

CHARLOTTE MESSENGER.

VOL. I. NO. 18.

CHARLOTTE, MECKLENBURG CO., N. C., OCTOBER 21, 1882.

W. C. SMITH, Publisher.

The Darkie Domine's Discourse.

Look out, backslider, whar you walkin',
Make a misstep, chu' yo' bo'n,
I tell you what, it's no use talkin',
Ef you slip up, chile, you gone.

De road is full er stumps and stubble,
Rats and sink-holes ebery whar;
I 'spec de'll gib you heap er trouble,
Ef you don't stop foolin' dar.

It's dark as pitch an' mighty cloudy,
Spec' de debil's walkin' roun',
Fust thing you know he'll tell you "Howdy,"
Lif' his hoof an' stomp de groun'.

Man, can't you see a storm a brewin',
Hear de awful thunder peal?
Look! Blazin' lightning' threat'nin' ruin—
Oh, backslider, how you feel?

Drap on yo' knees and go to prayin',
Ax de Lawd to help you out.
Chile, tell him you's a lamb a strayin'—
Done got lost and scamblin' bout.

An' den you'll see de stars a gleamin'—
Luminatin' all de way;
'Bout ten thousand twinklin' beamin'—
Smack until de break er day.

But ef you fail de debil get you,
Fetch you slap right in yo' eye;
You'll feel most like er grapeshot hit you,
Dropped from half way to de sky.

THE BLIND BOY.

In November, 188—, Mr. Nay, formerly professor of music at Toulouse, came to settle at Menton with his son Henry. He rented at the further end of the town, the ground floor of a house whose windows looked into the street, and at the same time on the road leading down the mountain. It was not the beauty of site that had induced that choice, but the peaceful calmness and the pure and fragrant air which pervade that part. Henry Nay was blind.

He was about fifteen, when his eyesight, until then excellent, became gradually weaker. A very strange dimness fell over his eyes, and soon he had to give up reading new music; for Henry, young as he was, had already made his mark as a violinist. One morning all was night and darkness around him, and when, placing himself before the sun, he opened his eyes wide, he felt they were paralyzed, two large tears rolled on his cheeks; nothing more had revealed his grief.

Then the father took the child by the hand and searched the world for an oculist. All the celebrated specialists were consulted, and unanimously declared that the boy might be cured, if willing to submit to a painful and perilous operation.

Mr. Nay dared not take upon himself all the responsibility. Besides, this hesitation could not compromise the success of the undertaking. The precocious child was developing rapidly, and the father resolved to let him decide later on.

In the meantime they went from place to place, traveling almost constantly. For Henry, whose smallest wishes were never denied, was led on by that feverish activity and want of change which deluded him to hope for a ray of light.

Five years had gone by. They were living at Menton, as everywhere else, very secluded, and were seldom out before evening. The mornings were given to reading, the afternoons to music. The old master accompanied on the piano, as well as his stiffened fingers would allow him to follow, the brilliant improvisations of his son. It was the boy's only joy to give way thus, for hours at a time, to the fanciful strains of his imagination. Notes sparkled like a jet of fire under his capricious bow; then long, melancholy strains would follow—fall of regrets and tears for the lost treasure.

One cool evening Henry, leaning on his father, walked to the sea-shore. He sat on the sand, and there, motionless, his attention centered on the dashing waves, he was trying to perceive, distinct from one another, the innumerable sounds which compose the monotonous harmony of the sea.

Another day they walked to the woods, following the road that passed near their house. After half an hour the boy stopped.

"Father, you are tired?"

"Not in the least," answered the old man.

"You could not deceive me," resumed the blind boy, smiling. "Your case stumbles at each step. Fortunately, here we are, I hear the wind rustling among the leaves."

"Not quiet yet. We are walking along the railing of a park, whose trees project their branches over the road."

"Just then the silence of that calm night was broken by a few harmonious chords from a piano; then, after a pause, the invisible musician played the "Song of the Star," in Tannhauser.

Henry stopped, his hand resting on his father's arm.

"Is it where the light shines?" he asked.

"Yes."
"Let us listen. Do you mind?"
"With pleasure."

After the "Song of the Star" came almost without interruption a Waltz of Chopin, played with feverish rapidity as if the artist lacked time to finish it. After the waltz a nocturne, with sentimental variations, expressive of grand despair. Then, all at once, silence and darkness resumed their sway. The light had vanished with the last sounds.

"We have heard a real artist," said Mr. Nay, taking his son by the arm. Henry did not answer, but he thought, "It was a woman!"

