

HER BIRTHDAY VIOLETS.

By Nell Speed.

Naturally the new boarder had been seated beside the landlady's favorite, Miss Imogene Goldberg.

But, oddly enough, Jane Williams, whose hair was parted demurely in the middle and who wore her grandmother's old fashioned locket under her plain pongee shirt waist, realized that the fine gray eyes of the new boarder were looking her way frequently and intently.

She tried to analyze her feelings with the salad, and when the coffee—such thick yet spiritless coffee—was served she decided that it was embarrassing and not a memory which stirred her whenever the gray eyes glanced her way.

Still at the conclusion of the meal she climbed three uncompromising flights of poorly carpeted stairs to her hall room and drew from her trunk her small but treasured box of photographs.

There they were; the father who had died the year of her graduation, the mother who had left her alone to fight the world only twelve months before, a couple of aunts who had forgotten her in the needs and pleasures of their own children, several teachers and three girls in her class at the high school.

But there was no picture with masculine eyes that could possibly have resembled the gray ones which had watched her gravely across the table in the dingy dining room.

"I am getting moody," she said to herself as she prepared for bed. "I must turn over a new leaf. Tomorrow is my birthday. I can't afford to turn sour and old maidish at twenty-one. When I go back to the office on Monday morning I'll be more pleasant and make friends with the other girls. I've been living too much in dreams of the past."

Yet when she fell asleep it was the dream again of the past. It was her birthday, the first party in celebration of that day which she could remember with any sort of distinctness.

She was dressed in pink tulle all spattered with paper stars, and there were pink candles on the birthday cake. No one knew why an ordinarily well behaved and unmischievous child should do such a thing, but she suddenly decided to steal into the dining room and light the birthday cake before the "party came in."

The match sputtered and jumped. She tried to climb quickly from the chair, but the tiny flame was quicker still. In a flash the pretty pink tulle blazed up far above the candles, and then she forgot everything in her fright until she felt some one rolling her over and over on the carpet and battering her with his coat, and that had been Willie, the cavalier of her wee girlhood.

She remembered how her mother kissed Willie and cried over him, and he had "pooftooft" with very red face and shuffling feet. Their adventure was handed down as one of the traditions of the town, but when she was twelve Willie went away to live with his Grandfather Grey in the far west.

Later they had gone to Mexico, and Jane had lost track of them, although never forgetting in her own hard struggle for a livelihood.

And Willie had big gray eyes, just like those of the new boarder. She woke with a start. Now she knew why this man had attracted her attention. Of course the world was full of men with gray eyes. There were not colors enough to go around. Some must be duplicated, and it was very silly for her to think about Willie any more. Doubtless he was married even now to some dusky senorita whose father owned valuable silver mines.

So she turned over and fell asleep again, not to awaken until some one tapped at her door and the maid, with new respect in her bearing, entered, carrying a huge purple box.

"This here package's for you, Miss Williams," she said, but holding it as if loath to yield it to its rightful owner. "An' bein' as it's Sunday mornin' an' Miss De Lancey gone to church, I'll bring you a cup of coffee an' some toast up here."

For all the world loves a lover. And are not violets and lovers synonymous? Jane sat up in bed and reached for the box.

"Never mind about the coffee. I've overslept, but I'll be down in a few minutes."

She was undoing the box with trembling fingers, and the maid, all unnoticed, lingered curiously. Out came a great bunch of California violets done up in the most approved fashion—purple foil, cord, tassel and all.

"For me? Impossible! And there is no card."

She turned to the lid of the box. "Gabrielle."

The florist around the corner! Oh, it had been a cruel mistake. No one in the great city knew it was her birthday, and none would care if they knew.

"Now, Jane Williams," she said sternly as was possible with a mouth half full of hairpins, "right after breakfast you'll take that box back. It belongs to some other Miss Williams."

And it went back, the excited girl rushing right past the new boarder in her haste—and, yes, in her tiny heart an ache that the flowers were meant for her.

