

MY SCHOOLM'AM.

Her face was dimpled, round and fair, Her eyes were brown and mild, And when I saw her teaching there, I longed to be a child.

PINKS AND WHITE VIOLETS.

The prima-donna was nervous, and little wonder that she should be. To-night she was to appear for the first time before an audience of her own countrymen.

And she would win them, win them so that when she came before the curtain they would be her friends; her dear, dear friends.

Down below, the orchestra was tuning in the music-room. The man with the kettle-frames was testing his pitch and stopping the vibrations of the drum-heads with his fingers.

When the prima-donna was in a reflective mood she always did one thing. She would open her little traveling desk and take out a photograph and a well worn, much-read letter.

She knew that letter line for line, and word for word, and how well she knew that badly printed photograph!

There is no spot in New York that reminds one so much of Paris, or of the other continent at least, as this same square she gazed upon.

It was a beautiful day, with a crisp freshness in the air, and yet quite warm. In the park opposite, with its network of asphalt walks wandering through the still green turf, the sparrows twittered cheerily in the bare trees.

The prima-donna noticed all this, and more too; she noticed that everybody seemed to be in a hurry, almost on the point of running; that the cabbies lined up along the curb, talked good-naturedly together, and she could just see the edge of a large poster, announcing that she was to appear that night at Lucia.

Eight years ago she had left that little town on the Housatonic with her father, to study music under the best masters of Europe. Eight years ago!

She picked up the letter and the photograph; a strong manly hand, and a strong, young, manly face, with a high forehead and curling hair. If she had only worn those flowers!

she had only worn those flowers! she thought, but then she did not know—at least not until she had found that letter, long, long afterwards, among her father's papers.

The prima-donna had recalled the whole story, and the whole scene, this afternoon, and the square faded out of her sight. Once more she was in that town amongst the Berkshire hills. She was walking home with her silent, morose father, the organist. They had come from a rehearsal in the great memorial church, and, as they passed the townsfolk on their way beneath the elms, although she was sad and troubled, she nodded and smiled as they greeted her in kindly fashion.

He was a good, a brilliant organist, and the summer visitors would flock to the gray-stone church to hear the costly organ and the singing of that tall slender girl in white; her voice, to cultured ears, meant promise of great things, how great they did not know.

She remembered the day that Gerald was to come home; someone had told her, otherwise she would not have known, and yet she had it as if her heart would break. Why had she stopped writing to her so suddenly, and why did he not answer the two letters that she had sent him? The first letter with a playful reproach in it and a little excuse for his neglect; she "supposed he was so busy he had not time perhaps."

As she had opened the gate at the end of the ill kept path that led up to the dingy little house in which they lived, she noticed on the railing of the picket fence a fresh-plucked bunch of pinks and white violets, not very costly or very artistic in effect perhaps, but they were her favorite flowers; one of the scholars in the Sabbath school had placed them there she thought, so she picked them up and walked with her silent father towards the church.

She was to sing that morning, and she was to sing that morning, and she was to sing that morning, and she was to sing that morning, and she was to sing that morning.

As she crossed the dusty street she thought she caught a glimpse of Gerald standing in the arched doorway of the massive gray-stone church. Just then the father said, "Xenia"—her name was Xenia—"throw away those flowers, they do not match your dress," and she had dropped them in the road.

Then came the service, that never to be forgotten service. As her clear young voice rose and floated out past the arches, people had held their breath in wonder as if an angel was singing, and yet some said that her voice had tears in all its liquid notes. As for herself, she had forgotten everything, the church, the golden, rosy light that streamed through the great wheel window in the apse, even the great organ behind her back; she saw nothing but a figure with its arms folded and head bowed down. It was Gerald, and as she finished he turned; she could never forget the expression on his face. There was a flutter, almost like a sigh, that passed over the congregation as she sank to her seat behind the screening choir curtains and burst into silent weeping. Her father's reflection in the glass before him seemed to show triumph in its every line as he struck the grand final chords.

A tall, broad-shouldered man with long straight hair, tinged with iron gray, picked up his hat and left the church.

That night Gerald left for the distant city, and the tall man with the long hair dined at the dingy little cottage behind the picket fence. Two days later she was on the ocean, bound for Paris and her years of servitude.

Her father had kept back both her letters, and Gerald's, too—she knew that well enough when all too late—and Gerald had seen her throw away the flowers.

All this had gone through the prima-donna's mind after she had forgotten all about the square; then there was a knock on the door, and she had placed the letter over the picture in the little desk and had risen to meet her manager and an interviewing reporter. The day had passed and she had been driven in her closed carriage to the opera house and was in her dressing room.