With the sagacity of the blind, whose other senses are wondrously keen and delicate, he had recognized the woman in the nervousness of the touch and in the penetrating emotion of the sentiment. He had been divined that she was a sufferer, from the erratic choice of her music, and the brusque transitions of merriment to sadness, and the varied shades of her play.

The next day, as he questioned the old woman who waited on them, he heard that the villa belonged to Mr. Valencourt, a gentleman from Paris, who had bought it for his daughter, Madeleine, "a poor young lady who seemed very ill."

On that evening Henry did not mention that he wanted to go again toward the park. He only said he wished to bring his violin in case he should take a fancy to improvise a serenade to the stars. That day and the following, Mr. Nay and his son spent the whole evening on the beach.

"Shall we go to the wood?" said Mr. Nay, one morning; "it is nearer, and we should return earlier, for the nights are getting cool."

The young man repressed a smile.

"Let us go to the woods," he said, seemingly indifferent.

It was dusk when they reached the villa. Madeleine, alone in her room, was at the piano playing the "Elegy of Ernst."

Henry seized his violin, and, standing on the road, trembling with excitement, he repeated like an echo, the melody he had heard.

At the first notes Madeleine rose suddenly and looked out wondering, then closed the window.

"I am watched," she thought, and she blushed.

The violin was silent.

A minute later the girl opened the curtains, and tried to see through the impenetrable darkness outside. But all in vain. After the first feeling had subsided, curiosity had awakened.

"Who can it be?" she thought.

Henry Nay went home out of sorts, and well aware that he had disturbed her solitude. And yet he returned every night with his violin. One would have thought that he endeavored, in inspired improvisations, to implore forgiveness and express the feelings which were agitating him.

But the villa was buried in silence and obscurity. This irritated him to the last degree.

"It is all over!" said he, one day. "I offended her. Once more I shall go; and then I shall leave the country."

How wearily dragged the hours. At sunset his father led him on, gently humming what he called a "romantic lacy." Henry played a prelude, and commenced the "Elegy of Ernst." The melody was to bid her farewell. Plaintive and sorrowful, the notes fell in the peaceful night.

Suddenly he started, and his bow almost slipped through his fingers. A joy unspeakable pervaded all his being. The piano, timid at first, then more distinct, was following the violin. It was Madeleine, who, encouraged gradually, was playing the accompaniment of the "Elegy." The duo would have been prolonged far into the night had Mr. Nay allowed it.

On his way home Henry was silent and grave. His voice had a tinge of sadness when he wished his father good night. As they parted, he called him back.

"Father!"

"What is it, my son?"

"Nothing—tomorrow."

Henry had changed his mind. He did not sleep that night. As hours passed away he evoked the memories of his childhood, to have some idea of Madeleine's home, and, above all, of her person. What was she like? He recalled to mind the image of the young ladies he had seen. He could see her, first slender, graceful and fair, then dark, with classical features and fiery eyes; he could not think of her as not beautiful.

The next morning Mr. Nay entered his room early.

"Father," said he, hurriedly, "I have made up my mind. Will you write to Dr. Desmarres?"

"Have you thought it well over?" asked Mr. Nay, growing very pale.

"It is no risk to run," answered

Henry. "Nothing can be worse than my present state. Besides, I have reflected seriously, and am quite resolute," he added in a firm voice.

Mr. Nay telegraphed immediately to Dr. Desmarres, and two days later the young and celebrated oculist arrived at Menton.

"When shall I see the light, doctor?" eagerly asked Henry.

"It will be a week; for that time you will remain in this room, in the most absolute obscurity and silence, but after that—"

"After that—I shall see Madeleine," thought Henry, who did not care what more the doctor had to say.

That evening and the next Madeleine waited in vain. The third day she became sad and anxious. Had the unknown musician, who understood her so well, grown weary? Had he left the town? Strange thoughts troubled her. No, he had not gone. Consumption, that terrible disease, seemed to gain ground, as the poor child gave way to her sombre misgivings. A terrible presentiment agitated her.

She hardly lived, except for the hours when her mysterious friend was to appear. The time came, she was at the piano playing their favorite melodies; then, opening the window, bending down, she would listen and try to learn something of the dark night.

One evening she fancied she heard steps on the road. In the thoughtlessness of her excitement she rushed out in her thin muslin dress, bare-headed, her shoulders hardly protected by the light tissue that covered them. Like a shadow she glided on through the winding paths and opened the side door of the park.

It was a laborer returning from his day's work, a spade on his shoulder. Just then he hummed a merry tune, soon lost in the distance.

Madeleine remained, leaning against the wall her burning forehead, and her mind lost in reverie. She did not feel the cool evening breeze and the scarcely perceptible drops of rain that fell on her shoulders. A painful idea absorbed her. He will come no more!

