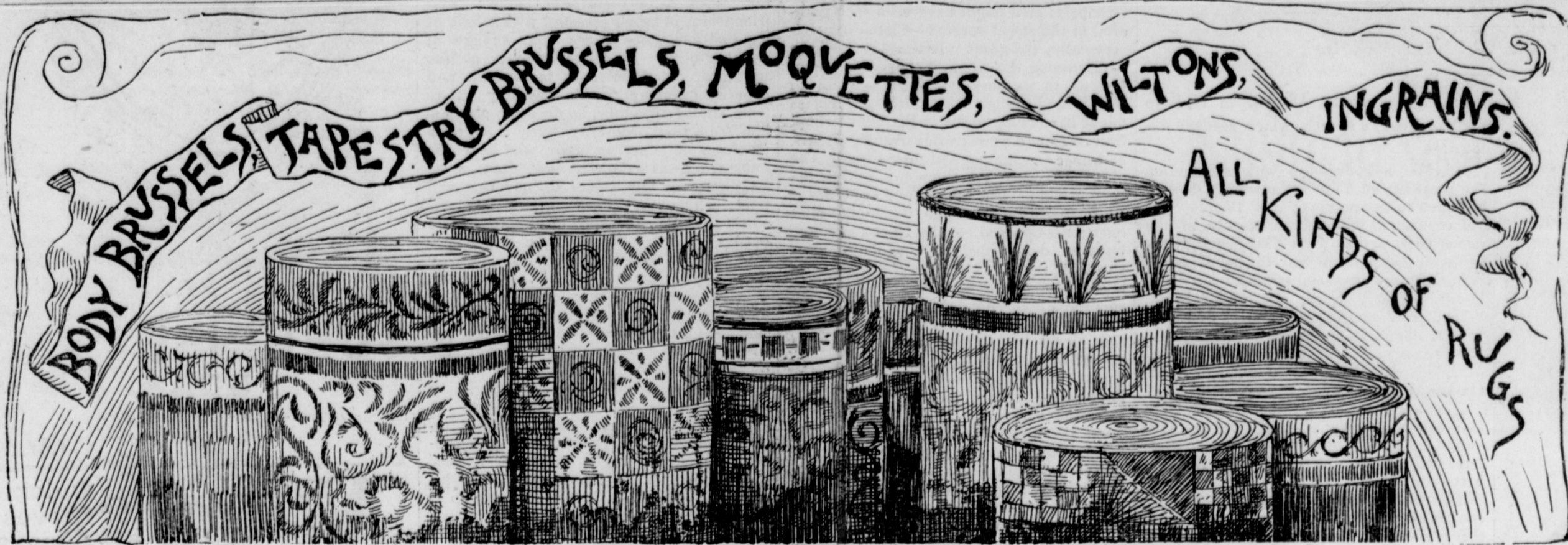


PROGRESS, SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1894.

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Progress' Short Stories.

Sketches of Personal Adventure Submitted in Competition for a Prize of Five Dollars.

VIOLA MAY ALDRIDGE.

Beside the Arno's dark dreamy flow, You know love we were seated, In these sweet moments long ago, When fond words were repeated.

Above is the opening verse of one of my own songs. The sadness it has thrown over my whole life makes it the song of all songs to me. In truth I never find myself even humming it over; but again I am a pensive wanderer under that balmy Italian sky. I was in love then, yes deeply in love with an angel on the earth, and I have been in love ever since, sweet Viola May Aldridge, was, like myself, a summer tourist. She had come from the quaint old city, on the banks of the Delaware, I had come from the meadows of Grand Pre. What was she like? My thoughts have no eloquence to describe her. Tall and queenly, graceful in perfection of figure; bonny brown hair in abundance, perfectly oval face, hazel eyes overflowing with language, and the golden promises of affection in every uttered tone. We met at Naples, Italy; an hour after our introduction we knew we were one in soul.

