PUBLIC LEDGER.

By E. WHITMORE. LARGEST CITY CIRCULATION. Fifteen Cents Per Week

VOL. XII. MEMPHIS, TENN.: SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 29, 1871. NO. 52

PUBLIC LEDGER.

THE PUBLIC LEDGER IS PUBLISHED every afternoon (except Sunday) by

E. WHITMORE,

At No. 13 Madison street.

The PUBLIC LEDGER is served to city subscribers by faithful carriers at FIFTEEN CENTS PER WEEK, payable weekly to the carriers. By mail (in advance): One year, $8; six months, $4; three months, $2; one month, 75 cents.

Newsdealers supplied at 2½ cents per copy.

Weekly Public Ledger,

Published every Tuesday at $2 per annum (in advance); clubs of five or more, $1 50.

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E. WHITMORE,
Publisher and Proprietor.

From Harper's Magazine for April.]

CRUISING.

What are the days but islands,
So many little islands,
And sleep the sea of silence
That flows about them all?
There, when the moon is risen,
The peaceful waters glisten;
But yonder plashing—listen!
It is the souls that fall.

The little boats are skimming,
The wind-led boats are skimming,
Each in its silver rimming,
Apart from fleet and shore.
There not an oar is dipping—
With just a cable's slipping
Guides out the phantom shipping
That wanders evermore.

Every day's an island,
A green or barren island,
A lowland or a highland,
That looks upon the sea.
The fruitful groves are crowning;
There barren cliffs are frowning,
And rocky channels drowning
The little boats that flee.

How many are the islands,
The teeming, talking islands,
That in the sea of silence
The roving vessels find?
Their number no man knoweth;
Their way the current showeth;
The tide returnless floweth
As each is left behind.

The sailors long to tarry—
For rest they long to tarry—
When at some isle of faery
They touch and go ashore.
With songs of wistful pleading
They follow fate unheeding,
And with the tide's receding
Are drifted as before.

But sometime, in the sailing,
The blind and endless sailing,
They pass beyond the hailing
Of land upon the lee;
The lowlands and the highlands,
And all beyond the islands,
Behold the sea of silence—
Behold the great white sea.

A Wedding and Funeral.

The Attakapas (La.) Register brings us this sad narration:

The ways of Providence are inscrutable. Men come and go like leaves in the wind. God is merciful, and His decrees are all wise. We must bow in patient submission. This week we are given a story in two chapters, short, and relating to the changes of life. Read and profit thereby. "In the midst of life we are in death."

Married.—On Thursday evening, the 8th of April, at the residence of David Berwick, on Bayou Sale, Dr. Charles R. Fassit, of Centreville, to Miss Jenny, youngest daughter of the late Robert M. Royster.

Died.—Suddenly at the residence of David Berwick, on Bayou Sale, on Monday night, April 12th, Dr. Charles R. Fassit, one of St. Mary's most honored and respected citizens. His remains were followed to the grave by a very large number of our citizens and his brother Masons, in whose beautiful grounds he was buried.

Mr. Fassit was in Centerville on Monday, cheerful, hopeful, and in the highest spirits. He remarked to his partner, Dr. Allen, that he would take a dose of hydrate of chloral, as he did not sleep well. On retiring to his room at night, he mixed a dose of the salt, swallowed it, and on attempting to get into bed he said to his wife: "I fear I have taken the wrong medicine; I feel very sick," and fell dead by the side of his bed. The bottle, properly labeled, was found to contain cyanide of potash. He had taken the wrong bottle, by mistake—the most deadly poison. May the Great Ruler of all things, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, be merciful to his afflicted, heart-broken young widow.

Death of a Notorious Brigand.

Guicche, the Brigand of Arezzo, Italy, was shot recently by the King's Carbineers. He was, it is said, the terror, but also the boast of the neighborhood; and, no less from admiration than from fear, he was always sure, as long as he could elude the bloodhounds of the lavy, of a supper and a sweetheart. Justice was over and over again suspended by the dread of his anger, and tempting posts, usually so coveted in Italy, were refused by one official after another in deference to his mandates. The mode of his capture was in keeping with the remainder of his eventful history. Three of his pursuers took refuge one evening with a poor and aged couple, and their suspicions were at once aroused by seeing before them the promise of a more sumptuous repast than was warranted by the peasants' condition. The supper was preparing for Guicche, and the fact was extorted from the temporizing pair. The Carbineers lay in wait for the solitary bravo, who soon came along singing a *rispeto* or love song, and they dispatched him before he had time to do more than bite off one of their fingers.

