but I noticed at once that a clergyman was one of the party. I was occupied with a ponderous article in the *Times*, when the sound of my own name drew my attention to the fact that a conversation was going forward among the three other persons in the carriage with reference to myself and my books. One of the ladies was perusing 'Bleak House,' then lately published, and the clergyman had commenced a conversation with the ladies by asking what book they were reading. On being told the author's name and the title of the book, he expressed himself greatly grieved that any lady in England should be willing to take up the writings of so vile a character as Charles Dickens. Both the ladies showed great surprise at the low estimate the clergyman put upon an author whom they had been accustomed to read, to say the least, with a certain degree of pleasure. They were evidently much shocked at what the man said of the immoral tendency of these books, which they seemed never before to have suspected; but when he attacked the author's private character, and told monstrous stories of his immoralities in every direction, the volume was shut up and consigned to the dark pockets of a travelling bag. I listened in wonder and astonishment, behind my newspaper, to stories of myself, which, if they had been true, would have consigned any man to a prison for life. After my fictitious biographer had occupied himself for nearly an hour with the eloquent recital of my delinquencies and crimes, I very quickly joined in the conversation. Of course I began by modestly doubting some statement which I had just heard touching the author of 'Bleak House,' and other unimportant works of a similar character. The man stared at me, and evidently considered my appearance on the conversational stage an intrusion and an impertinence.

'You seem to speak,' I said, 'from personal knowledge of Mr. Dickens. Do you know him?'

'He rather evaded the question, but following him up closely, I compelled him to say that he had been talking not from his knowledge of the author in question, but he said he knew for a certainty that every statement he had made was a true one. I then became more earnest in my inquiries for proofs, which he arrogantly declined giving. The ladies sat by in silence, listening to what was going forward. An author they had been accustomed to read for amusement had been traduced for the first time in thier hearing, and they were waiting to learn what I had to say in refutation of the clergyman's charges. I was taking up his vile stories one by one, and stamping them as false in every particular, when the man grew furious, and asked me if I knew Dickens personally. I replied—

'Perfectly well—no man knows him better than I do; and all your stories about him, from beginning to end, to these ladies, are unmittigated lies.'

'The man became lived with rage, and asked for my card.

'You shall have it,' I said; and coolly taking out one I presented it to him without bowing.

"We were then nearing the station in London so that I was spared a longer interview with my *truthful* companion; but if I were to live a hundred years I should not forget the abject condition into which the narrator of my crimes was instantly plunged. His face turned white as his cravat, and his lips refused to utter words. He seemed like a wilted vegetable, and as if his legs belonged to somebody else. The ladies became aware of the situation at once, and bidding them 'good day' I stepped smilingly out of the carriage. Before I could get away from the station the man had mustered up strength sufficient to follow me, and his apologies were so nauseous and craven that I pitied him from my soul. I left him with this caution—

'Before you made charges againt the character of any man again, about whom you know nothing, and of whose works you are utterly ignorant, study to be a seeker after truth, and avoid lying as you would eternal perdition.'

I Noticed.

I have noticed that purses will hold pennies as well as pounds.

I have noticed that in order to be a reasonable creature, it is necessary at times to be downright mad.

I have noticed that some men are so honest that neeessity compels them to be dishonest in the end.

I have noticed that whatever is, is right with a few exceptions—the left leg and the left side of a plum-pudding.

I have noticed that the prayer of a selfish man is "Forgive us our debts," while he makes everybody that owes him pay to the utmost farthing.

I have noticed that he who thinks every man a rogue is very certain to see one when he shaves himself, and ought, in mercy to his neighbors, to surrender the rascal to justice.

Mrs. Lydia E. Pinkham, 233 Western Avenue Lynn, Mass., is rapidly acquiring an enviable reputation for the surprising cures which daily result from the use of her Vegetable Compound in all female diseases. Send to her for pamphlets.

Stories of the Flood.

HUMOROUS OCCURRENCIES IN THE SUBMERGED STREETS OF CINCINNATI.