"Miss Aldridge, allow me to introduce Mr. Minton." This was her uncle's voice, married and travelling with his wife and sister. It was however in a later moonlight ramble along the storied Arno that we had our first interview alone. She had an earlier admirer. I told her the immortal story. I dreamed I might be preferred; that dream came true. It was dreaming in that sunny clime, but it was to be love's dream for ever. I had my sketch book and we were looking over it together. "I love your sketches, Mr. Minton. Are these real pictures of the Acadian valleys? Is this truly the old well, and are these the willows in the land of Evangeline?" "Yes, they are all said to be perfectly true to nature. You see Grand Pre as it is today. This is our Gaspereaux river, and you see it represented in all its old time beauty." She looked a few moments pensively upon the rippling Arno, veiled in moonlight glory, and then remarked, "How lovely both places seem." In reply the fragrant, flowers, the sweet blue haze of the sky, and the soothing influence of twilight gave a voice to my longing soul. "They are indeed beautiful scenes, Miss Aldridge, unless you will permit me to call you May; it is a name I most highly esteem." "I do not see any harm in your mentioning it," she said. "It is simply May; many of my friends prefer it." "The name of May Aldridge will ever be a cherished name with me." "The name of a friend is often more dear than its owner. This from her. Do you think she went on that Longfellow's Evangeline of Grand Pre, like Rebekah in her own land, ever drew water or drank from this well?" "Such is the legend of the Prairie and the same I believe to be true. It is called Evangeline's well, and what that well and Pre and river was to her this scene and the Arno is now to me. Evangeline was dearer than life to the heart of but one, and so would I have you to myself alone. Parting from you must bring me sorrow, and then as the shadows of the twilight

lengthened her fair white hand only trembled a little in my own. A deep colour came over that beautiful face, and the glance of the hazel eyes was far away. She made me no reply. "May shall I remain?" In answer to this there was no outspoken response, but her beautiful head rested confidently upon my shoulder, and but one whispered word was, "Remain."

But that heavenly moment was destined to be of brief duration. At the same instant a dark figure emerged from the laurel shadows, and stood directly facing us. "Miss Aldridge!" said the young man in a passion of anger. "I have heard and witnessed all. I see you think yourself separated from me for ever, but beware! I shall never let you go." Then to me he almost hissed forth with intense bitterness, "We meet again, sir, in due time."

At the close of the tourists season we were all crossing the Atlantic coming to our American homes. We had passed a very cheerful and social evening, and all seemed quite secure about the steamship Britannia. But as the hours wore on and the company had mostly retired; thick darkness fell upon the Atlantic, and the weather grew strangely threatening. I was standing by the railing on the starboard bow and on the lower deck. I had not seen anything of that strange young man since he came upon us so unexpectedly by the Arno river. May had merely spoken of him as Mr. St. Lorne. Suddenly a strong arm was twisted about my neck, and with a mid cry in my ear "Remember the Arno," I felt myself forced backward towards the ocean. It was May's jealous admirer.

In the midst of my frantic effort to throw him off, came a loud crash. We had collided with an unknown vessel. A great billow swept down towards us, something struck my antagonist a powerful blow, I saw him swept into the dark waters. Instantly I rushed away to seek my affianced bride. In the midst of the awful confusion I discovered her prostrate form upon the floor of the state room saloon. I took her in my arms and held her securely, and as I praised God saved.

When I found her robed in the white garment of her state room, one wave at least had already gone over her. How that scene in the future became an awful reality of death; oh would that I had not to tell. The Aldridge family had a stately home in the city of brotherly love, and it was really a sweet home in every sense of the word. In the following spring we were married from that dear old place.

"I Viola take thee Albert to my wedded husband," is engraven for ever in my heart of hearts. Our bridal tour included a short stay at our old Grand Pre homestead. It is still standing under the elms, though a stranger's footstep has crossed the door since then. How my beautiful May revelled in our charming Acadian scenery. How often there together we sang another of my own songs, of which this is a verse.