IN THE CLOAK-ROOM.

There was mistletoe everywhere at Harbingdon Hall; it had even found its way into the cloak-room, where the gaselier was full of it. It was Christmas eve, so of course the mistletoe had a right to be there; but I don't think it ever hung over anything more fierce-looking that night than the face of Col. Verschoyle, a great, tall, soldier-like, brown-bearded, brown-faced hero from Abyssinia.

Colonel Vivian Verschoyle, C. B., and V. C., had done his country good service, and laurels had been amply heaped upon him; he was "honorably mentioned" and duly lauded, receiving his fill of adulation and adoration from all the county round. His handsome face was as bronzed as it well could be, but all the mischief the African sun had done his complexion, had not spoiled the beauty of those deep, dark eyes, or the perfect symmetry of those noble features.

Yes, he was a wonderfully fine fellow, this Abyssinian hero, and a great lion in his way; all the girls about Harbingdon had fallen down before his shrine and worshiped; but their adoration was short-lived; it died away with a faint struggle when they heard the gallant colonel was engaged to be married. It was all up with our hero then! Abyssinia was no longer an interesting topic of conversation, and I don't think the colonel was considered as handsome as he had once been.

There was a grand entertainment at Harbingdon Hall on Christmas eve, and Colonel Verschoyle and his *fiance* were at it.

The evening was more than half over, and the colonel was in the cloak-room, standing under the mistletoe, looking with great, dark, angry eyes into the glowing fire. Let me tell you this brave warrior was very much put out just then, and about as angry as he could be; you could see he had a hot temper, and that something had occurred to render it hotter than ever. The colonel was a man who would not stand being trifled with, and he considered that he had been trifled with in the most shameful manner; he was there to learn the cause, and he was waiting for Enid Vavasor to come and render an explanation.

"Meet me in the cloak-room in a quarter of an hour," he had said to her, in a low, determined, hard voice, as she was whirled away in a waltz by a tall, dashing young officer, whose name the colonel did not know, and whose uncommonly handsome face he had not seen until just a few minutes before, when he caught sight of it in the conservatory, amid orange trees and camelias, in very close proximity to the lovely, laughing lips of Enid Vavasor.

The storming of Magdala was nothing to the fierce warfare in the heart of Vivian Verschoyle as he witnessed that kiss. He walked away to the far end of the long drawing-room at Harbingdon Hall, bewildered, maddened, furiously angry, fiercely jealous. This great, strong, noble-hearted man had given all his pure, true love to that girl, and she had made a fool of him. Another moment and she was whirled past him in the arms of this stranger—waltzing, too, a thing she said she had given up because she knew he disliked it. The colonel was beside himself, and then it was that he went up to her and told her to meet him in the cloak room in a quarter of an hour; and now he was there awaiting her presence.

She was long in coming. He pulled furiously at his great tawny beard in his restless impatience, and yet he had not made up his mind what he was to say to her, though he felt that a girl who could act as she had acted that night was no fit wife for him. He was bitterly disappointed in her; for he believed her to be all that was pure and womanly, having a lively aversion to the fast, free "girl of the period."

They had been engaged about a month, and her father's estate joined Harbingdon where Colonel Verschoyle was now staying on a visit to Lord Wenborough. Enid Vavasor was the only girl in a family of nine sons, most of whom were in the army, and she was the very idol of her doting parents.

Ha! she was coming now—and Vivian Verschoyle turned his haughty face toward her as she passed through the door of the cloak-room.

Enid Vavasor, how shall I describe you, with your strange, fanciful name and your strangely sweet face? It was not in beauty and excellence of feature she excelled, for beyond those rare blue eyes she had not a single good feature, and yet—strange contradiction—it was a lovely face, and Colonel Verschoyle knew it to his cost as he turned to meet it, with its winsome smile, its exquisite colorings, and its halo of chesnut brown hair, rippling and waving over the broad, low brow. Bright scarlet holly berries shone out amid the brown ripples with just the faintest *soupcon* of mistletoe, and another bunch of the same Christmas berries appeared on the breast of that snowy dress of softest lace. She looked almost as if she were enveloped in a white cloud as she came forward, and met the haughty gaze of the colonel bent upon her.

