

CHARLOTTE MESSENGER.

VOL. I. NO. 43.

CHARLOTTE, MECKLENBURG CO., N. C., APRIL 28, 1883.

W. C. SMITH, Publisher.

THREE SONNETS ON LIFE.

I.

Fair Life, thou dear companion of my days—
Life with the rose-red lips and shining
eyes—
That led'st me through my Youth's glad
Paradise
And stand'st beside me still, in these dull
ways
My older feet must tread, 'the tangled maze
Where cares beset me and fresh foes sur-
prise;
On the keen wind and from the far-off skies
Is borne a whisper, which my heart dismays—
That thou and I must part. Beloved so long
Wilt thou not stay with me, inconstant
Love?
Nay, then, the cry upon the wind grows
strong—
I must without thee fresh adventure prove
And yet it may be I but do thee wrong,
And I shall find thee waiting where I rove.
—Louise Chandler Moulton.

II.

Prisoner I was within a noble hall,
Ringed round with many gracious images,
And through it floated strains which might
appease
The soul's sore thirst for music. On each
wall
Fair pictures hung, to hold the eye in thrall—
High mountains, clothed in cold, immacu-
late peace,
A light of water between wavering trees,
Wild seas, wherefrom drowned mariners
seemed to call;
A table stood there, heaped with fruit and
wine,
But lo! the fruit turned ashes at my gaze
And to my taste the gold juice seemed like
brine.
Here must one die, then, with no chance for
strife,
Loathing the impotent beauty of the place;
Then these words shivered past me: "This
is Life."
—Philip Bourke Marston.

III.

We are born with pain; being born, we wail
and cry;
Childhood thrives best upon a mother's
tears;
Youth is a storm of futile hopes and fears;
Manhood is marred by passion, utterly;
Age, though he hath seen so many follies
fly,
Hath not decreased his store when the
grave nears;
Folly and noise fill all our little years,
Till, as we are born with pain, with pain we
die.
And over us God's dome of azure towers,
Where suns and systems whirl and keep
their place,
And we call Life this piteous broil of ours,
And stoop to observe, with foolish earth-
ward face,
While that vast pageant of stupendous
powers
Sweeps on, eternally, through silent space.
—Herbert E. Clark.

LEONIE'S LILAC.

About 12 o'clock one bright Febru-
ary day in Paris Madame Blanchet sat
waiting for the arrival of her belated
scholar, Miss Cora Bell, a young
American whose habit it was to spend
a couple of hours three times a week
in so-called "elegant conversation" in
the French language with that worthy
dame. The little apartment where the
teacher lived had formerly been a
garret over the dependance of a sub-
urban boarding-house, taken under
some stress of circumstance by its
present occupant, and little by little,
through taste and perseverance, it
had been made to "blossom like the
rose." No wonder merry Miss Cora
liked her tri-weekly French lessons.
The walls of the large room, divided
into two smaller ones by screens, were
hung with fluted chintz, all flowers and
leaves of brightest hue. A tiny por-
celain stove diffused, when called upon
(but that was not too often, for mad-
ame, like all French women, believed
in economy in wood), a friendly
warmth. In both windows, whose
panes of glass were polished like the
speckless boards of the flooring, were
kept plants and birds. A great green
box of mignonette in flower sent out a
luscious fragrance. Vines were made
to start from behind every picture-
frame and out of every china jar upon
the shelves; and somehow or other
they grew like Jack's bean-stalk, strong
and green and luxuriant. Best of all,
a flood of genial sunshine came in on
all sides, for the garret boasted of vari-
ous windows. Where madame slept one
could find out by peeping behind a
screen at the white curtained bed with
the crucifix above it, but where madame
cooked no one ever guessed; yet she
had a fashion of producing from un-
known corners a series of luncheons
that were nectar and ambrosia to her
youthful visitors. Days there had

been in madame's past experience
when the poor lady had known what
it was to subsist upon the slenderest
of rations, but now the fame of her
exquisite embroideries in chenille and
silk was noised abroad, while her oc-
casional scholars, like Cora Bell and a
few liberal Americans of the same
set, made up an income sufficient for
the widow's wants.