Oh! the dear old home, By the bright Grand Pre; Is the sweetest spot, In this world to me. Where the great dykes sweep, To the mountain side; And look far away O'er the salt sea-side. What to us then was a lake of Lucerne, or a Naples bay, compared with the green

meadows and the Blomidon of my boyhood. But we bade adieu to them all, and she my life's idol left them forever. Our bridal tour was continued, we were again on the broad Atlantic. We were to revisit our enchanting bower by the Arno river, and dream once more our dream of love unending.

But when will there be no storms, when will there be no more wrecks at sea. Be still my soul and cease to pray to penetrate the mysterious veil of the hereafter. A good sea boat? Yes, but "the sea is mighty and rages horribly." A fearful storm arose with seas sweeping down upon us like uprooted mountains. Like many others, with vows and prayers, we stood ready to go down together. Now a tremendous hurricane on wings of living fire. The deadly composit, the fire ball of heaven, rushes along the gleaming sky. It floods with purple flame the masts, the deck and the angry surges. Then the awful panic, and the rush for the lowering boats. My beloved May is torn from me in the mad struggle and passed into one: I am hurried for safety into another.

We parted heart-broken As tearful we bowed To His will the far future still keeping, And there in the shadows Within that dark cloud, Our voices were silent with weeping.

Somewhere unconfined with millions of our race, shrouded in the last vestments of the remorseless deep, she slumbers in eternal silence. Rescued next day, I but watch and wait, while I tell my sorrow to the sea. "O when will the day break and the shadows flee away." I have another song to sing for myself alone. One verse only I give here. Some day the thoughtless world may have the rest.

"Till the sea gives my love to me waking I'm her's and her true heart is mine; My bride is my angel there sleeping, As long as the holy stars shine. In my dreams are our wedding bells blending, Love's music in melodies low, And ever her voice calls me softly, Across the blue waves as they flow. I was her treasure, her's only, May is my love till I die; So broken hearts often may follow Under the heavenly moon sky."

IMMORTELE.

OVER THE CLIFF.

"Just imagine," it's a year ago this month on the 26th of April last, that we had the great gale and snow storm in the provinces. How rapidly the time flies, and yet, so vivid to my mind are the experiences of that terrible night, that it seems only a few weeks, instead of many months since they transpired.

In looking up my diary I find that my good wife and I were at Cow Bay, Cape Breton, and left there about five p. m. the evening of the 26th, bound for Little Glace Bay, with a horse and covered carriage.

It looked a little dark, but apart from that it was mild, and now and then a drop of rain would remind us to hurry forward on our journey of several miles.

But the rain came on only too soon and the wind increased so much that we wondered if we would go on or return. We decided to press forward as it was difficult to turn where we were, and consoled ourselves that it might be worse in the morning. The roads were dreadful. Sometimes we would sink almost to the hub of the wheels in mud and water. To make matters worse the spring on my side of the wagon was broken or disabled in such a manner that when the wheels would sink in the mud or uneven road the carriage top would lean fearfully to that side. Through the approaching darkness I therefore tried to drive in such a way that my side would have the best of the road.

Darkness came on very fast. Hail and sleet, rain and wind also increased. The horses would not go faster than a walk as the roads were so bad. Then it became colder, and a snow storm came upon us

almost as quick as it takes to write its arrival. The wind dead in our faces, increased to a terrible gale. The canopy top of the wagon blew out like a sail and made it all the harder for the horse to jog along. I let down the top of the carriage, but we were worse off than ever for the wheel frame part caught in my side of the wheel, owing to the damaged spring, and the wheel slid along instead of turning round like the others. I hoisted sail again but we were beating against the wind and I was but a poor sailor.