The coiffeur had finished twining the string of pearls in her hair, but she was nervous and could not sit quietly in that bare, unfurnished place; despite the protests of the "General," as she called him, and tales of draughts and colds, she would take a peep at "the house"—prima-donnas are willful and always have their way

—so she went down the stairway to the stage.

As she stood in "the tormentors," the first entrance, she could hear the ushers letting down the seats, and, as the curtain swayed gently, rushes of heated air swept back into the wing. From the open part of the house a conversation and now and then a laugh was wafted in as the curtain swayed. The stage carpenters were noisily setting the droop scene.

The prima-donna gathered her chubbah about her bare white shoulders and approached the blackened peep-hole. At first she could not see clearly, and looked again. Then she turned very pale, her eyes looked strange, and her lips were white and trembled nervously.

"Could you send for a messenger?" she said, "and quickly, please; there's something I've forgotten." Her manager looked anxious, but she answered him, with a nervous, excited laugh, that "nothing was the matter, only some flowers she had forgotten."

When the messenger returned he brought back, in brown tissue paper, a bunch of pinks and white violets. The curtain rose and the opera began. She was dimly conscious of two things, the waving of the leader's baton and a tall figure, with folded arms, standing back in the shadow in the gay box on the stage tier. People wondered why Lucia should wear a bunch of violets and pinks.

She had won them. They said she sang with soul and feeling. She came before the curtain, leading the tenor by the hand, amidst the bravos and the wild applause. There was a glance exchanged between the tall figure in the box and the lady with the pink and violets, a single glance, but it meant a flood of happiness.

When the prima-donna had wedded the well-to-do and rising young lawyer, Gerald Wilton, people wondered still more, and then forgot about it. Mrs. Wilton, in the garden of her beautiful summer home, along the Housatonic's banks, cultivates white violets. These and the pinks in the terrace above are still her favorite flowers.—James Barnes.

Richmond.

It may be that naivety in Virginia and many years of residence in Richmond have inclined the mind of the writer to know the city's loveliness, yet he knows no city in the United States more beautiful. It is not that the houses generally are handsome, but there are sections of the city where the yards, filled with trees, look like bowers, and the public squares are among the most beautiful in the country.

"The Capitol Square," with its leafy slopes, its fine old Capitol building itself on its eminence with the simple grandeur of an old temple, and with its broad walk, with the splendid Washington Monument at one end, and the impressive old "Governor's Mansion" at the other, is perhaps the prettiest park of its size in the country. It is certainly so to a Virginian, for many proud or tender associations cling about the place. For a hundred years and more the city has been associated with all that Virginians are proud of. In old St. John's Church assembled the great Virginia convention which prepared for the public defence, and led the way to the independence of the colonies. Here in Richmond sat the great convention for the ratification of the Constitution, when Kentucky was a district of Virginia; here have assembled her law makers, her jurists, and all that have contributed to make the Old Dominion renowned and great. Here met, year after year, the Old Virginians, with their wives and daughters, to enjoy the gay life of the capital of the Old Dominion, which they adorned by their presence. Here sat and deliberated their secession Congress during the period when Virginia stood as the peace-maker between the two sections. Here she finally declared her decision, to secede from the Union. Here Lee received the command of the Virginia forces, and here he was appointed later to the command in chief of the armies of the Confederacy. Here the Confederate government passed its life, and from here the Southern side of the war was fought. To Richmond the armies and energies of the North were directed, and for it they strove. Whilst it stood the Confederate stood, and it fell only when the South was exhausted.—From "The Old Dominion," by Thomas Nelson Page, in Harper's Magazine for December.

He Picked His Men.

A prominent Methodist clergyman who now resides in San Francisco, tells this incident, which occurred in the Pullman sleeper while riding through Iowa. As the train passed over the state line into Iowa a seal was put on the liquor sideboard in the buffet, and the clergyman, wishing to test the enforcement of the prohibition law, called the porter and asked him if he could get a little whisky.

"Oh, yes, sah," said the porter. "And how about a little wine?" queried the minister.

"I think I can fix you, sah," was the prompt and whispered reply. "But," continued the reverend gentleman, how about the prohibition in Iowa?"

"Oh," said the porter, with a knowing wink, "we always pick our men, sah."

Starving Miners Eating Dogs.

MADISON, Wis., December 5.—Governor Peck sent the following telegram this morning to W. J. Shumway, chairman of the relief committee at Hurley: "It is rumored here that starving miners at Ironwood, Mich., are eating dogs. Have Dr. McLeod investigate, and if reports are found true send them one hundred barrels of flour and some meat until relief arrives from Michigan for them."

