SONGS OF CUPID.

Lock my ear to the earth to hear Proserpina plead
"Hasten!" to spring a-coming,
Rife with the distant humming
Of rising sap in the forest, and odorous sighs on the mead.
I met a wounded lover straying away to mope:
I bade him listen, and filled his foolish being with hope.
Twing-twang! A lover is delicate game!

I listen and hear the blood leap up in the veins of a rose,
And see its petals blushing;
I hear the murmurous rushing
Jams to the quiet heart of a valley wooing [illegible]
"[illegible] summer," said I, and on the season s[illegible]
[illegible]ed the secrets that only the heart of a lover can know—
Ha! ha! A lover is delicate game!

The trees are falling asleep, the sun is brown in the west;
"Ah me," the leaves are sighing,
"Ah me, the flowers are dying,
And we must lie with them on the mother's withered breast!"
I left the leaves and flowers to mourn their life away,
And set a hopeless lover a-dancing as if 'twere May—
Ho! Ho! A lover is delicate game!

Silent the moon's cold eyes look down on the placid snow;
The river, wrapt in sleeping,
Graved in the ice is keeping
Its heart, till spring shall brew her charms in the caves below.
But seasons are one to me, and off to the chase I go,
With a kiss to my lady moon, and a pull at my trusty bow—
Twing-twang! A lover is delicate game!
—Duvva Morgan Smith in Home Journal.

JARVIS AND WIFE.

I was within a mile of the boundary line between Tennessee and North Carolina, and near where the Little Tennessee river crosses the line, when I heard shrill voices on the rough trail ahead. Then as I passed a sharp curve I came upon a man and a woman, and a few rods beyond them was a tumble down cabin, with three children sitting on the doorstep.

It needed but a glance to show that man and woman were husband and wife, and that the cabin and children belonged to them. The woman had on an ancient straw bonnet and a faded shawl, as if bound on a journey, and both people were somewhat excited. My appearance cut short their conversation, and both gave me a "howdy?" as I drew nearer.

It was the lonellest, gloomiest spot in all the gloomy spurs of the lonely Cumberland. Nine miles back was a mountain cabin in another such cove—how far ahead to the next I could not say. Around the house was half an acre of cleared ground. All else was rock and hill and bush. The nearest town was twenty miles away, and as for schools and churches the people had scarcely heard of them. It wasn't so much the poverty—though none could be poorer—but the utter loneliness, the seclusion, the cutting loose from all the great world, that struck me. Once a month some stranger might pass that way. There was an awesomeness about the spot even when the sun shone the brightest. When the night came down and the winds sighed through trees and bushes and the solemn old mountain sent masses of loosened earth and rock crashing down the steep slopes it must have been maddening.

We three looked at each other for a minute without speaking. Then the man said:

"I'm jist glad on't!"

"So'm I!" replied the woman.

"'Cause now I'll tell him all about it, and you'll see if he don't fetch (agree) with me."

"No, he won't, Samuel Jarvis! He'll jist fetch with me, and he'll tell you to yer face that ye orter be ashamed of yerself."

"Is it a—a family jar?" I inquired.

"Come up to the cabin," replied the man.

The children's faces wore an amused expression through the dirt. They seemed to be about 7, 9 and 12 years old, respectively, and soap and combs and towels were articles unknown to them. They snickered among themselves as we approached, and the oldest said to his father:

"'Mam was a-goin' this time, fur suah."

"She!" was the brief command of the father.

"Dad and mam is always a-fussin'," added the second oldest.

"Hiram, you shet!" exclaimed the mother as she sat down beside him.

The father and I sat down upon a log at the door, and while he was clearing his voice to begin, and reaching out for a stick to whittle while he talked, the woman suddenly broke down and sobbed out:

"Just look around and see how I've had to live fur the last fifteen years!"

"Thar's them as lives wuss," replied the husband.

"What hev we got?" she demanded, starting up and looking around. "You could tote our goods on yer back. We've jist squatted yere, and we don't own nothink."

"It's agin the law to own niggers," he calmly observed.

"Niggers! What do we want with niggers? Niggers would starve with us! We'uns is niggers 'nuff."

"We'll hev a mule some day."

The children cheered.

