

# The Call of the Cumberlands

By Charles Neville Buck

With Illustrations from Photographs of Scenes in the Play

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### SYNOPSIS.

On Misery creek, at the foot of a rock from which he has fallen, Sally Miller finds George Lescott, a landscape painter, unconscious, and after reviving him goes for assistance. Samson South and Sally, taking Lescott to Samson's home, are met by Spicer South, head of the family, who tells them that Jesse Purdy has been shot and that Samson is suspected of the crime. Samson denies it. The shooting of Jesse Purdy breaks the truce in the Hollman-South feud.

### CHAPTER IV—Continued.

He sauntered down the road, but when he had passed out of vision, he turned sharply into the woods, and began climbing. His steps carried him to the rift in the ridge where the white oak stood sentinel over the watch tower of rock. As he came over the edge from one side his bare feet making no sound, he saw Sally sitting there, with her hands resting on the moss and her eyes deeply troubled. She was gazing fixedly ahead and her lips were trembling. At once Samson's face grew black. Some one had been making Sally unhappy. Then he saw beyond her a standing figure, which the tree trunk had hitherto concealed. It was the loose-knitted figure of young Tamarack Spicer.

"In course," Spicer was saying, "we don't low Samson shot Jesse Purdy, but them Hollmans 'n' spicion him, an' I heered just now that them dawgs was trackin' straight up hyar from the mouth of Misery. They'll git hyar against sundown."

Samson leaped violently forward. With one hand he roughly seized his cousin's shoulder and wheeled him about.

"Shut up!" he commanded. "What a fool stuff hev ye been tellin' Sally?"

For an instant the two clansmen stood fronting each other. Samson's face was set and wrathful. Tamarack's was surly and snarling. "Hain't I got a license ter tell Sally the news?" he demanded.

"Nobody hain't got no license," retorted the younger man in the quiet of cold anger, "ter tell Sally nothin' thet'll fret her."

"She air bound ter know hit all pretty soon. Them dawgs—" "Didn't I tell ye ter shut up?" Samson clenched his fists, and took a step forward. "Ef ye opens yore mouth again, I'm a-goin' ter smash hit. Now, git!"

Tamarack Spicer's face blackened, and his teeth showed. His right hand swept to his left arm-pit. Outwardly he seemed weaponless, but Samson knew that concealed beneath the hickory shirt was a holster, worn mountain fashion.

"What air ye a-reachin' atter, Tam'rack?" he inquired, his lips twisting in amusement.

"That's my business."

"Well, git hit out—or git out yerself, afore I throws ye offen the cliff."

Sally showed no symptoms of alarm. Her confidence in her hero was absolute. The boy lifted his hand, and pointed off down the path. Slowly and with incoherent muttering, Spicer took himself away. Then only did Sally rise. She came over, and laid a hand on Samson's shoulder. In her blue eyes, the tears were welling.

"Samson," she whispered, "ef they're after ye, come ter my house. I kin hide ye out. Why didn't ye tell me Jesse Jurvey'd done been shot?"

"Hit taln' nothin' ter fret about, Sally," he assured her. He spoke awkwardly, for he had been trained to regard emotion as unmanly. "Thar hain't no danger."

She gazed searchingly into his eyes, and then, with a short sob, threw her arms around him, and buried her face on his shoulder.

"Ef anything happens ter ye, Samson," she said, brokenly, "hit'll jest kill me. I couldn't live withouten ye, Samson. I jest couldn't do hit!"

The boy took her in his arms, and pressed her close. His eyes were gazing off over her bent head, and his lips twitched. He drew his features into a scowl, because that was the only expression with which he could safeguard his feelings. His voice was husky.

"I reckon, Sally," he said, "I couldn't live withouten ye, neither."

The party of men who had started at morning from Jesse Purdy's store had spent a hard day. The roads followed creek-beds, crossing and recrossing waterways in a fashion that gave the bloodhounds a hundred baffling difficulties. Often, their noses lost the trail, which had at first been so surely taken. Often, they circled and whined, and halted in perplexity, but each time they came to a point where, at the end, one of them again raised his muzzle skyward, and gave voice.

Toward evening, they were working up Misery along a course less broken. The party halted for a moment's rest, and, as the bottle was passed, the man from Lexington, who had brought the dogs and stayed to conduct the chase, put a question:

"What do ye call this creek?"

"Hit's Misery."

"Does anybody live on Misery that—er—that ye might suspect?"

The Hollmans laughed.

"This creek is settled with Souths thicker'n hops."

