

THE VILLAGE SUGARSMITH.

Under a spreading maple tree
The sugarmaker stands,
A tired-looking man is he,
With large and grimy hands,
For he tends a grove that covers
quite
Four acres of his lands.

His hair and beard are all untrimmed,
His face is like the tan,
His brow is wet with dew and sweat,
He eats when'er he can;
And his pails he watches like a hawk,
For he trusts not boy or man.

Day in, day out, the season through,
You can hear him puff and blow,
You can see him tote his heavy pails
With both hands, to and fro,
Like a boy who waters the elephant
When he wants to see a show.

And children coming home from school
Look wistfully through the fence,
And hang around that sugar camp
'Till they are driven thence,
For they thirst to swig the maple juice
With a longing most intense.

Tolling, boiling, sugaring,
On through the week he goes,
Each evening sees a task begin
That morning doesn't close,
He grabs his buckets and prepares
For one more day's woes.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my old-time
friend!
The world cannot gainsay
That your big iron pot turns out
Straight goods, though, well-a-day!
'Tis precious little from your pot
That ever comes our way.

HAUNTED BY A TELEGRAPH MESSAGE

Dick Ramsey and I had gone West to make our fortunes. What that means none but an Eastern boy who has tried it can tell.

We roughed it together, sometimes faring well when we happened to fall into the camp of a hospitable Westerner, but more often tramping it from village to village looking for the work which was never found and wondering when we should strike our "streak" of luck.

Finally we separated, Dick to take the position of station agent at Lakeville, a new settlement, I to go to Riverdale, ten miles beyond, to hold a similar position. We could talk by wire, but we found that further communication would be impossible, for we were well tied down, and, after our separation, did not see each other again.

Dick was a gentle sort of fellow, one of those dreamers who never get on in a worldly way, but the dearest companion imaginable. I missed him terribly for a while, but his occasional talk at the wire told me he was alive and well. One afternoon there came a frantic call at the wire, and I hurried to the instrument to hear Dick tapping off the words that the express train had been delayed and to hold the "runaway" due at the station ten minutes later, until I heard from him. Directly after the message came the line "Express train in sight. Something wrong. Stand by." I waited a full minute, then came Dick's familiar tap-tap: "Express is being run by strange hands. They have stopped at this station. Send relief."

There was a second's silence; then, before I could flash the alarm along the line, the tapping began again. It ran: "Everything all right. Good-bye."

I signaled for him to repeat the message, and again came the words: "Everything all right. Good-bye."

I held the instrument in my hand and debated with myself upon my course of conduct. I did not want to needlessly send the alarm along the line. On the other hand, why had Dick sent his first message? I touched the instrument and asked: "Is everything all right, Dick?" And the answer came back, "Everything is all right."

It did not seem at all like Dick's touch, but I laid it to nervousness and quieted my fears while I waited for the "runaway."

I recalled that Dick had told me over the wire the previous evening that the "runaway" would have a large sum of money aboard, which it was to transfer to the express at his station.

When the "runaway" came up I notified the engineer that the express was waiting for him at Lakeville, and I also casually mentioned that the alarm had come from there; but that afterward I had received a message that all was well.

He seemed disturbed, and advised me to repeat the story to the United States Marshal aboard, which I did, with the result that the train pulled out of the station prepared for emergencies, though neither they nor I thought anything of the hasty message that had been flashed to me.

Ten minutes later the message came over the wires from Lakeville: "Found train in charge of highwaymen. Dick Ramsey murdered at instrument. Object was to rob the 'runaway,' but we overpowered them after a desperate struggle. Notify the stations along the line to send relief."

This, in brief, was the story of the death of Dick Ramsey, and after I had seen him laid away in the graveyard at Lakeville I packed up my goods and journeyed further on, for I could not

remain so near the scene of my old friend's death.

Well, strange things happen, and after I had found a position with the same company fifty miles away I was assigned back to Lakeville.

