

A GOOD WOMAN.

Busy at her work all day,
Never asks a cent of pay,
Thinks it ought to be that way;
Thank the Lord for Susan!

Singin', when she want to sing,
Like the robins in the spring;
Scoldin' some, like everything;
Thank the Lord for Susan!

Always ready, day or night;
Always willin'—she's a sight,
When it comes to doin' right;
Thank the Lord for Susan!

Me and seven children's what
She looks after, well or not,
And she's "Mother" to the lot;
Thank the Lord for Susan!

Goes to church on Sundays, too,
'Long with all she's got to do;
It's her that's goin' to pull me through;
Thank the Lord for Susan!

In her hair is streaks of gray,
And the crows' feet's come to stay;
Er: I like her best that way;
Thank the Lord for Susan!

Made of consecrated clay,
She gits better every day,
Thank the Lord for Susan!
W. S. LAMPTON.

A STRANGE COURTSHIP.

The day was closing in and the girl at the window could no longer see to read. She looked, instead, into the neighboring garden, bounded by low hedges and wind-bowed firs sharply outlined against a glowing crimson sky. And on the same background the small head made a charming salinette; the rounded cheeks and dainty pointed chin, the low straight brow and little self-willed nose, and above all the soft halo of fluffy hair. The thin, rasping voice of a mother roused the girl from the thoughts which had saddened her large dark eyes. A list of domestic cares was enumerated, and then the girl's mother approached the window and endeavored to claim the fugitive attention of her daughter by subjects nearer home.

"Maisie," she began, hesitatingly, "I want to speak to you again about—" (the girl knew the particular tone of voice, and broke in quickly with: "Oh! mother, please not that!") "My dear girl, it's positively ridiculous the way you always interrupt and refuse to listen to reason," and, with a whine, "It makes my position exceedingly awkward and unpleasant. What am I to do with you? Do you realize your age, Maisie? Nearly 24. Why, your sisters were all married before they were your age, and Connie had two children."

"At present," the mother went on, "I am besieged on all sides by men who wish to marry you, for you are a pretty girl, Maisie—prettier than any of your sisters, and more like your dear grandmother, who was quite a belle in her time—but in a few years nobody will look at you, your chances of happiness and of making a good match will be over forever. Percival Sutton—(Ah! I knew that was coming," sighed the girl)—"said he would come to tea this evening, and he is very anxious to speak to you. To-night you really must give him his answer, and I can only say that if you send him away with a refusal I will take no more trouble about you. He is the best match in the county; young, rich, intelligent, heir to a baronetcy—and remember, none of your sisters are titled—indeed, you cannot do better."

After a pause she went on, "I want to know what stands in your way of doing as the others had sense enough to do—of setting my mind at rest about you, and of taking up a position in life as the wife of a good man."

"You mean of a rich man!" the girl said languidly, folding her hands, and again turning her eyes to the garden.

A tall man, with bowed head and hands clasped behind him, was walking restlessly over the little lawn, a few inches of freshly fallen snow deadening the sound of his quick footsteps, and the girl watched with unconscious fascination the dark shadowy prints left in the flat whiteness. The tall stranger, with the grave face and athletic, though now stooping form, had never shown the slightest desire to make friends; indeed, had seemed determined to avoid any chance or risk of doing so. Years ago, when the girl's mother had called upon the lonely newcomer, she had found him at home, and he only acknowledged the visit by a polite note of thanks explaining that he never made or received calls, and lived a life of study and unbroken solitude. To-night, as her mother talked, and the girl's attention wandered to the growing number of blue-gray footprints in the snow, an unusual circumstance arrested her thoughts and drew her still farther from the sordid and wearisome conversation. A servant came out of the house and handed to the man an orange-colored envelope, which he did not open till he was again alone. Then he disappeared.

The girl returned to consciousness with a slight start, and became dimly aware of a question in her mother's face and voice. She risked, at random, the first answer that occurred to her: "Oh, yes, if you like, mother!" The reply was evidently appropriate. A smile diffused the hard, weary features of the elder woman; the very silk of her gown seemed to squeak sudden approval.

"My dear good child, this is sweet of you! That poor young man will be so happy!" Whereupon the dear good child was enveloped in a black silk embrace and covered with impulsive kisses.

