

SONG—THE WINDS.

The South Wind sings of happy springs,
And summers hastening on their way;
The South Wind smells of cowslip bells,
And blossom-spangled meads of May:
But sweeter is her red, red mouth
Than all the kisses of the South.

The West Wind breathes of russet heaths,
And yellow pride of woods grown old;
The West Wind flies from Autumn skies,
And sunclouds overlaid with gold:
But the golden locks I love the best
Outshine the glories of the West.

The North Wind sweeps from crystal deeps,
And Arctic halls of endless night;
The North Wind blows o'er drifted snows,
And mountains robed in virgin white:
But purer far her maiden's soul
Than all the snows that shroud the Pole.

The East Wind shrills o'er desert hills
And dreary coasts of barren sand;
The East Wind moans of sea-blanchéd bones,
And ships that sink in sight of land:
But the cold, cold East may rave and moan,
For her soft warm heart is all my own.
Chambers'.

ON GOSSIP.

What an invaluable ally to the gossip is the scandaliser! I remember an event which happened in Littleton when I was a child, and which made a deep impression on my mind. One evening I was sent to drink tea with my god-mother, a widow of near seventy years. Shortly after tea we were joined by a maiden lady of some fifty years, and as the two began to talk on subjects of no interest to me I retired with a book to the bow window, and being neither seen nor heard, was soon forgotten. And so, after a time was, by me, my book; and the conversation had become such that I was listening with all my might. Miss N. must have made every one's business her own, or she could not have recounted the wonderful stories she did about several Littleton families. All the intricacies of their private histories seemed to be known to her, and were unscrupulously laid bare to her auditor. Story led on to story, till at last there came one which touched the character of a lady who was dead. One great sin of her life had just come to light—at least, Miss N.—had just heard of it from a person who had kept the knowledge of it a secret for some years. Ah, that was a juicy morsel for the two! and it seemed to me that the fact of the poor creature's being beyond the pale of repentance and forgiveness added a zest. They said, how shocking it was! how awful! how the devil seemed to be let loose on the world! and how impossible it was to trust any one! for they would each have given their word that the deceased lady was a model of all virtue, and so on. But there was no horror shown at the sin, and no sorrow expressed for the sinner. Now, had Miss N.—in the first place, and she and my grandmother in the second, known that it was impossible to handle dirt without being somewhat defiled by it, and had also appreciated the fact that as they did think evil, and rejoiced in iniquity, they did not possess that Christian attribute without which a time might come when repentance and forgiveness would be as far beyond their reach as they imagined them to be beyond the reach of an erring sister, a vast amount of suffering might have been spared. In a few days it was widely circulated, and had come to the ears of the dead lady's relatives. Her mother was in a very delicate state of health, and the shock was so great to her that she never overcame it. Soon after her death the true facts of the case became known, and the accused was proved innocent by the discovery of the real perpetrator. Scandal had primarily set the story afloat, and gossip had kept its head above water. Had there been no gossipers the scandaliser would have been powerless. One class of people suffer terribly from gossip, viz., marriageable young men and women. If marrying and giving in marriage were to come to an end, some gossip-houses might be closed for want of adequate funds. The happiness of the country in general and of individuals in particular depends greatly on the sort of marriages contracted; and yet this, one of the gravest subjects of life, is treated with the utmost levity, and made the handle for no end of ridicule. How few couples have the chance of finding out the temper and disposition of each other until after engagement! And why? Because the least indication of the slightest friendship springing up between a man and woman is the instantaneous signal for nods and winks and a strict surveillance, to be quickly followed by innuendoes and whispers. Thus the two parties—made more sensitive than they ought to be by the knowledge that this is sure to be the case—and they are laying themselves open to be talked about. If a man be a little bit in earnest there is nothing he objects to more than feeling he is watched and his actions quizzed. If he have made up his mind to be quite in earnest he can brave it; and if there be nothing at all serious in the matter, it may amuse him. When men and women are allowed to take a little friendly mutual interest in, and to become really acquainted with each other, there may be some chance of "incompatibility of temper" being discovered before the happiness of the pair has been shipwrecked on that rock. It would have another effect, too—there would not be that silly consciousness which many a woman betrays when receiving attentions from a man, and she would be less

likely to begin immediately wondering what his intentions might be. On the other hand, there are instances where a woman would never suspect intentions at all if tattlers did not put the idea into her head.—*Golden Hours.*

BEARDS AND MUSTACHES.

