

WHEN MOTHER IS AWAY.

BY RUBIE T. WEYBURN.

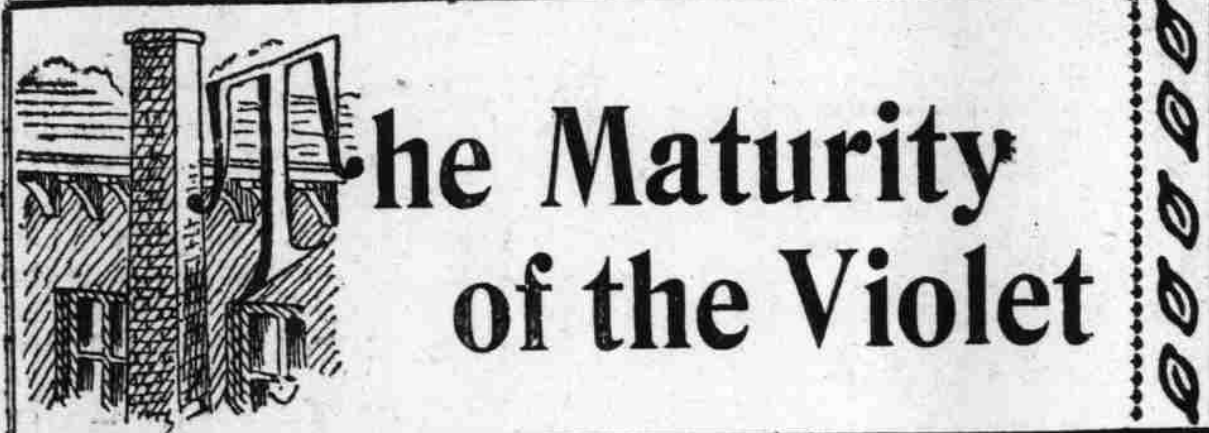
The house is such a dreary place when mother is away;
There isn't fun in anything, no matter what you play.
The dolls just sit as stupid, and act so still and queer—
They always say such funny things when mother's by to hear.

The little china tea set looks so lonesome waiting there,
There's no fun playing party and eating only air!
It isn't like the lovely thing you most believe you see
Upon the plates and saucers, when mother comes to tea.

There's no use doing up your hair and dressing up in style,
You know it's just pretending, and you're Betty all the while;
You never hear a whisper from the chairs against the wall:
"Dear me, what splendid lady now is coming here to call!"

The pictures in the picture-books are never half so fine,
The stories won't come out and talk for any pains of mine;
An hour goes so slowly, it's almost like a day—
The house is such a lonesome place when mother is away.

—Good Housekeeping.



The Maturity of the Violet

THE mainsail swung down with a rattle as the white-painted yacht came up in the wind. With jib and foresail fluttering gently she lay at anchor in a tiny bay. It was one of those coves upon the southwest coast where the trees stand body out toward the waves, marking with a fringe of green the landward limit of the beach. Mostyn Gainsford clambered up the narrow companion stairs. The man who was lounging by the tiller regarded him doubtfully.

"Clean ducks—and such pretty brown boots," he mused. "Think it over, Mostyn. Go down again. Change into something more prosaic."

Gainsford was gazing shorewards toward where a roof gleamed through the trees. His countenance contracted slightly.

"Because one is about to marry," he said. "Is that a reason to shudder at an incident of the past? May I not remember a period that was—yes, the most innocent and poetic of my life time?"

"Such candor in an engaged man is as admirable as it is rare," returned the other. "But let me reassure you your words are already forgotten."

"It was such a simple affair, Luttrell," went on Gainsford unheeding. "She was one of those country girls one reads about but never sees. Peach-blossom cheek, milk-white hand—and a disposition! Perfectly pastoral! I saw what lay beneath—the girl had soul. I read to her. I talked, I gave her glimpses of the outside world—of its better parts. I set myself to cultivate a mind latent with untold possibilities. It was a fascinating pastime, I admit. It was as the training of a pretty child. And you would have it there is harm in a pardonable curiosity to see the result of those endeavors of mine three years ago?"