Madame Blanchet, sitting at the
open window overlooking an ivy-
covered wall that just here formed the
boundary of the Bois de Boulogne, felt
quite wistful with regret over the non-
appearance of her favorite scholar.
"She will not come now," the widow
said to herself, as the inevitable man-
tel clock struck a cheerful, loud-voiced
"one." "Truly, she has twined her-
self into my heart, that chere petite
Cora. How she laughs and dances and
sings her life away! Just like that
other one—so many years ago." A
shiver ran over the little woman's
frame, and she closed her eyes; as if to
banish some painful image. "My
pretty Cora will never know so sad a
fate as hers, thank le bon Dieu." A
light step upon the stairway, and
Cora, blooming with health and ani-
mation, came into the room.

"Don't scold, dear madame. There
is time enough yet for a chapter of
our book before they send for me."

The lesson began, but Cora's atten-
tion wandered; her thoughts flew off
at a tangent; her eyes grew dreamy;
a deeper rose-color settled in her
cheeks. At last a little white protest-
ing hand was laid across madame's
page.

"Blanchet, dear, I want to confess
to somebody. Won't you be my
priest? You know that papa is in
America attending to business al-
ways, and that mamma is forever
going out. I've nobody but that
stupid Parker of mine, and talk I
must—I must. Oh, Blanchet, if such
a thing can be, I am too happy! All
of this dear blessed morning he has
been with me, and mamma has given
her consent, and we are to be married
soon."

And then, the flood-gates loosed,
came a stream of joyous confidence.
Cora never thought to look up at her
listener until she felt a hot tear, then
another, drop upon her hands clasped
in the widow's lap.

"What is it, dear madame?—what
have I said to pain you?" the girl
asked, wondering, to be answered by a
fit of bitter sobbing. With kind and
gentle words Cora soothed her friend's
emotion, and at last Madame Blanchet
was able to speak once more.

"Forgive me, dearest young lady,"
she exclaimed. "In truth I never can
forgive myself. I owe it to you to
explain my weakness. See here: this
picture which you have often caught
a glimpse of in my desk. Look at it—
judge for yourself of her youth, her
innocence, her beauty. She was my
only child, and I have lost her forever.
Years ago she knelt as you do now,
and poured out to me the wealth of
her love and happiness under circum-
stances like yours. The rest is too
painful for you to hear."

"Tell me more," the girl said, ten-
derly. "I would be selfish indeed if I
refused my sympathy at a time when
all seems so bright before me."

Little by little the story was re-
vealed. Ten years before Leonie
Blanchet had been sought in marriage
by a wealthy Englishman, to whom
her mother had given her with some
misgiving, watching her go from that
modest home into a life of luxury with
many anxious fears. The husband
Leonie had chosen was handsome,
young and winning; he had made good
his claim to a rank and station far
above Leonie's expectations. Leonie
adored him. What, then, was there to
apprehend? The widow could not
tell, but still! Leonie's first letters
came to her so full of boyant pride,
of confident happiness, that for a time
the mother could not but reflect it.
The young couple were absent upon
their wedding journey in the South,
and had reached Rome, when a thun-
der-bolt fell upon the pretty, trustful
bride. The man whom Leonie be-
lieved to be her husband had left his
true wife in England—a gay, fashion-
able beauty, sufficiently "emancipa-
ted," according to the notions of her
class, to mock openly and lightly at
her husband's latest fancy.

"But this is not for you to hear, my
child," the little French teacher said.
Cora, who from motives of delicacy
had avoided looking at her friend,
glanced hastily up, struck by the sup-
pressed passion in her voice. What a
transformation was there! In place
of the quiet, repressed, demure per-
sonage she had been accustomed to see,
Madame Blanchet's eyes were a-fire;

her cheeks glowed with a dull crimson;
her teeth were clinched.