It was by this time quite dark. Imagine it you will, our position, it indeed you can. Strangers in a strange place. Not a soul to be seen; not a light from a wayside house. In a terrible storm, increasing every moment, with a stubborn and tired-out horse and a disabled wagon upon frightful roads.

My brave wife clung on to my arm. My hands were quite numb with the cold wind, and I could not see ahead of the horse a yard. We were blinded with the snow, likewise the horse, as the sequel will show.

The horse stopped short and would not be persuaded to go ahead. I said "Get up there," but it was no use. I used the whip but he would not budge. So I gave the reins to my wife, and got out and led him along by the bridle.

In this way I fancy I covered about half a mile, when I noticed on my right a glimmer through the darkness. As it turned out afterwards we were nearing Big Glace Bay, and the home of Mr. McDonald.

Oh, I cannot relate the joy of the shipwrecked sailor as he sees relief coming, for I have never experienced it, but I tell you we were grateful to see anything or any place that would give us shelter.

It did not take long to decide what to do. I led the horse over to the gate and went to the door. Never shall I forget the kindness of these good people. One of the sons took the horse and housed him for the night. My wife and I were soon bathing our benumbed hands in water to bring circulation to them. My, how they tingled. We had tea beside a great grate fire, and our hearts were all aglow in gratitude. Having disposed of our meal we all sat around the fireplace and we related our experience. As we sat there the house creaked with the wind, and we could hear the roar of the sea as it dashed upon the shore.

We retired, but sleep was out of the question. I thought the house would blow away, so great was the gale felt at this exposed point where the house was situated.

In the morning, with grateful hearts, about 9.30 a. m. of the 27th, we continued our journey toward Little Glace Bay, a distance of about three miles.

The wind had very much subsided, and all nature seemed sorry that it had been so bad the night previous.

We had crossed the long sandy bar by the sea shore and had arrived at the top of a hill when we struck a snow drift about 50 yards long right across the road, and almost even with the fences. Nothing daunted, I made straight for the centre of it, full cry.

The horse took us over about 10 yards and then sank to his middle, he began to flounder and I jumped out and surveyed the scene.

Reader do not smile, when I say we were peculiarly situated. The snow was hard on top and we could stand on it with ease without sinking. So far so good. My wife looked at me and laughed, outright saying this is lovely, what are you going to do. I stood to my post, and held the horse's bridle. I saw a farmer about 300 yards away and beckoned to him to "come and help us." "He caught on," and brought a large wooden

shovel. He worked for some time making a path for the horse's feet, and when he was tired I took up the good work. At last we made a start, after an hour's exertion and got through the large drift.

This good man then informed us that there was another large drift ahead. So I asked him to come along and help us out, and I would do the same for him.

Forward we went and alas only too true another drift not quite so large awaited our arrival. We went through the same mode of procedure and after considerable delay we arrived safely on the other side of the second snow drift. Nothing further happened us until we brought up at McPherson's, Glace Bay.

Imagine our surprise when this gentleman informed us that he had staid up until 4 a. m. awaiting our arrival. They all thought, that we had perished in the storm, or driven over the cliffs into the sea.

Telephone inquiries were made from Sydney and several other places, and nearly all predicted we had perished in the gale.

I went down the main street of Glace Bay after dinner and overheard one boy telling several others that I was the man that went over the cliff the night previous.

Strange to say we were none the worse of this strange unexpected experience not even taking cold.

We often think of the 26th, of April 1893, and when we do our hearts well up within us in gratefulness to those who so kindly gave us a helping hand in the hour of need.

ALLAN DUCLOS.

EASTER EVE AT WHERE?

It was a wet foggy afternoon, too unpleasant to go out, so I take my book and drawing a rocking chair up in front of the sitting room fire I settled myself to enjoy my last library story. The wind blows fiercely and the rain dashes in angry little slaps against the window panes, the fire snaps and crackles cheerily and I read on and on.