"Gabrielle" spoke a most impossible dialect, and he did his little worst to make Jane understand that there had

been no mistake. But Jane firmly refused to carry the flowers back with her, and, just to convince herself that she was satisfied with what she had done, she walked half an hour in the park, returning to find the box standing on her shabby bureau. Again she opened it, and this time an engraved card met her gaze. "Mr. Frederick W. Grey," and beneath was the penciled legend: "Birthday wishes, and may I see you soon? I am waiting in the parlor now if you care to come down."

"Frederick W. Grey?" That must be the red headed assistant bookkeeper who was "Freddy" to every one in the office save herself. She had never heard his last name. Of course she would see him and thank him, though she could not imagine how he had known about her birthday.

Tucking the lovely flowers into her belt and giving a few deft touches to the end of her hair, she tripped down to the parlor.

But only the new boarder, he of the fine gray eyes, was there to greet her, and he certainly stood at attention as if waiting for her.

She held the card in her hand and looked about inquiringly. "Jane—little Jane Williams—don't you know me?" demanded the new boarder.

Then suddenly something new and strange pulled at Jane's heartstrings and at memories long dead. Something new and wonderful bonded through her veins.

"Willie—little Willie," she almost sobbed. "Oh, if you'd tied the flowers with pink tulle I would have remembered!"

It took him so long to tell her all about it—of his wandering with his eccentric old grandfather from mining camp to mining camp, from Mexico to Peru and Chile, of fortune made and lost and found again and of how the grandfather, growing more and more bitter against the recreant husband of his only daughter, had insisted that the grandson have his name changed by the law from that of his father's family to his mother's.

Then followed the story of how he had gone back to the old town directly his grandfather had departed on the last long journey; how no one seemed to know where she had gone, and how he had finally traced her to Mrs. De Lancey's and had come there unannounced to make sure that he would be welcome—that she had not changed—and had not found some one else.

"Oh, Willie," she sighed contentedly from a comfortable resting place on his shoulder. "Just as if there had ever been any one else since I lit the birthday candles!"

They had pre-empted the tawdry cozy corner, and by that time Mrs. De Lancey had come back from church, donned her pink silk negligee and was staring at them accusingly from the center of the ugly red and green parlor.

But when you have fine gray eyes you generally have the courage to announce your intentions, and Frederick William Grey did it so effectively that Mrs. De Lancey wiped her tears on the flowing sleeve of her pink negligee and shook hands with them both; then, turning her back on the cozy corner, for once put to its legitimate use, she departed, murmuring: "Well, you never can tell what sort of girl will land a man. And her hair so plain and her face so pale too!"

When One Spends Money. One would think that money would be saved in prosperous times when there is plenty of it about. But no; that is not the time when it is saved. It is then that it is spent. Everybody spends it—governments, railroads, corporations, capitalists, housekeepers, house builders, collectors. People expand their wants in such times and satisfy some of them, and then is when it is most of all impossible to live on anything a year. But after all the money has been spent a few times over and has come to be scarce and borrowing has come to be a serious matter and folks have much less to spend and no expectations than everybody groans and begins to save, not only trying desperately to squeeze back inside of the bounds of income, but to pay back what was spent in expectation of a time when saving would have become convenient. To most of us that time never comes. And yet there are things for which we spend more than we can afford, that really do justify our expenditures, so that after the money has been spent and we are pinched for the lack of it we would still rather have what it bought than have the money back.—Appleton's.

Why He Was Anxious. Buloz, the editor of the Revue des Deux Mondes, once had at his country house in Savoy a numerous company of literary people, one of whom was Victor Cherbuliez. Cherbuliez contributed regularly every other year a novel to the columns of the Revue, and a story of his was at that time running in the periodical. The guests had been out for a walk and had amused themselves with gathering mushrooms, which were cooked for dinner. As the company were sitting down, it occurred to one of the party that undoubtedly some of the people who had taken part in gathering the mushrooms knew nothing about them and that there might be poisonous fungi in the collection.

This reflection so affected the company that all the people present, with the exception of Cherbuliez, declined to partake of the dish. He alone attacked it with gusto. Thereupon Buloz showed sudden and intense alarm. "Cherbuliez! Cherbuliez! What are you about?" he exclaimed. "Remember that you haven't finished your story in the Revue!"

Greatly to his relief, the mushrooms turned out to be innocuous, and the story was finished.

A Remarkable Suicide.