"Do you know what I would have
done to him?" she went on. "I am a
Corsican, and the blood runs hot in our
veins when it is stirred by wrong—va!"

The brief passion was spent. It was
succeeded by a calm even more full of
meaning. Cora waited until her friend
could trust herself to speak.

"They parted then and there,"
Madame Blanchet went on, in a low
tone. "He did not defend himself.
He simply laughed at her—my poor,
heart-broken, humiliated child. He
said she was too innocent for the times
she lived in. And so she was, bon
Dieu, too innocent. She put all of
this into one last letter to me, and she
fled—fled into the night."

"And now?" the young girl said,
after a long silence.

"Now she is at peace," the mother
answered, quietly. "The Holy Church
received her in its bosom. Leonie is
one of the sisters of the
convent of the Sepolte Vive. For
some time past I have been laying up
money in order to take the journey to
Rome, but until recently it was all I
could do to live here, and to go away
from my employment meant starva-
tion. Oh, if I could but have seen
her, I would have starved—yes, gladly
—but that is impossible. All I can do
is to visit the outside of the convent
upon her 'day.' Once a year each sis-
ter has a 'day,' when she is allowed to
throw over the convent wall a flower,
in token to her watching friends that
she is still alive, but that is all. I
know what flower my Leonie would
choose—a bunch of fresh white lilac!"
"Sepolte Vive"—buried alive!" the
young girl repeated, sadly. A shadow
seemed to fall over her life, and her
budding happiness.

A few months later saw the Roman
spring unfold in all its glory. A party
of tourists were visiting that relic
of mediæval days, the convent of the
Sepolte Vive. Most of them turned back
disappointed at the threshold, but a
group of three people lingered until
the rest of the sightseers, after a collo-
quy held through a revolving barrel in
the wall of the convent, had reluctan-
tly dispersed. Over this barrel was
traced an inscription: "Who would
live content within these walls, let her
leave at the threshold every earthly
care." Upon these lines a woman
dressed in black, standing apart from
her two companions, kept her eyes
fixed, while her lips moved in prayer.

The order of nuns who have thus
condemned themselves to a living
death subsist on charity. It is only
when their supplies are totally ex-
hausted that they are allowed, after
twenty-four hours' starvation, to ring
a certain bell, which the 'outside
world interprets, "We are famishing."
Two Lenten are observed by them dur-
ing the year—the one common to all
Catholic Christians, and another held
between November and Christmas.
In the intervals the sisters receive and
partake of whatever food may be be-
stowed on them by visitors.

Two of the three loiterers were
young and handsome, radiant with ill-
disguised happiness. That they were
new-made husband and wife none
could doubt, and it was a pleasant
sight to see the wife order to be brought
from a carriage awaiting them a
hamper of abundant dainties, and with
the aid of her husband proceed to un-
pack their store. To gain answer from
the convent the young man knocked
briskly upon the barrel-head, which,
slowly turning, revealed a shelf with-
in.

"What wilt thou, stranger?" came
a voice, faint and far as the note of an
Æolian harp. So strong was the
sense of remoteness and of desolation
produced by this sound that involun-
tarily the young wife clasped her hus-
band's arm in shuddering.

"Oh! it is too sad," she whispered
in his ear. "I think I will go back to
the carriage and leave Madame
Blanchet with you—may I not?"

"Nonsense, darling. Who is it who
has contrived and carried out this
little expedition. I should like to
know? Come, cheer up, and bestow
your bounties upon the good sisters
within. Depend upon it, they will
relish them."

Their presents were given, and in
exchange our visitors received a series
of cartolini, or tiny slips of printed paper
folded like homeopathic powder papers,
and intended to be swallowed whole
by the believer, who might thereafter
hope for a cure of any mortal ailment
possessing him. As their colloquy with
the unseen sister came to a close, the
young man signed to Madame Blanchet
to draw near. The mother had kept a
veil over her face while standing by in
silence, but now she sprang forward,

A Petrified Indian.

