

The Port Tobacco Times

AND CHARLES COUNTY ADVERTISER.

PUBLISHED AT PORT TOBACCO, MARYLAND, EVERY FRIDAY MORNING, BY COX & DALEY, EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS, AT ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

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Volume XLIII.—No. 2.

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Return thanks for the liberal patronage we have received and hope to continue to merit the same. (Feb. 5-2-86.)
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I have an Established Warehouse at La Plata, on the B. & P. R. R., and have all ways on hand there a full line of all grades of the above Fertilizers ready for immediate delivery. References: J. H. Langley, W. M. Jamison, Capt. Alex. Franklin, Thos. B. Delaney, Alex. Haislip, John B. Carpenter, H. H. Owen and all who have used these Fertilizers. We have a most excellent article for POTATOES and all kinds of Garden Vegetables.

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"The Glass of Fashion,"

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FOR SPRING STUFF, NEVERTHELESS WE HAVE MADE EARLY PURCHASES, BECAUSE WE HAVE SECURED STYLES IN

SPRING GOODS

THAT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BOUGHT LATER. THE FIRST SPRING MONTH IS ONLY A FEW DAYS OFF, SO WE ADVISE OUR CUSTOMERS TO BUY A LITTLE IN ADVANCE OF SPRING, AND SECURE THE FIRST NEW THINGS OF THIS SEASON.

Wool Wide Shirting Percales, Wide Malins and Serenader Gingham, New Patterns of Spring Satins, Indian Blue Cottons for Dresses, Silk Ribbons in Woods and Browns, \$1, Tricot Cloths in Woods and Browns, \$2, 25 inch Diaper in Woods and Browns, \$2, 25 inch Flannel Suits (new), \$4, Hamburg Embroidery, half price, 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 6c, 7c, 8c, 9c, 10c, up.

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THE HARTFORD LIFE

ANNUITY COMPANY,

HARTFORD, CONN'T.

Will Insure all Healthy Subjects, Male and Female.

THE COMPANY was organized in 1806 and had discovered that it is not the great crisis of life which are the most difficult to meet heroically, and that among the most practical and prosaic of every day hardships herency was apt to stray, more than was loyal to Tom, to dreams of what might have been if she had chosen differently. Oh, that "if!" She little knew, when she discovered that it is not the great crisis of life which are the most difficult to meet heroically, and that among the most practical and prosaic of every day hardships herency was apt to stray, more than was loyal to Tom, to dreams of what might have been if she had chosen differently.

R. H. MITCHELL, General Agent for MARYLAND.

M. THOMPSON, Agent for CHARLES COUNTY.

JNO. T. DIGGES, Examining PHYSICIAN.

Select Poetry.

A KNOT OF BLUE.

She hath no gems of luster bright To sparkle in her hair;

No flowers of herrowed light To make her beauty fair;

Upon her shining locks about Are daisies wet with dew;

And daisies from her bosom throat A little knot of blue.

A dainty knot of blue, A ribbon little of blue,—

It fills my dreams with sunny gleams, That little knot of blue.

I met her down the shadowed lane Beneath the apple-tree,

The halcyon blossoms fell like rain And what I said or what I did

That moon I never knew. Her eyes were from her name and hid

A little knot of blue, A love knot strong and true,—

'Twill hold my heart till life shall part, That little knot of blue.

—*Sonnet Meters Park in Country.*

Select Story.

LITTLE TROTTIE.

A SHORT STORY FOR DEFEATED MOTHERS.

The sun shone as brilliantly at the parade grounds at Fort Fletcher as though it was an earthly paradise instead of a bleak and ugly bit of Montana prairie cut off from its parent wilderness by some rough defenses and two rows of sufficiently ill-built quarters. It was quite deserted at this hour, except by half a dozen of the garrison children, who—being of an age to enjoy the sunshine undisturbed by any *arrere pense* as to the ugliness it shows upon—were amusing themselves immensely and filling the clear air with joyful shouts and shrill laughter, the only imperfection in their happiness being the necessary—strictly enforced by warnings and punishments—of keeping to the upper end of the parade, far away from a certain low stone wall behind which a blind, dangerously attractive to youthful enterprise, overhung the Yellowstone river.

Mabel Heriot, sitting in the small porch in front of her husband's quarters, her fingers busy with some huge darns in a pair of scarlet stockings, turned her pretty, discontented eyes, more often than was good for the progress of her work, to another pair of scarlet stockings which flashed in and out among the group of children with an activity which promised her more darning in the near future, for they belonged to her small son; and though Trottie was only three years old, he had early manifested a positive genius for wear and tear, holding his own in that, as in other boyish attributes, among the older children, with a cheerfulness and confidence which filled his mother with mingled admiration and regret.