"A mu-el! Some day! Oh, yes! A real, live mu-el! And a kerridge! And we'll feed him on slivers and splinters! That's hin the talk fur the last dozen years, and whar's the mu-el!"

"Mule's high, Nancy."

"Kin I wollop him, dad?" anxiously inquired the oldest child.

"Shet!" called father and mother in one voice.

"It's like this, stranger," continued the wife after wiping away her tears. "We don't git along. It's all his fault. He's lazy, and he don't keer fur riches. He's allus gwine to do suthin', but it never comes. Yere we squatted when we got spliced, and yere we are today. Them young uns has growed up like heathen, and I've forgotten all I ever knowed. I've got clean bushed out."

"Mam's a-bawling!" snickered the oldest.

"Shet!" exclaimed the father as he reached over and cuffed the youngster's head.

"I purfess that we heven't got rich," slowly replied the husband, "but tain't all my fault. Wasn't I claw'd by a ba'r? Didn't I fall fum a tree? Wasn't the young 'uns down with the measles and thingz?"

"But you hain't used me right!" sobbed the woman. "Look at these duds—the best I hev! I've worked and toiled and toiled and saved, and what have I got for it? Who be I but a ramshackle squatter's wife, a hevin' chills all summer and goin' b'arfut in the winter? Where be we, and what be we?"

The children set in and began crying with their mother, and the mountaineer drew his sleeve across his eyes and whispered:

"Stranger, talk to her soothin' like. She's powerful good hearted, but liable to spells. She's got a spell on just now."

"Perhaps things will soon mend," I said, as the woman controlled her emotion a little.

"Whar' did ye find me, Samuel Jarvis?" she suddenly exclaimed.

"At yer pop's."

"Yes; at my pop's, whar I was brung up like a lady. What did you promise?"

"Heaps, I reckens."

"So you did! I was to hev mules and kerridges and niggers and allks! Whar' be they?"

"We've bin misfortunate, Nancy. The strangers will fetch with me that a man hain't to blame fur his misfortunates. Come, wife, take off yer things."

"What fur?"

"To stay, of course. See them young 'uns a-weepin', and see me a-askin' it of you."

"You said I could go if I didn't like your style."

"I was only funnin', Nancy."

"Ma's a-gittin' the upper of dad!" snickered young Hiram.

"Shet!" called the father, getting in a double cuff this time.

"Well, I might stay on account of the children," said the wife.

"Yes, they are pore things."

"And mebbe you'll do a turn better."

"I will, Nance—durn my buttons if I don't!"

"But the stranger must fetch with me that I'm a doin' it to please you and the children."

"Yes," I said, "your duty lies here. You must not desert your family."

"Ma dasn't go and pop dasn't let her!" called Hiram from behind a stump, and then we went inside. We had a "smack" of bear's meat and corn bread, and as evening came down they gathered in front of the fire to hear of the wonders beyond the Cove. Railroads! Neither mother nor children had ever seen a track. Steamboats! They could hardly comprehend. New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago! They had never heard the names. Telegraphs and telephones, pianos and organs, reapers and mowers, steam engines and electric lights! Each was a wonder to them. Neither man nor wife could name five states. They had no names for oceans. They could name only three large rivers. We talked and talked, and when midnight came the squatter reached over for my hand and said:

"Stranger, don't it make yer head ache to carry all them knowledge around?"

"Dog gone my shoes, Sam Jarvis, but we's got to be aristocratic purty soon or I'll hang myself."—M Quad in Detroit Free Press.

Troubles of a Tobacco Plant.

After the growth has been fairly started the troubles of the young plant begin. It has to be as carefully watched as the youngest baby of the household, and the planter must of necessity be a most patient nurse. It has to be defended from late frosts and that arch enemy, the worm. This ever present worm is the only living thing of the insect or animal kingdom, with the single exception of man, that relishes the seductive weed. Frequently they destroy entire fields three or four times, and the planter host of the writer told him of an instance where a field in his plantation had to be reset a half dozen times. The Virginia worm is long, round and green, with a smooth skin, protruding eyes and numerous legs. It keeps pace in its growth with the plant. When the latter is small so is the enemy, and as it grows so does the worm, until it reaches a length of three or four inches and the thickness of the index finger. When the plant is small and tender the delight of the worm is to eat through the stalk, bringing it to the ground, but after it reaches any size it contents itself with eating great holes in the leaves.

