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VANITY OF VANITIES.

"Vanity of Vanities," the world is full of sin, The pot of evil boiling all the time; The big man and the little man in breathless haste to win His eagle or his dollar or his dime; And yet though of this desert waste the winds of evil blow, There's many a cheerful glimmer shining out above the snow. A thousand traps and pitfalls lie about us every day, Temptations and delusions by the score; The nabob in his selfishness rolls by us on the way, The poor man often bangs his cottage door; And yet there's compensation. Every clumsy mortal whines, Who grasps a hornet by its sting or hedgehog by its spines. Amid the selfish thousands there are hundreds true and kind, With many noble features that redeem; The roughest ore has value if it be but well refined, And men are mostly better than they seem; If looking out for brambles you are sure to find their darts; Perhaps you'll be as lucky if you closely look for hearts. For after all is uttered, we but find that which we seek, The searcher after weaknesses will find; Go, listen, and you'll wonder at the kind words mortals speak, No benefits have a message for the blind; The world is but a mirror, and within our neighbor's face We see our soul reflected in its ugliness or grace. "Vanity of Vanities," the world is full of sin, But also full of sunshine and of flowers; The man who works for happiness its smile will surely win, The man who seeks shall find his sunny hours; So thrust the little barriers of its selfishness aside, And find the hidden blessings lying under all its pride; The unit is always somewhere, and the good old world is wide. —I. Edgar Jones, in the Current.

OLIVE'S ADVENTURE.

"But I don't believe any one would take the trouble to molest us!" said Mr. Jaynesford, genially, as he threw a fresh log, moss-fringed and odorous of the scented dead leaves, among which it had lain all the autumn time, upon the blazing fire. "In the first place, we've got nothing to steal—and in the second place, if we were all murdered, I can't see any particular good it would do anybody. So I calculate we may sleep quietly in our beds." "Yes—but, father," said Mrs. Jaynesford, with an anxious look (she was a modern Martha, cumbered with many cares, this angular, hard-working, yellow-faced farmer's wife); "I really think you ought to get an extra bolt on the back door, and I never did think a hook and staple was a safe thing for the little hall door. If there is a gang of burglars and murderers going through the country—"

silver, and Jotham keeps all his money in the county bank. Towser's all very well, but I've heard o' better dogs than he is, bein' settled by a dose of poison, and I'd like to know what good Jotham's loaded rifle's goin' to do us, arter he's had his throat cut from ear to ear in his sleep!" "Oh, Mrs. Jaynesford!" shuddered Olive, the brush falling from her nervous fingers; "I can't stay alone to-night—will you send Bessie in to sleep with me?" But in spite of little Bessie Jaynesford's peaceful breathing at her side, Olive could not go to sleep until midnight, and when at last a few snatches of capricious slumber visited her eyelids, it was embittered by frightful dreams of black crape-masked burglars standing at her bedside, and pistols presented close to her eyeballs. "Pshaw!" said Olive to herself next morning, as she viewed her pale face and swollen eyes. "I am a goose—and I'll be one no longer. What could any one gain by hurting a poor lame girl like me? I don't believe there are any burglars around—and if there should be, I don't believe they will come to Farmer Jaynesford's."

Custer's Confederate Friend.