The Lexington man looked up. He knew what the name of South meant to a Hollman.

"Is there any special South, who might have a particular grudge?"

"The Souths don't need no part'lar grudge, but thar's young Samson South. He's a wildcat."

"He lives this way?"

"These dogs air a-makin' a bee-line fer his house," Jim Hollman was sneaking. Then he added: "I've done

been told that Samson denies doin' the shootin', an' claims he kin prove an' alibi."

The Lexington man lighted his pipe, and poured a drink of red whisky into a flask cup.

"He'd be apt to say that," he commented. "These dogs haven't any prejudice in the matter. I'll stake my life on their tellin' the truth."

An hour later, the group halted again. The master of hounds mopped his forehead.

"Are we still going toward Samson South's house?" he inquired.

"We're about a quarter from hit now, an' we hain't never varied from the straight road."

"Will they be apt to give us trouble?"

Jim Hollman smiled.

"I hain't never heered of no South submittin' ter arrest by a Hollman."

The trailors examined their firearms, and loosened their holster-flaps. The dogs went forward at a trot.

### CHAPTER V.

From time to time that day, neighbors had ridden up to Spicer South's stile, and drawn rein for gossip. These men brought bulletins as to the progress of the hounds, and near sundown, as a postscript to their information, a volley of hound signals sounded from a mountain top. No word was spoken, but in common accord the kinsmen rose from their chairs, and drifted toward their leaning rifles.

"They're a-comin' hyar," said the head of the house, curtly. "Samson ought ter be home. Whar's Tam'rack?"

No one had noticed his absence until that moment, nor was he to be found. A few minutes later, Samson's figure swung into sight, and his uncle met him at the fence.

"Samson, I've done asked ye all the questions I'm a-goin' ter ask ye," he said, "but them dawgs is makin' fer this house. They've jest been sighted a mile below."

Samson nodded.

"Now—Spicer South's face hardened—"I owns down thar ter the road. No man kin cross that fence withouten I choose ter give him leave. Ef ye wants ter go indoors an' stay thar, ye kin do hit—an' no dawg ner no man hain't a-goin' ter ask ye no questions. But, ef ye sees fit ter face hit out, I'd love ter prove ter these hyar men that us Souths don't break our word. We done agreed ter this truce. I'd like ter invite 'em in, an' let them damn dawgs sniff round the feet of every man in my house—an' then, when they're plumb teetotally damn satisfied, I'd like ter tell 'em all ter go hell. That's the way I feels, but I'm a-goin' ter do jest what ye says."

Lescott did not overhear the conversation in full, but he saw the old man's face work with suppressed passion, and he caught Samson's louder reply.

"When them folks gets hyar, Uncle Spicer, I'm a-goin' ter be a-settin' right out thar in front. I'm plumb willin' ter invite 'em in." Then, the two men turned toward the house.

Already the other clansmen had disappeared noiselessly through the door or around the angles of the walls.

Fifteen minutes later, Lescott, standing at the fence, saw a strange cavalcade round the bend of the road. Several travel-stained men were leading mules, and holding two tawny and impatient dogs in leash. In their number, the artist recognized his host of two nights ago.

They halted at a distance, and in their faces the artist read dismay, for while the dogs were yelping confidently and tugging at their cords, young Samson South—who should, by their prejudiced convictions, be hiding out in some secret stronghold—sat at the top of the stile, smoking his pipe, and regarded them with a lack-luster absence of interest. Such a calm reception was uncanny. After a whispered conference, the Lexington man

came forward alone. Old Spicer South had been looking on from the door, and was now strolling out to meet the envoy, unarmed.

And the envoy, as he came, held his hands unnecessarily far away from his sides, and walked with an ostentatious show of peace.

"Evenin', stranger," hailed the old man. "Come right in."

"Mr. South," began the dog-owner, with some embarrassment, "I have been employed to furnish a pair of bloodhounds to the family of Jesse Purdy, who has been shot."

"I heard that that Purvy was shot," said the head of the Souths in an affable tone, which betrayed no deeper note of interest than neighborhood gossip might have elicited.

"I have no personal interest in the matter," went on the stranger, hastily, as one bent on making his attitude clear, "except to supply the dogs and manage them. I do not in any way direct their course; I merely follow."

"Ye can't hardly fo'ce a dawg." Old Spicer sagely nodded his head as he made the remark. "A dawg jest natcherly follers his own nose."