A little mischievous smile parted her coral lips. For a moment she looked about to laugh outright; but she controlled herself; and, looking up with a dancing light in her blue eye, she asked, "What is the matter?"

Now our Abyssinian hero did not expect this effrontery, so he came to the point at once with soldier-like brevity.

"Enid Vavasor, you are a coquette—and—I won't stand it! I won't be trifled with!"

Of course he meant to say much more, and make a longer speech, only the pretty face looked so mocking that he stopped short in abrupt contempt. She came a step nearer, and for some minutes they stood there under the great bunch of mistletoe together.

"What have I done?" she asked.

The lovely, laughing eyes were raised inquiringly to his, but as he felt the spell her beauty was casting over him he grew more fierce.

"What have you done? What you shall never have the chance of doing again—made a fool of me!" he thundered forth, his generally clear voice thick with passion.

Remember, the colonel was madly in love and bitterly disappointed, and the storm in his breast, as I told you before, was even hotter than the storming of Magdala.

"I don't see how that can be," said Enid, with provoking calmness, going up to the fire-place and putting her tiny white-slippered foot on the fender. "If you have been made a fool of, as you say, you must have made yourself one, Colonel Verschoyle."

The pretty lips once more wreathed themselves into that mocking smile, and he was beside her in one fierce stride.

"Enid," said he, "you know you have done wrong; you have played with me long enough; but it ends now. Look here!"

She looked up, all sweetness and surprise, but I think she shrank a little as she met the blaze of passion in his eyes.

"Look here," he continued. "Since you have found some one else to kiss and flirt with, you can let me go. I have been miserably mistaken; but it can't be helped now, only we had better part. You have shown me plainly enough this evening what you are."

"What am I?" she asked, simply.

"A flirt!" he exclaimed; "a heartless flirt! And we must part."

"Oh, yes, if you wish it, I suppose we must," said Enid; "but you have said a very hard thing of me—a thing I never heard before; and I would not stand it now, only I see you are angry, and don't quite know what you are saying. I never flirted in my life, sir!"

The sweet eyes looked into his, but he was too irate to see their sweetness.

"You let that—that fellow kiss you in the conservatory!" he cried. "What more would you have, or do I need, as a proof of what you are?"

The color came into her cheeks. "Oh, then, you saw that, did you?" she said, and she gazed down thoughtfully into the fire.

"Why did you allow it?" he demanded.

"Because—oh, because I like him," she replied; "and then, you see, I stupidly let my maid put a sprig of mistletoe in my hair to-night, and so I suppose he—he couldn't help it."

She was laughing now, and her face was flushing brightly until it looked lovelier than he had ever seen it before.

Almost roughly the colonel seized her round, white arm, and the laugh died away on her lips.

"Let me go," she said; "you hurt me. Please remember you are not in Abyssinia now, and English people have feelings."

"Then where are yours, pray?" he cried. "Enid Vavasor, answer me; why have you trifled with me?"

His lips were white with suppressed passion, and, though she struggled to free her arm, he held it still.

"You told me you loved me," he said, hoarsely.

She smiled faintly as she replied, "I told you the truth, Vivian."

"Then why have you been false to me?" he asked. "Enid, cease this mockery, and tell me what you mean by your conduct this evening?" he added, stamping his foot until the whole room shook.

"Oh dear, you do frighten me so!" said Enid, shuddering and looking pathetic. "I wish you would be more considerate, and not treat me as if I were a great strong man like yourself, and could fight it out."

He let go her arm with a contemptuous exclamation. She had tried him very much, and, as he had said to himself that he was not a man to be trifled with, I think it was wonderful he kept as calm as he did.

"There is nothing more to be said, then; we had better part now, and let the world think what it will of us," he said, in a low, cold voice; and Enid, who was watching him keenly, saw how deeply he was roused.

For a moment she hesitated, and a look of contrition swept over her face; the next instant her lips curled with the old expression of laughing derision.

"The world will wonder when they hear Colonel Verschoyle has jilted Miss Vavasor," she said.

"They will never hear that, and you know it. There shall never a word go forth against you from my lips," he said, sternly.

"Then you give me up? may I go away now?" she asked, like a child who has been reprimanded. "Are we to say good-by here?"