The Seventh cavalry were sent to guard the engineers of the Northern Pacific while they surveyed the route to the Yellowstone. This party of citizens joined the command a few days out from Fort Rice. General Custer wrote me that he was lying on the buffalo robe in his tent, resting after the march, when he heard a voice outside asking the sentinel "which was General Custer's tent." The general called out: "Halloo, old fellow! I haven't heard that voice in thirteen years, but I know it. Come in and welcome!" General Rosser walked in, and such a reunion as we had! These two had been classmates and warm friends at West Point, and parted with sorrow when General Rosser went into the Southern army. Afterward they had fought each other in the Shenandoah valley time and time again. Both of them lay on the robe for hours talking over the campaign in Virginia. In the varying fortunes of war sometimes one had got possession of the wagon train belonging to the other. I knew of several occasions when they had captured each other's headquarters wagon, with their private luggage. If one drove the other back in retreat, before he went into camp he wrote a note addressing the other as "Dear friend," and saying, "You may have made me take a few steps this way to-day, but I'll be even with you to-morrow. Please accept my good wishes and this little gift." These notes and presents were left at the house of some Southern woman as they retreated out of the village. Once General Custer took all of his friend's luggage and found in it a new uniform coat of Confederate gray. He wrote a humorous letter that night thanking General Rosser for setting him up in so many new things, but audaciously asking him if he "would direct his tailor to make the coat tails of his next uniform a little shorter," as there was a difference in the height of the two men. General Custer captured his herd of cattle at one time, but he was so hotly pursued by General Rosser that he had dismounted, cut a whip, and drove them himself until they were secured. —Boots and Saddles, by Elizabeth B. Custer.

MAPLE SUGAR MAKERS.

THE SUGAR CAMP YEARS AGO AND AT PRESENT. Old And New Processes Described—Backwoods Fun in Former Times—Curious Things About Sap. A New York commission merchant said to a Times reporter: "The art of making maple sugar has greatly improved everywhere within the past few years. In the early days tapping a maple tree was simply the cutting in it with an axe, a foot and a half above the ground, a sloping notch three inches deep at the bottom, which was scooped out into a miniature trough. As the notch filled with sap it was ladled out. By this means of procuring the sap much of it was wasted, and then the sugar hole and the hollow piece of elder cane into use. It is not many years ago since any one walking through a sugar bush in the sap-running season could see the sap dripping through these elder tubes into rude troughs made by hollowing out with an axe a piece of log split in half, and holding three or four gallons. In the sap dead flies, bees, leaves, and twigs were always to be seen floating, and in the removal of these more or less sap was wasted. In the days of the elder and the wooden trough, the sap was carried to the old time boiling kettles, which were usually the ones used in the periodical soap-making. These were hung over fires built on the ground and thus the sap while boiling was exposed again to all kinds of foreign substances. The manner of hanging these kettles was peculiar, and I know of many old farmers who make sugar simply for their own household use who stick to the old crane and kettle still. In hanging a kettle a tall, slim tree would be selected and cut four or five feet from the ground. It was then trimmed of its branches and a hole bored through its butt end large enough to admit a strong wooden pin. This pin was then driven into the top of the stump, and the trunk of the tree could be swung around at will. The kettle was hung on this crane over the fire, and when it was necessary, was swung aside to make it convenient for further operations. The sap was carried in from the trees in pails, borne by yokes across the shoulders not only of rustic swains but maidens as well, for sugar making in the old days was a gala time and always looked forward to with joy by young and old, although it meant weeks of the hardest drudgery. "The sugar camp was the place for love-making and all kinds of backwoods fun. Then, more than under the present system, it was frequently necessary, when the sap was running free, to boil all night. The grove, lighted up by many fires and peopled with many flitting forms of merry girls and lusty farm lads, presented a picturesque scene. On such occasions the country fiddler added the charm of his presence, and every moment that could be snatched from attention to tree and kettle was spent in hilarious devotion to dances whose graceful figures have long since been forgotten. It was very important to keep a close watch on the boiling kettles, for the sap was liable to boil over. Sometimes, even by the most violent and persistent stirring of the seething sweetness, the watcher was not able to stay this inclination, and in such emergencies a piece of fat pork was always kept handy to throw into the rising sap. This would instantly allay the trouble in the kettle by breaking the rapidly forming bubbles by some action which I never quite understood. "It would not do to leave the sap long without stirring, for there was danger of scorching and certainty of its getting too thick. The work of stirring a large kettle could only be done by a strong person, and he required frequent relief. There was always some one of long experience in sugar making, generally a woman, who was the tester of a camp. She went from kettle to kettle, carrying a gourd dipper half full of sap or water. Dipping a spoonful of the boiling syrup from a kettle she threw it in the gourd and judged by its action whether it had reached the graining stage, or that approach to it when the fires should be lowered, if not extinguished. When all was ready the syrup was turned off and the sugar run into well-greased pans and cups, bowls and dishes of all shapes and sizes. "But a sugar camp nowadays, while it is a cheerful and hospitable place to visit, is vastly different from what it was in our grandfathers' days. There is no more boxing of trees, the elder stick has disappeared, and the wooden trough is never found in a well-regulated sugar bush. A small metal spile driven into a small sugar hole now conducts the sap into tightly covered tin buckets. There are no insects or dirt to be taken from the sap when it is carried to the evaporating pans, and none is wasted. The evaporating pan, which has taken the place of the old kettle, is a broad, shallow pan, built in an arched furnace, and sheltered by a close building. The sap flows in at one end of the pan and follows devious furrows or passages in the bottom of the pan. By the time it reaches the end of these the sugar has been deposited and the sap flows out at the lower end of the pan as maple syrup. When this cools it is placed in the pan again, after straining, and beaten eggs and milk added to it. The heat is gradually increased, and the eggs and milk thicken and collect the impurities, and all rise to the surface, when they are readily removed in a body. When this syrup runs off the process of 'sugaring off' is completed, and the sugar is simply placed in molds and is ready for market. "There are many curious things about sap. It will not run freely unless there are mingled conditions of heat, cold and light. Sap runs best with a still, dry, dense atmosphere, and when there is a north or west wind. A frozen soil,