Luttrell shrugged his shoulders. "In these matters the question is not of right or wrong. The point hinges on the more important lady's mood should she chance to hear of it. Still, it's no business of mine."

Gainsford's eyes sought the roof again.

"It was an idyll," he said. "Would you know the extent of our caresses? She pressed my hand, and only at the parting. It was in token of gratitude, I believe, whereas I owed her more. To me it was a glimpse of purity that I treasured."

Luttrell had lit a cigar. He watched the flung match as it struck upon the smooth water.

"I trust you will not find it a wild-goose chase," he said. "And yet, perhaps that would be the best. Too tame a bird, you know, might spell complications."

"It is useless talking to you," retorted Gainsford. "If she is there still you shall come to see her with me, and then, perhaps, you will understand."

The dinghy, an oarsman within it, was waiting at the quarter. Gainsford stepped into it. A moment later the man was pulling him shoreward with quick strokes.

"Do not wait," he told the man as the boat's nose slid, grinding upon the beach. "I shall be here some time. Stand by on board until you hear my whistle."

As he walked slowly along the path that led from the beach the old familiarity with the surroundings was upon him once more. He had not thought to have remembered the spot so well. The scent of the May blossom came strongly to him. It seemed to him that the sweetness of the perfume had killed three long years. Surely it was only yesterday that he had trodden the verdure-lined path.

His pulses tingled a little as he set eyes upon a large, flat stone set low down by the wayside. They had sat upon it so many times, he and she. A voluptuous reverie was upon him. So pleasant was it that, submitting, he encouraged its thrall. He let himself sink down upon the broad slab.

It was here that he had first met her. It was here that he had sung the

cadence of Wadsworth and Tennyson into her ears. He had marked the parted lips and the light that came and went in her eyes. It had been a pleasant fountain at which he had drunk. And the waters had bequeathed no bitter taste. She had benefited; he had little doubt of that.

He rose slowly and paced onward. He could see the cottage now, with its green shelter of oak and elm. He looked more closely. There was something strange about the building. There was an addition, the new whiteness of which stood out rather glaringly from the worn tint of the rest. He had drawn near to the main road that ran at right angles between the path and the cottage beyond when he heard the starting pants of an automobile. A brilliant red car went speeding up the road. Its throbbing jarred upon him; the wafted odor of petrol annihilated with noisome brutality the scent of the hay.

A minute later he had crossed the road and was walking up a narrow garden path. He stared about him in growing unrest. In the place where had revelled a tangle of undergrowth and shrub was now a cleared space, gravel-covered. Two tables were there and a medley of chairs, while nearer to the house stood a long bench.

He seated himself upon the latter to await—whatever should occur. A very small infant came toddling toward him from round a corner of the building. The child held a piece of jam-covered bread in his hand. As he pressed his small frame confidently against Gainsford the jam left a red stain upon the white duck trousers. Gainsford, in his preoccupation, allowed the misfortune to pass almost unheeded.

He looked up quickly at the sound of an exclamation. She herself, the one who had lived in his mind's eye, stood in the flesh before him. He stared for a while in dumb amazement. The tracings of her features, of her form, all this escaped him. He noticed but one thing—she wore a waitress' cap and apron.

There was a glad light in her eyes as Gainsford's hand went out toward her. Yet she was not the same. There had been a great change. As is the way in such matters, he could not at first see where it lay. But this much was evident, that where he had left a tremulous snowdrop a firm-stalked sunflower now stood.

"Well! I never did!" she cried. Gainsford experienced a sudden shiver. Her mode of expression had been more diffident in the old days, but her eyes were as pretty as ever. They were dancing with pleasure now. "To think of it!" she exclaimed. "Why, it seems just like old times seeing you here!"