Suddenly my ears catch the sound of strange, sweet singing and then a very peculiar sight is spread before my wondering gaze. I was in a little old fashioned building—a church. The walls were rude and bare, the floor uncovered and the long narrow benches looked hard and forbidding. But what my eyes at length caught and became fascinated with were the two central objects the altar and reading-desk. Such banks of magnificent flowers, my eyes had never before beheld, such glorious roses, red and white, pink and yellow, lilies pure and fair, and behind the chancel wall was what seemed like an immense mirror framed in gold. The glass reflected the beautiful flowers again and again. On the glass were written "Easter," "He is risen Christ the Lord," "Hallelujah." And the congregation, could I believe my eyes; yes, they were all negroes, and they were all very black, but the blackest of all was the preacher, he stood up there in his white robe among all those beautiful flowers and he preached his little sermon to his little flock, and the words he spoke were wise and the advice he gave was good and then after the sermon he said "Let us pray," and that prayer was the very strangest part of this very strange service. What ever the congregation wanted they told the preacher and he prayed, and this is the way he prayed "Please Lord send sister Hettie a new hat," and the response came from all the people, "Please Lord do," and then "Please Lord send brother Ben a pair of boots," and the response "Please Lord do." After several more requests, a great large negro woman who was sitting next me whispered loudly in my ear, "Now honey what you want ter pray fur?" I did not reply. "Come on, honey, don't be afraid, speak up." I still did not answer, and then with her great black hand, she gave my



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arm one or two gentle little taps. I shook myself free from her touch and opened my eyes, to find myself still in the sitting room, with the rain dashing against the window, the fire burning brightly, and, by my side, with two paws on my arm, his head nesting against my shoulder, and his kind brown eyes looking up in my face, was my own dear little brown-coated, lapped dog "Pug." JEANNETTE.

TOLD OF BROWN SEQUARD.

His Great Reason For Remembering a City in New Jersey.

About twenty-five years ago rather a queer looking old Frenchman applied for lodging at the City Hotel in New Brunswick, New Jersey, and for six months or more he was a source of great curiosity, it not suspicion, by his fellow guests and neighbors. His room was a mystery to the landlord, filled as it was with all sorts of queer looking bottles filled with acids and the viscera of animals.

The Frenchman seldom spoke to any one but left the hotel early in the morning and returned at night with a well filled bag, the contents of which were still more of a mystery than the old man himself. He was thought to be a counterfeiter, a burglar or a dealer in charms, and as a hoodoo by the negroes, who became thoroughly afraid of him and gave him a wide berth.

After a time one of the physicians located here, Dr. Clifford Morrrough, discovered his identity, and occasionally Dr. Brown-Sequard, for he it was, availed himself of Dr. Morrrough's fine laboratory in pursuing his scientific investigations and researches. However, nothing could induce him to converse on any topic foreign to his studies, nor would he accept of the hospitality of the local physician.

Several years later Dr. Morrrough was in Paris and attended one of Dr. Brown-Sequard's lectures. He stopped to see the celebrated physician, but had hard work to secure recognition. He finally mentioned the talismanic word, "New Brunswick," and the face of the doctor lighted up instantly.

"New Brunswick! Ah, yes, I well remember it. I never shall forget it. Mon Dieu, what frogs, what toads, what terrapins," and with this he resumed his work, perfectly unconscious of Dr. Morrrough's presence.

Temperance in the Army.

Lord Roberts says of the Army Temperance Association which he founded in India that it had succeeded beyond his expectations. It began with about 10,000 members. This was in 1885. Two years later there were 14,000 total abstainers and some 300 temperance men on the rolls. And last April, when he left India there were more than 20,000 total abstainers and nearly 3,000 temperance men—just one-third of the British army in India.

Better Than Intuition.

Jack.—So you knew I loved you?

Ada.—Yes, I have known it for some time.

Jack.—Ah, what was it told you—your womanly intuition?

Ada.—No; your sister Jennie.