

THE EXAMINER:

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

Vol. IV.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, MONDAY, JUNE 11, 1855.

No. 48.

Literature.

LOVE'S MEMORY.

A sweet poem by Mary Ann Browne.

I wore a wreath; 'twas fresh and fair—
Rich roses in their crimson pride,
And the blue harebell flowers were there—
I wore and flung the wreath aside;
Too much did these bright blossoms speak
Of thy dear eyes and youthful cheek.

I took my lute methought its strain
Might wile the heavy hours along;
I strove to fill my heart and brain
With the sweet of ancient song;
In vain; what'er I made my choice
Was fraught with thy bewitching voice.

And down I laid the restless lute,
And turned me to the poet's page;
And vainly deem'd that converse mute,
Unmingled might my heart engage;
But in the poet's work I find
The fellow essence of thy mind.

I wander'd 'midst the silent wood,
And sought the greenest, coolest shade,
Where not a sunbeam might intrude;
And in a chestnut's quiet shade
I sat, and in that leafy gloom
Thought of the darkness of the tomb.

And strove to lead my heart to drink
At the deep founts of wandering thought;
To ponder on the viewless link
Between our souls and bodies wrought;
To quench my passionate dreams of thee
Awhile in that philosophy.

Yet all the while thine image bright
Still flitted by, my mind to win,
Casting through dreamy thoughts its light
Like a sunshine that would enter in;
And every leaf and every tree
Seem'd quivering with beams of thee.

Belov'd! I will strive no more!
Thine image in vice-regal power
Shall ruling sit, all memories o'er
Throned in my heart, until the hour
When thou thyself shalt come again,
Restoring there thine olden reign.

The Teacher's Trial and Reward.

BY MARY IRVING.

'Oh! it is a thankless task to teach,' exclaimed Mary, as she drew off her school bonnet, after a summer's day's hard toil.

'What now, Mary?' asked her hostess, gently, looking up with an inquiring smile.

Mary tossed herself into the beckoning arms of the crimson-cushioned rocking chair, and shook down her curls over her flushed cheeks.

'Nothing so very new nor strange, to be sure. A teacher's trials are like—like these troublesome mosquitoes,' she said, crushing, as she spoke, one of the melodious insects upon her hand, impatiently; 'they are little to meet and conquer singly, but, coming in swarms, and without cessation, they sing one's nerves to distraction!'

'She grew eloquent as she recovered breath, and went on: 'There is a fine drapery of romance thrown about the ideal of teaching, that will bear little of the rough handling of reality. It is delightful in perspective—this enthroning yourself on a pyramid of young hearts, whose uprushings are to waft you into a seventh heaven of self-complacency. It is delicious to fancy yourself the prime mover of an electrical battery, whose wires shall vibrate simultaneously in a hundred small breasts, at your lightest touch. But delusion is written on all these day-dreams! You seat yourself on that magic platform, a queen, and you are disenchanted into a servant of servants. The eyes which you pictured turning to you, as the sunflower to the sun, are wandering over desk and bench in search of paper balls, quill ends, or whatnots of mischievous contrivance. The 'young affections' are bestowed upon jack-knives and long-tailed kites; and the youthful ambition works itself out through heels and hands, instead of head. You hammer away upon your own lungs, with little enough impression upon pebbly souls before you! I don't shake your head so eagerly, Aunt Hannah! I know my duty, and I will not shrink from it for these obstacles; but sometimes they do swell mountain high!'

'Aunt Hannah,' as Mary called her by the relationship of affection, not of kindred blood, was a strong-hearted spinster—yes, a veritable 'old maid'—of fifty years or more. She was calm and Quaker-like in her manners and in her dress; but her apartments were furnished in a style of comfortable elegance, that made them peculiarly attractive to young eyes. Being a 'lone woman,' and a woman of fortune, she usually bound to her hearth some glad, warm, young heart, and kept her own soul bathed in its fountain of fresh life. Her house was a home for the homeless; and who is so homeless as a young teacher in a strange city? So thought the kind old lady, at least when she took Mary to her heart and home as a daughter.

Mary was a sunny-spirited creature, not often shadowed by an eclipse of discouragement; but when the cloud came, the shower must follow. So, she suddenly dropped her face on her hands, at the last sentence of her little oration, and burst into tears, like a homesick child.

Aunt Hannah quietly laid aside her darning-needle and basket, pushed her spectacles up on her forehead, and sat looking at the crying girl with a smile, half arch, half sympathizing.

