

Violets
And
Other Tales.

— " —

Miss Alice Ruth Moore graced
THE REPUBLICAN office on Tues-
day last by a visit. Miss Moore
has just placed upon the market a
literary venture under the title of
"Violets and Other Tales," a copy
of which we acknowledge having
received. Her advertisement ap-
pears in another column, and later
we shall offer some comments as to
the merits of the work.

Republican
No. 10

Size with illus-
first 500 copies
\$65.00 for 1000

N.O. Republican.
July 27 '95

VIOLETS AND OTHER TALES

The above is the title of a vol-
ume of poems and short sketches
by Miss Alice Ruth Moore. The
little volume reflects great cred-
it upon its versatile author, and
will be read with delight by the
thousands of Miss Moore's ad-
mirers all over the country. The
book is nicely gotten up, and is
sold at fifty cents per copy.

Journal of
Lodge
N.O. Jan.

Dealer is the new

Journal of the Lodge
N.O. July 27 '95

A SOUTHERN AUTHORESS.

A talented young woman, and a noteworthy representative of the educated class of colored women, is Miss Alice Ruth Moore of New Orleans, La.

As a gifted author, of whom much may be expected, Miss Moore is entitled to unusual consideration, while her versatility in other directions proves that she is a worthy type of progressive womanhood.

The efforts of the able colored women of this country are deserving of high recognition in the onward march of the times, and their influence is especially significant in eradicating unjust prejudices, as bright, intelligent minds prove the fallacy of racial discrimination against any people.

Evidences of great intelligence among persons of African birth have been by no means rare in the past, but the advancement which the entire race is capable of making, through educational opportunities, is signally manifested in the mental acquirements of men and women who reflect credit upon the republic.

Miss Moore may be described as a type—and a most pleasing type—of the “new Southern woman.” Charged with vital energy, she takes an active part in the progressive movements of the day, and in the utilization of her time cannot be said to be behind any of her energetic northern sisters.

VIOLETS AND OTHER TALES.

BY ALICE RUTH MOORE.

The outer form of the book is so attractive that one guesses as much about the contents. There is a modest little introduction by the author, and a preface by Sylvanie F. Williams of New Orleans, which exhibits the sincere friendship of this lady for Miss Moore. There are over a dozen poems, some of which show a deep love for nature's secrets and unconsciously give the reader an insight into the heart and soul of the author. The rest of the book is composed of short stories cleverly told, which exhibit strong narrative powers, a wide observation of life, a power of pathos as well as of humor, and the faithful depiction of character. There is distinct evidence of literary ability and interest is sustained to the end of the book. Perhaps the charm about it is its unassuming, unprofessional air. It is to be hoped that the book will meet with success. The satisfaction one receives from reading it is worth more than the price.

E. AZALIA HACKLEY.

Denver Colo.
Stateman's Experiment
Sept 14. 1895

o o o
Several ladies have already ordered
"Violets and Other Tales," the dainty
little book of which Miss Alice Ruth
Moore is the author. Miss Moore,
one of New Orleans charming daugh-
ters, is one of the youngest and best
known writers among our women. Or-
ders left at this office will receive
prompt attention. The book which is
bound in light blue and gilt cloth,
costs one dollar.

Denver - Exponent
Sept 14. 1895

Violets and Other Tales.

"Violets and Other Tales," is a book
just published by Miss Alice Ruth
Moore. It is a literary gem and contains
many short sketches of much merit.

Miss Moore was born in New Orleans,
July 19, 1875; consequently but a trifle
past her twentieth year. She received
her first training in the public schools
of New Orleans, afterwards attending
Southern University, from which she
entered Straight University; graduating
from this University in May, 1892, being
poet of the graduating class.

Professor Hitchcock, who was favora-
bly known throughout New England,

was favorably impressed with Miss
Moore's talent and urged her to enter
the prize short story contest carried on
by the Comfort in 1893. She did so and
won 3d prize in two contests.

"Violets and Other Tales" in hand-
some cloth binding stamped in gold,
postage prepaid for one dollar; paper
cover copies, fifty cents. The book con-
tains 176 pages. There are 29 short
stories and poems. Send all orders to
this office.

San Francisco
Western Outlook
Oct. 14. 1895



Born in the Crescent City about 20 years ago, she enjoys the double advantage of standing on the threshold of life with the hopes and aspirations of genius and youth.

Miss Moore received her first educational training in the public schools of New Orleans, but afterward attended Southern University, from which she graduated at 14 years of age, and then entered Straight University, an institution conducted by the Congregational Church of the North, graduating at the end of three years.

She was a quick, apt scholar, and developed such talent for composition that she was encouraged to devote special attention to English literature and the classics, and to what end her efforts in this direction were expended is plainly noticeable in the excellence of her style of writing.

"VIOLETS AND OTHER TALES."