"Exactly—and they have followed their noses here." The Lexington man found the embarrassment of his position growing as the colloquy proceeded. "I want to ask you whether, if these dogs want to cross your fence, I have your permission to let them?"

The master of the house crossed the stile, the low sun shining on his shock of gray hair, and stood before the man-

hunter. He spoke so that his voice carried to the waiting group in the road.

"Ye're plumb welcome ter turn them dawgs loose, an' let 'em ramble, stranger. Nobody hain't agoin' ter hurt 'em. I sees some fellers out thar with ye that mustn't cross my fence. Ef they does—the voice rang menacingly—"hit'll mean that they're a-bustin' the truce—an' they won't never go out agin. But you air safe in hyar. I gives yer my hand on that. Ye're welcome, an' yore dawgs is welcome. I hain't got nothin' 'gainst dawgs that comes on four legs, but I shore bars the two-legged kind."

There was a murmur of astonishment from the road. Disregarding it, Spicer South turned his face toward the house.

"You boys kin come out," he slouted, "an' leave yore guns inside."

The Jeshees were slipped from the dogs. They leaped forward, and made directly for Samson, who sat as if moving as a lifeless image on the top step of the stile. There was a half-moment of terrific suspense, then the beasts clambered by the seated figure, passing on each side and circled aimlessly about the yard—their quest unended. They sniffed indifferently about the trouser legs of the men who sauntered indolently out of the door. They trotted into the house and out again, and mingled with the mongrel home pack that snarled and growled hostility for this invasion. Then, they came once more to the stile. As they climbed out, Samson South reached up and stroked a tawny head, and the bloodhound paused a moment to wag its tail in friendship, before it jumped down to the road, and trotted gingerly onward.

"I'm obliged to you, sir," said the man from the Bluegrass, with a voice of immense relief.

The moment of suspense seemed past, and, in the relief of the averted clash, the master of hounds forgot that his dogs stood branded as false trailors. But when he rejoined the group in the road he found himself looking into early visages, and the features of Jim Hollman in particular were black in their scowl of smoldering wrath.

"Why didn't ye ax him," growled the kinsman of the man who had been shot, "whar the other fellers' at?"

"What other fellow?" echoed the Lexington man.

Jim Hollman's voice rose truculently, and his words drifted, as he meant them to, across to the ears of the clansmen who stood in the yard of Spicer South.

"Them dawgs of yore'n come up Misery a-hellin'. They hain't never turned aside, an' unless they're plumb ornery, no-count curs that don't know their business, they come for some reason. They seemed mighty interested in gittin' hyar. Ax them fellers in thar who's been hyar that hain't hyar now? Who is their fellar that got out afore we come hyar?"

At this veiled charge of deceit the faces of the Souths again blackened and the men near the door of the house drifted in to drift presently out again, ewing discarded Winchester pistols at their sides. It seemed that, after all, the incident was not closed. The man from Lexington, finding himself face to face with a new difficulty, turned and argued in a low voice with the Hollman leader. But Jim Hollman, whose eyes were fixed on Samson, refused to talk in a modulated tone, and he shouted his reply:

"I hain't got nothin' ter whisper about," he proclaimed. "Go ax 'em who hit war that got away from hyar."

Old Spicer South stood leaning on his fence and his rugged countenance stiffened. He started to speak, but Samson rose from the stile and said, in a composed voice:

"Let me talk to this fellar, Unc' Spicer." The old man nodded and Samson beckoned to the owner of the dogs.

"We hain't got nothin' ter say ter them fellers with ye," he announced, briefly. "We hain't axin' 'em no questions, an' we hain't answerin' none. Ye done come hyar with dawgs an' we hain't stopped ye. We've done answered all the questions them dawgs has axed. We done treated you an' yore houn's plumb friendly. Es fer them other men, we hain't got nothin' ter say to 'em. They done come hyar because they hoped they could git me in trouble. They done failed. They got belong ter the county. They got a license ter travel hit, but this strip right hyar hain't the healthiest section they kin find. I reckon ye'd better advise 'em ter move on."

The Lexington man went back. For a minute or two Jim Hollman sat scowling down in indecision from his saddle. Then he admitted to himself that he had done all he could do without becoming the aggressor. For the moment he was beaten. He looked up and from the road one of the hounds raised its voice and gave cry. That baying afforded an excuse for leaving and Jim Hollman seized it.

"Go on," he growled. "Let 'er see what them d—d curs her ter say now."