It is the chief work of the pickaninnies (children) of the plantation to keep the plants free from worms. Two or three times a week they go up one row and down another, carefully looking under every leaf in the hunt. Now and then you will hear a joyous "ki-yi" come from the direction of some woolly headed worker, and you may know that it sounds the death knell of an unusually large pest. In slavery days, as now, the hunt was carried on with the greatest vigor and the punishment visited on the unfortunate youngster who failed to capture every worm in his allotted district was to make him bite the repulsive reptile in two. This is a tradition, however, and must be relegated to the Uncle Tom period of our literature. But the pickaninny also had his reward. The "miller," a large white moth, is responsible for the tobacco worm. It is exceedingly prolific and sometimes deposits as many as a hundred eggs in a single night. The planter gives a reward of five cents for every "miller" captured, and on bright moonlight nights, when they are most numerous, you can see the young darkies moving stealthily about the fields on a still hunt for scalps.—R. L. Clutter in Detroit Free Press.

Experiments in Signaling.

Partially successful experiments in signaling by means of electric lights flashed on clouds have been made by British officers at Singapore. A message of four words was read from an outgoing vessel at a distance of sixty knots, but the reply escaped notice.—Arkansaw Traveler.

The British postoffice service employs 3,000 women. Competitors for places have to be over 18 and under 20 years of age.

CONFIDENCE WOMEN.

THEY ARE PREPARING FOR THE WORLD'S FAIR.

A DARING CLASS OF WOMEN WHO INFEST BIG CITIES.

Sophie Lyons, Mary Krating and Lila May—The Chicago Contingent Has Many Slick Workers Among Its Members.

ABOUT THIS season of the year, when ye farmer and ye country merchant is supposed to pay occasional visits to the big cities, blossoms into notoriety a class of femininity known to the police as "con folk." They parade the avenues and the by-ways. To-day they are so well clothed in silk and finery that they easily pass for the wife of a millionaire. To-morrow they are meek and lowly and clad in the garb of a working girl. In the first costume they look for the country merchant for a victim, in the last for the rural philanthropist who is always ready to assist a poor girl in distress because she has just lost her situation.

She is often found in another dress. It is that of a man. In this she can rob and plunder to great advantage when the opportunity presents itself. She will do anything from climbing a porch to holding up a man on the highway.

Every large city has its corp of this class of criminals. They seldom move around between cities. There are only

Sophie Lyons

two or three of national reputation, such as Sophie Lyons, Mary Keating, and Lila May, each one of them with a multitude of alaises.

There is not one of these who has not been in jail on many occasions charged with serious offenses; but the cases against them generally fall through for lack of the prosecuting witness, who would sooner not figure before the public in that light.

Mary Keating, who is a resident of the flourishing city of Chicago, has peered through prison bars not less than half a hundred times. She is at the present time in retirement owing to a severe strain caused from overwork, and is wanted for the theft of $285 from a Detroit man who had too much confidence in her. She was strolling past the city hall during the G. A. R. encampment with her victim when a detective approached the pair and said: "That woman is the most notorious pickpocket in the country. You'd better drop her."

"I guess I know my business," retorted the smart Detroiter, bristling up at the insult offered his companion. Later he reported to the police the loss of all the money he had. He was obliged to walk home, while Mary took a trip for her health to the seashore. She has a sister, Nora, who is almost, if not equally as good a "worker" and has a record of some thirty arrests. Both reside in Chicago.

Minnie Williams, one of the three sisters of that name who have the peculiar condit of affairs made the acquaintance of Alice, is one of the best combination picipockets and confidence workers in the western country. Her plain features without any pretensions to beauty, adorn frame 2371 in the gallery. She is personally known to every policeman and detective in south and west Chicago. Minnie's life during the last five years has been one succession of downs and ups—down in a police station cell and up before the police magistrate. Notwithstanding all this she has by careful and prudent economy managed to accumulate at her "calling" enough money to purchase a handsome home.