A man who had visited Paris was telling of an extraordinary suicide he had heard of in that gay city. "He was a Frenchman, who was nothing if not original," said the teller of the tale, "and even when he grew despondent he planned his death in a most original fashion. He locked the door of his room in the Rue Nitot and, removing the weights of the window cord, fastened them to the window itself. He added to the weight of the window by attaching six fatrons. On the sill he adjusted a large triangular bread knife, such as is used by chefs, and made ready a small balloon, capable of lifting fifty pounds. The ingenious Frenchman then pushed his head out of the window after attaching the balloon to his neck and by releasing the clamp that held the window cut his head off completely with the improvised guillotine. The decapitated body was discovered several days later, but it was not until the balloon and the head were found a week later in the field of a peasant, eighteen miles from Paris, that the method of suicide was really known."

Old Maps of Louisiana.

An interesting exhibit in the Louisiana State Museum is a collection of old maps that show the state of Louisiana extending from Canada, which was then called New France, on the north to the gulf of Mexico on the south and from Virginia and Carolina on the east to the Pacific on the west. These maps were printed in Italy and Holland and France and were evidently largely works of fancy and imagination on the part of the geographers, as they depict mountain ranges where none exists and lakes and rivers distributed around in places where they are not found today. One of the most charming of these maps represents the Mississippi river as making a graceful turn along what is now the roadbed of the Louisville and Nashville railroad and emptying into the gulf in Florida. Along a strip of this country about where English Lookout and peaceful Bay St. Louis are located is a fearsome spot marked as the land of the man eaters.—New Orleans Picayune.

A Coveted Picture.

Some years ago a western man entered J. G. Brown's studio and seemed to gain satisfaction in finding its familiar features unchanged. He told the artist that in his boyhood he had worked in the streets of New York and, with others of his class, had served as a model for one of the pictures of street boys. He had gone west and had prospered and now had returned with a desire to become the owner of the group picture in which he and some of his boyish cronies appeared. He wanted it as a reminder of the struggles of his boyhood. He looked back on those days as being quite as happy as any he had ever known. The picture, says W. Howard Standish, discussing J. G. Brown, a painter of humble folk, had long ago been sold, and, although the would be purchaser offered to give him \$25,000 for the work, the artist was unable to supply any clue to its whereabouts.—New Broadway Magazine.

To His Benefit.

A Tennessee congressman enjoys telling a story of a dandy in his district who in a way is something of a philosopher.

Some one was saying to Mose one day: "You're always in trouble. Mose. Why can't you try to do better? You're a likely sort of dandy, and you could get along very well if only you'd behave yourself—keep a steady job instead of drinking bad whiskey and getting yourself behind the bars half the time."

"Excuse me, boss," said Mose, with a grin. "but it looks to me like I makes more money this way. When I works hard I gets \$7 a month and my board. When I gets arrested the judge he says to me that it will be \$10 or thirty days. How kin I afford to work for \$7 a month when I'm worth \$3 more in de lockup?"—St. Paul Pioneer-Press.

Diagnosed the Case.

A successful oculist recently put in a day or two with his new shotgun in the marshes. He soon noticed that when using the left hand barrel he generally brought down the game, but when using the other barrel he invariably missed. He finally tacked a small target to a bush near the river's bank and fired at it several times with each barrel in order to bring the matter to a test. The result confirmed his suspicions. One barrel was all right, or nearly so, and the other was all wrong.

"Well," said the oculist to a friend who was with him, "as nearly as I can make out this gun has a severe case of strabismus, with strong symptoms of astigmatism!"—Modern Society.

The Cost For Repairs.

"Why did you sell your auto?" "Cost too much for repairs." "Wasn't it a good machine?" "First rate. Never got out of order. But I had to pay for repairing the people it ran over."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Judicial Ignorance.

"Did the clock stop when you dashed it down cellar?" asked the police judge of the man who was charged with being disorderly.

"Of course it stopped. Did you suppose it went through to China?"

Modern Facilities.

"Who was dis Rip Van Winkle?" "An old time guy wot slept in de mountains." "Didn't have no public libraries, I s'pose, in his day?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Cruelty and fear shake hands together.—Balzac.

In the Drinking Days.