'Cheer up, my bird,' she exclaimed, at last, leaning forward. 'Why shouldst thou oss your burden at the school-room door?'

'I know I should not bring it home, to plague you with it, dear aunt. But do let me cry; it does me good, once in a while!'

'Not a moment!' insisted the old lady, good humoredly, 'or I will write to Frank to-morrow, telling him that you are tired of school-life in New England, and would prefer a touch of life in the West!'

'Oh, nonsense!' interrupted Mary, looking up, blushing, and

laughing in spite of herself, as she bit the corner of her handkerchief. 'I will be more of a woman, there! But the childish feeling will come over me in some moments. You don't know anything about the trials of public schools, aunt. Really, you cannot understand this 'continually drooping' of vexations, that would wear out the patience of a stone school mistress, I believe.'

'And what if you were mistaken, Mary?' said Aunt Hannah, laying her hand on her shoulder.

'Why? Did you ever teach, Aunt Hannah? I am sure there was no deed of it, you were rich sure!—'

She glanced around her without finishing her sentence.

'And you think teaching a penance, which none but the penniless would go through,' said the lady, laughing.

'She grew grave as she added—'

'Shall I give you a leaf of my life's experience, Mary? You may distill some balsam from it.'

'Oh! yes, aunt,' answered Mary, with deep interest, bending over until her curls rested on the old lady's brown silk apron. 'But first tell me how you came to teach? If it was from the love of teaching, you never can sympathise with me.'

Aunt Hannah stroked Mary's soft hair, and looked steadily, almost sadly, into her hazel eyes for a few minutes without speaking.

'I see a dream within these eyes, Mary,' she said, at last, in a low deep tone—'a dream that lies in your heart's core! No, do not drop the lashes; let me read, and recollect thus the dream that budded and grew in my heart, once,—transplanted the heaven long ago!'

'I did not mean to pain you, aunt,' whispered Mary, pressing her lips to the withered hand that rested on her aunt's lap. 'Forgive my inquisitiveness.'

'It does not pain me, Mary,' she answered cheerfully; 'for why should the thought of that which is immortal, pain? But I will not sadden you with what your young, loving and loved heart would call a sad story to-night. I will only say that at the age of nineteen I found myself, by one stroke, cut aloof from life's joys and hopes, and driven to life's duties for the support of an existence that was long like a withered rose-leaf.'

She drew herself up, took out her knitting and commenced her story with animation.

'I became in short, Mary, a district school ma'am, in a small country village, actually from choice. But it was in none of your romantic little country school houses that I found myself ensconced—no white, green-blinded elm-shaded nook of science—nor even a neat corn-field. No; a bare, bleak, and weather-blackened establishment, unshaded by shrub, tree, or blind, in the exact triangle formed by three dusty roads, was my seat of empire.'

'It was a summer school—ladies, at that day, taught only in the melting season. My scholars were generally the 'lesser fry,' whose brothers and sisters were detained at home, meanwhile, to cultivate domestic science in the cheese-room or hay-field. Small as they were, however, they were large enough to embody the imps of mischief that always lurk about the walls of the school-house. But I pass them and their pranks, long since remembered only to be smiled at. The two largest of my pupils shall be the heroes of my story. They were only sizable scions in any nursery of shooting ideas, and, as such, naturally assumed importance.'

'One was the minister's son—a high browed and high souled boy of fifteen—pale and precocious, enthusiastic in his love of the beautiful and his love of his books. He was a boy among a thousand. The snows of the 'Jungfrau,' whose legend you were last night reading, cannot be purer of contamination from the world beneath, than was his young soul of that world's debasing influences. But he was not a cold-hearted paragon of perfection, carved in ice—my gentle, loving Eddie! His blue eye—I can see it now, looking up at me from his brown pine desk, over which he was bending closely—alas too closely! and always poured a brighter gleam from its inner fountain of light as it met mine. His faults, if they could be called faults—were all involuntary. If I felt constrained, by consistency, to reprove him for the work of some musing moment my voice unconsciously took a softer tone, and my eye catching the reflection of his winning glance, contradicted the reprimand. Such was Eddie Carroll—my prodigy, my pride.'

