

The Family Circle.

WHEN LILACS IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM.

ELIZABETH CHISHOLM

When lilacs in the dooryard bloom,
And lift and shake their plummy sheaves;
When sunbeams smite the forest's gloom,
And winds go whispering through the leaves;
When wrens and robins build again
In peace about the cottage eaves

Then, though my strength is something spent,
And though my eyes are growing dim,
I thrill with gladness and content,
My soul sends up a joyful hymn,
And in the beauty of the world
I feel my spirit overbrim.

Long years have gone since mother took
The lonesome way that angels mark;
The memory of her latest look
Is like a candle in the dark;
But when the lilacs bloom I see
Her sweet face in a starry arc.

She loved so well these homely flowers;
She broke them for my childish hand;
They speak to me of happy hours,
By mother love and patience spanned;
Their perfume has a waft of sweet
Blown hither from th' immortal strand.

I like the dear old-fashioned things;
I always find them just the same;
And so the fancy wakes and clings
That, blooming by whatever name,
I'll one day pluck the lilac sheaves
Where flowers in deathless gardens flame.
—Harper's.

A VISIT TO THE WEST INDIES.

GEORGETOWN, DEMERARA (BRITISH GUIANA).—(Continued.)

We now come to the cabin passengers, but we cannot say of all of them as of the others, that they are contented and happy; on the contrary, we have some who try and make it as disagreeable as possible. Who were they? Not the two Portuguese gentlemen, for they are both jolly fellows and made the best of it. Not the German, although inconvenienced by the detention, he did not show it. Not the Canadians, for they do not care how long she lies in the bar, so long as they get plenty to eat and drink. Well, who can it be? One was a Yankee commercial traveller (as we afterwards discovered) and the other two were Demerarians, on their way to Barbados for their holidays (clerks)—these were the three discontents who made it disagreeable for all. The airs they put on, the stiffness they bore! How they would turn up their nose at this and that on the table—smell it too, if you please—and tried to impress the fact upon the rest of the passengers that they were by no means "small potatoes." Thus it continued till the fifth day when the two Demerarians got tired of spending their holidays within six miles of their respective homes, and asked the captain to put them ashore which he willingly agreed to. Notwithstanding their pretended snobbery, they were mean enough to take advantage of five days' free board on the ship, as their passage money was handed back to them in full. We all drew a sigh of relief as we saw them rowed away. On shore they would be glad to get half the fare they received on board ship. The Yankee traveller remains and keeps up his dignity in good style, but exclusively alone—no one takes notice of him. Next day we got off the bar, and no doubt our "extensive" friends felt sorry, as they could not get another steamer to take them to their destination for a week after we left.

We were nearly fried with the intense heat while on the bar, and were glad when we finally passed outside the "lightship," where we got plenty of cool sea air to refresh us. During all these trying days our captain was the jolliest fellow amongst us. He felt the delay keenly, but would say, "My first thoughts are in the interest of Pickford & Black, then the passengers."—and we all can testify as to his unswerving fidelity to the interests of his masters, which always were first with him. We never travelled with a more contented man—seldom or ever angry, and displaying great tact in the management of the crew and ship. Sixty hours' sail brought us to the "ser-

pent's mouth" or the "great bogus," the entrance to the Gulf of Paria, and at 8 a.m. on Sunday we cast anchor at Port of Spain.

In the harbor lay two English men-of-war. Our stay in Trinidad was of short duration, as our captain wanted to make up for lost time. At 1 p.m. we heaved anchor for Barbados, at which island we arrived on Monday morning. Here the "war fleet" lay at anchor in the following order: H.M.S. *Blake*, *Mohawk*, *Tartar*, *Buzzard*, *Cleopatra*, *Canada*. In a few minutes we were surrounded by boatmen to row us ashore. This is one of the sights a stranger witnesses in Barbados—all excitement. After some bartering we got our boat and went ashore; the steamer anchors three miles from shore.

One cannot realize the crowded condition of this town until he tries to walk through the streets—he has to elbow his way through—men, women, and children, a veritable bee-hive. The streets are narrow with scarcely any sidewalk, and there is no time to stand still, one must move on, or be carried forward in the crowd. Everybody seems to be active—no drones seen—the island is so crowded that all must work or die. We visited many places of interest missed on our former visit, and, by the way, our Yankee friend, so haughty and overbearing, took his departure here without even saying good-bye, but no one regretted his absence.

We were on board at 6 p.m. and immediately steamed for St. Lucia, where we arrived next morning at 7 p.m. In this lovely landlocked harbor lay the training squadron, H.M.S. *Ruby*, *Active*, *Volga*, *Calypto*.

ST. CHRISTOPHER.

As we slowly entered the harbor of St. Lucia, we came to a standstill alongside the training squadron which lay at anchor. The decks were crowded with young marines watching their respective crews practicing for a contest which was to take place in the afternoon. There were races at short and long distances, all of which were keenly contested, the best crew winning each time with tremendous cheering from the crowded decks. We have to thank the courtesy of our obliging captain for the enjoyment we had in witnessing the races. Although he was in a great hurry to get to the next island he waited until the fun was over.