A book of Miss Moore's which has just been issued by the Monthly Review Publishing Company of Boston, entitled "Violets and Other Tales," gives direct evidence of the ability of the young author. The volume, which is very attractively bound in both cloth and paper, contains prose sketches and poems which indicate artistic quality of a high standard. She not only has great delicacy of perception, but admirable powers of description, and lends to all her conceptions the attraction of originality of expression. Many of the sketches suggest rare comprehension of human nature, and a finely attuned sympathy with the varying moods of human existence. Like nearly all who possess the unmistakable token of genius, the minor chord seems especially to appeal to her sensitive nature, but bright flashes that reveal her real appreciation of the happiness that life affords are not by any means lacking, so that the book is particularly adapted to win its way to the heart of the great public, and will prove a volume that will not only be once read, but reread.

In the first poem of "Three Thoughts," she suggests the real pleasure that ought to underlie all the necessary activities of life.

How few of us

In all the world's great ceaseless struggling strife,

Go to our work with gladsome, buoyant step,
And love it for its sake, whate'er it be.

Because it is a labor, or, mayhap,
Some sweet, peculiar art of God's own gift
And not the promise of the world's slow smile
Of recognition, or of mammon's gilded grasp.
Alas, how few, in inspiration's dazzling flash,
Of spiritual sense of worlds beyond the dome
Of circling blue around this weary earth,
Can bask, and know the God-given grace
Of genius' fire that flows and permeates
The virgin mind alone; the soul in which
The love of earth hath taint'd not.
The love of art and art alone.

THE MODERN WOMAN.

As an illustration of her keen, clear-headed aspect of the "woman question," the following extract from an article entitled "The Woman" is certainly of interest.

"Take the average working-woman of today. She works from five to ten hours a day, doing extra night work, sometimes, of course. Her work over, she goes home or to her boarding-house, as the case may be. Her meals are prepared for her, she has no household cares upon her shoulders, no troublesome dinners to prepare for a fault-finding husband, no fretful children to try her patience, no petty bread and meat economies to adjust. She has her cares, her money troubles, her debts and her scrimplings, it is true, but they only make her independent, instead of reducing her to a dead level of despair. Her day's work ends at the office, school, factory or store; the rest of the time is hers, undisturbed by the restless going to and fro of housewifely cares, and she can employ it in mental or social diversions. She does not incessantly rely upon the whims of a cross man to take her to such amusements as she desires. In this nineteenth century she is free to go where she pleases—provided it be in a moral atmosphere—without comment. Theatres, concerts, lectures and the lighter amusements of social affairs among her associates are open to her, and there she can go, see, and be seen, admire and be admired, enjoy and be enjoyed, without a single harrowing thought of the baby's milk or the husband's coffee.

"Her earnings are her own, indisputably, unreservedly, undividedly. She knows to a certainty just how much she can spend, how well she can dress, how far her earnings will go. If there is a dress, a book, a bit of music, a bunch of flowers, or a bit of furniture that she wants, she can get it, and there is no need of asking any one's advice or gently hinting to John that Mrs. So and So has a lovely new hat, and there is one ever so much prettier and cheaper down at Thus & Co's.

"And so your independent working woman of today comes as near being ideal in her equilibrium and self poise as can be imagined. So, why should she hasten to give this liberty up in exchange for a seridom, sweet sometimes, it is true, but which too often becomes galling and unendurable?

"It is not marriage that I decry, for I don't think any really sane person would do this, but it is this wholesale marrying of girls in their teens, thus rushing into an unknown plane of life to avoid work. Avoid work! What housewife dares call a moment her own?

CAUSES OF UNHAPPY MARRIAGES.

"Marriages might be made in Heaven, but too often they are consummated right here on earth, based on a desire to possess the physical attractions of the woman by the man, pretty much as a child desires a toy, and an innate love of man, a wild desire not to be ridiculed by the foolish as an 'old maid,' and a certain delicate shrinking from the work of the world—laziness is a good name for it—by the woman. The attraction of mind to mind, the ability of one to complement the lights and shadows in the other, the capacity of either to fulfil the duties of wife or husband—these do not enter into the contract. That is why we have divorce courts.

"And so our independent woman in every year of her full, rich, well-rounded life is gaining fresh knowledge and experience, learning humanity, and particularly that portion of it which is the other gender, so well as to avoid clay-footed idols, and finally when she does consent to bear the yoke upon her shoulders, does so with perhaps less romance and glamor than her younger scoffing sisters, but with an assurance of solid and more lasting happiness. Why should she have hastened this; was aught lost by the delay?

SOME NATURAL TRAITS.

"They say, 'that men don't admire this type of woman, that they prefer the soft, dainty, winning, mindless creature who cuddles into men's arms, agrees to everything they say, and looks upon them as a race of gods turned loose upon this earth

for the edification of womankind.' Well, may be so, but there is one thing positive, they certainly respect the independent one, and admire her, too, even if it is at a distance, and that in itself is something. As to the other part, no matter how sensible a woman is on other questions, when she falls in love she is fool enough to believe her adored one a veritable Solomon. Cuddling? Well, she may preside over conventions, brandish her umbrella at board meetings, tramp the streets soliciting subscriptions, wield the blue pencil in an editorial sanctum, hammer a typewriter, smear her nose with ink from a galley full of pied type, lead infant ideas through the tortuous mazes of c-a-t and r-a-t, plead at the bar, or wield the scalpel in a dissecting room, yet when the right moment comes she will sink as gracefully into his manly embrace, throw her arms as lovingly around his neck and cuddle as warmly and sweetly to his bosom as her little sister who has done nothing else but think, dream and practice for that hour. It comes natural, you see."