She works the unsuspecting stranger under the guise of an innocent country girl lately arrived in Chicago. Her tales of woe are as many and varied as the hues of a rainbow and as strikingly original. Minnie is not spending the summer in Chicago for health and hopes to reap a rich harvest during the world's fair. Not long since a boot maker was relieved of a burden in the shape of an $800 roll of bills by her; but when the case came before the grand jury she was discharged, "because," as one of the wise men said, "a man must be a chump who would let a woman rob him."

Jennie Monroe, whose arrest on more than one occasion has saved a stranger the loss of his wealth, is an accomplished worker. She is known as a crook with no particular specialty, preferring to make game of whom

Lila May

falls into her net. The Monroe woman is a frequenter of the levee and considered a hard character.

Annie Foley is a notorious pickpocket and all-round thief, whose crimes have passed the dozen notch. In the gallery her number is 610 and her specialty "robbery." She was born in Chicago, and notwithstanding a somewhat deep scar on the side of her face, is considered a fairly good-looking woman.

"Vic" Palmer, whose last daring

Mary Keating

robbery would have secured for her a sojourn lasting two years in the penitentiary had not a new trial been granted her owing to her age, is another of the pickpockets who for several years have infested the streets and boded no good to the welfare of a plethoric purse. "Vic" secured a new trial and through compassion her sentence was changed to six months in the county jail, where she is at present. Together with her sister Maggie she has earned and holds a prominent place in the gallery of rogues.

These women are making great preparations for the influx of greenhorns that the world's fair will bring. Of course they will be joined by their sisters from other cities of America and Europe. They will look after bail bonds and habeas corpus proceedings when their sisters get "pinched." The combination can command millions of dollars in bail bonds. Such is the "pull" of the average confidence woman.

TRUTH AT LAST.

The Identity of the "Man in the Iron Mask" Being Established.

It is said that an officer of the garrison of Nantes, Paris, has received to transcribe some dispatches of Louis XIV, and of Louvois in which there are statements upon the "Iron Mask."

These dispatches are but a succession of sentences interrupted and divided by dashes, and which have never been transcribed before. It is impossible to get the exact text as that has not been communicated, but it is to all accounts of great interest, and throws much light upon the obscure points of the campaigns of Piedmont in 1691 and 1692.

It says that Gen. de Bulonde, having raised the siege of Coni without necessity and against the orders of Catinat, and in this manner compromised the success of the campaign, was imprisoned in the castle at Pignerol, and the dispatches which ordered his arrest contained also an order to allow him the liberty to walk on the ramparts during the day with a mask.

Gen. de Bulonde was the man of the iron mask, and all explains itself. This general had betrayed his country. Louis XIV, for motives unknown, did not want to have him executed. He had him imprisoned and accorded him his life, on the condition that no person ever again see his face. The sadness and silence of the prisoner, upon which point all authors agree, was probably caused by repentance.

The Man in the Iron Mask—Masque de Fer—was a state prisoner who went by the name of L'Estang. In 1662 he was confined in the Chateau Pignerol. In 1686 he was removed to the Isle Saint Marguerite and in 1698 to the Bastile, where he died in 1703. He was a state prisoner more than forty years. He was buried under the name of Marchiale.

There have been scores of hypotheses concerning his identity. Voltaire said he was a twin brother of the king. Some think that he was Count de [illegible] son of Louis [illegible] was [illegible] of [illegible]

IN DUTCH HOUSES.

THE WAR WHICH A PEASANT WOMAN MAKES AGAINST DUST.

Interesting Study of a "Dutch Interior." How Laundry Work Is Done in Holland—Servants—A Strange Custom. Food and Cooking.

Had Lady Macbeth lived in Holland, that "damned spot" would have been out in five minutes. Nothing, not even it, could stand against a Dutch cleaning woman. She is irresistible. Look how she is armed. Glance at her weapons. Cloths and chamois, brooms and brushes, scrubbing brushes for the floors, hair brushes for the wainscots, feather brushes for the walls, tooth brushes for the corner, goose wings for the stoves, hens feathers for cleaning out the key holes, small sticks of wood for poking out any unhappy particle of dust which may have got into the cracks of the floor, white paste for the windows, red paste for the hearth stones, emery for the steel, and several other pastes and polishes as the occasion may require. These are the implements a Dutch peasant woman uses to clean out her cottage home. Dust is her natural enemy, she is born into the world to fight it, it is her mission, and she does no more than her mother and foremothers have done before her. No wonder that such a home training turns out an exceedingly high class of domestic servant; and yet, the Dutch mistress grumbles. Such is life.

