

A POET IN HER 12TH.

SHE BEGAN WRITING VERSES AT THE AGE OF SIX.

The Work Done by Margaret F. Mauro New 14 Years Old—Her Education at Home—Her Instinctive Turn to Rhyme—Love for Details.

IN the midsummer St. Nicholas, there appeared seven poems by a girl of 12 years. The author is little Margaret Frances Mauro, of Washington, D. C., now in her fourteenth year. Her "Sonnet to a Purple Pansy" follows:

A lovely flower, loveliest of thy kind,
Fair as the purple cloud that sunset decks,
A beauteous blossom of thy gentle eez,
A bit of fragrance, budding on the wind,
A storehouse for the honey-gathering bee;
Now coyly smiling with coquettish grace,
Now with a lovely look upon thy face,
An upward glance of grave, sweet purity;
A drop of purple dew that gleams, then fades,
Sets upon earth's green breast another gem,
Then, lifeless, hangs upon its withered stem,
Drops—and the grassy woodland dells and glades
Know it no more—forget it did exist—
But in my heart, O flow'r, thou art forever missed.

vals, as her mother preferred to educate her according to her own ideas of what a little girl should learn. At home, where she was surrounded by her flowers and her toys, Margaret's poetical nature expanded. From the time when she was taught to hold a pen her natural inclination was toward the writing of verses, which, crude at first, gradually took on rhyme and rhythm. The flowers, the birds, the books which she read, and the trifling incidents of her every-day life suggested to her the ideas which she expressed in childish rhyme. Even her daily hour of piano practice, which, with the instinct of a healthy child, she thoroughly hated, furnished her the theme for a poem which she called "The Monster 'Practicing.'" The editor of St. Nicholas wrote of her in the August number of that magazine:

"Some of our young readers may have 'skipped' the poems on pages 856 and 857, as perhaps too 'old' for them, or too like poems for grown folk. But they will turn again to them with interest when they realize that these verses are the work of a girl of 12—the thoughts that come to her from her favorite flowers and birds, and the every-day experiences of childhood. As such, the poems are truly remarkable in depth of feeling and power of expression, and they seem to us an evident promise of a genuine poetic gift."

Margaret Frances Mauro is not yet 14; and most of these verses were written before she had completed her twelfth year. Indeed, she has written prose and verse since she was 6 years old.

When the girl was in her thirteenth year her mother took her abroad for a course in French. After the sorrow of parting with her father, her chief concern as she walked up the gang plank of the ocean steamer was for the large doll which she carried in her arms. When she returned recently she brought with her in a cage a green parakeet, of which she is very fond.

The publication of her poems was

WOMAN RUNS A ROAD.

MISS JESSIE DELL, AUDITOR OF THE SYLVANIA.

She Attends to a Large Part of the Business of the Company and Organizes Excursions—Also Practices Law with Her Father.

MISS JESSIE DELL, of Georgia, is probably the only young woman in the United States who is the auditor of a railroad. Although she is not yet 22 years old, she has held that place on the Sylvania railroad for almost three years. Her father, Col. John C. Dell, is president of the railroad. He is a prominent lawyer and a man of extensive political influence. It was through Miss Dell's devotion to her father that she first began to take an interest in the affairs of the railroad, and in his law practice as well. By her discernment and judgment she soon gained his confidence, and small business matters were committed to her. She gradually familiarized herself with all the departments of the railroad's management, and when a vacancy occurred in the office of auditor she applied to her father for the place. With a good deal of reluctance he appointed her, and she has discharged the duties of the office with entire efficiency.

Passes are sent to her regularly, as auditor of the road, by all the other railroads of the south. They are often made out to "Jesse Dell," and she frequently receives communications addressed to "J. Dell, Esq." Miss Dell's duties do not take her entire time, and she devotes part of her leisure to getting up excursions and picnics from which the railroad may reap an added profit. She makes a note of every coming event at places along the road, and when the proper time comes suggests to her friends the possibilities of an excursion.

Meeting a group of girls at a soda water stand or in a store, she mentions that a big political meeting is to be held, and that it may be the last chance to hear the speakers who are to make the addresses. Then she prevails upon some young man to circulate a paper on which to obtain the names of those who are willing to attend the meeting. When a sufficient number of these has been obtained she apprises her father and assists him in making the train arrangements. Then some amateur dramatic performance in a neighboring town will claim her attention. She confides to a few popular chaperons that a select and exclusive excursion is to be made up to attend it. The party is made up, and a special train is chartered. Another field for this activity is offered by the cheap excursions of the Central Railroad of Georgia, of which her road is a branch. Last fall she successfully engineered a considerable reduction in rates on her road for special days at the Atlanta exposition. On one of these occasions the idea of having all the school children attend in a delegation occurred to her. She interviewed the principal, and finally gained his consent to give four holidays and conducted the delegation. Miss Dell prefers to have the general public consider her father the promoter of many of the schemes, but her personal supervision is usually well known. She sometimes disputes with the president the price of round trip excursion rates.