I found the village grown into a settlement of very fair size and the simple little station replaced by a very pretentious one, while the humble little churchyard, where they had buried poor Dick Ramsey was gay with flowering shrubs, and spires of marble lifted themselves here and there among the trees. Dick's grave was still marked by the rude cross I had placed over it.

Well, in the duties of my new position I am afraid I forgot Dick, and for weeks at a time I never thought of the mound behind the church, and the poor fellow who had come with me from home and whose joys and sorrows had been mine for so long.

In Dick's place at the instrument there sat an honest little chap and assisting him was another lad, for the station at Lakeville now boasted half a dozen employees.

High above the station, on a bluff that commanded the finest view of the town, was the home of the president of the company, a man who had fought his way up and now boasted his millions.

The president was a tall, dark man with stern features, but a kind heart, and often I watched him with envy as he alighted from his private car and entered the handsome victoria which carried him behind his spanking black team up to his home on Lakeville heights.

Often the president did not go up to the city, and on these occasions he wired me on his private line, and I wired to the city for him.

One day, coming to sit at the instrument, there came a call on the president's wire and responding I received this message: "Let me know if the road is clear."

A minute later I called up his private wire and tapped: "The road is clear."

"All right," came back the answer. It was a simple enough message, but it set my pulses throbbing. Mechanically I touched the button and repeated the message, "The road is clear," and immediately came back the words, "All right."

I sat at the instrument like a man in a dream and my thoughts were with Dick, who had sat at the same spot five years before and had touched that same instrument. What was there in that reply that so fascinated me? Or was it the anniversary of poor Dick's death that made me so fanciful?

That afternoon the president came down to the station on business. He must have seen me watching him, for he shifted his position uneasily and nervously handled the instrument. I may say that he was an expert operator and preferred telegraphing his messages to writing them.

As I watched him I remembered hearing the strange story of his rise. How from an operator on a distant road, he had suddenly become a stockholder, a director, and finally the president of the road; and how his wealth and holdings were known far and wide.

He seemed ill at ease that day, and I withdrew my eyes and busied myself elsewhere; but more than once he caught me looking at him.

Twice that day the president drove down to the station and slowly he drove home again as though he were disturbed about something. The third time he came it was almost dark, and I heard him send his coachman home, telling him that he would follow soon on foot.

For half an hour the president busied himself around the station, a most unusual thing for him, and when he finally took leave it was to walk hurriedly away in the direction of the churchyard, a journey which I often took myself.

Scarcely knowing what I was doing, I pulled my cap over my eyes and started after him. What excuse I would make if he turned and saw me I knew not. I only understood that some force was pulling me onward and that some force was taking me over the same road and in the very footsteps of President Greydon of the Lakeville and Laska Railway.

To my surprise he turned the corner as he reached the church, and plodding his way past it, opened the gate which led into the churchyard and slowly wended his way among the graves. Through the narrow paths we went, he the substance, I the shadow close after him.

When, horror of horrors, he stopped! And, my God, he bent over Dick Ramsey's grave. Lower and lower he sunk until he was upon his knees and his hands were spread out upon the sod. In the uncertain light of the rising moon I could see that he threw back his head and his face was drawn and deadly white, and that his lips were moving.

I must have stepped upon a twig, for a sound betrayed me. Springing to his feet, he turned and faced me, not ten feet away.

With a cry of rage, he sprang toward me. "So you followed me," he cried fiercely between his teeth; "you dogged my steps."

He was a powerful man, but in the struggle which followed I easily mastered him and had him plinked, white and panting. "Do not add another murder," I said, fiercely, "to that of Dick Ramsey."

"How did you know?" he whispered. "I recognized your hand upon the wire. I was the agent at the next station when you took Dick's place—you remember—five years ago—to-day?"

"Oh, God, yes!" he cried. "Shall I ever forget? When I had to come to

this cursed place to live I thought it might disappear after a while. But it grows stronger every day. I live with it, see it, hear it; that poor fellow—the time. Yet I had to do it or be killed. There was a gang of us. Oh, oh!" he cried, and, breaking down utterly, the proud president of the road buried his face in his hands.

It was a strange scene, we two there in the moonlight, the accuser and accused, he trembling, I revengeful.