All of a sudden a violent chill shook her from head to foot; she went in doors, fainting, sick at heart, and laid down with burning fever.

Ten days after that fatal evening, Henry Nay in his room, with drawn curtains still, was expecting the visit of the Menton doctor, Dr. Desmarres had left in charge, fully instructed, after the operation. The success was complete. Henry was blind no longer; but his eyes were gradually brought to bear the light. For a few days past he had gone with out a fold over them, and that very morning the doctor was to open the thick curtains and let him behold the light of heaven, the dazzling brilliancy of the sun.

The doctor entered, followed by Mr. Nay. Henry was agitated with great emotion. His father led him by the hand to the window just opened by the doctor.

"Look!" said he.

Henry screamed with joy and closed his eyes. Then opening them again, with a rapturous look, he embraced the whole horizon and tried to discover the way to the villa.

"At last I shall see Madeleine!" he thought.

At that very moment he perceived at the turning point of the road a priest in his surplice, with a silver cross in his hand; then the children's choir, followed by six women carrying a coffin covered with a white sheet; after the coffin, young girls dressed in white and bearing tapers, and closing the procession a long file of men and women of all ages.

"Henry's heart sank within him.

"Doctor," said he, "that is a young lady's funeral?"

"Yes," he answered, "a charming and unfortunate child, the victim of consumption. Just imagine, she died at her piano, as she was playing the celebrated 'Elegy of Ernst.' Her name was—"

"Madeleine!" exclaimed Henry, in a stifled voice.

"You know her?" asked Mr. Nay, astonished.

"No," murmured the young man, "but I loved her!"—[Waverly Magazine.]

An Established Theory.

There is a theory advanced by scientists that if you whisper in the ear of a sleeping man the impression of your words will be conveyed to his mind as by a dream. We recently experimented with this theory and found it worked very satisfactorily. A noted Western scout who boasted of having slain two hundred Indians was stopping at the hotel where we reside. We entered his room and whispered in his ear: "We are attacked by Indians! The red devils are upon us!" Did he spring up, grab for a knife and blindly rush forward for a fray? He did arise from the bed. And he crawled under it. There can be no doubt that the theory is correct.

How to be Handsome.

Most people would like to be handsome. Nobody denies the great power which any person may have who is handsome, and attracts you by good looks, even before a word has been spoken. And we see all sorts of devices in men and women to improve their looks. Now, all cannot have good features—they are, as God made them—but almost any one can look well, especially with good health. It is hard to give rules in a very short space, but in brief those will do:—

Keep clean—wash freely. All the skin wants is leave to set freely, and it takes care of itself. Its thousands of air holes must not be closed.

Eat regularly, and sleep enough—not too much. The stomach can no more work all the time night and day, than a horse. It must have regular work and rest.

Good teeth are a help to good looks. Brush them with a soft brush, especially at night. Go to bed with cleansed teeth. Of course to have white teeth, it is needful to let tobacco alone. All women know that. Washes for the teeth should be very simple. Acid may whiten the teeth, but it takes off the enamel and injures them.

Sleep in a cool room, in pure air. No one can have a cleanly skin who breathes bad air. But more than all, in order to look well, wake up mind and soul.

When the mind is awake, the dull, sleepy look passes away from the eyes. I do not know that the brain expands, but it seems so. Think, and read, not trashy novels, but books and papers that have something in them.

Men say they cannot afford books, and sometimes do not even pay for a newspaper. In that case it does them little good, they feel so mean while reading them. But men can afford what they really choose. If all the money spent in self-indulgence, in hurtful indulgence, was spent in books or papers for self-improvement, we should see a change. Men would grow handsome, and women too. We were not meant to be mere animals. Let us have good and read them, and sermons and h e e them.

Physical Training of Girls.

Physical training just at this period is one of vital importance. The exercise that is best adapted to develop all parts of the body in a natural, healthy manner is domestic labor. It is always at hand; it can be taken regularly every day, and there is such variety that almost every muscle can be exercised. Housework should never be considered menial or degrading; it is nature's laboratory in which the girl may obtain not only the best physical development but most valuable knowledge that will fit her for the practical duties of life. This training may be supplemented by other kinds of exercise, such as walking and out-door sports. The very general introduction of foreign help into domestic service has proved most unfortunate for the health of American women.

Closely connected with this neglect of physical training at home is an evil of great magnitude—that is, supreme devotion to brain work. The practice pursued very generally at the present day of confining the girl in school or seminary for a series of years is attended with most serious evils. In the language of a popular writer, "It is educating our girls to death." While we would not discard education in all its various departments, extending to the highest culture, we maintain that it is no advantage or blessing if it is to be obtained at the expense of the physical system. There are other parts of the body besides the brain that need faithful training. The highest accomplishments and mental acquisitions will not compensate for impaired constitution and poor health.