AN UNCEASING WORKER.

In addition to Miss Moore's literary work she is a teacher in one of the large public schools of New Orleans, and also teaches short-hand and typewriting at home, besides contributing articles, sketches and poems regularly to the New York Age, the Woman's Era of Boston, the Journal of the Lodge of New Orleans, the Monthly Review of Boston, the Colored American of Washington, D. C., and other race journals. She is generally considered the ablest writer for the public press among the colored women of the United States.

Miss Moore is actively interested in womens' clubs, and was one of the organizers of the Phillis Wheatley Club.

In personal appearance Miss Moore is very pleasing and attractive; quadroon, with a fine, shapely head and delicately modeled features. Her face is sweet and winsome in expression, but also indicates the thoughtfulness of a poetic temperament.

Boston
Mass.
Daily Standard. July 27 '95

The Daily Standard of Boston recently gave a lengthy notice of Miss Alice Ruth Moore, of New Orleans, a young colored woman who is distinguishing herself in the literary world. She has contributed articles to many of our papers, as well as to the standard magazines, which have attracted much attention because of their deserved literary merit.—
American Baptist. *July 9*

*American Baptist
July 2, 1890*

LITERATURE.

BY CHAS. ALEXANDER.

I have just published *Violets and Other Tales*, by Miss Alice Ruth Moore a book of short stories and poems.

Her stories and poems are beautiful in their simplicity; penetrating in their delineation, and true in their psychological disquisitions, and her style charms one from the very start.

This book of 178 pages, handsomely bound in cloth, sent post-paid for \$1.00; paper cover, fifty cents. Address, Chas. Alexander, Box 94, B. B. Boston, Mass.

Monthly Review, July '95

Violets and Other Tales.—The handsome little volume of poems and stories by Miss Alice Ruth Moore—the bright new star in the Southern sky—is a little gem. It is a happy realization of the many flattering

things said of the young author, and better still, it is a rich promise of what she may hereafter do.

The book is unique and decidedly interesting and the stories are well told. There is a warmth and vigor of imagination, and a fervid abandon to emotion, characteristic of Miss Moore and of the South. All her lovers love; her heroines are fond of kisses; they do not shrink from a good hearty hug even if it does crush their sleeves and disarrange their toilet; and when their heroes prove fickle or false, life has lost its charms. All this is natural with an ardent gifted Southern girl, scarce out of her teens; and it does not hinder one from reading between the lines, words of splendid promise for the future, if the coming years are devoted to earnest, patient, judicious study. She unquestionably possesses talent of a high order—her power of expression is marvelous. She has a gift for characterization, a genius for epigram. Of course there are little crudities, exaggerations, rhapsodies, but then they are neither very numerous nor very grave, and one can readily forget them under the spell of her moving narration, her vivid imagery, her deft touch and her magnificent command of English. Perhaps her greatest defect is her inability to more frequently and more strongly touch the heart, but, as I have said, she is young yet, and perhaps her own has not been touched. She will yet kindle the fires in the eyes of her heroes and warm with a master's hand the hearts of her heroines. It is our duty to bid this beautiful little courier a cordial welcome, in order that the gifted young author may feel encouraged to do what this little volume teaches us to believe she has the power to do so well.

CHARLES S. MORRIS.

Monthly Review, July 1895
★★★★

"Violets and Other Tales."

Miss Alice Ruth Moore has in a great degree gifts as a writer.

Her "Violets and Other Tales," which has just been issued by the Monthly Review Publishing Company of Boston, Mass., will meet a hearty appreciation from the discriminative reader, as he will find himself "amidst a world of flowers and sweets." Its verse and prose are the creations of undoubted talent; the soulful outpourings of budding womanhood sentient with the ruddy warmth of the South, not the usual mechanical drudge work of a penny-a-liner.

Her girlhood's sweet presence, the charm of her personality, is upon every page, and like a real presence awakens that indescribable feeling of delight which the propinquity of woman alone produces. Color, perfume and music are in the rhyme of her verse, the rhythm of her prose, from leaden-gray to crimson; from the wood-violet to the jasmine; from the thunderous tones of the organ to the clear, shrill notes of the wren, every gradation of shade and sound is preserved and applied with true artistic instinct.

Republican, Aug 10.

Miss Alice Ruth Moore's promised contribution—"Violets and Other Tales"—merits considerate criticism. Miss Moore's introduction reads: "In this day when the world is fairly teeming with books,—good books, books written with a motive, books inculcating morals, books teaching lessons,—it seems almost a piece of presumption too great for endurance to foist another upon the market. There is scarcely room in the literary world for amateurs and maiden efforts: the very worthiest are sometimes poorly repaid for their best efforts. Yet, another one is offered the public, a maiden effort,—a little thing with absolutely nothing to commend it, that seeks to do nothing more than amuse. Many of these sketches and verses have appeared in print before, in newspapers and a magazine or two; many are seeing the light of day for the first time. If perchance this collection of idle thoughts may serve to while away an hour or two, or lift for a brief space the load of care from someone's mind, their purpose has been served—the author is satisfied." As is frankly confessed, several of the charming stories of this book have been read in a series of "En Pas-

sant" letters written by her, and these, added to many new ones, impress the seeming boundlessness of the author's versatility. "Violets" is not lacking for a piquant literary style that does more than "lift for a brief space the load of care from someone's mind"—it charms and amuses and tells of greater things we may expect from its talented author.