"He is such a real boy!" she said to herself with half a sigh and half a smile. "If he was only a quiet little fellow like Harry Scott how much less work it would be to take care of him. I shall never be able to keep his clothes mended as he grows rougher and more heedless in this uncivilized place."

Then the stockings she was darning dropped on her lap, and her thoughts left the stockings she had been watching and slipped back, as they were apt to do, back over the four years of her marriage, with all its poverty, its privations and its dreary exile in this Western post, back to the days of her childhood and very substantial cure of a shied on the past by the knowledge that it can return in no possible future those girlish days had grown to look very shadowless to Mabel Heriot. Life had been so easy,—no cares, no responsibilities, no anxieties,—while everything a girl could desire of luxury, amusement and admiration had been showered upon her as the adopted daughter of a wealthy and generous, though rather tyrannical, uncle. It had all been quite perfect until she dined with Tom Heriot at a West Point ball and read something in his blue eyes, heard something in his pleasant voice that stirred her heart with the conviction that, charming as her life had seemed, it would henceforward be very quiet and desolate if she must banish those eyes and that voice from her; a conviction strong enough to support her through all the stormy scenes which followed her uncle's bitter opposition to her engagement to a penniless lieutenant; strong enough to make her reply to his final declaration that she must choose between her lover and him by putting her hand in Tom Heriot's, with the passionate protest that where he went there she must follow, even though it was to the world's end. Nor has she yet, even to her own heart, said that she repented her choice; only, like many another heroic woman, she had discovered that it is not the great crisis of life which are the most difficult to meet heroically, and that among the most practical and prosaic of every day hardships herency was apt to stray, more than was loyal to Tom, to dreams of what might have been if she had chosen differently.

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anything could ever be, and yet who every day, almost every hour, of his little life added to her cares and her anxieties.

Her thoughts came back suddenly to the present at a more uproarious shout than usual from the children, and she saw Trottie cantering toward her astride of a stick, while half the pleats of his killed shirt trailed behind him. "Oh, what a boy!" she cried, rising to catch him as he passed.

"Not a boy; Trottie a horse. Listen, Trottie, and with a most life-like neigh and a final prance of the scarlet stockings, he paused before her.

"Naughty, naughty Trottie," she said, quite declining to give his performance the smile its realism deserved. "See this great rip, which mamma only mended last night."

"Trottie sorry," he cried, looking up in her troubled face, and then with a spring he clasped both arms about her neck as she bent over him to gather up the torn pleats, and gave her such a hug as small arms know how to give. "Trottie big bear now," he laughed between two ferocious grunts.

As she freed herself, smiling and frowning and holding the little clinging hands in hers, somebody close beside them sighed so heavily that Mabel turned, rather startled, to see

An Indian woman, with a basketful of bead-work strapped to her back, stood gazing at the mother and child with a look of yearning sorrow in her eyes which half-touched, half-frightened Mabel. "What do you want?" she asked quickly.

"Me want nothing white mother can give," the squaw answered, gravely, laying one brown hand on Trottie's bright hair. "Him pretty boy," she said slowly, a hard breath between each sentence. "Me have pretty boy big. White mother very happy; she keep her boy. Great Spirit take my boy." Then, with a gesture of despair which all her wonderful savage endurance could not subdue, she clasped both hands before her face and wept on her knees, shaking with sobs which she still struggled to silence.

The tears filled Mabel's eyes, but she stood hesitating what to do, her aversion to Indians, which was the natural result of four years spent in their near neighborhood, striving with compassion for the grief which most appeals to a woman's sympathy.

But no doubts troubled Trottie. Grief was evident in every line of the bent, trembling figure, and for every grief in his experience there was one remedy sure and unerring. He applied it at once.

"Not cry any more," he said in his cheerful little voice, and kissed the only bit of brown cheek which her clasped hands left visible.

She turned as though she would have flung her arms about him, but Mabel had clasped her boy fast, with a sudden terror, sharp though indefinable.

The Indian arose slowly, her face recovering its usual calm as she did so.

"Pretty boy very good to me; white mother not be afraid him hurt him," she said, and walked away with a grave dignity which brought a shamed color to Mabel's face.

She stepped forward with an impulse to say something kind, but paused with a smile at herself, half shy, half amused. What could she say of consolation that an Indian woman could understand, whose religious faith was probably even more fervent than her knowledge of English? And she shrank from offering a grief that was so real and so dignified the usual and very substantial cure of a squaw troubles. No, Trottie, had done all that could be done to show their sympathy. Poor soul! whatever else she might fail to comprehend, she had understood the touch of those baby lips.