Women and Brains.

Sir James Crichton Browne's Late Utterances Referred.—A Scientist's Argument Which is an Example of the Polly Into Which a Learned Man May Be Drawn—Some Telling Illustrations on the Main Point.

Sir James Crichton Browne has lately brought forward anew the somewhat threadbare argument that the brain of the average man is several ounces heavier than that of the average woman, and that hence women must have smaller mental capacity. A few parallel facts may be worth considering in this connection.

The brain of an average elephant is about three times as heavy as the brain of an average man, yet we do not find that the elephant is three times as smart as a man. The brain of an ant is indefinitely smaller than the brain of a sheep, yet the ant is much more intelligent than the sheep. In other words, the smaller creature may have a smaller brain without necessarily having inferior wits. The woman, being a smaller animal than the man, naturally has a smaller brain, but it does not follow that she is therefore more stupid. This view is confirmed by the fact that if a boy's brain is below a certain weight the boy is invariably an idiot, while a girl's brain may fall several ounces below that weight and still the girl be rational.

Some scientists say that women's brains are heavier in proportion to the weight of their bodies than the brains of men. Other scientists say contrary. But the relative weight of the brain is not a sure guide any more than its absolute weight. There are certain small birds, built light for flying, whose brains are heavier in proportion to the weight of their bodies than the brains of human beings.

The only test of the comparative ability of two brains is see what they can accomplish when placed under the same circumstances. All over the country in our public schools boys and girls from the same families study side by side, and the girls average quite as well as the boys. In the colleges the young women take rather more than their share of the prizes. This is probably due not to superiority of the female brain, but to the fact that many stupid boys are sent to college by their parents because it is fashionable, while a girl goes to college it is generally because she really wishes to study. But, however we may account for it, the fact remains that the alleged mental inferiority of women does not show itself in any of the educational institutions where the two sexes study together.

After graduation, not nearly so many women as men score a brilliant success in business or in the arts. The reason, I take it, is not because women have insufficient intelligence, but because most of them prefer to put their intelligence to a different use—namely, to apply it to running a house and family. This is a business fully as important and useful as any other. And to run a house and family successfully under present conditions takes as much intelligence—one might almost say as much statesmanship—as to run a railroad or a city government. If any man doubts this, let him send his wife off for a holiday and try for a week to do his own housework and take care of half a dozen children.

Sir James Crichton Browne again finds an alarming connection between feminine intelligence and lack of personal beauty. He fears that "what woman gains intellectually by the higher education now in vogue she will lose in beauty and grace," and as a proof of this he cites the Garo tribe in India, where the women are said to have the entire control of public affairs and to be "the very ugliest women on the face of the earth." If education tends to ugliness, it would be more to the point to show that these Indian women are the most highly educated women on the face of the earth.

Brains seem to be distributed among women as among men without any regard to good looks. Some bright women are strikingly handsome, and some are strikingly homely. Maria Mitchell, for instance, was a plain girl, though she developed into a fine looking elderly lady. Mrs. Somerville, on the other hand, was conspicuous for her beauty. That education and freedom do not tend, on the whole, to make women ugly may be shown by the illustration on a large scale. American women are better educated and more "emancipated" than the women of any other country. Yet all Americans and many foreigners say that no other country can boast of so many beautiful women. And any one who has attended a class day at Wellesley will hardly be persuaded, as he looks at the "garden of girls," that education is detrimental to good looks.

Sir James Crichton Browne's whole argument is an example of the folly into which a learned man may be drawn, when in following a speculative theory he closes his eyes to the facts of everyday observation.

The newspapers have lately been making merry over the case of another scientific man. This gentleman had written learned articles to prove the mental feebleness of women from the smallness of their brains. He died, and his own brain proved on examination to weigh less than that of the average woman. A good many women will await with interest the death of Sir James Crichton Browne and the result of a post mortem—Alice Stone Blackwell in Boston Globe.

How He Died.

Mrs. Mulcahey—Shure, docther, and it is true that little Jimmy O'Toole bit yoors termanty in two and swallowed the mercury.

Docther—Yes, my dear madam, it is and the boy is dead. Mrs. Mulcahey—Shure, docther, and it were a cold day for Jimmy, poor bye, with him the mercury went down. Doctor—Yes, madam, he died by degrees.—Hot Springs Medical Journal.

A POSSIBILITY.—Binks—Yes, sir; I have a photograph, and among my collection is a song by Patti. Think what a priceless thing that will be to the coming generations when the great Patti's voice is stilled forever!

Jinks—But, my dear sir, from present indications Patti will outlive the photograph.