A once well known individual who had lived every day of his life and gained from it a great experience left the following advice—and little else—to his sons: "Drink slow; do not mix your liquor; never sit with your backs to the fire." It was an excellent precept for the era in which it was given—the times when the dining room door was kept locked that there might be no shirking the claret and when the only chance at the circuit mess of escaping intoxication was to drop under the table "like the rest," as Lord Cockburn tells us he did, and lie quiet—nay, even when our judges resented that discredit should be brought on drinking by misconduct. Everybody drank, and much too much, in those days, but especially the upper classes. A well known politician discharged his coachman for overturning him in his carriage. "I had certainly drunk too much, sir," urged the poor man, "but I was not very drunk, and gentlemen, you know, sometimes get drunk." "I don't say you were very drunk for a gentleman," returned his master, "but you were exceedingly drunk for a coachman!"—London Illustrated News.

Cage For a Queen Bee.

When a queen bee becomes unproductive through old age, it is necessary for the bee keeper to supply the colony of bees with a new queen. This he does in the following manner: The old queen is removed from the hive and the bees are left alone for about twelve hours or longer, during which time they find out that they are queenless. The new queen is then put into a cage made of wood and wire cloth, with an opening through one end. This opening is filled tight with a mixture of honey and sugar. The cage thus prepared is laid upon the tops of the frames in the hive. The bees soon discover the new queen in the cage and set to work upon the honey and sugar. In the hive bees recognize friends and strangers by their sense of smell, and a strange queen entering a hive would be very quickly killed by the bees. By the time the queen is liberated from the cage she has acquired the scent of the hive and is therefore no longer a stranger.—London Globe.

Eccentric Editions of Books.

Mr. George Somes Layard in a book entitled "Suppressed Plates, Wood Engravings, Etc.," writes of the ridiculous people who value such books as the first issue of the first edition of Dickens' "American Notes" just because there is a mistake in the pagination, or a first edition of Disraeli's "Lothair" because the prototype of "Mr. Catesby" is divulged by misprinting the name "Capel," or "Poems by Robert Burns," first Edinburgh edition, because the Duke of Roxborough appears as "the Duke of Boxborough," or Barker's "Breeces" Bible of 1594 because on the title page of the New Testament the figures are transposed to 1495, or the first edition in French of Washington Irving's "Sketch-Book" because the translator, mistaking the author's name, has declared the book to "traduit de l'Anglais de M. Irwin Washington," and in the dedication has labeled Sir Walter Scott "baronnet."

Cornish Humor.

The magistrate at the Liskeard police court might well have excused the laughter which greeted the remark of a police witness only a short time ago who said with all seriousness: "He was drunk, your honor, and couldn't stand. I told him to go away, and as he wouldn't I locked him up."

The laugh in another court was against the solicitor who severely asked: "Were you present when you heard this?"

Mixed metaphors are not a peculiar nor indeed a common failing of the Cornishman, but a certain eloquent town councillor quite recently got entangled when in the course of a protracted debate on the momentous subject of the local dust bins he declared indignantly, "It is time we put our foot down with a loud voice."—English Illustrated Magazine.

A Fair Jury.

In a suit some years ago between father and son before an Indiana justice of the peace the sextet comprising the jury came in after three hours' deliberation with the following impartial verdict: "We, the jury, agree to find judgment for neither plaintiff nor defendant and find that each pay half the costs." It is said the verdict struck every one as being so unusually fair that even the parties to the action were satisfied.—Case and Comment.

Foiled.

Lazy Lewis—I was told dat de farmer wot lives on dat hill paid his hands jist de same whedder dey worked er not, so I went an' hired 't him. Tired Thomas—Den youse played off sick. I reckon? Lazy Lewis—Yep, an' at de end ov de month I found dat he never paid nobody nothin' nohow.—Chicago News.

Broke the Charm.

"Well, you are a good little boy. Are you usually as quiet as this?" "No fear, but mother's going to give me a clockwork engine if I don't say anything about your dreadful red nose!"—London Opinion.

In the Fog.

Towne—So you were in London, eh? How did you find the weather there? Browns—I didn't have to find it. It came and hunted me up and surrounded me in chunks.—Philadelphia Press.

A London Joke.