LOVE SONG OF THE TOM-TIT.

[The most successful, and certainly the prettiest, song in the new comic opera, "The Mikado," is the love song of the tom-tit. It has already become popular, and its refrain has become a catch phrase. (The song runs) On a tree by a river a little tom-tit Sang "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!" And I said to him, "Dicky bird, why do you sit Singing 'Willow, titwillow, titwillow'?" "Is it weakness of intellect, birdy?" I cried, "Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?" With a shake of his poor little head, he replied: "Oh willow, titwillow, titwillow!" He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough, Singing "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!" And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow, Oh willow, titwillow, titwillow! He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave. Then he threw himself into the billowy wave, And an echo arose from the suicide's grave—"Oh willow, titwillow, titwillow!" Now I feel as sure as I'm sure that my name Isn't Willow, titwillow, titwillow, That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim "Oh willow, titwillow, titwillow!" And if you remain callous and obdurate, I Shall perish as he did, and you will know why. Though I probably shall not exclaim as I do, "Oh willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Bad habits—Worn-out garments. A railroad strike—A collision.—Ex. A roller-skater is known by his bumps. Sallie Ratus is the girl that takes the biscuit.—The Hatchet. The wife's pathway in life is generally a buy way.—Boston Post. When a stovepipe is out at the elbow the soot begins to play out. In Denmark the rooms in the hotel are all bald-headed—that is, they have no locks.—Siftings. Would it be just to say that all physicians partially get their living by pillage?—The Judge. According to the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, the last man will undoubtedly be a tailor.—Life. Often a cold shoulder pleases the recipient, especially if it happens to be a cold shoulder of lamb.—Waterloo Observer. The empress of Austria has a private circus. Many American ladies have them to on lodge nights.—Courier-Journal. A poetess sings, "I Have Found What Silence Is." Her friends, it is understood, are not so fortunate.—Boston Transcript. "More light" is the watchword of progress, but more of the opposite quality in a load of coal is what the people are beginning to demand.—Chicago Ledger. "What is the 'dollar of our daddies'?" asked a college paper. It is what the average undergraduate pays his wagers and anti-temperance subscriptions with.—Burlington Free Press. "What One Girl Did" is the title of a new story. She doubtless did the same as all other girls do—jump up on a table and frightened a poor little mouse to death.—New York Journal. A philosopher writes, "Man is the merriest species of the creation." Did the philosopher ever see a man when it was first broken to him that he was the father of twins? We trust not.—New York Graphic. "How Love is Made in Persia," is the title of a recent article. It is probably made there of the same compound parts as here, that is, millionaire's daughter one part, impecunious nobleman one part, desire for forty-nine parts, desire for wealth forty-nine parts. Mix.—Boston Post. "Six says she can't come down to-night; she has a severe headache. That's what she says; but Cholly don't give it away, she's 'yin' like a house afire. She hurt her bunion so tryin' to wear number two shoes on a number four foot, that she can't walk." was the way a Fourth street eight-year-old excused his sister when her beau called.—Brooklyn Times. A sporting paper contains an article entitled "How to prevent accidents in the game of baseball." This difficulty may be overcome by the substitution of garden digging for baseball. A young man who is digging garden never gets injured by running the bases or by the bat flying out of another player's hand; though when he gets through with the game he may be induced to think he has exchanged backs with a man one hundred and ninety-seven years old.—Norristown Herald. "The spring has sprung again, sir, and I have sprung with it." Said he, "some little vessels that the whole world would like to read I know you'd prize them. You'd better prize them—In an idle hour I dashed them off at almost lightning speed." A journalistic Encounter. Then ensued, and, crash! the poet whirled downstairs and through the door. The bright young writer Was not a fighter. But he'd often dashed off poets at almost lightning speed before. —Sumerville Journal. There are 130,000 fishermen in France, and about four fishermen out of every 1,000 are drowned every year. Over 3,000 children recently died in the Fiji Islands of whooping cough. The malady has become epidemic.