Top-Heavy Cruisers. General Overhauling to Be Done by the Navy Department.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5.—The recent examination of the cruiser M-1 shows, it is said, has shown that the vessel is in a worse plight than was at first expected. It is believed now that the five-inch armor around her sides will have to be removed to give the ship sufficient stability and that besides this it will be necessary to place 30 or 40 tons of cement in her bottom to bring her meta center to the proper point. She has no double bottom and unlike most of the new vessels cannot overcome her top heaviness by filling this bottom with water.

The Philadelphia, which is one of the cranks, vessels in the service, never goes to sea without 300 or 400 tons of water in her double bottom to stiffen her up. This increased weight brings her displacement up to nearly 1,000 tons more than she was designed for. A report has been received at the Navy Department from the commander of the Detroit stating that his vessel is also a little top heavy.

The naval authorities are still at work examining into the center of gravity, meta center and other things which go to show the stability of vessels. In every one of the five cruisers which were under suspicion as being defective it has been found necessary to place cement in their bottoms. All of them will be delayed from two to four months by the operation.

Nuns in China.

They belong chiefly to the lower classes, the poorer parents being willing to sell their daughters to the services of the convent. The children thus grown up in the ascetic atmosphere and eventually join the order. Poor widows also frequently solve the self supporting problem by entering a convent. When the women are merely novices the front of their head is shaved. When the novitiate is completed—which cannot be until the end of the candidate's 16th year—the entire head is shaved. The nun vows to lead a chaste and ascetic life. Her diet is purely vegetable; meats and liquors she must avoid. She must hold no intercourse with men, and must take no interest in worldly affairs. Her religious duties, which she promises faithfully to perform, are mainly prayers, ceremonies and the care of the altar, on which the ritual fire must not die out. But the Chinese nun enjoys a good deal of freedom. She may walk about the town. Her spare time is spent in tending the sick. And as the Buddhist priests have very little intercourse with the community, and thus exercise a great influence.

Directum the Champion.

Saladin Gives the Great Trotter a Hard Race.

PHILADELPHIA, December 5.—Directum the champion trotter, record 2:05½, defeated Saladin the great pacer, record 1:05½, this afternoon in a match race on the Point Breeze track of the Philadelphia Driving Park association. Saladin, in a fine burst of speed, won the first heat in 2:10. Directum took the next three and the race in 2:10½, 2:12. The track was somewhat soft and therefore between two and three seconds slow. In view of this circumstance the performance of the two great stallions at a season of the year when thoroughbreds are usually in winter quarters, may justly be regarded as remarkable. At the conclusion of the race, both Monroe Salisbury, the owner of Directum, and John Kelley, his driver, said to James B. Green, the owner and driver of Saladin that the pacer had given the king of trotters the hardest race of the season. Throughout the four heats Directum trotted perfectly not breaking once, while Saladin went into the air once in each heat.

To Be Sold at Auction.

The furniture of the Pennsylvania State Building on the World's Fair grounds is being packed up and shipped to Harrisburg, where it will be sold at auction December 12. The State Commissioners think they can realize more on the articles if sold among the people of their own State.

The coal monument, the property of the Pennsylvania Coal Company, which stood in the center of the Mining Building, has been torn down, broken up and sold to a contractor. There were 60 tons of coal in the shaft, and the price paid was \$3 a ton.

Rats have taken possession of the Fair grounds. They are there in droves, and where they come from is a mystery. Workmen who are daily tearing down the popcorn and lunch booths find regiments of rats huddled under the floors, in the wells and corners. The Administration Building seems to be a favorite haunt.

Don't Bore People.

There is nothing so certain to make you disliked as to tell your troubles to a friend. Prosperity means friendship, but don't you take it into your head to retail your troubles, or you will soon discover that your company is not wanted, and the people who once bowed to you in pleasant recognition, now walk on the other side of the way, with a cold and stony glare that looks over your head or through your body, but never meets your eye as of yore.

The people are not hard-hearted that turn the cold shoulder to you. They are only averse to knowing of any more misery than they already have to bear.—Home Queen.

What They Were For.

Mamma—"What do those holes in your new shoes mean?" Rupert—"I suppose, mamma, they must be meant to let the squeaks out."

—The small potatoes are worth nearly as much per bushel, in food value, on the farm, as the larger ones. They may not be salable, but the pigs will care nothing for the size, and will accept them as readily as they will the best.

For and About Women.