Walter (who has just served up some soup)—Looks uncommonly like rain, sir. Diner—Yes, by Jove, and tastes like it too! Bring me some thick soup.—London Tatler.

Mammoth Cave.

For many years after the discovery of Mammoth cave the entire work of exploration was practically in the hands of negro slaves, the property of the man who owned the cave. Sometimes they would come to an obstacle that barred the passage, such as a great limestone rock or a yawning crevasse across the way. Such obstacles would often stop exploration in that direction for years, though beyond the obstruction there were likely to be scores of beautiful chambers and many miles of passageways. Thus it happened that for years nothing was known of that large part of the cave lying beyond the abyss named the Bottomless pit. This obstruction was known for over twenty years before it was crossed. Then one day in 1837 the negro cave explorer Stephen and some of his fellows dragged to the place the trunk of a small tree, and on this rather dangerous bridge Stephen crawled across the abyss. Then began the explorations that revealed one of the most wonderful and extensive parts of Mammoth cave. The abyss was found later to be 180 feet deep.

Some Witty Titles.

The pupils of one of the high schools of Philadelphia evinced great interest in a competition for a prize to be awarded the pupil who should submit the wittiest list of titles for twelve sham books on a dummy shelf. The following are some of the titles received in the competition: "A New England Puss," by M. E. W. "Thoughts On My Bed," by Van Hammer. "Lizzie Wouldn't," by John Wood. "The Fatal Blow," by John Knox. Porter's "Tales of Lost Baggage." "Lost In the Wash," by the author of "Bachelor's Buttons." "Grinding the Poor," by Mill. "Owe No Man," by O. W. Holmes. "After the Ball," by the author of "Our National Game." Morse on "Our Old Houses." "Woodchucks and Rabbits," by Burroughs. "E. E.," by the author of "My Double."

An Unconscious Meal.

Once John Muir, author and ranchman, was dining with a friend. They sat down, and Muir began to tell a story. The waiter came around several times, but the story was so good nothing was ordered. Muir talked and talked, and in between he would reach over and break off a piece of bread from a French loaf on the table. This he did a good many times. The story reminded him of another, and so he talked and ate bread until finally, being very hungry, his companion broke in with: "Well, what shall I order for you, Mr. Muir?"

"Order?" he repeated in his abstraction. "Yes, order—to eat." He looked over at the last little remaining piece of bread on the plate and said, as if waking from a dream: "Eat? Why, I've had all I want. That bread was bully."—Bookman.

Large Thumbs.

"People of great strength of character, who are guided by the head rather than the heart, have large thumbs," says Irving R. Bacon. "Whenever you see a person with a strikingly large, well developed thumb, you may be almost certain you have before you one who is a natural born ruler, eminently practical and fond of whatever is useful. Wherefore also he is fond of history. A large thumb woman may fall in love as deeply as her small thumb sister, but will not marry unless she can see a sufficient bread and butter supply ahead. But she is more apt to be a real helpmate when adversity comes."—New York Journal.

The Only "Merrymaking."

The school record kept by an old time teacher of "No. 6" in a New England village contains at least one item which moved a chance reader to smiles. It is this:

"Special honor badges were given to Flora and Minetta Lovett for the best attendance. During the entire school year they were not once absent to attend any picnic, reunion, excursion or merrymaking, the only exception being the afternoon of May 30, when their twin brothers were ill from the effect of something they had eaten and not expected to live, although they soon recovered."

No Visible Signals.

"Yessum," said Sandy Pikes as he devoured the wedge of pumpkin pie. "I sternly object to the nefarious practice of clipping off de tails of dogs."

"Ah, I am glad you are so tender hearted, my poor man," sympathized the good housewife.

"Well, it ain't exactly dat, mum, but when a dog hasn't any tail I can't tell by de wags if he is in a good humor or not, and it makes me skeery about approaching de house."—Chicago News.

Strict Truth.

May—She says she can trace her ancestry on her mother's side back to the conquest of England. Fay—That's correct. Her maternal grandmother was married in leap year to a man named England.—Catholic Standard and Times.

The Ruling Passion.

"Why didn't your daughter go to Europe to study music, Mrs. Dibbs?" "We've got her ready to go three times, and each time she decided she'd rather stay at home and show her clothes."