*Isaac Freeman.
Aug. 10 '95.*

The New Books.
VIOLETS AND OTHER TALES. By Alice Ruth Moore. 12mo.; pp. 176; cloth, \$1; paper, 50 cents. New Orleans: The author. For sale by Monthly Review Pub. Co. This is a pretty little volume, well bound and well printed. It contains some twenty-nine little tales, sketches, essays, poems (?), etc., and they are slop.

Picayune, N. O. Aug. 18 '95

Miss Alice R. Moore's Book,

We have just finished a perusal of "Violets and Other Tales" by Miss A. Ruth Moore of New Orleans for a copy of which we are indebted to Mr. Charles Alexander of this city, and for which we take this opportunity to return him our thanks; and now we propose, as it were,

"Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw,"
in that our first excursion among the "violets."

Miss Moore's book is an octavo volume, consisting, we believe, of some 176 pages, made up in the main of desultory and furtive pieces. As will be seen from its title-page the book is not a treatise on any one particular subject; it is varied with prose, verse, fiction and dialogue, which shows that the author is gifted with a remarkable and versatile genius. Nothing tends so much to show one's ability to write as the changing from one style of composition to another without apparent detriment to the writer. This our author's book shows her capable of doing with the utmost ease and freedom.

Another thing we think commendable in the work, is the author's unconsciousness of what race she belongs to. The number of books is small, indeed,

which are written by colored authors, and yet do not treat of race-matter. This is not the case with Miss Moore, her book deals with all manner of subjects, and in all she shows the same artistic touch and gracefulness of expression.

Amid a large selection of pieces each of which claims distinction on some particular merit, it would be hard to say which is the best without in some way giving annoyance to the writer; for the reader's mind never runs like that of the author. Milton always thought "Paradise Regained" better than "Paradise Lost" and so with many other authors. However, we venture to suggest that no one can read without pleasure and instruction "Chalmette" and the "Idler" and, in fact, all the poetical selections. The same is true of such prose pieces as "The Woman" "At Eventide" and "the Bee-man." In all of these selections her genius shines forth resplendent, and, in them, as she herself writes of another,

"The light streams through the windows
arched high,
And o'er the stern, stone carving breaks
In warm rich gold and crimson waves."

We like Miss Moore's book; we have read it with much pleasure, and are sure that our readers will encourage this brilliant young writer of the South. Her book can be had in this city of Mr. Charles Alexander of the Monthly Review for 50 cents and up-

*Boston Concord.
Aug. 17. 1890.*

THE PICAYUNE'S BOOKS.

Our readers know that Miss Alice Ruth Moore has collected a number of her writings and put them into a book. As all writers do, she presented the press of her city with a copy each. The Picayune appreciated the compliment by calling it "slop." Now the book may not have transcendent value, the poetry may not be that of Byron and Shakespeare, nor the prose that of Macaulay or Addison; yet it is not devoid of merit.

The Boston Daily Standard, as competent a critic as the Picayune, thought the book deserving of special mention and devoted two columns to the writer and the volume, quoting extensively from its pages.

The author of "Violets and Other Tales" is very young, scarcely out of her teens, and when one at this age can make a book, there must be something in him or her, and if any one doubts it in this case he or she can read Miss Moore's book and be convinced.

Every white woman of New Orleans who has written anything has been lauded to the sky, and yet, excepting Constant Beauvais (Miss Queyrouze), we do not know the one who has not written "slop".

If Miss Moore was white the same praise would have been accorded her. But she is not white, and through the dark glass of prejudice the Picayune's literary critic

*Daily Crusader.
N.O. Aug. 24. 1890.*

EDWARD CHANDLER.

Alice Ruth Moore, the sweet singer of the Crescent City will offer this month to the literary public a collection of short stories and poems entitled "Violets and Other Tales." The literary standing of Miss Moore is a guarantee that her book will possess the important essential of merit.

Texas Freeman

It is not generally known by our club women that it is possible to possess a wellappointed library of Negro authors. The Monthly Review for August—the only periodical of its kind published in the interest of the race—advertises a list of Negro books numbering more than 30. The latest is a brilliant little gem called "Violets and Other Tales" by Miss A. R. Moore of New Orleans, so well known by her contributions to several of our best race papers. Miss Moore is a charming writer, and exhibits a graceful, flowing style and originality of expression rarely found in one so young. Her book has elicited most favorable comments from her reviewers, and if the encouragement she deserves is given her, she bids fair to shine very brilliantly in our literary firmament. Every library should be enriched by a copy of Miss Moore's work.