Her hand was playing with the lace of her cap. Gainsford, gazing at her afresh, disagreed—inwardly, but entirely—with her words. His thoughts went back to the shy, willow-figured girl with the large eyes and tremulous voice that he had known.

"The place has changed," he began. He felt that his voice came from him with a horribly dead sound. "But the path was the same. I passed the stone—the stone where we—"

She broke into a little laugh. "Ah, that stone sees more folks than it used to."

He was gazing hard at her. He wondered whether it was a fleeting blush that he saw upon her cheek.

"Lots of people come here now," she went on in answer to his mute inquiry; "it pays." She eyed him with a sudden speculative look. "Would you like some tea?" she asked.

He attempted a faint return to gallantry.

"Your tea was always excellent," he said.

"It's better now," she answered; "it's a shilling a head."

"Oh!" exclaimed Gainsford. The verdure and the wall of the house seemed to rock for a second before him.

"A shilling—a head," he repeated dully.

"Cream included," she rejoined. She drew a little nearer. "It was the reading and poetry that first put it into my head," she confided to him. "After you'd gone I'd get to thinking about the things you had read, and the ideas that came to me were something surprising. There was the one about the girl that was like a violet by a mossy stone that worried me more than all the rest put together. I thought—well, of all the lives. It was a kind of warning."

Gainsford felt it incumbent upon him to fill the gap.

"I see," he murmured untruthfully. "My goodness! What a fright I got in," she continued. "It was the thinking that I might get that way myself that nearly drove me clean out of the place. Then Jim came along. He'd had some experience as a waiter in London. It was after we'd got married that we started the light refreshment business. And what with the motor cars and the bicycles, and good tea, and good service—well, it pays nicely."

The infant was attacking Gainsford once more. A second jammy smearer took its place by the side of the first upon his white trousers. Gainsford eyed the child in growing dislike.

"Oh, Mostyn, you bad boy!" cried his mother in reproach.

Gainsford looked up quickly.

"Mostyn?" he repeated.

It was undoubtedly a blush that adorned her cheek this time.

"We called him that," she murmured, "because—"

"Because of what?"

"You see, if it hadn't been for your kindness I might have been gawking on in just the same old way. Jim and I have never forgotten that. So when he came we called him Mostyn. Sometimes after we've had a good day's business Jim'll take him on his knee and call him a little living token of gratitude. But it's only right that you should see Jim. Jim!" she called.

A second later a white-aproned man stood before Gainsford. Gainsford underwent an inward struggle. Then he held out his hand. The act was a concession to the unity of man and wife. The latter hastened away to perform the duties of her office.

The child was still gyrating slowly about the pair. The man bent toward it.

"Mossy!" he said, "run away after your mother."

Gainsford shivered. Mossy! It was the last straw.

"It's a fine afternoon, sir," said Jim.

"The atmosphere of this place is not what it was," returned Gainsford.

"It's wonderful healthy," protested Jim.

Just then his wife returned with the tea tray. The desire of flight possessed Gainsford. Heedless of the probabilities, he pleaded indisposition.

"Of course," he concluded, "I'll pay for the tea."

Jim's eyes wavered diffidently between the tea tray and the visitor.

"There's no getting away from the fact that it was prepared specially," he admitted. "But seen' as it's your, sir, supposing we say sixpence instead of a shilling?"

His wife's fine eyes glowed in approbation.

Gainsford drew half a crown from his pocket. He swallowed once or twice ere he spoke.

"Give the change to—Mossy," he said.

The final word was his sacrifice to the ashes of what once had been a glorious spiritual edifice.

"No, you need not come back with me," Gainsford assured Luttrell; upon his return to the small craft; "the fact is that the one I expected to find was not there."

"Ah, it's just as well," returned Luttrell. "These little dippings into the past are either dangerous or bitterly disappointing. I heard from a man who had been there that there is an excellent tea place in the neighborhood. Shall we go?"

"Not for worlds!" said Gainsford. "You see I happen to have been in there once already this afternoon."—The Teller.

Burning Dead Grass.