Miss Dell, though unofficially, takes a personal business interest in every employe of the road. Her power is respected, and she is vastly popular as well. An amusing instance of her importance occurred on the occasion of a large excursion to the seashore. The necessary schedule was difficult to adjust. The trip being expensive, was not at first popular, but Jessie secured some concessions from the Central railroad, and the train was filled when the starting time came. It was to leave at 5 in the morning, but Miss Dell did not appear on time and the train awaited her coming. The time of departure went by. The engineer decided that by means of shorter stops and faster running than usual he could make the trip. The warning whistle blew, the bell rang, the passengers murmured. The train had to leave without her. She arrived just too late at the depot. The station-master telegraphed for the train to wait for her at the first crossing, a mile out of town. She boarded it there, and it rushed on at a frightening speed, arriving at the junction barely in time to make the connection.

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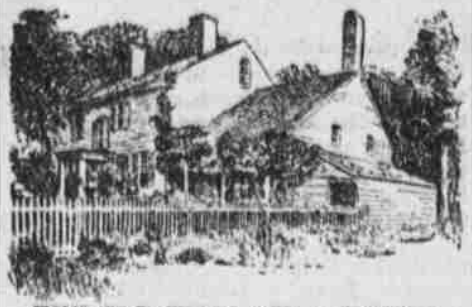
falling interest in her father's law practice. She discusses with him the important cases, and in the absence of his partner at the state senate recently, she assumed the position of confidential secretary. The business could not be done by Col. Dell alone, and the affairs were too grave to be entrusted to inferior clerks or to any outsider.

WASHINGTON LIVED THERE.

A Centennial Celebration at the Old Wallace Mansion in Somerville.

The centennial anniversary of the delivery of Washington's farewell address was celebrated the other day at the old mansion at Somerville, N. J., which he once occupied as his headquarters. The house is one of the best preserved Revolutionary relics. The Revolutionary Memorial Society of New Jersey is negotiating for its purchase, and will turn it into a museum. It stands on the old coach road leading from the town, and is half hidden in an ancient grove of oaks. It was known as "Headquarters Middlebrook," and under its roof was planned Sullivan's campaign against the Six Nations.

It was in the winter of 1778-79, while Washington's seven brigades of infant-



THE OLD WALLACE MANSION. ry, including troops of Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, were encamped at Camp Middlebrook, Bound Brook, that this old mansion became the headquarters of Gen. Washington. The great oak timbers of the dwelling had but just been put in place, and the house was hurriedly completed especially for Washington's occupancy. Its owners were two brothers named Wallace, Scotch merchants of New York. Washington took possession of it at the close of a successful campaign in which the British had been driven from New Jersey.

Mrs. Washington joined her husband early in December, 1778, and the mansion was the scene of many a brilliant social gathering of army officers and their wives in the winter and spring of 1778 and 1779.

The house has a wide wainscoted hall, with a wood cornice, ornamented arch, and a broad winding staircase. On the right of the hall is Washington's reception room, with its old-fashioned fireplace, and wood cornice cut in dog-tooth design. In the rear are Washington's sleeping apartments, with white and blue Holland tile and a Franklin stove. The dining room on the left contains the original chair rails and windows with small panes of glass. The upper sleeping rooms and slaves' quarters are in a fine state of preservation.

While Washington lived in the house a brilliant ball was held at Pluckemin, five miles away, in honor of the French alliance.

JOSEPHINE'S HOME SOLD.

Residence of Napoleon's First Wife Bought for Building Purposes.

The chateau of Malmaison, which was the residence of Josephine de Beauharnais after her divorce from Napoleon I, was sold recently to M. Osiris, the well-known philanthropist, for 132,000 francs, says the European edition of the New York Herald. The Gaulois states that M. Osiris was also the purchaser for 4,300 francs of two pyramids in red granite, originally at the Chateau de Richelieu, which are situated on the facade of the chateau. The famous billiard table of Napoleon, placed in one of the rooms of Malmaison near to that in which the sale was held, was sold to a curiosity dealer of the Rue de Pelletier for 725 francs.