Beware of inquisitive people. An excessive curiosity to know all is generally accompanied by as great a desire to tell it again.

The Concertina.

The concertina, which was a development of a previously existing aeolina, was invented in 1829 by a Viennese named Damian and consists, as every one knows, of a small pair of bellows and a range of keys which regulate the admission of wind to metal reeds. The concertina sounds notes in one key only. The concertina proper was invented on the same date by Charles Wheatstone, who later became a famous man of science. It seems curious that a man whose reputation rests chiefly on his electrical work and discoveries, who was one of the earliest men of science to make experiments in connection with submarine cables and who, moreover, was an extraordinarily skillful decipherer of cryptographic writings, should also have dabbled in musical inventions. But, as a matter of fact, Wheatstone's musical work preceded his scientific discoveries. He went straight from school to the business of manufacturing musical instruments, and it was in 1829, at the age of twenty-seven, that he took out his patent for the concertina. But he was more interested in the scientific principles on which musical instruments are constructed than in music itself, and his acoustical and musical experiments soon drew him into the path which led to his many electrical discoveries.—London Globe.

An Emended Sign.

Many a householder at the mercy of the painter will find a bond of sympathy with the students of Stanford university in the incident taken from the San Francisco Chronicle. The score of fraternity houses on the campus were in the process of being cleaned up in preparation for the receptions and luncheons to be given to visitors on the day of the big football game. A man got the contract to paint one of the houses white with the understanding that the job must be done and dry by a certain day. After making a rush start the painter asked permission to hang out his sign. His request was granted, and he put up a conspicuous announcement over the front porch, "These Premises Being Painted by Blank Blank."

Then the work dragged. He would come one day and stay away two. So the impatient collegians added to the sign until the announcement read: "These Premises Being Painted by Blank Blank, Now and Then."

A Calm Witness.

A lawyer was cross examining a witness with a view to getting him muddled in his testimony. The following questions and answers occurred: "Did you see the plaintiff faint a short time ago?" "Yes, sir." "People turn pale when they faint, don't they?" "No, sir; not always." "What! Do you mean to tell me that a person can faint and not turn pale? Did you ever hear of such a case?" "Yes, sir." "Did you ever see such a case?" "I did, sir." "When?" "About a year ago, sir." "Who was it?" "Twas a negro, sir." The lawyer excused the witness.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

The Moabite Stone.

The so called Moabite stone was discovered by the Rev. F. Klein in 1868 among the ruins of Dibon, the ancient Dibon. The stone was of black basalt, rounded at the top and bottom, two feet broad, three feet ten inches high and fourteen inches in thickness, but was unfortunately broken by the Arabs, whose cupidity had been aroused by the interest that was taken in it by the explorers. The fragments were afterward collected and laboriously fitted together, and the stone now stands in the Louvre at Paris. The inscription of thirty-four lines is in Hebrew-Phoenician characters and appears to be a record of Mesha, king of Moab, mentioned in II Kings iii, referring to his successful revolt against the king of Israel.—New York American.

A Model Friend.

What true friendship consists in depends on the temperament of the man who has a friend. It is related that at the funeral of Mr. X., who died extremely poor, the usually cold blooded Squire Tightfit was much affected.

"You thought a great deal of him, I suppose?" some one asked him.

"Thought a great deal of him? I should think I did. There was a true friend! He never asked me to lend him a cent, though I knew well enough he was starving to death!"

Too Expensive.

Two little girls who were taken to see "Othello" were much impressed by the death scene.

"I wonder whether they kill a lady every night?" asked one.

"Why, of course not," said the other. "They just pretend to! It would be too expensive to really kill a lady every night!"

Sweet Sorrow.

"I can't please my friends," sobbed the young bride.

"What's the matter, pet?" "They insist that I can't be happy with a fathead like you, but, oh, husband, I am!"—Washington Herald.

Domestic Amenities.

Kitcher—I've waited an hour for you to get your hat on straight. Mrs. Kitcher—Well, I've waited longer than that for you to get your feet on straight.—New York Sun.

Decision of character is one bright golden apple which every young person should strive in the beginning to pluck from the tree of life.