The recent death of Dr. Barnes, at
one time surgeon-general of the United
States army, recalls an incident which
took place a good many years ago, and
attracted much attention at the time.
Shortly after he was appointed assist-
ant surgeon in the army he was sent
out with several other members of the
medical corps to Kansas, at that time
a howling wilderness. One day a
young lieutenant in the camp received
a letter from a friend in the East say-
ing that a brace of Englishmen had
started for the far West on a hunting
expedition, and might be expected at
the fort by a certain time. The lieuten-
ant read the letter at the mess
table, and immediately a discussion
began as to what diversions should be
gotten up for the visitor's entertain-
ment. Some one suggested that as
Kansas was an unknown country, a
hoax of some kind would be eminently
proper, and everything was kept pretty
quiet until the day before the visitors
were expected, when the camp rang
with the news of a curious phenom-
enon. Two of the officers, it was said,
becoming attracted by the representa-
tions of a friendly Indian, had fol-
lowed him to an out of the way place,
about ten miles from the fort, to shoot
buffalo. Here was located, to all ap-
pearances, an ordinary spring. The
Indian was some distance in advance,
and, going to the spring, dipped a cup
full of water. He had only taken one
draught when he uttered a shriek.
The officers rushed to his assistance,
but when they arrived at his side he
was in a state of complete petrifica-
tion. When the Englishmen arrived
at the fort next day they were told
this story. They expressed some in-
credulity at first, till the officers of-
fered to guide them to the spot. The
following day the expedition was ac-
cordingly made. A petrified figure,
clad in a picturesque savage's costume,
was found by the side of the spring,
and everything tended to corroborate
the story. One of the Englishmen
appeared to have some doubts as to
whether such a phenomenon was with-
in the bounds of possibility; but the
two surgeons who were present bom-
barded him with such a volley of
scientific hypotheses, duly backed by
jawbreaking physiological terms, that
he surrendered at discretion. The up-
shot of the matter was that the vis-
itors considered the figure as a great
discovery. They begged it, and had it
boxed carefully and transported at
enormous expense to New York, to-
gether with several demijohns of the
fatal water, intending to ship the
whole to England. In the meantime
the English and American papers were
full of the matter, and the greatest
interest was manifested to have the
petrification examined by experts. On
arriving in New York the object was
investigated, and the slightest exam-
ination proved that the material was
sand-stone, and the water ordinary
spring water. Barnes always denied
that he was concerned in any way in
the hoax, but his friends say now that
he was too modest to claim the credit
for it.—Chicago News.

Breakfast at Home.

"Well, Madame," says the head of
the house, who has apparently got out
of bed on the wrong side, "what have
you got for breakfast this morning?
Boiled eggs, eh? Seems to me you
never have anything but boiled eggs.
Boiled Erebus! And what else,
madame, may I ask?"
"Mutton chops, my dear," says the
wife, timidly.
"Mutton chops!" echoes the hus-
band, bursting into a peal of sardonic
laughter. "Mutton chops! I could
have guessed it. By the living jingo,
madame, if I ever eat another meal
inside of this house—" and jamming
on his hat and slamming the door, the
aggrieved man bounds down the
stairs and betakes himself to the res-
taurant.
"What'll you have, sir?" says the
waiter, politely, handing him the bill of
fare.
"Ah!" says the guest, having
glanced over it, "let me see! Bring
me two boiled eggs and a mutton
chop!"

Nature has presented us with a
large faculty of entertaining ourselves
alone, and often calls us to it, to teach
us that we owe ourselves in part to
society, but chiefly and mostly to our-
selves.

According to the last census the
railway employes of the United States
comprised one-thirtieth of the male
population twenty-one years of age
and upward.

and putting her lips to the opening
uttered with feverish anxiety a few
sentences of wild pleading unheard by
her companions.