The land surrounding the chateau, with the exception of the park, which is sold to M. Osiris, was divided into thirty-five lots. These were sold to various purchasers. Comtesse de Bari, the owner of the small chateau of Malmaison, purchased one of the principal lots. The orphanage of Notre Dame de Lumiere Eternelle became the possessor of twenty-two lots. The sale, which was conducted by the representative of Mme. Sourdeau of Bougival, was attended by a large number of property owners of the district. The total amount realized was 200,100 francs. M. Osiris, interviewed by the Temps as to the use to which he intends to put Malmaison, states that he intends to present it to the nation. Before actually doing so, however, he is going to consult certain persons as to the best means of honoring the memory of Napoleon I. For example, he is contemplating the possibility of making the chateau into a residence for old officers.

Bird Mimics.

Another form of "protective resemblance," which exhibits much ingenious contrivance and skill, is sometimes found among birds. Some birds hide their eggs among stones which resemble the eggs in form and color. The little "bottle-tit," in England, weaves a bottle-shaped nest out of moss, lichens and spiders' webs, and when placed in a tree or bush, the nest so closely resembles its surroundings that it can hardly be detected. The color and appearance of the nest are imitations of the prevailing color and appearance of the particular tree in which it is placed. An amusing story is told by Mr. H. F. Witherby in Knowledge, of a "bottle-tit" which made a serious blunder in trying to hide its nest. The nest was placed in a green holly-bush and was covered with white lichens. It might be suggested that the bird was so(7-blic 11

HERE IS A POOH-BAH.

RICHARD J. SEDDON, PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND.

He Also Holds a Score of Other Offices Each Is a Crown Man's Work—Thus He's Colonial Treasurer, Postmaster-General, Etc., Etc.

HERE is a picture of the Poooh-Bah of New Zealand, Richard J. Seddon. A few of his governmental and other functions are indicated in the following, which was lately passed by the Dunedin Assembly of the Knights of Labor:

"We protest against the action of the Hon. Richard Seddon in monopolizing the positions of premier, colonial treasurer, postmaster general, minister for customs, minister for native affairs, minister for labor, minister in charge of the government life insurance department, member of the Globo assets board, as well as being advisory director of the Anglo-German gold mining syndicate, as not being consistent with his professions of democracy."

Even if this told the whole story it would be an interesting example of multifarious activity. But it does not. In addition to the above offices Mr. Seddon fills a score of others, subsidiary and supplementary, the names and character of which would be unintelligible to one not familiar with the politics of New Zealand. No man in modern politics falls so little short of being "the whole thing." His days are full of business. In his capacity of premier he must receive reports from himself of the colonial finances, correct his own schedules of customs, and, if need be, rebuke himself for defective collection and administration of cus-

activity of forty. He was not trained to diplomacy, but possesses the advantage of perfect knowledge of the colony which he may be said to rule. This latter he has gained by a lifetime of hard work spent among all classes of the people and in all branches of activity.

New Zealand, one of the fairest of the British colonies, is perhaps the liveliest and most up to date. It led the world in woman suffrage and is joint author of the so called Australian ballot law. It is the paradise of labor organizations, and its workmen are better organized than those in any other country. This fact gives added importance to the protest above quoted. Another fact of like import is that Mr. Seddon has long been the "workingman's friend" in New Zealand. He is rugged, democratic, unceremonious.

But the oldest and most perplexing problem in New Zealand politics is the "native" question, which involves the relations of the aboriginal Maoris to the government. The Maoris, unlike the blacks in the neighboring colony of Australia, have not succumbed before the advance of Christianity and rum. Indeed, they are not blacks at all, but belong to the comely, light skinned family found in Samoa and Hawaii.

In the ruder days, before the British possession, the Maoris were tremendous fighters among themselves. They had a system of tribal feuds that is feebly reflected in the Sicilian vendetta and the feuds of the Tennessee mountaineers. Thus they were generally at war.

The British conquered them, but made an engaging pretense of buying all their lands. Indeed, the purchase and sale were bona fide except that the terms were inexorably fixed by the purchaser. Some of the lands, like our Indian reservations, and still held in fee by the aborigines.

To this circumstance and to the strong native intelligence and combativeness of the Maoris is due the fact that the aboriginals are still very much

TO PACIFY CHRISTIANS.



MGR. TCHAMTCHIAN.

The suspension and exile of the sultan of Turkey of the most reverend patriarch, or metropolitan bishop, of the Armenian community at Constantinople, rendered it needful that a "locum tenens" should be appointed for the administration of the affairs of that church in the capital of the Turkish empire. An ecclesiastical personage, Mgr. Bartholomew Tchamitchian,

has been chosen for the office, not by the assembly of Armenians, but through the intervention of a mixed council, the members of which were nominated by the sultan. The new official enjoys much popularity with the high-rank Turks and it is expected that his great tact will do much toward keeping peace between the two factions.