A house-dress made from a creamy yellow flannel having strips of fine black and pale blue shown herewith. It is cut in a Mother Hubbard style and is gathered to a bias yoke of the same material. The skirt is garnished with four ruffles, each 2½ inches wide, put on in pairs. The collarette forms a point on each shoulder and in the middle of the back. It is garnished with an insertion of tulle lace and a ruffle of the same. The standing collar is made of a bias strip of satin of a greenish tint and is fast in front with a small bead on each side. The plain corset belt is made of the same shade of satin about 14 inches wide, and is held in place by a gold buckle in front and a hook behind. The belt has a foundation stiffened with whalebone and serves to hold the full loose folds in place at the waist, giving the dress the appearance of consisting of skirt and blouse. The puffed sleeves are finished with lace frills at elbow and wrist.

The overskirt is certainly with us, but it is an apothized overskirt, brought to a pitch of perfection to suit the times. In Paris the best modistes are making club skirts to open over underskirts of velvet, and the combination is very chic and pretty. Sometimes the two skirts are of precisely the same material, only the underskirt is defined by a wide band of fur or velvet or passementerie. For girlish costumes silk and wool are much used, the underskirt being of the silk, as are the girdle, the collar, shoulder knots and deep cuffs. Black is very much the vogue in Paris, and Ducret, indeed, is quite famous for black gowns, brightened with a little color. One of the latest productions is a black velvet skirt trimmed to the knee with a shaped flounce of petunia colored velvet, headed by vandykes of jet pointing each way, and by an inch wide band of very fine Persian lamb fur. Thus some glossy fur is used for a Bolero jacket, with revers of black moire opening on a soft vest of black velvet with two rows of white lace extending down to a wide jet belt. The mutton-leg sleeves are of petunia velvet, made to droop at the top, and these are finished at the wrist with white lace cuffs. It is very lovely. A pretty evening frock, which has just come home packed in silver paper, is of pale-pink satin, trimmed around the very full skirts with trails of pink chrysanthemums. The low bodice is seamless and has a berth of pink satin and a garnish of the same artistically folded and fastened on one side with a large rosette. Clusters of chrysanthemums are placed on either shoulder, the buds and leaves hanging down over the bodice in a prettily graceful loose and easy fashion. Another evening gown is of pale turquoise blue silk, trimmed around the skirt with a band of turquoise passementerie, and having the bodice with berth and full shawl frills of butter colored thread lace finished with turquoise galloon.

In tailor gowns the skirt seams, as well as those of the bodice, are frequently lapped and stitched; sometimes they are covered half way up the skirt with a flat band ending in an embroidered arrow head. Many of the handsomest costumes have plain skirts, elegantly cut and absolutely untrimmed with all the ornamentation confined to the waist.

Sets of very narrow frills, hardly over an inch wide, and cut on a curve, are seen on the edge of round waists and make a pretty finish. I have seen five or six scarf frills overlapping, and two kinds of materials are used as black satin and green cloth; sometimes these frills are each edged with a tiny white lace insertion or picot edge. When these frills are used they also appear on the tops of the sleeves.

Among an array of elegant Parisian dresses was one of brocade satin, showing a circular skirt faced above the knee with black velvet. It was scalloped at the top, the scallops outlined with a narrow jetted gimp. A handsome black cloth dress had a similar skirt. Only five inches of cloth showed on the skirt, all the rest being velvet. To make it less heavy the cloth did not run the entire length of the skirt beneath its velvet facing. The effect was that of a velvet skirt made with a black-cloth yoke top.

Gowns of petunia satin, with black moire from the knees down and for large sleeves; the satin has small black flowers, and any extra trimming is of black lace.

The rumor about the reintroduction of steels in the skirt is constantly coming up again, and although it is as yet lacks direct confirmation, we must yet so far grant the truth as to inform our readers of a novel step in the direction toward the revival of crinolines, the Philadelphia Times. This is an underskirt with a hoop made of the lightest aluminum inserted in the bottom hem. The model in question is made of pink silk, measures two yards six inches wide, and has a handsome flounce of narrow tucks and lace around the bottom, which quite takes away the appearance of a crinoline. The hoop is pliant enough to yield to almost every bend of the dress, while it also lends a certain stability to the fashionable width of our present dresses. We quite think that those ladies who have tried this support for their wide skirts will readily acknowledge how comfortably it keeps the multiplicity of folds away from their feet.

SEEN IN THE STORES.—An odd pen-wiper of yellow felt with the grotesque figure of a "Brownie" perched in the centre.

Collarettes of yellow chiffon and knots of Majenta veater.

Pretty court-pleated booklets accompanied by a pair of little gilt scissors attached by narrow colored ribbons.

Beautiful cases of decorated card-board and light Sarah silks for holding "Unanswered Letters."

Decorated boxes for correspondence cards and envelopes.