Fainter and fainter were the pitying
accents that smote her ear in return.

"Sepolte vive," daughter. The grave
gives back no answer."

"Let us wait beneath the garden
wall, dear friend," Cora said, as be-
tween them her husband and she sup-
ported the steps of the trembling
mother from the spot. "It should be
at about this time that the flower is
thrown, and oh! how it will comfort
you to have it from her hand!"

Underneath the ancient wall of the
convent garden the little group waited
in silence. It was a moment of feel-
ing too profound for words. As the
hour drew near the mother left her
friends and went to kneel alone upon
a grassy mound where her cheek
might graze the wall, as if caressing
it. For a time all was silent. Then a
bell sounded the hour with slow and
solemn strokes. A bird burst into
joyous caroling in the tree above
where Cora stood. "It is a good omen,"
she said, glancing up into her hus-
band's face. As the last stroke of the
bell died upon the air something white
and fragrant fell at the feet of the
kneeling figure. "It is Leonie's white
lilac!" Cora cried, starting joyously
forward.

But the mother did not stir. The
token had come too late to awaken joy
or sorrow.—Harper's Weekly.

A Story About Webster.

"Yes, I knew Mr. Webster well,"
responded a gentleman of mellow years
and spirits, when inquired of concern-
ing the great New Englander, "and
what has been said of him reminds me
of an incident which, with others of a
similar kind I have heard, gives a
pretty good idea of one of his traits
relating to finances. Mr. Choate was
in Washington at the time. He and
Mr. Webster were almost as brothers.
One day Choate needed \$500, and he
applied to Mr. Webster. 'Five hun-
dred dollars!' says Mr. Webster. 'No
I haven't it at this moment, but I will
get it for you, Choate.' The latter was
glad to hear it, and would wait. 'Draw
your note,' said Webster, 'I'll sign it
and bring you the money. While you
are about it make the note for a thou-
sand; a thousand is as easy to get as
500.' Mr. Choate said that 500 was
all he needed. 'I'll take the other
500,' said Webster. The note was
drawn, and Mr. Webster, taking his
cane, went into the avenue. 'Good-
morning, Mr. X., good-morning,' said
he, as he entered the great banking
house which was the fiscal agent of
the government. 'Good-morning, Mr.
Secretary,' said the great banker in the
blandest manner. 'What is it I can do
for you this morning, Mr. Secretary?'
Mr. Webster was secretary of state at
the time. 'A little favor for my friend
Choate. He wants a little money, and
I told him I thought I could get it for
him. A thousand, I believe he made
his note for,' passing the paper to the
banker. There was no such thing as
hesitating, much less declining, and so
the banker was only happy to accom-
modate the head of Mr. Fillmore's ad-
ministration. The gold was laid out
in two equal piles, at Mr. Webster's re-
quest. Putting one in each pocket,
and with one of the bows which Mr.
Webster only could give, he departed.
'Here, Choate, here is the five hun-
dred,' said the great expounder, enter-
ing where Choate was waiting. Hand-
ing him the gold, Mr. Webster resumed
his reading where he had been in-
terrupted by Choate's entrance."

The narrator of this incident did not
recollect much about the sequel. "Both
are dead, you know," said he. "They
were great men, and I value their au-
tographs highly."—Washington Let-
ter.

Peter Cooper.

He was of the people and for the
people. He was born in their ranks
and he never left their ranks. Prosper-
ity did not produce sluggishness in
his blood. Wealth did not taint his
goodness. The toiler was as his
brother. Pride he never knew. Mere
outward appearance he despised.
Dissimulation he abhorred. And he
went through his long life as gentle
as a sweet woman, as kind as a good
mother, and as guileless as a man as
could live and remain human.—New
York Truth.

A new English book is called "People
I Have Met." A new American book
might be called "Men I Have Been
Out to Sea."

In Paris men wear bracelets. A fa-
mous bey wears one of diamonds
valued at \$200,000.