Perhaps the most wonderful verses ever written by a child not yet in her teens are in the poem entitled "Ye Romance of Ye Oldenne Tyme," which Margaret wrote before she was 12 years old, and had published in the September number of St. Nicholas. The poem is:



MARGARET FRANCES MAURO. Besides the almost absolute perfection of the rhyme, and the simple music of the verses, the spelling, the syntactical form of the lines are true to the genius of ancient English. And yet this little poet, whose years preclude the idea of any extensive excursions into the literature of earlier times, is unable to tell when or where she got the ideas for the poem. Although not precocious in any other way, Margaret has been writing verses since she was 6 years old. She is the daughter of Philip Mauro, a patent lawyer, and all the years of her young life, except one, when she was abroad, have been passed in Washington. The child never went to school, except at infrequent inter-

never dreamed of until her father, struck by the apparent beauty and smoothness of the lines of "Ye Romance of Ye Oldenne Tyme," sent them to the editor of St. Nicholas for an opinion as to their poetical merit. The answer was warm praise for Margaret's genius and an offer to publish the child's best poems.

Butterfly Mimics. In the South American forests the butterflies and the birds are equally brilliant in their colors, but the butterflies being weaker, fall a prey to the birds. One very bright-hued species of butterfly, however, is not disturbed by the birds, on account of the disagreeable odor which it emits. Singularly enough, some other groups of butterflies, which resemble the species just described in color, also escape persecution by the birds, although they emit no odor. It is evident that the similarity of color deceives the birds, and thus serves as a shield for the butterflies. This sort of mimicry of color and form, which naturalists call "protective resemblance," is not very uncommon among insects.

Distinguishing Shades.

By a scientific experiment Professor Cattell of Columbia college has determined that the average person's eyes are able to distinguish about twenty-five different shades between black and white. He employed no less than two hundred shades in his experiment, but the great majority of these were too near alike to be distinguished by the eye. These were not shades of different colors, but simply gray surfaces passing gradually from white to black.



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A BRAVE WOMAN.



MRS. JOHN C. KESSLER.

Mrs. John C. Kessler, of Chicago, who will try to bring a little light into the lives of the children of "Little Hell," has been engaged for years in works of charity and benevolence. Her own life was saddened when she lost her only son, and she is now devoting herself to the poor children who live in the squalid districts in the twenty-third ward. She chose this district as the one in which her efforts to make life brighter for poor children would be spent. In "Little Hell" the sur-

roundings are not only poverty stricken, but vicious and criminal, and Mrs. Kessler's task is one of the noblest as well as the most arduous assumed by a philanthropist. Mrs. Kessler began her work last December by establishing a mission in the district. When she began to know the people she resolved to build the Children's Temple, which was recently opened. She has wealth enough to carry out the project and energy to reach the poor children.—Chicago Times-Herald.

It then devolves upon him to give audience to the postmaster general, himself, concerning needed appropriations and reforms in the depart-



PREMIER SEDDON.

ment of postoffices and post roads. He must then resolve himself into the minister for labor and confer with himself concerning the even perplexing questions which come up in that important department. Having then dismissed a few papers, laid by his own hand upon his own desk, concerning government life insurance, Anglo-German mining syndicate affairs, Globo assets and Maori land questions, he has the rest of the day for the demands of his private business and social affairs. His evenings are presumably free for his family.

It is perhaps unnecessary to state that Mr. Seddon is a hustler. He is not yet seventy and looks less than sixty. He has all the springiness and

In New Zealand politics. They sit in parliament and hold office. They have discovered a rich vein of eloquence. To some extent, since their contact with the English, they have learned the pleasing arts of diplomacy, such as lying and cheating.

Thus, if Mr. Seddon had nothing to do but attend to the Maoris, he would be what is ordinarily accounted a busy man. But, as we have seen, this is only one budget pigeonhole in his capacious and many sided day's work.

Three Remarkable Stars.

At an early hour in the evenings of September a brilliant star, of a slightly reddish color, will be visible low in the northwest. The curved handle of the "Great Dipper" points to it. Its name, Arcturus, can be found in the book of Job. At the same hour, nearly overhead, in the middle of the Milky Way, will be seen the outlines of a large cross formed by stars. This cross is in the constellation Cygnus. The largest star, at the head of the cross, is called Alpha Cygni, and the next in size, situated at the point where the beams of the imaginary cross meet, is called Gamma Cygni. Concerning these three stars Mr. Lockyer, the English astronomer, has recently made a very interesting statement. Analyzing their light with the spectroscope, he finds evidence that Arcturus is almost exactly similar to our sun in its composition and is cooling off. Alpha Cygni, on the other hand, is a sun very different from ours, and is getting hotter, while Gamma Cygni somewhat resembles the sun, but is also increasing instead of decreasing in temperature.