Mounting, they kicked their mules into a jog. From the men inside the fence came no note of derision, no hint of triumph. They stood looking out with expressionless, masklike faces until their enemies had passed out of sight around the shoulder of the mountain. The Souths had met and fronted an accusation made after the enemy's own choice and method. A jury of two hounds had acquitted them. It was not only because the dogs had refused to recognize in Samson a suspicious character that the enemy rode on grudgingly convinced, but also, because the family, which had invariably met hostility with hostility, had so willingly courted the acid test of guilt or innocence.

Days passed uneventfully after that. The kinsmen dispersed to their scattered coves and cabins. Now and again came a rumor that Jesse Purvy was dying, but always hard on its heels came another to the effect that the obdurate fighter had rallied, though the doctors held out small encouragement of recovery.

One day Lescott, whose bandaged arm gave him much pain, but who was able to get about, was strolling not far from the house with Samson. They were following a narrow trail along the mountain side, and, at a sound no louder than the falling of a walnut, the boy halted and laid a silencing hand on the painter's shoulder. Then followed an unspoken command in his

companion's eyes. Lescott sank down behind a rock, cloaked with glistening rhododendron leafage, where Samson had already crouched and become immovable and noiseless. They had been there only a short time when they saw another figure slipping quietly from tree to tree below them.

For a time the mountain boy watched the figure and the painter saw his lips draw in a straight line and his eyes narrow with a glint of tense hate. Yet, a moment later, with a nod to follow, the boy unexpectedly rose into view and his features were absolutely expressionless.

"Mornin', Jim," he called.

The slinking stranger whirled with a start and an instinctive motion as though to bring his rifle to his shoulder. But, seeing Samson's peaceable manner, he smiled and his own demeanor became friendly.

"Mornin', Samson."

"Kinder stranger in this country, hain't ye, Jim?" drawled the boy who lived there, and the question brought a sullen flush to the other's cheek bones.

"Jest a-passin' through," he vouchsafed.

"I reckon ye'd find the wagon road more handy," suggested Samson. "Some folks might 'spicion ye fer stealin' long through the timber."

The skulking traveler decided to lie plausibly. He laughed mendaciously. "That's the reason, Samson. I was kinder skeered ter go through this country in the open."

Samson met his eye steadily and said slowly:

"I reckon, Jim, hit mought be half as risky fer ye ter walk upstandin' along Misery es ter go a-crouchin'."

Ye thinks ye've been a-shadderin' me, I knows jest whar ye've been all the time. Ye lies when ye talks 'bout passin' through. Ye've done been spyin' hyar, ever since Jesse Purvy got shot, an' all the time ye've done been watchin' yerself. I reckon hit'll be healthier fer ye ter do yore spyin' from 'tother side of the ridge. I reckon yer allowin' ter git me of Purvy dies, but we're watchin' ye."

Jim Asberry's face darkened, but he said nothing. There was nothing to say. He was discovered in the enemy's country and must accept the enemy's terms.

"This hyar time I lets ye go back," said Samson, "fer the reason that I'm tryin' like all h—I ter keep this truce. But ye must stay on yore side or else ride the roads open. How is Purvy terday?"

"He's mighty poorly," replied the other, in a sullen voice.

"All right. That's another reason why hit hain't healthy fer ye over hyar."

The spy turned and made his way over the mountain.

"D—n him!" muttered Samson, his face twitching, as the other was lost in the undergrowth. "Some day I'm a-goin' ter git him."

Tamarack Spicer did not at once reappear, and when one of the Souths met another in the road the customary dialogue would be: "Heered anything of Tamarack?" "No, hev you?" "No, nary a word."

As Lescott wandered through the hills, his unhurt right hand began crying out for action and a brush to nurse. As he watched, day after day, the unrolling of the monumental hills and the transitions from hazy, wraith-like whispers of hues to strong, flaring riot of color, this fret of restless expectancy became actual pain. He was wasting wonderful opportunity and the creative instinct in him was clamoring.

One morning, when he came out just after sunrise to the tin wash basin at the well, the desire to paint was on him with compelling force. The hills ended near their bases like things bitten off. Beyond lay limitless streams of mist, but, while he stood at gaze, the filmy veil began to lift and float higher. Trees and mountains grew taller. The sun, which showed first as a ghost-like disk of polished aluminum, struggled through orange and vermilion into a sphere of living life. Lescott heard a voice at his side.

"When does ye 'low ter commence paintin'?"

It was Samson. For answer the artist, with his unhurt hand, impatiently tapped his bandaged wrist.

"Ye still got yore right hand, hain't ye?"