A DUTCH INTERIOR.

A "Dutch interior," from a housekeeper's as well as an artistic point of view, is a most interesting study. It is one thing to know a country well by traveling through it, stopping at the best hotels, visiting all points of interest, taking careful notes by pen and brush of all worth recording, but it is quite another experience and fully as interesting to live among its people as one of themselves to see how they live and think, manage and eat; when they are conscious no looker on is by, and that they need not adapt themselves to any stranger's custom or fancy. This latter has been my good luck to experience, and I can truthfully say that there are no cleaner, more hospitable, kind hearted, domestic people in the world than the Dutch. I mention "cleaner" first because with them it comes first. What would become of a Dutch woman in a world where there is no dust is a subject for conjecture, and though I look upon my visit to Holland as part of the happiest time in my life, still my sincere prayer is that my Dutch friends may never visit me. I could never live up to their idea of cleanliness; the mental strain would be too great.

Washing is not done weekly as in America, but allowed to accumulate for weeks, sometimes even longer, an unhealthy custom; but in this as in many other respects the Dutch can hardly be called a clean nation, from a hygienic point of view. With them it is dust, dust, and again dust.

Often the underservants such as scullery maid, nurse maid, etc., do not sleep in the house. This gives more space and room for the family. These girls come in by the day, sleeping at their own homes at night. All servants in Holland dress extremely neatly, generally in lilac print dresses, white muslin caps, and large white aprons.

The same dress is worn in the street as in the house. If the weather is cold, a shawl is thrown over the shoulders. They do a good deal of the household shopping. It must be indeed delightful for the Dutch mistress to have Betsey Jane all ready dressed to run her little errands, instead of having to wait an hour or more while Betsey Jane curls her "bang" and bedecks herself with cheap finery. This a good arrangement for maid as well as mistress, for with the former it breaks the monotony of the daily round, gives her a little blow of fresh air, besides the opportunity of a slight flirtation with the butcher's boy or the green grocer's assistant.

A HOUSEHOLD CUSTOM.

A strange household custom in Holland is the custody of the "guest money" by the mistress. Each guest is, as in England, expected to fee the house servants. In Holland, this money is at once handed by the recipient to the lady of the house, who at certain seasons of the year such as Christmas and Easter, divides it equally among all her staff. Not a bad plan when one thinks it over, but rather startling at first to the guest.

And now for Dutch food. All food is good in Holland, all cooking excellent, beef and mutton even better than in England, vegetables in abundance. Butter is very good and plentiful and is used without stint, but—everything is spoiled by being served cold. Rich dishes which would be most appetizing were they eaten piping hot, become repulsive, indigestible masses of grease when served from a cold dish on a stone cold plate. During the whole of my stay in Holland I never once saw a dish covered or a plate heated.

Cakes are a specialty with the Dutch. Each town has one or more of its own, and it was interesting to trace the ancestry of many of our American ones. Waffles met me at a kermes at The Hague. The koekje, which is to be found all over Holland and is, in fact, the Dutch word for "little cake," is actually and etymologically the ancestor of the New England cookie. Doughnuts I met everywhere, though I cannot imagine from where they got their ugly name of "doughnut." In Holland they are called spritsen, and in French Canada, where they are a sort of national cake, they are known by the name of croquignoles, and sometimes beignet, which latter name is simply the French for fritter. I imagine that in one way and another we owe a good deal of our cooking to Holland.—J. E. Brooks in Good Housekeeping.

A Desperate Case.

Physician—Want treatment for yourself? You look hearty enough I'm sure.

Caller—This fatness which you notice is not natural, doctor. It came very rapidly.

"Your flesh looks all right. Don't worry over a little plumpness. Great Hot Springs and [illegible] bly beneficial. [illegible] things and"—

"I beard." [illegible] Omaha World.

"Great Galenic! [illegible] and you [illegible]

Newspaper [illegible] iron [illegible] would [illegible] across the ocean without [illegible]

There are certain things that virtue won't [illegible] with; ingratitude is one of them.—Uncle [illegible]