Dead grass is burning where it rests on the ground in many suburban places, not, as some people imagine, because of carelessness or of the presence of the much blamed spark from a locomotive, but because it has been purposely set afire. Its ashes form excellent fertilizer for the vegetable or flower garden that is to succeed it.

This value of small bits of ground on which vegetables or flowers may be planted is more appreciated year by year. Some of this appreciation may be referred to the increased cost of living, with its consequent necessity for minor economies; some of it is probably due to the increase of the knowledge of gardening and of the delights accompanying the growing of plants, and perhaps a portion is due to the example set by the Vacant Lots' Association, evidence of whose good work may be seen in every quarter of the city.—Philadelphia Record.

May Be Bred in Hot Water.

"They must be hothouse shad" is the explanation of a bright five-year-old boy of Chestnut Hill, of the presence in the markets at untimely seasons of that toothsome fish.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT.



USING UP PETER'S PUMPKINS.

Peter, Peter Pumpkin-eater,
He will hungry go,
For Joe and Ed and Bob and Ned,
And Phil and Fred and John and Jed,
And even little Tom and Ted,
And every boy I know,
Has made a Jack-o'-lantern
(And some are making two).
Poor Peter, Peter Pumpkin-eater!
What will Peter do?
—Youth's Companion.

THE TARDY MARK.

It was the first day of the month, and the reports for the month just closed were brought home by the children, and a dreadful cross appeared on Margie's report on the "tardy square" for the last Monday.

Papa always examined the reports, and the children knew that all marks were considered and the reason for them demanded.

Margie's face was very red when she handed her paper to papa. Papa could understand that a little girl might miss in spelling, or might not do an example right when she was sent to the board, and sixty pairs of eyes watched every motion of the chalk, but papa could never understand why any one need ever be tardy.

Margie watched papa "out of the corner of her eye," as she would have said herself, while his eyes traveled down the paper. At last he came to that dreadful black cross, and glanced up at her.

"Well, how was this?" he asked.

Margie was slow. Her best friends, and she had many of them, always had to acknowledge that she was slow. So now she stood in front of papa, curling the corner of her apron round a lead-pencil, and trying hard to think just which of the many things that had happened last Monday morning would be likely to impress papa the most, for it would take such a long time to tell them all, and the noon hour was most gone.

"Well," said Margie, "I couldn't seem to find but one blue and one pink hair ribbon, and I had to hunt a long time to find mates to them."

If she had said that Sister Beth had sent her upstairs twice for a book, whose title was so long she had had much difficulty in remembering it, or reading it when she did come to it, or if she had said that she had played with baby while mamma had curled Beth's hair, or if she had said that papa himself had told her to go round by Mr. Ford's with a note, all of which had been equally true, she would just have been told to start earlier the next time; but she unfortunately chose the thing that seemed of no importance to her father, while it had remained in her mind because Margie was an orderly little soul and usually knew where her belongings were, and the errands and the baby were such every-day events that they did not seem really worth mentioning.

But papa had said such a dreadful thing. Margie opened both eyes and mouth wide; she really could not say a word, and papa had gone out of the house and down-town without giving the matter another thought.

An hour later mamma, going through the room, had found her all in a heap on the floor, just where papa had left her, sobbing gently to herself.

"Why, my deary," said mamma, "what has happened?" And little by little Margie told her story, although even then she forgot the errands and the baby, until she came to the dreadful thing papa had said.

"He said," she sobbed, "if I was late again this month I should have to wear a blue and a pink or a red and green ribbon, one on each pigtail, for a whole week! O mamma, do you think he would disgrace me so?"

Margie was slow, but what she lost in slowness that month she made up by starting early. It never entered her head to refuse when the other children claimed her time to do errands which they should have done themselves. Margie noticed that now quite frequently mamma interfered. When Philip said, "Here, Margie, run upstairs and get my history. I've just time to finish this story before school," mamma said, "Philip must get his history himself. I want Margie to start for school now."