"I tried to lead a better life," he continued, "and, on my gains, I succeeded well. But oh! the misery of these years. I thought to-night if I could see his grave and pray upon it I might be forgiven and have rest." His eyes sought the spot where poor Dick lay with crushed skull.

"What are you going to do?" I asked, after we had stood there in silence.

"Give myself up, now, I suppose," said he; "there is no other way."

The next day the whole country was ringing with the strange confession of President Greydon. He made a clean breast of it and was so manly and sincere in his repentance that nobody was sorry when his sentence was placed at a term of imprisonment instead of the death penalty which is summarily dealt out to criminals in the newest of the Western towns.—Columbus Dispatch.

MAKING ICE AT HOME.

How'd You Like to Be the Iceman and Have Women Treating You Thus?

It was time for the frozen pudding, and the frozen pudding didn't appear. The hostess talked on nervously, the guests seconded her efforts by brilliant sallies and elaborate unconcerns, the host, being only a man, transgressed every written and unwritten law of etiquette by asking a pertinent question.

"My dear," he inquired gently, "what is the matter with the next course?"

"Well, if you must know," answered his wife, with a flushed face and scarcely veiled asperity, "the ice hasn't quite finished freezing!"

The husband looked amazed and mystified. All the other men in the company followed suit. But the women rose one and all to the occasion nobly and trilled out merrily in chorus.

"Oh! Do you do it too?" they all cried.

"I've done it every winter for five years," a single voice separated itself from the others by exclaiming.

"I've done it for nine," a second voice proclaimed proudly.

"I never think of buying ice in cold weather," this from a third.

The men looked more mystified than ever.

"I don't want to seem too curious, ladies," spoke up the host meekly, after a moment or two, "but what have you all done for so long?"

"Made ice for ourselves," cried the women in chorus again.

A whole chapter of amusing stories and anecdotes followed, in the course of which the frozen pudding made its appearance, was eaten, followed by the dessert and coffee, and forgotten.

"The first time I thought of making ice," said the first speaker, "my ice book was just out, and I had only a solitary \$5 bill to last me nearly a week. I kept house on an allowance at that time, and my other supplies were very low also. It was a bitter cold morning, and as I waited for the iceman to come up the back stairs with his little lump of chilliness a brilliant idea occurred to me. I paid him cash for the portion of ice I took that day, and the same evening I went to work with an old tin biscuit box and a pail of water. I poured the water into the box and set it out on the fire escape.

Next morning it was frozen solidly, of course, and I didn't buy any ice that day or the next. In fact, I've never bought any since just as long as the thermometer registers freezing weather."

"I used an old wooden box, with heavy wrapping paper folded inside, double, to keep the water from leaking out of the corners of the box until it begins to freeze," said another woman.

"And I find an oval dish pan the best," explained another.

"And I," the woman who now expressed herself so in a voice fairly tremulous with pride, "I have had a tin box made on purpose, just the shape and size of my ice box. You haven't any idea how well it works. My iceman knows I get ice from some one besides himself, but he's never been able to find out where or how. Consequently he doesn't dare to laugh right out, as he would if he knew the truth."

"My iceman knows the truth, all right enough," laughed a merry looking woman at the other end of the table. "The fire escapes on our building look too funny for anything, all covered with boxes and pans and all sorts of contrivances for holding water these days. The iceman jokes us all about it, too, when we have to call him in, but it's no use. Everybody in our building got the economy streak in the worst form long ago, when first the talk of hard times began, and we've been doing our own freezing ever since."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Music From Electricity.

Some workmen were making changes in city electrical wires a short time ago and one of the wires accidentally struck the cornice of a store where musical instruments were sold. When the wire struck there was a report like the firing of a pistol and a flash of light was seen. Fire bit the instruments, including several music boxes, which took part in the confusion by beginning to play.

NEWS FOR THE FAIR SEX.

NOTES OF INTEREST ON NUMEROUS FEMININE TOPICS.

Pretty Pocketbooks—Deafness of the Princess of Wales—The New Butterfly Bracelet—Straws, Ribbons and Roses—Etc., Etc.

