

MRS. KRUGER AT HOME.

HOW SHE WAS WOOLLED AND WON BY PAUL KRUGER—A GLIMPSE OF HER HOME LIFE IN THE TRANSVAAL.

THE wife of "Oom" Paul Kruger is a treasure'—and this by the testimony of a man who, however much he may differ from us in other things, may be allowed this utterance.

When, with his goat-like beard tinged with hairs of gold, and his sunken eyes lit with the light of love, young Kruger came a-wooing, he came not a bit in the fashion of the modern youth who offers hand and heart, goods and chattels. According to Boerish custom, his pleasure had been made known. Mrs. "Oom" Paul, who was then only gentle, blue-eyed Miss du Plessis, came forth timidly to greet him, in a gown so simple that she could surely never have expected to win a suitor through it.

And these are the words she uttered with downcast eyes and cheeks of rosy red. "I can bake, stew, sew, clean, scrub." And behold, it was enough! Her suitor was at her feet. He, who was then only Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, took her from that moment to his heart—to him she was the most rarely accomplished of all women.

Oom Paul's wife has that virtue we call housewifeliness to a remarkable degree. Some women have it in addition to other excellent qualities. The Boer woman has it to the exclusion of all else. Mrs. Kruger is, first, a wife; secondly, a housewife; and thirdly, nothing. Through this woman a fortune of substantial proportions has been saved. It will be her epitaph. Future generations of wives may ask: "How did she do it?" and the answer will be the same as on the memorable day of her wooing: "I can bake, stew, scrub, sew."

Mrs. Kruger, with her husband's fortune, might live in positive luxury and, indeed, one might say, with almost unequalled splendor. She might have driven in an equipage, and lived in a palace to match our Queen's own residence. She would have none of them.

She looked at the black that shone upon her stove, and was happy. She counted the irons that stood in a row,

and rejoiced. She thanked God that there was plenty of clothes-line. She was grateful for the nimble fingers that enabled her to sew.

She and her husband live on the amount allowed them from the government for "coffee money." We have all heard of this allowance, yet few are aware that on this coffee money, which has supported them for years, the Krugers have entertained diplomats and travellers from near and far, and no one has come out from that hospitable mansion hungry. No one could, who has a palate for good cooking, for Tanta Kruger's is one of the best. She is her own *chef*, and furthermore she is her own butler.

On the occasions when she has guests, she wears her very best Sunday-go-to-meeting black gown. She dons this garment just before she announces "Dinner is served."

She does this at the last moment, because, before that, she has been adding pinches of salt to the stew, last dustings of pepper to the soup. Then one of her daughters remains in the kitchen while the first lady of the Transvaal—just as the scorching African sun is going to rest—takes a second to wash, and dons her single holiday gown.

At five o'clock every morning the little Boer household is astir. It is a little household now, for out of the sixteen children who called her mother only seven are alive.

What serves as their Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle is a little two-storey cottage. It has in the parlor a nice, neat set of black horse-hair furniture that Mrs. Kruger had on her wedding day. It has two marble-topped tables that came with it. The halls and walls of this little home are as clean as a new pin.

Over her little kitchen stove at five o'clock any morning Tanta Kruger may be seen bending industriously. She has risen half an hour earlier in order to light the fire, and when the President arrives, the aroma of coffee fills his nostrils. It has been said that Mrs. Kruger prides herself upon her coffee. It is one of her boasts, and she is a modest woman. Another is that she