St. Lucia is a coaling station for the war fleet, and many a bloody battle was fought and won in its waters in days gone by for its possession between the French and English—as it then was, and is considered now, the key to the West Indies. It is the only landlocked harbor in all the English islands, and resembles that of St. Thomas, which belongs to the Dutch. Vast forts are being erected, and in a few years St. Lucia will play no small part in the protection of the Empire.

Alongside the magnificent stone wharf, built by the English Government, are several ocean steamers coaling; hundreds of black women with their baskets on their heads are ascending and descending in systematic order. The scene in the distance appears like an ant's nest, as these poor creatures swarm the decks. The public market lies alongside the wharf; here are to be seen for sale all kinds of fish—flying fish, sword fish, shark, porpoise, etc. The shark is a favorite with the lower class, but the better or middle class do not eat it. A monster was landed while we stood there, and an ugly looking brute it was. No sooner was it landed, than a black woman approached flourishing a dangerous looking weapon with which she cut up the voracious fish in no time, and carted it off to the market to be sold at so much a pound.

On the door step of a house alongside the market we noticed a white baby lying on a cocoa-mat. We stood to admire and pity the little infant, when the mother, a black woman, came up and asked if we wanted to buy the baby, which she offered for 5s. We felt sorry we could not do something for the little pet, but putting a coin in its little hand we told the mother we could not buy her babe, but to take good care of it, and that God would reward her handsomely by-and-bye.

After discharging and taking on what cargo there was, and filling our fresh-water tanks, we put to sea in the afternoon. The large coolie vessel which was wrecked at the entrance of the harbor on our way south, and which lay on the rocks alongside the shore, was now broken up by the action of the waves; no trace of her could be seen.

Our next stopping place on our way north is Martinique, a French island, some sixty miles distant from St. Lucia. At 7 p.m. that same evening, we dropped anchor quite close to shore in fifty fathoms of water. We waited some time for the arrival of the doctor to pass us. We then went ashore in a small boat to witness one of the most extraordinary and ridiculous sights ever seen. It was *fete* day, just before Lent, the whole town went mad. We were told they were "chasing the devil out of town," and if he never came back, it was no fault of theirs. The whole town, young and old, male and female, rich and poor, all joined together in an indescribable mass. All wore false-faces of every description, and dresses, masquerade style, representing every nation, heathen and Christian, on the face of the earth, and many no dress, and the acts of indecency were horrifying in the extreme. They rushed hither and thither like mad people; they danced, groaned, screamed, hooted and yelled enough to frighten the demons below, the whole scene presenting a picture of a legion of demons from the bottomless pit let loose for a season. The town officials, from the mayor down, jumped in the wild *melee*. They bore torches, lights of every kind; whites, blacks, and mulattoes joined all in one. At 12 p.m. sharp the seance ends and all settle down for another year, when this "solemn festival" is gone over again.

(To be continued.)

A TRANSFORMATION SCENE.

There is never a road in Morocco in any place whatsoever. There are goat tracks that have been widened and deepened by the caravans, and one is at liberty to ford the rivers where he likes. . . . You scarcely ever see a tree; but, as if to atone for this there are the grand tranquil lines of the virgin landscape, unbroken by roads, houses or fences. We are about to change from one territory to another, and all the men of the tribe we are approaching are under arms, their chief at their head, to receive us. Perched on their lean little horses, on their high-peaked saddles that are almost like easy chairs, they look like so many old women shrouded in long white veils, or like old black faced dolls, or mummies. We draw near, and quickly, at the word of command given in hoarse tones, the whole army scatters like a swarm of bees, horses curveting, arms jangling, men shouting. Under the spur, their steeds rear, leap, gallop like frightened gazelles, mail and tail flying in the wind, clearing rocks and great stones at a bound. The old dolls have been restored to life; they, too, have become superb; they are metamorphosed into tall, active men, with keen faces, standing erect in their great silver plated stirrups. The white bournouses fly open, and stream behind them in the wind with the most exquisite grace, revealing beneath robes of red, orange, and green cloth, and saddles with housings of pink, yellow, and blue silk embroidered with gold. And the fine symmetrical arms of the men, to the colour of light bronze, emerge from the wide sleeves, brandishing in the air in their headlong course the heavy bronze muskets which in their hands seem no heavier than reeds. It is a first welcoming fantasia (exhibition of Arab hard-riding) given in our honour. . . . Men pass us with the speed of a flash, standing erect upon their saddles, or standing on their heads with their legs waving in the air; two horsemen make for each other on a mad gallop, and as they meet, without drawing rein or coming in collision, exchange muskets, and give each other a kiss. An old grey-bearded chief proudly calls our attention to a squad of twelve horsemen who charge down on us abreast—and such handsome fellows as they are! They are his twelve sons.—"Into Morocco." From the French of Pierre Loti.