Omaha Enterprise
Aug. 31, 1905

Miss. Phillips, one of our successful solicitors in this city, will introduce "Violets and other tales" in her canvass of this paper and no one of our subscribers can afford to be without this book, and claim to love your race. Our girls and boys must be encouraged and you can do this like other people encourage their children by buying the works of their brains, the products of their hands. This book is purely a production of a Negro and we all should have that feeling in it to take a copy. The price for the cloth back is only \$1 and the paper back 50 cents, now don't every body take the paper back for you want the book in your library and therefore the cloth.

You know there are some people in this city also who do not know that the black people are making history and they believe that, the black people have never done anything in literature, science, art or agriculture. We purpose to successfully refute this pernicious notion by placing on our home market, so far as we are able, every article of the Negroes' brain and production for sale from time to time. We have now a little volume entitled "Violets and other Tales" by Miss Alice Ruth Moore, a highly cultured and refined lady of our race who lives in New Orleans. The book is a gem of her poetic writings and other work.

St Joseph Mo. Mirror
Oct. 5, 1895

Mr. W. Williams, Reporter for
"VIOLETS."

**A New Orleans Singer's Work in
Prose and Verse.**

Conscience is a dangerous element for the literary reviewer to carry into his work when dealing with race productions. This should not be so, but a long course of indiscriminating praise and superlative laudation over the achievements of mediocrity has rendered us supersensitive to criticism. Long winded biography, stilted and strained romance, and limping verse have been hailed as the inspired utterances of genius, leaving no room for a proper and adequate recognition of the small but growing number of talented writers whose work demands respectful hearing and earnest consideration.

But if the conscientious reviewer departs from the path of praise and ventures to point out the crudities and shortcomings of many of our ambitious authors, he is denounced as being actuated by either malice or jealousy. In this condition of affairs, it is refreshing to come across a work in which the author is prepared to find the way to fame is not all a bed of roses. In fact, criticism is disarmed by the exceeding modesty of the preface in which Mrs. Sylvanie F. Williams introduces "Violets and Other Tales" as "fugitive pieces" by Miss Alice Ruth Moore.

Miss Moore is no stranger to the readers of THE AGE, as several of these pieces have appeared in its columns. Her talent is undeniable and she betrays a daintiness of touch that does not at all detract from her power as an artist. Her opening sketch, which gives the title to the collection, is full of sentiment and pathos, and she skill-

fully avoids descending into bathos. In "The Woman" she argues the question of marriage for self-supporting women with both sense and sensibility, showing an acute perception of the weaknesses of human and woman nature. For a New Woman, to which type she is accredited, she shows a moderation and breadth of vision that do not always characterize our latter day reformers. On the other hand a vivid imagination is given a free rein in "Ten Minutes Musing" and "In Unconsciousness," the latter suggesting various forms of dementia. "Titee" is a pretty little story of boyish sacrifice and devotion.

The effect of "Salamambo," a review of Flaubert's romance, is spoiled by the deliberate misspelling of the French novelist's name throughout the article, for which it is to be hoped that Mr. Charles Alexander, editor of the *Monthly Review*, whose imprint the volume bears, has had his hair well pulled. There are other typographical blemishes due to careless proof reading.

The volume contains other sketches, mostly with a tragic or pathetic strain, intermingled with verses both grave and gay, and conforming in form and feeling to poetic requirements. Sometimes in the fullness of youthful enthusiasm the author pitches her note of sentiment too high, and its ring is not quite true. This gives an impression of overstraining in some of the later sketches.

The collection, as a whole, however, is a creditable performance, full of promise, and couched in clear and comprehensible language, with a flowing and flexible style.

New York Age

Oct. 3, 1895.

7. Sun. 10/6/95
6, 1895.

SOME AFRO-AMERICAN VERSE.

**Recent Flights Compared to Those of a
Sweet Singer of 123 Years Ago.**

One hundred and twenty-two years ago J. French of London published a small volume of poems, written by Phillis Wheatley of Boston, of whom the modest preface says: "Phillis was brought from Africa to America in the year 1761, between seven and eight years of age. Without any assistance from school education, and by only what she was taught in the family, she, in sixteen months' time from her arrival, attained the English language, to which she was an utter stranger before, to such a degree as to read any of the most difficult parts of the sacred writings, to the great astonishment of all who heard her. As to her writing, her own curiosity led her to it; and this she learnt in so short a time that in the year 1765 she wrote a letter to the Rev. Mr. Occum, the Indian Minister, while in England. She has a great inclination to learn the Latin tongue, and has made some progress in it. This relation is given by her master, who bought her, and with whom she now lives." John Wheatley signs his name to the facts here given.

In those days Phillis Wheatley was regarded as a prodigy. She would be so regarded if she should appear among us now. It could be truthfully said of her that she was "little, black, and cute." As if to assure the world that Phillis was a real, breathing creature, the publisher of her verse printed the following:

We, whose names are underwritten, do assure the world that the pomes specified in the following page were (as we verily believe), written by Phillis, a young negro girl, who was but a few years since brought, an uncultivated barbarian, from Africa, and has since been, and now is, under the disadvantage of serving as a slave in a family in this town. She has been examined by some of the best judges, and is thought qualified to write them.