TO BE CONTINUED.

ye?" demanded the boy. The other laughed. It was a typical question. So long as one had the trigger finger left one should not admit disqualification.

"You see, Samson," he explained, "this isn't precisely like handling a gun. One must hold the palette; mix the colors; wipe the brushes and do half a dozen equally necessary things. It requires at least two perfectly good hands. Many people don't find two enough."

"But hit only takes one ter do the paintin', don't hit?"

"Yes."

"Well—the boy spoke diffidently but with enthusiasm—"between the two of us we've got three hands. I reckon you kin learn me how ter do them other things fer ye."

Lescott's surprise showed in his face and the lad swept eagerly on.

"Mebby hit hain't none of my business, but, all day yestiddy an' the day befo', I was studyin' 'bout this



Jim Hollman.

here thing, an' I husted up an' got that corn weeded an' now I'm through. Ef I kin help ye out I thought mebby—" He paused and looked appealingly at the artist.

Lescott whistled and then his face lighted into contentment.

"Today, Samson," he announced, "Lescott, South and Company get busy."

It was the first time he had seen Samson smile, and, although the expression was one of sheer delight, inherent somberness loaned it a touch of the wistful.

When, an hour later, the two set out, the mountain boy carried the paraphernalia and the old man standing at the door watched them off with a half-quizzical, half-disapproving glance.

As the boy, with remarkable aptitude, learned how to adjust the easel and arrange the paraphernalia, Lescott sat drinking in through thirsty eyes the stretch of landscape he had determined to paint.

Then, while he painted, the boy held the palette, his eyes riveted on the canvas, which was growing from a blank to a mirror of vistas—and the boy's pupils became deeply hungry.

The day of painting was followed by others like it. The disabling of Lescott's left hand made the constant companionship of the boy a matter that needed no explanation or apology, though not a matter of approval to his uncle.

Another week had passed without the reappearance of Tamarack Spicer.

One afternoon Lescott and Samson were alone on a cliff-protected shelf, and the painter had just blocked in with amber and neutral tints the crude sketch of his next picture.

"That'll be extra payment."

"All right. Time is money. Look sharp, now. You can kiss your hand a few times at, say, a penny per kiss."

And closing his watch with a snap, the overdriven business man rushed off.

Tribute Money.

Fancy long ago said that the black marks on either side of the head of the haddock were made by the Apostle's finger and thumb as they held him, while extracting the tribute money from his mouth. But alas for fancy! The haddock is not found in the Sea of Galilee! Most of the fish there belong to the barbel family, and no one has ever told us authoritatively what particular variety the tribute-bearing fish belonged to. The "half shekel" of the tribute was 112 grains Troy weight of silver, say nearly a quarter of an ounce, worth about thirteen cents today, but greatly more in those days.

Steel Barrels for Russia.

One of the European orders which the war has sent to this country has been obtained by the Pressed Steel company of Sharon, Pa. It is for the Russian government, and is for 100,000 steel barrels for use in the Russian and Galician oil regions, and the best part of it is that hundreds of thousands of these barrels are needed, and have hitherto been obtained in Germany. The Sharon concern will run day and night for many weeks to fill this order, which, it is believed, will be followed by many more of the same sort, for Russia can hardly get the barrels from any other country.



### WAVED FAREWELL BY PROXY

After This, Who Shall Say English Business Man Is Not Full of Resources.

The other morning, as a departing transatlantic steamer was casting off its lines and swinging out into the stream, an elderly business man hastily embraced a lady who was one of the passengers, and rushed down the gang-plank to the wharf, says the London Answers.

Going hurriedly up to a melancholy loafer who was watching the busy crowd, the gentleman drew him behind a pile of baggage and said: "Want to earn a shilling or two?" "You bet I do."

"You see that lady in black on the bridge there?" said the elderly one. "Certainly."

"Well, that's my wife going abroad. Now, of course, she'll expect me to stand here for the next 20 minutes, while the steamer is backing and filling in, waving my handkerchief and watching her out of sight. D'ye see?"

"I do, sir."

"Well, I'm too busy to humbug about here; stuck to buy, biz to attend to. She's a little near-sighted, so I'll just engage you to wave this handkerchief instead. It's a big one, with a red border, and as long as she sees it she'll think it's me. Come up to 202 Bangrup street when they are well off, and I'll pay you."

"S'posin' she looks through a telescope, or something?"

"In that case you'll have to bury your face in the handkerchief and do the great weep act."