A correspondent of the London *Globe* supplies to that journal the story following: "Beards have been one of our national weaknesses, and the taste for mustaches, though comparatively modern, is rapidly becoming as characteristic of us as it is of our French neighbors, from whom we are said to have derived it. The partiality of the old Greeks for smooth-shaven faces is as unintelligible to an Englishman as that of low foreheads; and if a modern Damassepus, who had a dash of fashion about him, pleased us, and we wanted to please him, we should probably reverse Horace's prayer that Heaven would send him a barber. Popular as these graceful appendages are, however, when it was announced in the newspapers that there was to be an exhibition of beards and mustaches at the North Woolwich Gardens, and that a prize would be awarded to the owner of the largest beard and the finest mustache who cared to exhibit himself, no doubt most people thought the said exhibition was a hoax or a joke. I, however, had the resolution to believe that, after all, there might be something in it, and buoyed up with the hope, faced the broiling sun, the boring railway journey, and the hustle and bustle of a crowd devoted to shrimps and riot. On arriving at my destination, I discovered that all was well, and that thirty bona fide competitors had entered the lists, and that the exhibition would come off at 9 o'clock precisely, in the large ball-room which stands in the centre of the gardens. The gardens themselves were, as usual, full of people, and the minds of all of them were evidently full of beards and mustaches. The whole place, in fact, seemed a kind of perambulating exhibition—a spot sacred to none but possible competitors for the great contest, and their female admirers. Every other man you met had a mustache or beard preternaturally developed, an unpleasant way of staring at those who had not, and an insolently critical air when he regarded those who had not. The importance assumed by these men, many of them fine martial-looking fellows, who carried it on well enough, was assumed by others who had not the same pretensions to support such a dignity. Feeble shadows, with watery eyes and tottering legs, shameful wrecks of men, maudlin and miserable, plucked up a sort of ludicrous courage because they happened to have a beard, and swaggered it with the best. As 9 o'clock drew near there was a general rush to the pavilion; tea-parties were broken up as if by magic, the gardens were deserted, streams of people kept pouring in from the toll-gate, and by 9.10 there was scarcely standing-room in the building. At the conclusion of a sort of nondescript play, a gentleman made his appearance on the stage—"himself the proud ideal that he sought"—and announced that the exhibition was about to commence. The assignment of the prize he left entirely in the hands of the ladies, adding, however, that in spite of his own superb mustache, he did not intend to compete himself, and must be considered entirely out of the question. Thirty competitors had entered themselves for the beard prize, though only eight had the courage to present themselves. One of these heroes, who was too modest to face an audience of critical ladies, had written a letter enclosing a small handful of his beard, just to show what he could have done had he chosen to appear. The hairs measured forty inches, and the writer added that he had "cultivated some of them up to forty-five inches," and had hopes of being able to excel even that. The competitors were then told to appear—to pass slowly over the stage, fronting the audience, and giving them a full view of their faces. The excitement now became intense; aimless bursts of applause echoed through the building; eager faces and straining eyes peered from every corner; staid old gentlemen with faces radiant with excitement, and bathed in perspiration—the heat was intense—craned their necks forward to see. As for the ladies, they scarcely knew what to do, and one or two seemed springing off their chairs with enthusiasm, and were quite hysterical; one actually fainted, and added to the general madness by being carried out into the open air. At last the first competitor made his appearance. His claims were based on a very fair black beard, which was apparently about a foot long. He looked rather foolish, and tried to persuade himself that he was not nervous by indulging in a series of short convulsive laughs, and so he disappeared, numbering about five votes. The next was a young man, dressed up to the roots of his hair, in the taste peculiar to those who are of the shop, shabby. With a fine bow he confronted the audience and made a stand in the middle of the platform. There he evidently intended to remain, but as he based his pretensions on nothing more solid than a very ordinary beard of the sandy-bushy order, he was greeted with peals of laughter and shouts of derision, plainly constructed by himself into applause; but, like the rest, he had to move on, numbering no votes. His successor was a very nervous, elderly man. He had evidently prepared a very sweet smile for the occasion, which terror had petrified into a ghastly grin; his claims were based on a long black beard, with a peculiar curl about it, but he disappeared very early. The prizeman, who looked like a missionary, and was irreverently