This statement is signed by his Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Governor; the Hon. Harrison Gray, the Hon. James Bodoïn, John Hancock, Esq., and others.

During the past week I have received four volumes of verse written by Afro-Americans, none of whom is as genuinely African as Phillis was, and all of whom have enjoyed more opportunities for culture than she, and lived in a happier condition and under brighter skies. They should have a finer touch, a tenderer sympathy, a better mastery of the machinery of versification, a truer insight into nature and nature's god, than the African slave girl who lived and thought and wrote one hundred and twenty-two years ago. Her opening poem, "To Mæcenæ" is good enough to quote entire:

Mæcenæ, you, beneath the myrtle shade,
Read o'er what poets sung, and shepherds played.
What felt those poets but you feel the same?
Does not your soul possess the sacred flame?
Their noble strains your equal genius shares
In loftier language and diviner airs.

While Homer paints, lol circumfused in air
Celestial gods in mortal forms appear;
Swift as they move hear each recess rebound;
Heaven quakes, earth trembles, and the shores re-
sound.

Great Sire of Verse, before my mortal eyes,
The lightnings blaze across the vaulted skies,
And as the thunder shakes the heavenly plains
A deep-felt horror thrills through all my veins.
When gentler strains demand thy graceful song
The lengthening line moves languishing along.
When great Patroclus courts Achilles' aid
The grateful tribute of my tears is paid;
Prone on the shore he feels the pangs of love,
And stern Pelides' tenderest passions move.

Great Merro's strain in heavenly numbers flows;
The nine inspire, and all the bosom glows.
O, could I rival thine and Virgil's page,
Or claim the Muses with the Mantuan sage,
Soon the same beauties should my mind adorn,
And the same ardors in my soul should burn;
Then should my song in bolder notes arise,
And all my numbers pleasingly surprise;
But here I sit, and mourn, a grovelling mind,
That fain would mount and ride upon the wind.

Not you, my friend, these plaintive strains become,
Not you, whose bosom is the Muses' home;
When they from towering Helicon retire
They fan in you the bright immortal fire;
But I, less happy, cannot raise the song,
The faltering music dies upon my tongue.

The happier Terence all the choir inspired,
His soul replenished and his bosom fired;
But say, ye Muses, why this partial grace
To one alone of Afric's sable race,
From age to age transmitting thus his name
With the first glory in the rolls of fame?

Thy virtues, great Mæcenæ, shall be sung
In praise of him, from whom those virtues sprung;
While blooming wreaths around thy temples spread,
I'll snatch a laurel from thy honored head,
While you indulgent smile upon the deed.

As long as Thames in streams majestic flows,
Or Naiads in their oozy beds repose,
While Phœbus reigns above the starry train,
While bright Aurora purples o'er the main,
So long, great sir, the Muse thy praise shall sing,
So long thy praise shall make Parnassus ring;
Then grant, Mæcenæ, thy paternal ravs.
Hear me propitious, and defend my lays.

How Phillis felt "on being brought from
Africa to America" is expressed in the follow-
ing lines:

'Twas mercy brought me from a Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God, that there's a Saviour, too;
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,
'Their color is a diabolic dye.'
Remember, Christians, negroes black as Cain,
May be refined, and join th' angelic train.

On leaving the United States for England
Phillis wrote these lines:

Adieu, New England's smiling meads;
Adieu, the flowery plain:
I leave thine opening charms, O spring,
And tempt the roaring main!

In vain for me the flowerets rise,
And boast their gaudy pride,
While here beneath the northern skies
I mourn for health denied.

Celestial maid, of rosy hue,
Oh, let me feel thy reign!
I languish till thy face I view,
Thy vanished joys regain.

Savannah mourns, nor can I bear
To see the crystal shower,
Or mark the tender falling tear
At sad departure's hour.

Nor, unregarding, can I see
Her soul with grief oppressed;
But let no sighs, no groans, for me
Steal from her pensive breast.

In vain the feathered warblers sing,
In vain the garden blooms,
And on the bosom of the spring
Breathes out her sweet perfumes.

While for Britannia's distant shore
We sweep the liquid plain
And with astonished eyes explore
The wide extended main.

Lo! Health appears! Celestial dame!
Complacent and serene;
With Hebe's mantle o'er her frame,
With soul-delighting mien.

To mark the vale where London lies,
With misty vapors crowned,
Which cloud Aurora's thousand dyes
And veil her charms around.

Why, Phœbus, moves thy car so slow?
So slow thy rising ray?
Give us the famous town to view,
Thou glorious King of Day!

For thee, Britannia, I resign
New England's smiling fields;
To view again her charms divine,
What joy the prospect yields!

But, thou, temptation, hence, away,
With all thy fatal train,
Nor once seduce my soul away
By thy enchanting strain!

Thrice happy they whose heavenly shield
Secures their souls from harms,
And fell temptation on the fields
Of all its power disarms!