The new leather pocketbooks are loveliness personified. Crushed levant leather composes one exquisite style in violet, with amethyst stone in lock; new green with emerald in lock; another new tau with turquoise in lock, and new red with imitation ruby in lock, still others. These tints are soft and pretty in the extreme and are especially designed to match or harmoniously contrast with the new pastel tints in made in dress goods, so they will give the completing and tasteful touch to a handsome toilette.

Deafness of the Princess of Wales.

The Princess of Wales has for many years suffered, like her mother, the late Queen of Denmark, from a constitutional deafness, and it has long been a subject of surprise that her Royal Highness, in spite of this affliction, is able to enjoy social life so thoroughly.

Strangers to court life who have been entertained at Sandringham have been astonished to find how easy it was to converse with the Princess. She has studied the aural system now so much in vogue for the treatment of the deaf, and she has become such an expert lip-reader that the difficulties arising from her deafness are almost unperceived. The exquisite ease and charm of manner of the Princess further enable her to set strangers at ease who are called upon to converse with her.—Woman at Home.

The New Butterfly Bracelet.

The arm of the fashionable wearer will undoubtedly twinkle with one of the very new butterfly bracelets. Just a perfectly plain tight-fitting band of flexible gold it must be, clasping the arms above the elbow and set with a gold, jewel-besprinkled butterfly. The long, lovely body and large wings of the glorious insect are so poised that at every movement of the arm the gleaming pinions tremble, open and shut. Another equally curious and beautiful armband has a mere gold thread to fasten above the elbow. Across it is fixed a thin enameled lizard, which at a little distance appears to have climbed so high on the white, round member that gives it support. Not one of these new bracelets is clasped at the wrist or below the elbow.

Straws, Ribbons and Roses.

Some of the most attractive pastel combinations are carried out on coarse straws in ribbons and roses, the harmonies most favored being green, blue and mauve, two different shades of green, blue and lilac, mauve or pink; all the tints named being of an equally pale, low tone.

Preference is given to the greens over all others, for the straw, the shape proper being of sometimes one shade and the braids used to trim it of another. At the Maison James I was shown a charming selection of models built up after this fashion, also an admirable specimen of the Amazon style in mauve straw with rouleaux of the same on the brim, the trimming of which consists of ribbons of the same pale hue and of groups of short couteaux—white shaded off to blue.

A dainty little capote, the front of which shows a coronet made of bunches of cowslips in different shades of pastel green and mauve; a sort of rosetto of straw forms the back, to which is attached wide strings of very lappanous mousseline de soie, of a pale green tone, pleated down half their length. And, as representing the brighter side of the palette, a torse composed of ripe corn colored crinoline, the edge forming a sort of light turban decorated with a cluster of deep-hued pansies.—Millinery Trade Review.

Women Physicians in Russia.

Women physicians have established themselves all over Russia, and even their opponents must admit they have achieved a respected position. Part of them are employed by the Government, and since last year are entitled to a pension. They occupy positions as county physicians, school physicians, physicians for the poor and the municipal ambulance system, etc. Mrs. Dr. N. Schulz, in the St. Petersburg Institute for Experimental Medicine, is one of the foremost experts in bacteriology, and her lectures are well attended by physicians of both sexes. Dr. Lavroskaja, of the City Hospital, Obuchov, and a few other female physicians were last year with the expedition which went to Turkestan under the personal guidance of the Prince of Oldenburg to combat the pest. They all returned in good health, but their conduct shows a spirit of heroism worthy to be remembered. Dr. Pavloskaya has immortalized herself in another direction. At the right time and in the right manner she succeeded in interesting St. Petersburg society in the establishment of a sanitarium for consumptives, and through donations from private sources and the Imperial treasury the establishment in Taltai, near St. Petersburg, is in operation.

Dr. Schabanova has gained distinction for the erection of a sanitarium for children on the Baltic Sea coast.—German Medical Weekly.

Mother's Ingenuity.