Lower California Tidbits.

In a letter from Mulege, Lower California, to the New York Sun, Fannie B. Ward says: The other day Betsy and I were entertained at an exceedingly swell banquet at the house of a wealthy pearl merchant. Among the numerous courses of the dinner were some enormous snails, which had been fattened for Lenten food, as is the custom also in some parts of southern Europe. The snails are kept in large reservoirs, the floors of which are strewn with herbs and flowers. Doubtless the fashion was borrowed from the luxurious Romans, who, if we may believe Varro, fed them on bran and wine till sometimes a single shell would contain ten quarts! But that course remained untasted, despite our utmost efforts to do as the Romans do. At a later stage of the banquet two servants appeared staggering under the weight of a huge mangrove branch, laden with parasitic oysters. This was placed in the center of the festive board. Each little bivalve, moored by threads of its own spinning, clung so tenaciously that a hammer was needed to displace it. This circumstance aroused our interest in the oyster family, and determined us to cultivate their acquaintance. The parasitical or tree oyster is as common here as in the Indian seas, and looks so exactly like a dried leaf as to deceive even the fisher birds that seek it. It is found attached to the roots and branches of the mangrove tree, which grows in sheltered bays at the edge of the sea. These odoriferous groves look like marine forests, their lofty branches dipping the waves during high tide. A Japanese Postman. As in America, so in Japan, the postman wears his uniform. It consists of a suit of blue cloth, a wide butter-bowl hat and straw shoes. The mail bag swings under his arm, or is pushed along in a little two-wheeled cart. He is always running or trotting along. You know that in Japan men do nearly all the work that we make horses do here, so you see the Japanese postman carry, hasten along from station to station, travelling on a quick run mile after mile, up-hill, down dale, never stopping until he reaches the place where another postman is waiting to receive the mail and run on with it in his turn. So the mail carried in the greater part of the Japanese Empire. To a few places reached by steamers it travels in the United States. In a small town in Grass Valley, says a San Francisco paper, the leaves and bark of the tree are successfully used by the tannery as a substitute for leather. The tannery is expert in its work on native barks and trees.