This slave girl possessed a remarkable ear for music and a command of language and a familiarity with the classics, remembering her pagan origin, still more remarkable. All of her work is marked by a piety almost as pronounced as that which pervades the work of dren lean upon their parents. She struck the keynote in verse for her race, when it was still an infant on this continent, a child as she was in all things, and no one, except it be Paul Lawrence Dunbar, has approached her in imaginative power, in mastery of language and of poetic expression. She was a genius pure and simple, and would have "lisp'd in numbers" if she had remained a savage in the wilds of Africa.

Alice Ruth Moore, a New Orleans school teacher just out of her teens, has just published a small volume of prose and verse, in which there are many choice bits of sentiment. Such is a "A Plaint:"

Dear God, 'tis hard, so awful hard, to lose
The one we love, and see him go afar,
With scarce one thought of aching hearts behind,
Nor wistful eyes, nor outstretched, yearning hands,
Chide, not, dear God, if surging thoughts arise,
And bitter questionings of love and fate,
But rather give my weary heart thy rest
And turn the dark, sad memories into sweet.
Dear God, I fain my loved one were anear,
But since thou wilt that happy thence he'll be,
I send him forth, and back I'll choke the grief
Rebellious rising in my lonely heart!
I pray thee, God, my loved one joy to bring;
I dare not hope that joy will be with me,
But, ah, dear God, one boon I crave of thee,
That he shall ne'er forget his hours with me.

But "In Memoriam" has a broader sweep and a deeper sympathy:

The light streams through the windows arched high,
And o'er the stern, stone carvings, breaks
In warm, rich gold and crimson waves,
Then steals away in corners dark to die!

And all the grand cathedral silence falls
Into the hearts of those that worship low,
Like tender waves of hushed nothingness,
Confined nor kept by human, earthly walls.

Deep music in its thundering organ sounds,
Grows diffuse through the echoing space,
Till hearts grow still in sadness' mighty joy,
Or leap aloft in swift ecstatic bounds.

Mayhap 'twas but a dream that came to me,
Or but a vision of the soul's desire,
To see the nations in one mighty whole
De homage on its bended, worshipping knee.

Through time's heroic actions, the soul of man
Alone proves what that soul without earth's dross
Could be, and this, through time's far-reaching fire
Hath proved thine white beneath the deepest scan.

A woman's tribute, 'tis a tiny dot,
A merest flower from a frail, small hand,
To lay among the many petalled wreaths
About thy form—a tribute soon forgot!

But if in all the incense to arise
In fragrance to the blue empyrean,
The blended sweetness of the women's love
Goes pouring too in all their heartfelt sighs!

And if one woman's sorrow be among them, too,
One woman's joy for labor past
Be reckoned in the mighty teeming whole,
It is enough; there is not more to do.

Peace, peace, the men of God cry; ye be bold.
The world hath known; 'tis Heaven that claims
him now!

And in our railings we but cast aside
The noble traits he bade us hold!

So, though divided through the land, in dreams
We see a people kneeling low,
Bowed down in heart and soul to see
This fearful sorrow, crushing as it seems.

And all the grand cathedral silence falls
Into the hearts of those that worship low,
Like tender waves of hushed nothingness,
Confined, nor kept by human, earthly walls.

In "Idle Moments," Daniel Webster Davis of
Richmond has gathered many of the fugitive
pieces he has contributed to the newspapers of
his race or read on public occasions. Mr. Davis
is very nearly of the pure African type, with a
pleasing countenance, a twinkling eye, and an
intellectual head. His verse runs to the hu-
morous. "De Linin' ub de Hymns" will show his
faculty in this department:

Dars a mighty row in Zion, an' de debbil's gettin'
high,
An' de Saints dun beat de sinners a-cussin on de sly;
W'at fur it am? You reckon? Well, I'll tell how it
'gin:
Twaz 'bout a mighty leetle thing, de linin' ub de
hymns.

De young folks say taint stylish to lin out no mo',
Dat dey's got edekashun, an' dey wants us all to
know
Dat dey likes to hab dar singin' books a-hol'in' fore
dare eyes,
An' sing de hymns right straight along to mansions in
de skies.

Dat it am awful foggy to gin um out by lin',
An' ef de ole folks will kumplain cause dey is ole an'
blin',
An' slabery's chains dun kept dem back fum larnin'
how to read
Dat dey mus' tek a corner seat, an' let de young folks
lead.

De sermon's high-falutin an' de church am mighty fin';
We trus' dat God still understan's ez He did in olden
times,
When we, dough ign'ant, po', an' mean, still wor-
shipped wid de soul.
Dough off akross our peaceful bress' de wabes ub
trouble rolled.

De ole-time groans an' shouts an' moans am passin'
out ub sight;
Edikashun changed all dat, an' we believe it right;
We should serb God wid 'telligence; but fur dis t'ing I
plead—
Jes lebe a leetle place in church fur dem as kinnot
read.

Here is another, "The Canine:"

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As quick from that bulldog he hurried;
Not a policeman was there to fire a shot
As his teeth near his right leg were buried.

Quickly and lively he hurried away
From that field, not of fame fresh and gory;
Not a "cuss word" escaped his closely pressed lips—
That dog was alone in his glory!