### Caps for the Autoist in Winter

FURS and plushes and other warm-conserving fabrics help to make it possible for the devotee of the touring car to face ordinary winter weather and keep comfortable. Coats with broad collars of fur that can be fastened up close about the neck, caps that stick to the head and are soft, shaped to protect the eyes and not to catch the wind, with veils that cannot come off—all have been planned for her. Fur-lined gloves for the maid that likes to drive, and the coziness of overshoes, encourage her to defy the weather.

Here are two caps that are thoroughly practical and at the same time have the compelling virtue of being good-looking. They are modeled after the jaunty jockey-cap type, but have full, soft crowns and can be pulled down over the ears.

In each of them the veil is held in place by narrow straps made of the same material as the cap. These straps are sewed at one end to the cap and fasten at the other with snap fasteners. This allows the veil to be brought down over the face and wound about the throat, or to be fastened up off the face or wholly detached.

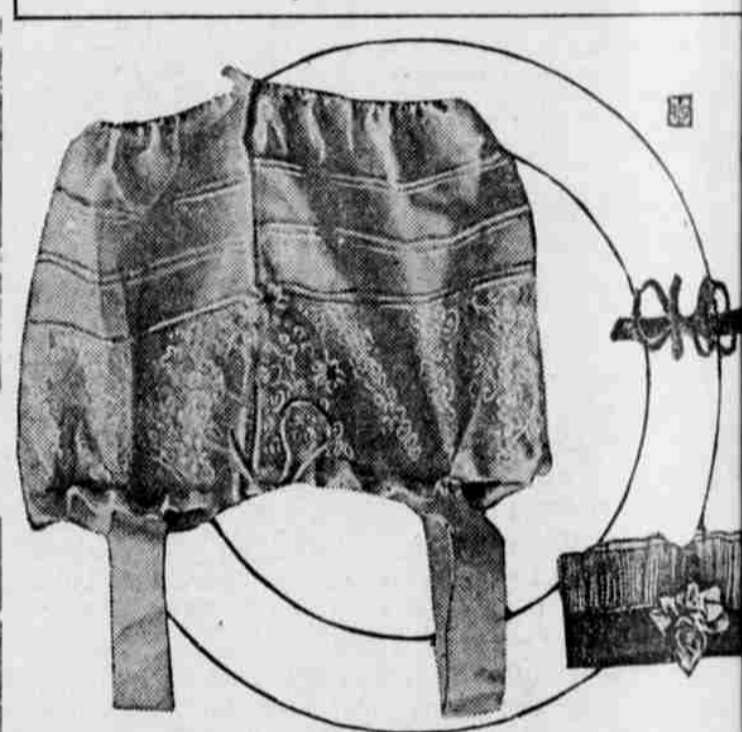
The cap at the left has a stiff visor covered with cloth and lined with silk.

A Test for Linen. Everything that's labeled linen. It may be part cotton and linen, and it may be mercerized with a very small portion of linen.

To test the material you buy linen, drop water on the goods. In all linen the moisture spreads idly and dries quickly. On cotton fabric will remain moist for a time.

Glycerin is considered a better than water. It causes linen to be transparent. Another test for linen is by burning the yarn. If cotton the ends curl up, if pure linen the ends remain smooth.

### Dainty Dress Accessories



EVERY woman likes to possess pretty and dainty accessories of dress, no matter how fragile and short-lived their glory and freshness may be. Here are three of the new things that have considerable durability to their credit and are indisputably attractive, and therefore popular.

At the left is a corset cover of pale pink crepe de chine and shadow lace with shoulder straps and decorative flowers of satin ribbon. The same model may be bought in any of the light shades and in white, at so modest a price that almost anyone may gratify a taste for "just pretty things" by buying it. A little can be saved by making it at home, when the price will be something less than a dollar for the material.

In making such small garments there is a saving usually in making two at one time. The width of the silk and lace is sufficient when the length required is purchased to make two corset covers like that shown here.

A straight strip of the crepe de chine is decorated with three groups of tiny hand-run tucks and hemmed up along one edge. The other edge is stitched—by hand, if possible—to a strip of shadow lace of the same length as the silk. The upper edge of the lace is bound with satin ribbon, and shoulder straps of the same ribbon are sewed to place.

Three small ribbon daisies or flat roses with pale yellow centers are sewed to the front, and baby ribbon is run through the binding at the top and the hem at the bottom, in order to adjust the garment to the figure.

At the right is a neckband of velvet ribbon bordered with knife-plaited lace and fastened with hook and eye.

Ribbon-Trimmed Millinery. Of the host of trimmings which adorn the newest