'A very different youngster was Master Walter Raleigh R——, a year the senior of Eddie, but scarcely towering above the tall, slender boy. Walter was the only child of the widow of a naval officer, who was passing the summer in the country air for the restoration of her health, and who wished to have her wilful but darling boy cultivating the talents which he was disposed to squander. He had been reared among city influences, and indulged, as I then thought, to his ruin. I scarcely wondered at this, for his face was one stamped by nature beautiful and noble, and his turbulent will was quiet enough to bear down the judgment of a grief-bowed invalid like his mother. He had, as the saying is, 'seen a little of the world'—quiet too much for his years—and fancied himself equal to all exigencies, superior to all authority. Yet, when his cloak of obstinacy was thrown off, he could be as generous and gallant as his namesake of old.'

'Of course, 'Sir Walter' was not going to surrender, unconditionally, his citadel of pride and perverseness to a country school mistress—one, too, upon whom he could literally, 'look down.' He was a most provoking thistle in my cheerfully tended garden, springing up every where to annoy and baffle me. Was a caricature chalked on the black board—I knew the hand at a glance. Was an unfortunate puppy tethered to my desk, or a sign of 'Blacksmithing' posted over the school room door—each bore witness to my own mind of the perpetrator, although he managed adroitly to elude proof. It a laugh went around the school room, I could never turn my eyes so quickly to the corner where it commenced, as not to find Master Walter bending with most imperturbable gravity over his slate or book, buried in abstract science. And when 'called up,' for these or other offences, he would swagger impudently, though not ungracefully, to my desk, and look me in the face with an air that said, as plainly as words, 'I am a lord of creation—who are you?'

Reasoning and reproof fell on him like hail stones on an Alpine glacier; they slid off, leaving the same unbumbled smile upon his half-curved lips. With a cool nod he would toss back his dark curls, toss a wink to the school, and stalk to his seat.

'He became a sort of omnipresent nuisance to my peace. I was ashamed to complain of him, and thus confess that I had failed in management; but he haunted my dreams at night and my thoughts by day. I used, at last, fairly tremble at his entrance, and almost fear to lift my eyes to him.'

'At length he ventured upon a trick of more consequence. On the morning after fourth of July, when I walked into

the school room, I found the children clustered about a heap of fragments of fire works, on the hearth. They had evidently been tossed down the low chimney, and had flown hither and thither, at no little risk, blackening the walls and desks in many places.'

'Who did this?' I exclaimed, in dismay, tho' with little hope of any answer.

'It was Walter R——, ma'am,' exclaimed two of the little boys together; 'I saw him climb the roof, and fire down the squibs and crackers,' added one, 'and said, too 'Who cares for that little Miss Willis?'

My womanly dignity and indignation were fully aroused. At the instant, Walter entered, whistling 'Yankoe Doodle,' as he moved to his seat. I called the school to order and silence.

'The boy that caused this disorder, will please to remove the fragments,' said I.

'Not a muscle stirred.'

'I turned deliberately to the offender, and facing his daring look, said—'

'Walter, you sit convicted of this act, by the testimony of your school mates. Have you any excuse to give?'

'There was a moment's pause in which Walter studied the expression of my fixed eye; then clear and calm as a bell, his voice rang out—'

'No, ma'am!'

'Then your sense of honor will tell you what is expected of you, Walter! No one else is to remove this rubbish,' I added, turning to the other scholars.

'His lips pressed each other more firmly, but he turned with apparent indifference to his books, with something, now and then, between a smile and a sneer. I took note of all, but took no notice, by word, of him or of his lessons. During the noon intermission, I thought he might relent. But no—the hour of two brought us both to our places in the yet untidy school room. I grew desperate. I felt that a crisis had come in my reign, and it must be met.'

'Walter R—— will please stop a moment after school,' said I, as I disbanded my little army for the night.

He kept his seat while the others walked away. Eddie was the last to leave, and as he passed through the doorway, he sent back to me a look of mingled anxiety and sympathy, that soothed and strengthened my heart. My culprit came up boldly to my side, and confronted me with his wilful black eyes.

'Walter,' I began, quietly, 'this is worthy of a hero! A mighty echevalier a boy of sixteen must be, who undertakes to dispute the authority of a young lady, shorter than himself and mistress of some thirty little country children!'

'His assurance was rather taken back by this unexpected tone, and the first shade of a blush marked a momentary confusion.'

'I would be your friend, if I could, Walter. You see, very well, that in this room I must and shall be obeyed. If you choose to absent yourself from this room, very well. I have nothing to do with boys too old to be gentlemen!'