Two mothers were talking about bringing up a daughter. The younger one asked, "What would you do with a very homely girl?"

"I would make her pretty," was the prompt reply. "Youth is the formative period, mentally and physically. It only depends on environment what shall be the result. I would, of course, accept inherited faults and try to crowd them out by acquired graces, placing before the child all the beautiful things I could buy—pictures, statuary, flowers, young animals, any thing which she could reflect the benefit of—in short, those things which we call classics."

"I should try to live in the country, or in pure air, and among beautiful vegetation. I should never mention beauty except to point it out, never to show her her own defects and make her self-conscious. She should have proper food, chiefly the vitalizing, color-making grains, fruits and vegetables, with plenty of salads and fresh milk. These can be so cooked that the most fanciful child will prefer them to rich sauces, spices and sweets."

"I should teach her to swim, both for the poise that it brings and for teaching her to love the water, and be perfectly fearless everywhere. The elements are friendly to those who understand them."

"A growing girl cannot breathe too much fresh air, and should have the benefit of an open fire, if only for the stored up sunshine which it throws out in winter. I should choose her companions. No woman who has reared her own children can fail to read the character of other people's. I should dress her so simply and daintily that her flesh tints and eyes would be in clear contrast. In fact, I would make her a child of nature with the aid of art."

"The responsibility of a whole life of joy or regret lies so heavily upon a mother that I cannot understand how any one can shirk or evade it. To develop the true and the beautiful as well as the good brings out every latent possibility. The ugly duckling can be made a swan if the mother works and wills."—New York Herald.

Wearing Earrings.

Whatever may be said of the return of the fashion, a good deal of unnecessary suffering must be inflicted by the method of piercing, says a physician. This small operation can be done quite painlessly. It is often performed carelessly and badly, and as it can only be done once, it seems worthwhile that your lady readers who contemplate the wearing of these ornaments should know the best way of preparing the ears for their reception.

Nothing looks worse than a badly pierced ear, and nothing is more irremediable.

The lobule of the ear may be rendered devoid of painful sensations by compressing it for about half a minute or so between two pieces of ice. This also constricts the blood vessels, so that the puncturing causes no bleeding.

Prior to the operation, the (clean) cork used, the piercing instrument (a sharp, new steel ear-pin is perhaps best), and the ear rings (plain gold rings should alone be used), must be boiled in water containing a pinch of soda to render them antiseptic. This is most necessary, and the non-healing of earring holes is due to neglect of this precaution. Be careful to pierce the lobule exactly in the centre, or a little above rather than below this point.

After compressing it between ice as mentioned, steady it against the cork—do not try to flatten or strain it over the cork—and then, having lubricated the needlepoint with clean salad oil, pierce the lobule until the needle enters the cork deeply, instantly afterwards inserting the ear ring.

Several times during the day the ear rings should be slightly rotated in their holes, that the same part of the ring should not stay too long in one position. It is therefore best to pierce the ears in the early morning.

The rings should not be removed, either during sleep or at any other time, for at least a month. These instructions may seem unnecessarily elaborate, but for the number of beautiful ears that have been more or less spoiled by their neglect.—Woman's Life.

Frills of Fashion.

Quills are now clasped with diamond buckles having very visible prongs.

The latest tulle hats have a garniture of crepe roses.

Skirts that are full or tucked on to the waistband have distinctly taken the place of the skin-fitting garments. Tiny bunches of fruit for the coiffure are being shown in lieu of the popular rose or bunch of violets.

The newest blouses are particularly smart; they are embroidered and enlivened with all sorts of complicated ornaments.

Ribbon embroidery on thin material, the ribbon gathered, is to be seen on many of the crowns and linings to the brims, and the treatment has also found acceptance on the materials employed for blouses.

A hair net which fastens at the back of the head with a fancy pin the size of a small button is a novelty which is supposed to keep the short locks in place.

Brimms are becoming more and more flexible, and no hat of a certain class

would be in a mode without ends falling at the back and fringed, and this falling drapery is certainly becoming.