"And you will tell him so yourself, dearie; or shall I see him alone first?"

I expect you will both feel a little shy and constrained."

"I should like you to see him by yourself, mother," said the girl, rising and wondering with complete disinterest what would be the outcome of her mental aberration and wandering response.

"And I may tell him—" said the mother, eagerly.

"Anything you like," her daughter answered as she disappeared.

The servant entered with a tea tray, made up the fire, and lowered the blinds. The girl passed swiftly through the hall, wrapping a soft gray cloak about her as she went, and then, opening a side door and closing it quietly behind her, she slipped out into the snow-covered garden. In the low hedge which divided it from the neighboring patch there was a broken space large enough to squeeze through, and a moment later she was skimming across the very lawn where she had just seen the owner's footsteps multiplying in the snow. As she had expected, he had left his garden door open, and through this she made her way into the hall, and thence into the only room from which as yet a light emerged. A cozy fire and red-shaded lamp showed her a charming study, lined from floor to ceiling with books, and in a deep arm-chair before the fire she beheld her three years' neighbor, the owner of this delightful little sanctuary.

On the threshold she stood still with astonishment. From what she had seen of his face she had not thought him remarkable in appearance—this man was without doubt singularly handsome. She had believed the bowed form belonged to a man of 50 at least, whereas this man could not have been more, and was probably less than 35. A vague sense of vexation filled her, and she wished she had not yielded to the ridiculous impulse which had brought her hither. Then, in a moment, a revulsion of feeling made her glad, with a great throb of gladness, that she had obeyed the dictates of her folly. He looked up from the fire, gazed at her abstractedly for half a second, and when he spoke his voice showed no surprise.

"Come in and shut the door," was his greeting; "I have been wanting you."

"You are alone, as usual?" she asked, drawing nearer.

"I am always alone. Why in the world did you come?"

"You had a telegram just now in the garden," she explained; "I feared it might be bad news."

He gave a little hard, mirthless laugh. "Bad news has long ceased to be possible in my life," he said coldly. "Was that why you came?"

"Yes."

"Reason enough to keep most people away," he remarked dryly. They looked at each other and were silent. At last she asked: "Why do you walk round and round your lawn every evening?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Force of habit, I suppose; it is the way I think."

Then, hastily changing the subject, he inquired: "What will your mother say when you tell her where you have been?"

"I don't think it will occur to her to ask. Her thoughts are taken up at the present moment"—she glanced at the clock—"in accepting an offer of marriage on my behalf. She is an admirable woman; I am her sixth daughter, and when she shall have disposed of me we shall have all been married before the age of 24."

The girl was gazing at him steadily and without flinching; vaguely she found herself wondering if there had ever been a time in her life when she had not known him—when, in fact, this stranger had not been her first and greatest thought, the supreme interest which completely filled the emptiness of her world. So had love come to her unthought, and as yet she knew it not by that name. When she spoke her voice was low and appealing:

"Well, it can matter little how one works out one's destiny if in the end all will infallibly turn out well. For instance, I shall marry this man of my mother's choice, and perhaps for a few years we shall be miserable together; but at last death will free one of us, and then life's object will become clear and I will view it with the impartiality of my last hour, from the standpoint of age, experience or resignation, as a charming picture in a circular frame, and shall smile to see how well the colors blended." She laughed hopefully.

"Poor little girl!" he muttered, rising, and, leaning against the mantelpiece, he looked down at her with yearning, dreamy eyes. "Shall I tell you the riddle of my life?" he asked. She assented.

"Ten years ago I married the girl my father chose for me—an heiress, the only child of rich and indulgent parents. We did not love each other—a punishment which I doubtless deserved. Less than a year after our marriage I first noticed a strange expression in my wife's face, which day by day became more apparent, and then she began to talk strangely and say senseless things. Vainly I strove to fight the fear which was fast growing to certainty, till at last the violence of a mad woman left me in doubt no longer as to the terrible thing which had come upon me. I discovered then that her grandmother had died in an asylum, and that a brother, whose very existence had been hidden from me, had shot himself while temporarily insane. I won't describe to you the horror of the next few months, when the best brain doctors in London pronounced her case hopelessly incurable, and when I had done all I could to restore the balance of her disordered mind, without avail. I did not want to send the poor thing away; but the matter

was taken out of my hands. When I was recovering from a knife wound in my left temple—you see I am destined to carry a reminder of her to my grave—the doctors insisted on removing her to an asylum, and there I have been obliged to leave her ever since."