GALLANT CONDUCT.

The following incident, in which the qualities of readiness and cool courage in an emergency were eminently displayed by British officers, occurred at St. Lucia in connection with the recent wreck of the English ship *Volga*. On Sunday, December 10th, this vessel, a three-masted steel ship, was driven ashore off Vigie Point, St. Lucia. Besides her cargo of rice and linseed, she had on board 643 coolies, who were to be landed at St. Lucia and Jamaica. The news of the wreck was speedily taken up to the military quarters, where at the time there were only three young officers, Lieutenant Stanley Halslo, R.A., Lieutenant P. H. Parken, R.A., and Lieutenant Harrison, A.S.C. Without the loss of a moment the three lieutenants, who were in mess kit, saddled their horses and galloped down the Morno to the shore, intending to call out the crew of the garrison boat. The men were, however, not to be found, and the officers determined to put off by themselves to the *Volga*. The boat, which was a heavy six-oared gig, was launched with difficulty, and the three

young fellows started on their heavy pull out to the wreck, which was on the rocks about a mile and a half off. The tide was running strongly against them, and with a brisk wind blowing, the sea was high. Vigie Point terminates in perpendicular rocks, and a heavy surf was breaking over them. It was all that the officers could do, by pulling their hardest, to keep their boat from being driven by the wind upon the rocks. When, at length, after a most exhausting row, the three officers reached the *Volga*, they found her on the rocks with a heavy list to port, and the waves dashing over her. A large number of the crew and of the coolies had before this put off to the shore in the ship's boats, but there were still many on board, and the three lieutenants had to use great caution in approaching the ship, for fear their boat should be swamped by a rush of coolies. They succeeded, however, at length in getting alongside and filling their big boat with coolies, whom they eventually, together with the *Volga's* log and papers, landed safely in Castries.—*The Colonies and India*.

THE IMPERIAL WHALE.

The "imperial whale" that does not dare, "unless by stealth," to attack the "firm united commonwealth of the herrings," is a very precious fiction, and full of humour.

"But herrings, lively fish, like best to play In rowan ocean or the open bay; In crowds amazing through the waves they shine,

Millions on millions from ilk equal line: Nor dares the imperial whale, unless by stealth,

Attack their firm united commonwealth. But artful nets and fishers' wile skill Can bring the scaly nations to their will."

—Allan Ramsay.

Only a poet could imagine a whale stealing up in a red Indian, snaky sort of manner upon its prey, or suppose that Behemoth, let him be never so crafty, could take a herring by surprise, or fancy that any danger to the whales could possibly result from a bold front attack upon a shoal of herrings. That the whale eats herrings is "a fact of knowledge" with the poets and seeing that they are convinced it really was "a whale" (as our translation of the Acts states) that "swallowed Jonah, there can be obviously no physical difficulty in the way of Behemoth swallowing herrings. Pitt goes farther, and says it swallowed sharks! Milton and many others after him speak of the whale as being scaly, but Campbell is, I think, the only poet who endows Leviathan with a voice. "Where loud Lofofen whirls to death the roaring whale." Judging from that poet's natural history generally, it is more than probable that "roaring" was only a truth by accident, for it is undeniable that the whale and its cetaceous relatives, the "quadrupeds" of the sea, "can roar you 'buth 'gently as any sucking dove, or 'with that hollow voice of roaring of the lion in the Progress that came after the Pilgrim at 'a great padding pace."—From the Poets and Nature. Reptiles, Fishes and Insects.

ELEPHANT TRAVELLING.

By Sara Jeannette Duncan.

Suddenly my attention was attracted by a dark spot in the distance upon the road. It was moving, moving rapidly in the direction of the station. As it came nearer it looked like an animated barn, and it had approached within a quarter of a mile before I could be certain that it belonged to the animal kingdom. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, my worst fears were realized. I saw that the creature had four large unwieldy legs, two great flapping ears and a trunk, that it was, in a word, an elephant, and that it was travelling toward me with a momentum of which I never thought an elephant capable. As I look back, my Oriental experiences seem to crystallize into the awful moment when I awaited the onslaught of that formidable beast. Two alternatives presented themselves to me, either to fly for shelter into the telegraph office, or to open my sun-umbrella in the face of the advancing animal with a view to imparting some of my own terror to him, but I was incapable of doing either. I was frozen to the spot. My whole life did not pass in review before me, as is customary upon such occasions. I was entirely occupied in speculating as to the precise arc I should describe in the air when the elephant picked me up with his trunk. I believe I was under the impression that he would toss me over his head, and then sit on me. An instant later I observed that the elephant was being ridden by a man who sat just behind its ears, and that it was not, so to speak, all elephant, but consisted partly of an erection, presumably dissociable, on its back. This somehow gave me courage to shriek. I shrieked violently, and turning, almost ran into the arms of my preserver, a Mahomedan gentleman in a green cap, spectacles, and whiskers.—From "The Idler" for March.