I have spoken of Margie's many friends. One of her best was Miss Gardner, the second-grade teacher, who had found out that she really did know things, even if she was so slow about letting you know she did, and had promoted her to the second grade.

Miss Gardner was the very nicest teacher, Margie thought, so the next night after papa had said "that dreadful thing," Margie waited after school to walk home with her, and had told her all about it.

Now Miss Gardner liked Margie as much as Margie liked Miss Gardner, and a little girl who always knew what she was talking about and who always tried to "commodate" was a

pleasing variety in that busy school-room, so Miss Gardner made a plan to help Margie, although she said nothing about it.

It was really amazing how many people watched the outcome of that month. Margie had confided in the grocer at the corner, while he was tying up a bundle for her one day, and the milkman who brought baby's milk, when she had ridden down to school one morning, but refused a more extended ride. "You see how it is," she had ended her explanation. "I don't feel as if I'd enjoy the ride, thinking about those ribbons, especially the red and green."

Papa, on his part, had heard considerable about those ribbons. First mamma had taken him to task. His partner, who was one of Margie's fast friends, wanted to know "what he meant by abusing that child so." And asked to explain himself, he had brought up the story of the ribbons.

Even Miss Gardner had stopped him on the street, but by that time papa had heard about the errands and the baby, much to his surprise. "Can you tell me why on earth she did not tell me about those and not about those absurd hair ribbons?" he gasped.

"Why, yes, I can," said Miss Gardner, with the same smile that made the children love her. "You see, the errands and the baby are so much a matter of course that she didn't think about them, and for such a dreadful offense she felt as if she must have some especially important excuse, and the ribbons had made the most impression on her from the fact of its seldom occurrence."

Papa thanked Miss Gardner, and explained that he had thought that he was letting Margie off with a very slight punishment, but that he had found out his mistake, and he had also found out how many more friends his little girl seemed to have than he had any idea of; and then Miss Gardner and papa had laughed.

When the month ended Margie brought home her report with a smiling face. The spaces for the tardy marks were all blank. Papa took the paper, and in his most impressive style congratulated Margie upon her success, and then assured her that in future he could trust her to take care of her own tardy marks, and that whether tardy or not, he should know that she had done her best.

Margie felt that the month of anxiety had been well spent if she had gained such a boon as that, but still she felt that she must make it thoroughly plain that she had had a great deal of help, "specially from Miss Gardner. You see," she ended, "Miss Gardner didn't want me mortified, so she never rang the bell if I wasn't there without coming to the door to see if I was coming, and once she waited until I ran into the yard, and then when I couldn't possibly be called late she rang it."

"H'm!" said papa. "I wonder if Miss Gardner knows the meaning of the word partiality?"

"I think so," said Margie. "Miss Gardner knows about everything."—Martha Durant, in Youth's Companion.

Horses No Longer "Pulled."

"Pulling" in all its forms has been checked to a great extent, both here and in England, by watching the performances of the horses and the jockeys, and ruling accordingly. There have undoubtedly been numerous instances where a jockey has been accused of "selling a race," when he really did his best, a cording to his lights, to bring his horse in first. These very cases of injustice, however, have served to emphasize the determination of honest racing men to stamp out the practice, and have had a wholesome effect upon the jockeys. Tod Sloan, in some respects the greatest jockey this country has produced, always claimed that his expulsion from the English track was a gross injustice. Be that as it may, foul riding has been much less common over there since he was forced off the track. Our own stewards have begun to realize within the last five or six years that drastic measures must be taken to stop jockeying, and as a result several "good boys" were disciplined last season for faults in riding that would have been overlooked in former years.

Transforms Vegetables.

Not satisfied with the usual grafting adopted by floriculturists, a Frenchman, M. Mollard, of Paris, has started in to transform vegetables. Already he has succeeded in turning a radish into a potato—according to a recent consular report.

It seems that after paying \$1500 a volume for "Fads and Fancies," New York's smart set still has money enough left to pay \$1500 a pair of "medicated boots."