The girl had drawn nearer to him; his story had been a shock to her, but her thoughts were not of herself. "How dreadful!" she said, "and how lonely you must often be. Why have you never let me know you all these years?"

"I—I dared not!"—he turned away. He did not see the glory of love and suffering that shone in her soft dark eyes. Maybe he heard both in her voice, for there stole into his eyes the light of happiness.

"It was unkind of you," she said; "I might have been better than nothing."

She crept close to him, and shyly put her hands in one of his; he bent over them, holding them to his brow. "Little girl, you don't understand," he said softly. "Better than nothing!—it was just because you were better than everything that I could not say to you 'Come!' Every day since I first came here I think I would have given my soul to see you come in at that door as you did to-night. And so the years passed. I was often lonely, but it satisfied me to know that you were near. It amused me to wonder what we should say to each other if ever we met."

"Yet," said the girl, "I wonder that you can hold such happy theories about life! Do you really believe that your riddle will be solved?"

"I think," he answered gravely, "it was solved by the telegram you saw me open in the garden; it brought me the news of my poor wife's death—and you came to save me from the horror of my thoughts."

The girl would have drawn away her hands, but he detained them; she swayed a little, and he supported her with his arm. "I must go back," she said faintly. He folded her cloak about her tenderly. "I am going to take you home," he said.

—Max Hamilton, in St. James Budget.

Habits of Snakes.

An eminent writer on birds and reptiles declares that the notion frequently entertained that snakes fascinate their prey is utterly exploded. It would be somewhat interesting if this gentleman would tell us what power it is that snakes exert over birds which draws them against their will within easy distance of the reptile's jaws. The writer of this paragraph has seen birds fluttering in the air above the heads of snakes, apparently unable to resist the influence that attracted them. Whether it be fascination or some other force, it unquestionably existed, although every one may not have observed it. Snakes never bite. To bite would be impossible, from the formation of their jaws. They strike from above, fastening their fangs into their prey, after which they dispatch it, ordinarily by swallowing. Many varieties of snakes have the power to conceal their young in their mouths. The tiny snakes play about the mother's head, and upon the slightest alarm she opens her mouth, and they immediately vanish, reappearing when the cause for alarm seems to have been removed. Whether the mother snake has the faculty of communicating their danger to them is not known; in all probability she has. There are certain fish that open their mouths and engulf their small brood when danger threatens. The lover of nature finds endless opportunity for interesting research in the study of every form of life.—New York Ledger.

The Sole Survivor.

Your true sailor is a prosaic animal; he tells no varnished story, and the most pathetic narratives of casualties and life-loss at sea are those which are never written. Some years ago the captain of a British vessel described in mid-ocean a bark, dismasted and apparently abandoned. He did as 99 per cent. of British officers would, lowered a boat and proceeded to investigate. Arrived at the bark, he found it difficult to approach on account of the tangle of broken spars and rigging which drifted alongside. On the deck there was not the slightest sign of human occupancy. The boats had gone, the wheel was smashed, and the deck house carried away flush with the deck. In the forecabin, however, sick in his bunk, was an English sailor, who told an almost an incredible tale. In effect it was that a week previous all hands were summoned on deck to take in sail, and so prepare for an approaching squall. The sailor was too sick for this service, so kept his berth. And it was well he did, for of all the company on deck, not a single man survived. A huge sea came along, swept the bark from bow to stern, and carried overboard every living soul, except the sick Englishman.—London Syren.

Slave Markets in Finland.

A regular slave mart still exists in many country districts of Finland. Once a year such paupers, lunatics and aged people of each parish as cannot support themselves are put up at public auction and consigned to those farmers or farmers who will board them at the lowest price offered by the parish authorities. The helpless creatures are made to work as much as possible by their owner, who have the right to chastise them.

Anacosta, Mont. is getting ready to defy the rivalry of the world in its public fountain, with a perpendicular jet three inches in diameter and 220 feet high.

A new German church has been completed in Jerusalem at a cost of \$200,000.

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

ITEMS OF INTEREST ON AGRICULTURAL TOPICS.