On this portion of Front street the houses are principally used as dwellings. The ground floors of the houses are under from two to four feet of water, so that the occupants have sought shelter in the upper stories.—All the front windows were open and looking out of them were hundreds of women and childrn who were not able to leave their dwellings, except in boats, with any degree of safety. The streets below, which had became a part of the Ohio river, was being navigated by numerous boats, wash tubs, planks and a number of small boys were walking about on stilts.—At the corner of Butler and Front streets were anchored several boats waited to be hired out.

'What'll ye ax to row me cross to me house in the muddle of the block?" asked a son Erin, coming out of a saloon at the corner, where he had been inbibing rather freely, of the young man who had charge of the hiring of the boats.

'Fifty cents,' answered the young man in charge.

'To blazes wid ye and yer boat,' returned the intoxicated man as he caught hold of a plank that was floating by. He mounted the plank and giving it a push reached the middle of the street, where the water was the deepest, when he lost his balance and down he went into the water, which had the effect of sending up screams from women whose heads were stick-out of nearly every window in the neighborhood. A boy in a wash tub came to his rescue. A number of the children imprisoned in the houses were amusing themselves by throwing cats and dogs out of the windows.—One old woman attempted to cross the street in a tub, which upset with her and she came very near drowning before help could reach her.

A boy about twelve years of age, who was amusing himself by walking on stilts across the flooded streets, missed his footing and fell and was taken out of the water unconscious.—Shouts of the 'The baby! the baby!' by a chorus of excited women's voices rent the air in this locality late yesterday afternoon. The excitement was occasionad by the upsetting of a wash tub containing a youthful excursion party composed of a little boy and girl aged ten and twelve respectively, and a baby of about four months old. She had charge of the navigation, but proved a poor seaman, as the tub upset. Fortunately the accident happened in shallow water and no harm except a good wetting was done.

A fine old Irish lady, whose residence is in Pendleton was visited by the flood, sat contentedly on the side of her bed-stead watching through the open door the work of removing her neighbors in boats. Being finally entreated to abandon her house and seek a place of safety, she said, 'O'ill no go. O'ill stay here.' And this ultimatum the fine old Irish lady still sticks. If her house is out of water she 'still is sitting,' on the same bedstead—*Cincinnatti Commercial.*

A Funny Mistake.

Mistakes will occur in the best regulated families, but we doubt if a more ludicrous one ever happened in any home than that which the San Francisco *Alto* reports. The editor says that in a small village across the bay resides a well-known minister and his family. One of his sons, who was just approaching manhood, has been in the habit, since infancy, of walking in his sleep.

Every effort has been made to break him of his somnambulistic tendencies, but without avail. A short time ago, it was decided by the head of the house that the somnambulist should occupy the same couch with his elder brother, and the latter instructed, in case the boy attempted to walk in his sleep, to administer punishment by an application of the sole of his slipper.

One night a short time ago, the father imagined he heard a disturbance in the chicken yard at the rear of the house, and fearing that his hen roost might be robbed, he entered the room where the boys were sleeping, and, opening the window, looked out into the darkness to ascertain whether his apprehensions were correct.

The elder son thought the figure at the window was his brother, and leaping from his couch seized the ever-ready slipper and administer a severe castigation upon the form in undress at the window.

Before the astonished father could return he had received some four or five heavy stinging blows, and was so surprised and astonished that for a moment he could hardly speak a work.

The son when he realized the situation, was almost paralyzed, and scene was ridiculous in the extreme. When the circumstances were explained, however, the clergyman fully appreciated the joke.

A Lesson in Equestrianism.

Horseback riding as an art and as a beneficial exercise is one of the most judicious habits that one could cultivate. While it affords the equestrian every opportunity for the cultivation of graceful posing, it comprises all the healthful elements of the most invigorating pleasures. Like all else in this world, however, if indulged in immoderately, the result are extremely painful, and oft times dangerous. Galled limbs, and Piles that itch intensely, particularly after getting warm in bed, are not infrequently the outcome of excessive exercise in the saddle. In such cases, however, the evil can be thoroughly eradicated by applying Swayne's Ointment, which, as a cure for Piles—itching or otherwise, has no equal.