A little white-gloved hand was offered to him, as the sweet young face was raised toward his, but his heart was growing bitter against her and her playful coquetry; so he did not take the outstretched hand; he only bowed low and said: "That is the best thing we can do."

Enid Vavasor's eyes rested upon him for a moment as if she were about to speak, and he waited with a heart, the quick, fierce throbs of which told him she had only to say "forgive me," and she would be his own once more; but Enid did not say it; for after that one long, wavering look she simply bowed her young head with its crown of holly and went away, and Vivian Verschoyle was left there alone underneath the mistletoe bough in the cloak-room. Not long alone, for presently the door was opened quietly, and when he turned, perhaps expecting to see Enid again, he came face to face with the dashing young officer, the cause of all this trouble, a young man with skin as bronzed as Verschoyle's own, for he had but lately escaped from Indian suns, and had been but two days on English ground.

* * * * * * *

In less than a quarter of an hour afterward you might have seen Colonel Verschoyle with a very different expression on his countenance, hastily searching the great drawing-room, his handsome features glowing and a bright color tinging his brown cheeks. He was looking for Enid Vavasor; but he could not find her amongst the merry-makers and dancers. Presently, however, he caught a glimpse of something white in the conservatory, amid the orange trees, and he was there in a moment. He threw himself beside her on the sofa, imploring forgiveness in tones of earnest entreaty, as though he almost feared to be denied. But it was a very sweet young face that smiled up at him with large, loving eyes as he caught her to his heart, saying, "Enid, Enid, my darling, you should have told me that he was your brother!"

A Canada paper reports that two young women, fond of dancing, recently got up a dancing party to counteract the effects of a revival meeting, and that when the appointed evening came one of them, according to agreement, called at the house of the other, to accompany her, with two young men, to the dance, and found that she was dead.

A man reached Augusta, Ga., on Monday last, who said he had walked all the way from Nova Scotia; that he started a few days after Christmas without a cent in his pocket, and that he is going to Alabama to buy himself a farm!

Anecdote of Webster.

A correspondent of Harper's Monthly says:

In looking over an old note-book of my father's, written many years ago, I came across an anecdote which, if it has never appeared in print before, is too good to be lost. While John Branch, of North Carolina, was General Jackson's Secretary of the Navy, he, Tazewell, and Daniel Webster were walking on the north bank of the Potomac, at Washington. Tazewell, willing to amuse himself with Branch's simplicity, said: "Branch, I'll bet a ten dollar hat that I can prove that you are on the other side of the river."

"Done," said Branch.

"Well," said Tazewell, pointing to the opposite shore, "isn't that *one side* of the river?"

"Yes."

"Well, isn't this the *other side?*"

"Yes."

"Then, as you are *here*, are you not on the *the other* side?"

"Why, I declare," said poor Branch, "so it is! But here comes Webster. I'll win back the hat from him."

Webster had lagged behind, but now came up, and Branch accosted him:

"Webster, I'll bet you a ten dollar hat that I can prove that you are on the other side of the river."

"Done!"

"Well, isn't this *one* side?"

"Yes."

"Well, isn't that the *the other* side?"

"Yes, *but I am not on that side!*"

Branch hung his head and submitted to the loss of the two hats as quietly as he could.

Baptizing the Baby.

In an Eastern town there is a woman who is extremely deaf, and her affliction has caused an extremely unpleasant mistake, of which her infant child is the victim. She took this babe to church the other day to have him baptized. While she was waiting in the vestibule she thought she would keep him quiet by feeding him from a bottle of milk. While the child was still taking his substance the mother was summoned to the church with the announcement that the minister was ready. In her agitation she threw the bottle from the babe's mouth hurriedly, when the gum nozzle came off, and a part of the milk was spilled upon the child's new clothes. When the clergymen took the child in his arms he looked down at it, and asked the mother what name should be given it. She, with her mind troubled about the accident, thought he was asking how the clothes became soiled; so she answered:

"Nozzle came off."

Rather surprised, he asked again for the name, and she, thinking he did not understand her, bawled out:

"Nozzle came off, I say!"

Whereupon that astonished divine poured water on the child's head, and said:

"Nozzle-came-off Ferguson, I baptize thee," etc., etc.

What this woman wants to know is, whether the Legislature or something can't have that child's name changed to Henry, or Lucullus, or William, or some other more euphonious appellation.