Mulching Potatoes—A Window Fernery—To Make Potpourri—Keep Only Good Cows—To Destroy Cutworms—Etc., Etc.

MULCHING POTATOES.

Good results with potatoes have been secured by mulching between the rows with straw as a protection during dry seasons and for keeping down weeds. The mulching with straw has long been known, and has its advocates, but one objection is that the straw serves as a harboring place for insects.

A WINDOW FERNERY.

For a window fernery nothing is prettier than a merchant's show case. One can often find them at second hand stores. Paint them a dark shade of green, and then put in your plants, ferns and mosses, and as the box is glass-enclosed the temperature is always warm and moist. These cases are of any size—about three feet long and half as wide is the most convenient size. Dwarf palms may be planted, and so may orange or lemon seeds and the "Wandering Jew," as well as ferns of all descriptions.

TO MAKE POTPOURRI.

Potpourri should be made by gardeners during the season of outdoor flowers. Pick the most fragrant flowers, pick the flowers apart, placing the latter where the sun can shine upon them. Let the petals thus continue to dry in the sun several days. Each flower may be made into potpourri by itself or the different flowers may be mixed in any variety and proportion that pleases the maker. Flowers which have little or no scent should be left out. When the flowers are well dried, sprinkle them with table salt. Do not omit this, as it is important. The right proportion is about two ounces. If also two ounces of powderedorris root are added and well mixed in with the dried petals, the fragrance and permanence are improved. Now the potpourri is ready to put in the jars that are sold for that purpose.—Boston Beacon.

KEEP ONLY GOOD COWS.

Make it a rule in your herd that no cow can stay in it unless she can make 4,000 pounds of milk a year and milk good enough to make over 200 pounds of butter. Find this out with a pair of scales costing twenty-five cents and a Babcock machine costing five dollars. These two little machines will save you more money than a miserly disposition. They will put you on an intelligent business basis and make a first-class merchant dairyman of you. Get one of the boys to start this method of testing the cows and see how interested he will become in it. This is the only way to make a thoroughbred dairyman of him and teach him how to make money with cows.

TO DESTROY CUTWORMS.

The best remedy against cutworms that attack cabbage, onions, tomatoes and similar plants soon after they are set out, is to drop about a tablespoonful of poison mash in the vicinity, but not in the exact place where the plant will be set. If this is done three to five days before the plants are set out, the worms will be attracted to the bait, will eat it and will be killed. The best bait seems to be wheat bran, say two quarts cheap molasses, and two pounds of paris green. Mix the bran and poison together thoroughly with a dry tray. Then add the molasses, previously diluted with a gallon of warm water, adding enough water to make a dough that can be handled easily without running. This plan has been very successfully used by a large number of farmers and is especially recommended by the Maryland station (Bulletin 55). It is inexpensive and does the business. Where cutworms are frequent there will often be from four to eight worms dead about each hill of bait. There are other methods of applying the poison, but this seems to be the most effective and farmers and gardeners who have tried it endorse it as the most practical scheme yet devised for dealing with the cutworm pest.

UNPLOWED HEADLANDS.

We think the practice of leaving a headland unplowed at the end of the furrow, instead of running as close to the fence as possible, is growing among farmers. And yet we are not sure that it is a good one. We remember seeing in boyhood unplowed headlands for horses to run on in cultivating in the great nurseries near Rochester, N. Y. It is probably from the nurserymen that the practice has sprung. But they have a reason for it, as the young grained stock, if tramped on by a horse, is ruined, and a single tree thus lost makes a vacant place in the row. But the farmer can better afford to lose an occasional hill of corn, tramped out when cultivating, than to waste a width of seven to ten feet used only as a headland. Besides, with the farmer the hood crop only occupies the ground one year, followed next spring by either oats or barley. Neither of these do well on sod ground, and so there is more than enough loss the second year to make up what may have been gained the first.—American Cultivator.

TREATMENT OF SWAMPY LAND.

A. W. B. has a piece of meadow land that cannot be plowed except during a dry season. Two years ago he plowed it and seeded to oats. Last year he planted to corn and lost the crop. He wants to know how to treat the land. As far as my experience goes nothing but a grass crop should be attempted

on this kind of land. Frequently the finest crop of corn can be raised, but when it comes to the question of curing in the shock the result is, as a rule, a failure on account of the surface moisture which is always present and which will mount the inner spongy and fibrous substance even to the grain rendering proper drying impossible. The oat crop in a similar way would fall because of the too rapid succulent growth, and before the crop was ready for fodder or grain much of it would be flat and worthless.