Russian and Venetian guipure laces in heavy applique patterns, wrought on delicate net meshes, are much used by French tailors and modistes for trimming handsome cloth gowns in the soft pastel tints.

A profusion of buttons of various sizes is the rule on the French costume of the present season, while in hat pins miniatures and antique coin effects prevail.

The favorite way of making up handkerchief squares is in the form of a bolero. Special attention is given to the revers, in order that the fringe, which is a feature with most of the squares, may be seen to advantage.

The new ribbon lace fabric is likely to become a great favorite for shirt waists all through the summer season. These are made of ribbons and insertion running vertically in the bodice and horizontally in the sleeves. A soft belt of wider ribbon to match is knotted at the left side of the front.

To Europe on Thirty Dollars.

I was, in knowledge of worldly life, says W. J. Stillman in the Atlantic, scarcely less a child than I had been when, at the age of ten, I determined to go out into the world and make my own career, free from the obstacles I imagined to be preventing me from following my ideals. I've ever present feeling developed in me by the religious training of my mother, that an over-ruling Providence had made my life in keeping, made me quite oblivious of or indifferent to the chances of disaster, for the assurance of protection and leading to the best end left no place for apprehension. It was a mental phenomena, which I now look back on with a wonder which I think most sane people will share, that, at the age when most boys have become men, for I graduated at twenty, I went into a strange world like the children of the Children's Crusade, with an unflinching faith that I should be led and cared for by Providence as I had been by my parents. I had no apprehension, from the moment that one of the ship-owners who was in business relations with my elder brother offered me a free passage on one of his sailing ships to Liverpool, that I should not find a similar bridge back again; and with my thirty dollars changed into six sovereigns, and a little valise with only a change of clothes, I went on board the Garrick, a packet of the Black Ball line, sailing in the last days of December.

Another Spanish Excuse.

A belated war-story comes from Ponce, Puerto Rico, and is told by Lieutenant Juan Arato, of the Spanish Engineers.

"When the war broke out," said the Lieutenant, "we found that our supply of ammunition of all sorts was very low. Some was new and some old; some was black and some brown; some was old-fashioned and some was smokeless and mysterious. There was one lot of brown smokeless powder which was marked 'Use with care! Very powerful! Keep cool and dry!' and to it was attached a legend that it had burst a Krupp field gun.

"I determined to try it. I employed a small charge in a gun, and to my surprise it refused to go off. My gunners were very much disgusted, and one of them said: 'Bah, this is no good for war. I'll use it for cooking our supper.'"

"We all jumped as he threw a double handful into a small campfire. Judge of our feelings when we saw the fire go out. I afterward learned that powder of this sort deteriorates with age, and that long before this case was opened it was as harmless as wet sand."—Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post.

Australian Whaling.

In 1835, the heyday of the whaling trade, when the smoky glare of the whaleships' try-works lighted up the darkness of the ocean night, there were twenty-one vessels, of a total tonnage of 9,257 tons, registered in New South Wales, employed in the fishery. In the same year twenty-two vessels arrived in Sydney from the various grounds, their cargoes of whaleboats, sealskins and sperm and black oil valuing altogether at about \$750,000. Now the whaling trade in southern seas is represented by two or three small and poorly equipped ships from Hobart, though the whales—sperm, right and humpback—are again as plentiful as they were in the first years of the fishery. One of the present writers, less than three years ago, counted over 300 humpbacks pass to the northward in two days on the coast of New South Wales, while there were probably double that number of the swift and dangerous "fin-back" whales traveling with them.—The Fortnightly Review.

Not in Their Line.

The young married woman had been telephoning to the grocer's for an order of supplies. A girl had taken her order and had just said good-bye. Suddenly the young married woman remembered that she had a turkey for to-morrow's dinner and must have something with which to make the dressing.

"Hello," she called hurriedly.

Then a pleasant girl's voice answered "Hello."

"I want you to send up two loaves of stale bread," said the Y. M. W.

"Madam," answered the same pleasant voice, "we don't keep stale bread at the telephone exchange."—Detroit Free Press.

A Connecticut man is building an ark in anticipation of another flood.