With a kiss that was even more tender than usual, Mabel Heriot took her boy on her knees and told him fairy stories until dinner time, to the utter neglect of the undarned stockings and the torn skirt.

All that day Mabel felt strangely anxious and restless whenever Trottie was out of her sight. But by the next day common sense had got the better of imagination, and, absorbed in her every-day duties, she allowed him to play with the other children on the parade ground. At two o'clock the maid was sent to bring him in to dinner, he having failed to appear as hungrily prompt as usual. In a quarter of an hour she returned, full of mingled excitement and fright, and said that not finding Trottie on the parade ground, she had gone to the houses of the officers' children only to be told that Trottie was been with any of them; nor had he been seen for some time. Then Mabel—a terrible certainty stabbing her heart with a pang that aged her face look suddenly gray and aged—cried sharply:

"That Indian woman has taken him! My baby! my baby!"

In vain Tom Heriot assured her that their naughty boy, who was a great pet in the regiment, would be found in one of the soldiers' quarters, leaving his eyes and ears with strange sights and sounds.

"Go and see," she said hoarsely; "but you will not find him unless you find her."

When he came back presently, very white and quiet, from this useless search, the alarm had spread, but there were kind faces and anxious suggestions and offers of assistance in Mabel's pretty little drawing-room which suddenly looked so desolate.

Nobody but Mabel gave the Indian woman more than a thought for they were all used to daily visits from Indians, who had long been perfectly

peaceable and were believed quite incapable of a bolder crime than petty dishonesty. Besides, what motive could tempt them to steal a child whose discovery in their hands would be most certainly severely punished, while even his undiscovered possession could not avail them in any way?

It was not long before a soldier was sent, after a whispered conversation, to climb down the bluff at the further end of the parade ground, toward which the mothers in the garrison had been glancing shudderingly ever since the news of Trottie's disappearance. In a terribly short time the soldier returned, the tears filling his kindly Irish eyes, and in his hand Trottie's little fez, which he found half way down the bluff; just where a rock overhung the swift Yellowstone. A great silence fell upon the fort, which had been so full of excitement, and the voices which had spoken of hope and courage to Mabel were hushed when Tom Heriot, sinking down beside his wife's chair, laid his head on her knees and sobbed.

It was Mabel who spoke, almost at once, in a strange, strained voice that yet was instinct with energy, and something which, if it was not hope, yet was resolved that it would not be despair.

"Tom, darling, do not give him up. Our boy never went near the bluff. He promised me again this morning that he would not, and he would not more break a promise than you would, Tom. That Indian woman has him. Find her—find her quickly, dear; I cannot wait much longer."

More to soothe her than from any hope of finding her belief true, Tom, with another officer and a few soldiers, rode to the little Indian camp, about a mile from the fort, only to find that nothing was left of it but some burned out fires. Something of his wife's strong conviction seemed to pass into Tom Heriot's heart, at the sight of that suddenly deserted camp.

"We must make up several parties and search for them," he said briefly to the officer with him as they rode back to the fort; but there was the light of new hope in his eyes.

There is this much of resemblance to a family in such a small and isolated community as the garrison at Fort Fletcher, that, however much they may quarrel among themselves in private, they are all united in sorrow on one of its members' afflictions as for the time in the remembrance of how close and entire is their mutual dependence on each other. From the Colonel down to the latest arrived recruit there was no heart in the regiment that did not feel a pang at the thought of the blue reckless eyes and a pair of baby-fingers which, when they carried away in the swift rush of the Yellowstone or across the prairie to some Indian hiding place, they had little hope of seeing again. There were more volunteers than were needed for the searching parties as soon as Tom asked for them, and with the last one to set out Tom went himself after a sharp struggle between his restlessness and the desire to find his boy, and to find his boy's mother toward finding his boy and his sense that he was leaving Mabel to bear the heaviest burden of suspense alone. It was she who sent him away in the end.

"Go, Tom," she murmured, clinging to him with trembling fingers and looking at him with piteous, entreating eyes. "You have been always so good and patient, perhaps God will find you find him. I have been a bad wife, a bad mother, I must say, but I am sure you have been wicker and repining, though I have you both safe, my precious ones; God has punished me. Say you forgive me—just once, Tom—and I may forgive me, too, for your sake and let me have my boy again."

Holding her close to his loyal heart—which indeed had never doubted her perfection, he answered her that he never would, uttering the forgiveness for which she pleaded so passionately in such tender words as made it sound more like a blessing than a pardon.