Seed to grass in August. In the meantime get quite an accumulation of manure, together with a good admixture of sand. This will improve both the physical and mechanical condition when applied to the surface. Plow at the most favorable time, which will be when it is dry. Apply what sandy manure can be afforded and harrow down well as often as possible until it is time to seed. Sow half a bushel of timothy, ten pounds of small red clover, and five pounds of alsike to the acre, bush and roll. It must be remembered that this kind of land, unless drained, will gradually revert to the production of the wild grasses. It must then be newly seeded. If A. W. B. has other land more favorably located for cultivation it would pay better to let this wet land alone until it can be worked into a favorable condition. Underdraining is the only treatment which will get the land into condition to produce annual crops.—A. A. Southwick, in New England Homestead.

NEW SWARMS.

It is considered by the apiarist to be quite an advantage to the new swarm to furnish them with a frame of brood taken from another colony. In doing this it is best to select one having young brood just hatching from the egg, and not so far advanced to nearing maturity, or hatching out of the young bees. In thus removing a comb from a colony, the bees adhering to it should be carefully removed that none be taken to the new swarm if for no other reason than to be sure that the queen is not taken.

Swarms frequently return to their parent hive after issuing, which is usually due to the fact that the queen failed to accompany them, and when a frame of brood is thus given them, they in most cases will remain, and rear a queen of their own from this brood. Owing to circumstances it may not be the best policy to thus retain them when their own queen fails to come with them, but allow them to return, and the next attempt they make to swarm, the queen may come with them, which would be better than to detain them in raising a queen from brood; this depends upon circumstances. If everything in the parent colony is regular, except the failure of the queen to come with the swarm, it would be best to allow them to return, but as yet nothing but a partial success has been attained. To prevent swarms leaving, many practice clipping the queen's wings, which disables her from flying and prevents the swarms from leaving, but it does not prevent them from issuing from the hives, and frequently returning to the wrong hives, together with the loss of many of the queens, and in this way give all manner of trouble in the apiary. If we wish to increase our bees in the old fashioned way, (and it is as good as any) it is best to allow them to swarm without any hindrance, and be on the ground to take care of them.—Farm, Field and Farmhouse.

DON'T SELL THE HEIFER CALVES.

If one wishes to improve his dairy herd, as every dairyman and farmer is supposed to do, he should by no means trust to purchasing cows to accomplish his purpose, for unless an exceptionally good judge of milk cows the bargain may not prove satisfactory. Far better is it to purchase a first-class dairy sire to head the herd, then grade up, reserving the heifers of the best cows, judiciously culling out from year to year, and retaining only such as prove their ability to show a good profit in milk, cheese or butter over the cost of keeping them.

Every dairyman, and even the farmer with but few cows, should have a Babcock test with which to ascertain the exact results of each cow's performance during the year. These machines are now to be had at very reasonable rates, and a single test of a herd will oftentimes repay the necessary outlay by exposing some robber cow which is not paying her board. With the Babcock test and a scale for weighing the milk, a very close estimate may be obtained of the exact amount of butter made from time to time. When the heifers come in milk this will enable one to see just what they are doing, and furnish a way to tell which ones to retain and which to dispose of.

With such a sire as should head the dairy herd the greater proportion of these heifers will be better than their dams. In the course of a few years one will by such a system of breeding have as fine a herd of dairy cows for all practical purposes as money can buy, with a total cash outlay of only the first cost of the bull. By following the line of breeding prescribed for only eight years, the owner of one herd of common native cows has raised the average butter yield from 200 pounds a year to over 300 pounds.

Select a sire with strongly inherited prepotency and good breeding back of him, and better cows can be raised than can be bought for twice the money. The man who has cows to sell does not offer his best ones, as a rule, but reserves those for his own use. If the purchaser succeeds in getting these he pays a good round price for them. Breed your own instead of buying, unless to introduce new blood as a foundation. To buy one or more good

ocws is advisable to begin with, but to the average dairyman, who is now depending upon purchases to keep up his herd number as old cows drop out, it is best to raise your best heifer calves, then you will be sure of having good cows at a nominal price—that is, the cost of growing them. Don't trust to buying what some one else wants to get rid of.—New York Tribune.