Habits of the Codfish.

A correspondent of the New York Post says that the codfish frequents "table-lands of the sea." The codfish; no doubt, does this to secure, as nearly as possible, a dry, bracing atmosphere. This pure air of the submarine table-lands gives to the codfish that breadth of chest and depth of lungs which we have always noticed.

The glad, free smile of the codfish is largely attributed to the exhilaration of this oceanic altitudism.

The correspondent further says that "the cod subsists largely on the sea cherry." Those who have not had the pleasure of seeing the codfish climb the sea cherry-tree in search of food, or clubbing the fruit from the heavily-laden branches with chunks of coral, have missed a very fine sight.

The codfish, when at home rambling through the submarine forests, does not wear his vest unbuttoned, as he does when loafing around the grocery stores of the United States.

The best portion of a good man's life is his little nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.

Poesy.

Though mighty deeds of valor done,
And many fields of valor won,
Be soon forgot, they shine in fame
By means of men of humble name.

Some youth, perchance, of ardent fire,
Whose will can wield the flowing line,
Whose music teaches him to sing,
Sheds lasting lustre on a king.

For long as beautiful poesy
And gentle arts their pencils ply,
The poet hath a place to fill,
And nobly works with mighty skill.

Some men must rhyme, and some must play,
Some vanquish in the well-fought day;
But these as they are truly great,
Both they who charm and file the state.

Then deem not him whose words rehearse
The deeds of kings in flowing verse
A useless weed amidst the trees—
A blossom wafted on the breeze.

The king must die, the conqueror lie
As lowly as his brother clay;
But winsome words and fervid lines
Last while the sun in heaven shines.

HUNDREDS.

"Goods are at half price," said the sign. "How much is that tea-pot?" asked an old lady. "Fifty cents, mum," was the response. "I guess I'll take it," she said, throwing down a quarter. The sign was taken in.

Epitaph said to be copied from a tombstone in the cemetery Montmartre: "Here lies Joseph X., who for twenty years after the death of his wife lived in the society of his mother-in-law, and died in the certain hope of a better world beyond."

A father scolds his son for his numerous youthful errors. "Really, father, you were once young. Did you never frolic?" "Never," said the father, with a melancholy sigh; "when I was young I had no money; and when I became rich it was too late."

During a conference of clergymen, the following dialogue was overheard between two newsboys: "I say, Jim, what's the meaning of so many ministers being together?" "Why," answered Jim, scornfully; "they always meet once a year to exchange sermons with each other."

A little girl once took a letter from her mother to an old lady friend. "Many thanks, my child," she said; "you may tell your mother that you are a good child and a faithful little messenger." "Thank you, ma'am; and I shall tell her, too, I didn't ask you for ten cents, because mamma told me not to."

HER MISTAKE.—"Why do you suppose Rev. Johnson Reed is always driving over to Smithville?" asked one Austin gentleman of another. "His wife says he goes over to admire the beauty of the place," was the reply. "Yes; but does his wife know that the beauty of the place is a young widow?"

YOUNG AMERICA.—First proud mother—"My boy is only eleven years old, and he comes in every day with his pockets full of fruit. He can get over the top of any fence they can put up, the darling!" Second proud mother—"Pooh for your boy! Why, my Jimmy is only ten, and he's a corner loafer, and has been to the police court twice."

Laurie's mother was teaching him to add, and held up two fingers. He counted. "Now," said she, "here are three more. How many does that make?" The little fellow did not quite understand. "Why, Laurie," said she, "if you had two apples, and I should give you three more, what would you have?" Looking up with his great, speaking eyes, he said, "Why, mamma, I would have the stomach-ache."

A Haunted Railway.

Firemen on the Virginia Midland Railway tell wonderful stories of the nightly appearance of a ghost on the track of that road, near Otter River, where a tramp was killed some time ago. His ghostship first appeared on two white horses, but becoming more bold of late, the spiritual stranger, in the form of a man, has dispensed with the steeds, and has several times, unattended, taken a position on the track, in the attitude of the mad bull, and defied the iron horse. One night last week the fireman of an engine discovered what was supposed to be a man on the track. The engine, which was going at a high rate of speed, struck the man, and apparently killed him. The train was stopped, and several hands were sent back to see what damage had been done. The body was seen a short distance down the road, but upon the men reaching it it disappeared. At other times the ghost has appeared in the cabs of engines, and, after surveying things generally, just stepped out into space.