'I saw his lips arch slightly, and added—'

'If you really wish my assistance in your studies, Walter, should you not make some return?'

'No answer. His hand played with the leaves of my Atlas.'

'Do you not owe me the assistance of your example, in maintaining law and order among the younger ones? What would you do in my place, Walter? Would you think little of the obedience and respect of your oldest scholar? I leave this to your conscience and to your honor!'

'We parted without another word.'

'I was not surprised, although I was greatly relieved, on entering my premises the next morning, to find them 'swept and garnished.' The scholars had assembled. I rang the bell immediately, to prevent all needless observations. Walter was soon in his seat, with a bright spot under each eye, and lips that seemed struggling to regain their usual expression of pride. I saw and pitied the conflict, especially when I took a sealed paper from my desk and read—'

'I beg pardon, Miss Willis, for my offence against law and order. You shall find me a supporter of both.'

'At the first moment of recess, the boys sprang tumultuously out. I stepped near the door to listen.

'Ha! so you had to clear up after all, sir!' cried the boy who had been my first informer.

'What's that to you, picaninny Pete?' retorted the sharp tone of Walter; 'babies may mind their own business.'

'And big boys better mind their own brag!' drawled the other, with a hectoring chuckle.

'Harsh words followed fast, and blows were already on the way. I called suddenly from the stone step—'

'Walter! will you bring me a sprig of that wild honey-suckle in the field yonder? I want it for my herbarium.'

'Nothing restores self-respect and good humor to a culprit so effectually as the commission of an errand, be it ever so slight. Walter came back with a countenance almost cleared, bringing a quantity of fragrant flowers. I opened my Botany, and wiled him to stay while I found the description of the plant, and explained the hard, dry terms that defined it. Then, as I laid it between papers to press, his wondering eyes followed every motion.

'I don't think I should like a herbarium,' he said, bluntly, at last looking down at a fresh flower which he was yet twirling in his fingers.

'Why not?' said I. The flower you are holding will fade—the flowers which you left on the stalks, will fade. This one, though it is crushed for a little while, will not fade, but will keep its form and remnant of its beauty.'

'Well, I think I should like to study flowers, at any rate,' he said with earnestness.

'I will teach you as far as I can, with a great deal of pleasure,' I said as I arose to ring the bell. When I passed him in returning to my seat, I whispered, 'is it hard to keep good resolutions, Walter?' He started, and blushed deeply, for the first time, but took his seat in silence.

'From that day I found little to trouble my peace in Walter. He redeemed his pledge most honorably, and still he kept aloof from me, as though ashamed of his former conduct, and yet afraid to show that shame. He did not grow to my heart as did Eddie. But I mourned the day of his return to the distant city of snares and temptations, and sighed, as I said to myself—'

'Would that noble boy could be saved.'

'Three years later found me in the sunny South. I was passing the winter in the uplands of Georgia, when I received a letter from Mr. Carroll, Eddie's father. He informed me that his poor boy had left college, apparently 'far gone in a consumption,' and that he had been ordered South, as a forlorn hope.

'My heart bleeds that I cannot go with him,' the letter

ran, 'and pillow his head on a father's breast, in the struggle which I fear is too near. But you know why that cannot be. It is a great consolation to feel that he will be in the neighbourhood of one kind friend. I know how you have befriended my precious boy, and I am sure you will not withdraw your kind offices now, when they will be his only solace in a strange land.'

'A few weeks later I met the invalid himself. He sat propped up by sofa cushions, with the lurid hectic on his cheeks, and that unnatural light in his eyes which seems to pierce the shadow of death. Was it my Eddie, indeed? that tall, emaciated spiritualized being? His voice was all that reminded me of the school boy, as he started up with feverish animation, and exclaiming, 'Miss Willis!' sank back on his couch of cushions. I did not then ask him many questions; for evidently the sight of my face had awakened thoughts which distressed him. These he afterwards confided to me, in one of the many evenings that I spent in soothing his suffering and restlessness.

'Oh, Miss Willis!' he exclaimed, seizing my hand, and pressing it against his burning forehead—'to die so young.'

'Words of comfort would have done no good, and I only pressed his thin hand in token of sympathy.

'Do you remember,' and he smiled sadly as he looked up, 'what an ambitious boy I was, when I used to sit upon that bench just before your desk, in that old school house at home? You did not know half the dreams that dazzled me, half the plans that I had formed, and have since formed for my life—and now my life is ended!'