MONEY IN MANILA.

You Can't Pay as You Go, Because the Coin is too Cumbersome.

In Manila, in our Philippines, no one ever pays for anything he buys at the time he buys it, for the thin white suits that are everywhere worn are not made for transporting coin. Banknotes are practically out of circulation, and heavy Mexican dollars stand at the head of a motley family of fifty-cent pieces, Spanish pesetas and huge coppers, to give weight rather than value to the currency system. If you draw the first prize in the monthly lottery run for the benefit of the government, your \$100,000 is all paid to you in silver "cartwheels" or subsidiary coins, and you really feel that luck is after all something tangible when it takes a heavy dray or two to haul the results of your winnings from the government office to the bank.

A dollar is about all the coin that a properly clothed resident of Manila can carry about with him, and as it generally turns out, he doesn't need more, for the shopkeepers, tailors and bootmakers have all been educated to recognize the famous "chit system," a necessary evil that springs out of certain monetary and climatic conditions, and are always ready to accept the small bit of paper on which—over your name—you write an L. O. U. for the amount of your purchase.

If the cook wants a new stove, or the coachman a jar of "milk" molasses to sweeten up the feed for the horses, or if the gardener wants a lawn mower which can only be bought at the English drug store, or the office boy a new rope for the punkah, write out a "chit" for each of them, and that's the last you hear from the transaction until the first of the next month. But scarcely has that day come before all your creditors send in their collectors to cash these carelessly written "chits" and then your office is changed into a money changer's. Armed with a big canvas bag of dollars, you pay out for first one and then another all day long; and to see your callers bite the silver in the effort to discover lead, or drop a dozen pieces on the hard floor to verify the ring, is not to feel complimented by their opinion of your integrity.

About the only people who will not trust you are car conductors and the cab drivers; but as car fares rarely amount to over three coppers, and cab charges to a "peseta," it is easy enough to satisfy them with prompt cash.

A Horse Died of Grief.

"Speaking of the emotional life of a horse," said an old trainer, who had been listening to a story about an animal's death that was directly traced to grief, "I recall one remarkable instance of sorrow shown by a horse belonging to a circus with which I was traveling three years ago. We were performing in the little town of Unionville, Pa., when one of the trick horses fell and sprained one of its legs so badly that as could not travel. He was taken to a livery stable and put in a box stall, the leg was bandaged and he was made as comfortable as possible.

"He ate his food and was apparently content until about midnight, when the circus began moving out of town. Then he became restless and tramped and whinnied. As the caravans moved past the stable he seemed to realize that he was being deserted, and his anxiety and distress became pitiful. He would stand with his ears pricked in an attitude of intense listening and then as his ears caught the sounds of the retiring wagons he would rush as best he could with his injured leg from one side of the stall to the other, pushing at the door with his nose and making every effort to escape. The stableman, who was a stranger to him, tried to soothe him, but to no purpose. He would not be comforted.

"Long after all sounds of the circus had ceased, his agitation continued. The sweat poured from him, and he quivered in every part of the body. Finally the stableman went to his employer's house, woke him up and told him he believed his horse would die if some of the circus horses were not brought back to keep him company. At about daylight the proprietor of the stable mounted a horse and rode after the circus. He overtook us ten or twelve miles away, and, as I had charge of all the horses and was much attached to the injured animal, I returned with him. When we reached the stall, the horse was dead.

"The stableman said that he remained for nearly an hour perfectly still and with every sense apparently straitened to the utmost tension, and then, without making a sound, fell and died with scarcely a struggle. The veterinarian who was called remarked after the circumstances were told him, that unquestionably the horse died of grief."—Washington Star.

Iceland's Bottle Post.

The "bottle post" is an old institution on the south coast of Iceland. Letters are put into corked bottles which are wafted by the winds to the opposite coast. They also contain a cigar or other trifles to induce the finder to deliver the letters as addressed.

Upwards of 11,000 school children of Roubaix, France, receive tree food and clothing at the expense of the town.

Natal's wool production decreased in 1897 20 per cent.