

ring Strait, for during the summer months there is now uninterrupted steam communication from St. Michael to New York. Alaska is now easily traversed in the open season by means of steamers plying upon the Yukon, a form of locomotion that the "Trans-Alaskan Railway Company" proposes to revolutionize in the immediate future, by prolonging the Klondike line to a terminus on the American side of Bering Strait.

In Asia, explorations are being actively carried out under the direction of Prince Khilkoff, Chief Inspector of Communications, in St. Petersburg, with a view to the extension of the Trans-Siberian Railway from Irkutsk to Yakutsk, from which place the line could be carried on to, say, East Cape, at a cost that the boundless mineral resources of the country traversed would probably repay in a few years. The "Franco-American Railway" is therefore not a vague and shadowy project, but one that is receiving the serious attention of the scientific

world on both sides of the Atlantic. Where riches exist a railway must surely follow, and I would remind those who, dazzled by its magnitude, scoff at the scheme, that, half a century ago, one seriously suggesting the possibility of wireless telegraphy would probably have been regarded by the majority of mankind as a lunatic.

Such is a brief and necessarily incomplete account of the present attempt of the de Windt expedition, which left Paris in December, 1901. A detailed narrative of the journey will follow in two instalments—one of these articles will be despatched, if possible, upon the landing of the expedition on the American continent, and the second will be delivered in person upon the arrival of the travellers in New York.*

* The European members of the expedition are, besides the leader, Harry de Windt, the Vicomte de Clinchamp-Bellegarde, and Mr. George Harding, who accompanied Mr. de Windt on the previous occasion.

With Violets

BY CHARLES HENRY WEBB

I WOULD twine my thoughts in garlands, but the roses would betray
By their blushes what a prim rose might not say.

So my secret's not for roses; then lilies, if I chose,—
But the lily, pale with passion, tells the truth like any rose.

The daisy is too open; and poppies talk in sleep;
The jasmine ever was a jade who'll not a secret keep.

The heliotrope is jealous—so long and spoiled a pet;
It grieves her to the marrow she's not a mignonette.

But violets, sweet violets—simple no less than sweet—
Among the grasses hidden, so silent and discreet;

There gently grown and nurtured, as in a convent's shade,—
You surely know the way of a lover with a maid!

Go, modest little violets, and lie upon her breast;
Your eyes will tell her something,—perhaps she'll guess the rest:

Guess that with you a moment anear her heart to lie,
With you I'd fade and wither, with you content I'd die.

The Gay Chevalier

BY SYDNEY H. PRESTON

I SUPPOSE if it hadn't been for Uncle Jim I should have gone on feeling cut up about The Gay Chevalier without telling any one just how badly I felt. Indeed, if I had been a girl I should have cried over him many a time; as it was, I often had to open my eyes very wide, stand with my legs far apart, put my hands in my pockets, and whistle hard when I found him boozing in a sunny corner like a battered old tramp, or running away with a grub stolen from some industrious hen.

Somehow, though I tried hard enough, I never could forget what a beauty he was when he came to Orchard Farm last summer, and how visitors used to stand and exclaim with delight when they saw him strutting about with the hens, and how proud I was to show off that he had learned to fly up on my arm and take corn out of my pocket.

Miss Darlington said he was a perfect symphony in color. From the way she said it I know that is something very fine.

She pointed out the contrast between his bright yellow legs and the deep crimson of his comb and wattles, and said the way the golden shimmer of his neck feathers harmonized with the deep purple of his tail plumes would be the despair of an artist. "After all," said Miss Darlington, drawing a long breath and putting her head a little to one side, "Nature is the one true artist."

It is strange how surprised our minister was when I repeated it to him the next week; he didn't seem to have thought of harmonizings and contrasts when The Gay Chevalier came around to get some corn, until I pointed them out to him. Then he looked at me through his glasses, and said, "Wha-at, my little man,—ch?" And when I drew a long breath and said that after all Nature was the one true artist, he didn't know what I meant until I said it again; then he took off his

glasses and wiped them, and had another look, and asked me if I never played ball.

Tom, our hired man, was different. When I told him my Chevalier was a symphony in color, he bit off a big piece of tobacco, and said he was a darn fine rooster, anyway, and could knock the spots off of Taylor's big Brahma, and if he was his he wouldn't let the biggest painter in the world touch a brush to him.

And his manners were in keeping with his appearance. As father said, he was a model of gentlemanly deportment in his behavior toward the gentler sex. That is how we came to call him The Gay Chevalier. Whenever he found a tidbit he would cluck to the hens and set it down before them, and then step backwards with a courtly air as if it wasn't worth mentioning, like a well-bred gentleman giving up a car seat to a lady. Of course the hens always snatched, and never waited to say thank you, but he didn't seem to mind.

That was last summer, as I said, and if I had been told on my eighth birthday, when I got him, that before the ninth I'd be ashamed to meet him in the barn-yard, I couldn't have believed it. Considering that he had lost all his own self-respect, I thought I was treating him as he deserved when I pretended not to see him; but when other people got provoked at his doings, I couldn't help feeling more indignant than if he had stayed as respectable as he was when he came to Orchard Farm. That, I suppose, is because he is mine, for I remember mother saying that the more you are mortified at the behavior of your own, the less able you are to stand other people's comments.

The trouble began with those two Plymouth Rock cockerels. I wish they had never been hatched, or that they had been made into broilers. Up to the time they got big enough to push the hens aside and gobble up most of the food, The