And slyly he winked, as the seat of his pants
That bulldog sat quietly eating;
He remembers, no doubt, that storm-cloudy night,
And sighs with regret at that meeting.

But Mr. Davis strikes a higher note. "Hope"
will illustrate this:

When evening shades, the night's fair warning,
Doth gild the spires with its fond lingering rays,
The sun's last tint is hope's bright dawning,
The gloom will pass, the night shades fade away;
Bright hope gives warning
Of daylight's dawning,
When gloom is past, night's darkness chased away.

When sorrow, care, and pain unceasing
Beset our pathway and our souls appall,
We still can trust that love increasing
That gilds the stars, yet marks the sparrow's fall,
That love imploring,
Our trust enduring,
Shall pierce the gloom by faith in Him, our all.

When Death's dark night its shadows gather
Hope brightly beams and sheds her cheering rays;
Whate'er betide, we trust our Father,
Who clothes the fields with flowers in bright array;
Through ages winging,
His praises singing,
New life shall dawn with heaven's eternal day.

There are many pretentious poems in the vol-
ume before me written by Eloise Bibb of New
Orleans. She has a fine ear for music and a fair
command of language and appreciation of the
beauties of nature. "The Early Spring" will
suffice to show this:

The early spring's sweet blush,
Like a maiden's beauteous flush,
Mounts the cheek of earth and sky
With radiance soft and shy.
She comes like a virgin queen
From her couch of emerald green,
Enrobed in garments bright,
With sunny locks of light
And gladness in her smile,
Beguiling care the while

With a sigh from the thrush,
And the brook's low, warbling rush.
She stoons and whispers low
To the violets 'neath the snow,
On bended knee she peeps
In the home where the clover sleeps.
Her warm and fragrant breath
Has chased the gloom of death,
That shrouded tree and sky,
When winter's tears were nigh,
She dots on the light and shade
Her curls and mantle made.
O, ye who weep and sigh,
Bid tears a long good-by;
Be not now overcast
With scenes of the buried past;
Forget the pangs of yore
That made thy bosom sore;
Know that the soul grows strong
In battles great and long!
Weep not, nor e'en be sad;
Rejoice, for the world is glad.

Among the best things in the collection of George Marion McClellan, a graduate of Flsk University, is the following:

Still courage, brother, courage still!
Repress the rising sigh:
Oppression now the race must bear,
But freedom by and by!
And art thou sore at Southern wrongs?
Well, then, I pray,
Be comforted; all wrongs shall pass away.

The time will come when man to man
Will clasp each other's hand
And color bane shall cease to be
In all our goodly land.
Dost thou despair the death of prejudice?
Well, then, I pray,
Be comforted; that, too, shall pass away.

It takes a faith, a mighty faith,
To watch for such a day;
But, look! for sure as God is God,
All wrongs shall pass away.

This new crop of singers should be encouraged. The fact that they are moved to write and are able to pay the printer to put their thoughts in book form is evidence of an ambition that may yet produce something worthy our literature. First flights are always halting and uncertain, even with the best of singers who have gone before. Miss Moore and Miss Bibb both possess a lyric imagination and style which they should be encouraged to cultivate. All these aspirants are young. It is a noticeable fact that none of them takes such an intense view of the race question as Whittier did, for instance, or Cowper or Phillis Wheatley. True, a deep vein of piety pervades all their work, which is due to the influence of the Northern missionaries, who have controlled from the beginning the schools of higher learning for the blacks in the South. It detracts nothing from the quality of the work. There is unusual literary activity among Afro-Americans at this time, and there is undoubted improvement in their work, especially in creative productions. In the next decade or two we should get something substantial from this field, some contribution that will stand the test exacted by the high standard to which our literature has attained.

T. THOMAS FORTUNE.

New York Sun
Oct 6-1895.

VIOLETS AND OTHER TALES.

NEAT LITTLE BOOK.

THE LEADER received this week from the author a copy of a handsome little book entitled: VIOLETS AND OTHER TALES, by Miss Alice Ruth Moore. The contents of the books are in keeping with the ability of the author, and should be on the table or in the library of every lover of the race.

As has been so very ably said by one of our contemporaries, race productions are so generally hailed as the utterances of unpaid genius, until we become used to mediocrity being boomed. The book is modest, modestly prefaced by one of the leading teachers of the race in this city, and one who is well known the country over, and claims no aid of race subjects or grievances to aid it in currying favor. It stands upon its merits alone.

The book contains about thirty sketches and poems, some nice but

With music from the thrush,
And the brook's low, warbling rush.

short stories ; among them a clear and concise exposition of the new woman.

While some of the verses and perhaps the prose may not border on to perfection, yet the main thoughts are worthy of perusal in their entirety, as they are well stated metrically.

There is much promise in this work. In years to come, when the note of sentiment need not be pitched too high, and when her pathos has a truer ring, Miss Moore will doubtless take a first place among the novel writers of America.

THE LEADER is only too proud to claim Miss Moore as an attache of its editorial staff. We claim for her a continuance of the brilliant success she has so wonderfully achieved the past few years she has been in the journalistic and literary arena.

New Orleans Leader
Oct 19. 1895.