'Did not your plan reach beyond your life, Edward? I whispered. A spasm shook his slight frame, as he again covered his face, and was silent.

'Ambition had been the idol to which poor Eddie had given himself a living sacrifice. It was hard to say 'They will be done!'

'But he did say it as he lay in child-like helplessness, not many days after, waiting patiently for the Angel of Death to unlock the gate of a new life that has no sickness, no disappointment, no end!'

'I planted a laurel on Eddie's grave, and a sensitive plant beside it—mute emblems of the spirit that had struggled in the frail form below. 'Why was he taken?' I asked, with tears, as I turned from it the last time: 'had the wicked world no need of his pure spirit? How many hundreds it might have spared before him!—Thus we complain, short-sighted gropers along the shore of eternity.'

Aunt Hannah paused for the first, and sat poised her needles upon her idle fingers, as though buried in reverie. Mary drew a deep breath and asked softly, at last—'

'And what of your self-willed boy, aunt, your Walter? Did he never cross your track again?'

'My Walter!' exclaimed the old lady, brightening up. 'You shall hear! I was thinking how many years had passed since my first journey to the Western country. It seems more than twenty; and yet it can hardly be,' she said, as if reckoning, with her eyes fixed on Mary.

'Well! twenty years ago I was floating down the Ohio, in a fine steamboat; that is, fine for those days. I was alone and rather adventurous. But I had an unconquerable curiosity to see the grand old woods of 'the West' in their glory. They were all around me then. I suppose I should be forced to sail many a long mile beyond the Ohio, now-a-days to find the West. I was standing by the railing of the guards enjoying the waving panorama, when a little boy, about four years old, came running by me. His soft hair streamed back on the wind, and his cheeks glowed with the delight of having escaped from his nurse in the cabin.'

'Franky!' called a shrill voice, and a wolly head was thrust through the cabin doorway.—'Come here, Franky, rogue.'

'No, no! don't want to!' exclaimed 'Franky rogue,' in high glee, backing toward the railing of the boat, as she pursued him. All at once he knocked a part of the guard, close by the gangway, that had been carelessly fastened. It gave way, and stumbling back, he was just falling over the boat's side, when I caught his velvet stock by the skirt, and held him hanging over the dark blue waters.

'Nurse and child each gave a scream loud enough to bring crew and passengers in a body to our assistance. Among them was a young woman in a white dressing gown, with her long hair half braided, half streaming, to her waist. She looked more like a startled sunbeam than anything else, at that moment, as she bounded through the crowd with a mother's energy, and caught her rescued boy in her arms. 'Oh!' she breathed, folding him to her heart. The nurse soon told her the story, and, turning to me, she caught my hand, and looking up tearfully, she said, 'His father will bless you for this! Oh! could I have met him with one child wanting? Then seeming to recover consciousness of her disability, she glided back into her stateroom, carrying her treasure.'

'About an hour afterwards, as I sat studying the countenances that moved up and down the cabin, Master Franky's head peeped from behind a curtain, and soon he made his appearance in full, and fastened by one finger to his mother, who had regained her composure. Now, in a neat travelling dress, with a face above the order of a common beauty, she seemed a petite embodiment of graceful dignity. The nurse followed with a year old baby with peachy cheeks, dark blue eyes and dimpled hands.'

'I lured the little boy to my side, and asked his mother's permission to take him upon deck, as he seemed restless from confinement.'

'Certainly. I can trust him with you, if you will take the trouble of watching him,' she replied. 'Franky is a sad rogue!' The smile that dimpled her face as she said this, annulled the shake of the head that accompanied it.

'So you are a minister's boy, are you?' I asked of the little fellow, after some remark from him about his father, whom he expected to meet at L—— in a few hours.

'No,' said he, shaking his curls archly.

'What then—a doctor's boy?'

'No—no!' he shouted gleefully. 'I'm a professor's boy, that's what I am! I want to climb that rope tree. I don't want to sit still.'

'I found my task of guardian no very easy one, for the little fellow insisted on being escorted over the whole boat, and getting answers to a thousand, and one droll questions.'

'The supper bell rang, and I saw the young mother escorted to the head of the long table by the gentlemanly captain, who, with a knot of gentlemen, seemed assiduous in attentions to her. Franky was called to her side, and I lost him for a time.'

'I next caught sight of his round, curly pate, caased in a blue cap, with gold tassel, as he ran to my side, where I was