greeted as such by the audience, had a very fine beard indeed, which covered the whole of his chest, and was *facile princeps* among his competitors. The mustaches show, which came on afterwards, was a failure. There was only one competitor, a lame, pallid-faced gentleman, the better part of whose life had evidently been devoted to the cultivation of the "knightly growth" that won him the prize. The whole exhibition lasted a little over half an hour, and about 9:30 the band played 'God Save the Queen,' and the audience was dismissed."

THE FAMILY LETTER.

HOW THE MATERIALS ARE PROCURED.—HOW THEY ARE USED.—WHAT BECOMES OF THE RESULT.

The family letter is written on Sunday. The reason that day is selected is not alone because of the leisure it presents. The quiet of the day, its relief from all influences that irritate or agitate, frees the mind from irrelevant and antagonistic matter, and makes it pre-eminently a fit occasion for communing with distant loved ones. In nine cases out of ten the letter is written by the head of the family, and of those sent an equal proportion is addressed to his wife's folks. We don't know why it is that a man so rarely writes to his own folks, but as it is not the province of this article to treat on that subject, we will pretend we don't care. The hour being selected for inditing the letter, the first thing is to find the paper. There is always a drawer in every well-regulated family for keeping such things. It is either in the table or stand. Here the writing paper and odd screws and fiddle-strings and broken locks and fish lines and grocery receipts are kept. There may be other things, but if there are he will see them. The sheet of paper is finally found; the fly stains neatly scraped off, and the search commences for the ink and pen. The former is invariably found on the mantel next to the clock, and is immediately laid on the table convenient to the perspiring man, who sarcastically inquires if the letter is to be written to-day or next Sunday. This inspires the wife with new zeal in the search. She goes over the drawer again, because she knows he wouldn't see anything if it was right under his nose, but the pen is not there. Then she looks over the top of the bureau, and lifts everything on the top of the front-room table, and says it seems so singular it can't be found, when she saw it only the day before, and thought about the letter. Then she goes into the pantry, and, after exploring the lower shelf in vain, stands upon a chair, and carefully goes over the top shelf, where the medicine-bottles and unused cans are stationed. After she has done this, she starts up stairs, and pretty soon returns with the pen, and takes it to the sink to wash the grease from it, but does not succeed in quite effacing the scent of bergamot. This leads him to observe that anybody who takes a pen-holder to lift hair-grease from a bottle is too pure and innocent for this world. Everything now in readiness, good humor is restored, the wife takes her seat opposite, with her elbows on the table and her chin in her hands, and assumes an expression of countenance that is mysteriously calculated to both encourage and repress the writer; and he grasps the pen tightly between his fingers and stares at the paper with an intensity that is entirely unnecessary. The date-line starts off glibly, and then suddenly ceases as it reaches the date itself. He puts the holder in his mouth and immediately spits it out again, making up a face that is no wise suggestive of bergamot, and pettishly asks her if she knows the day of the month. Of course she does. Is it the 13th—or is it the 14th—but no—it must be. She hesitates, stares at him, wavers, and is lost. She don't know whether it is the 13th or the 14th, but the almanac will tell, and she at once starts to hunt it up. This occasions a delay of fifteen minutes, during which he makes about ninety-five passes at one fly. The date having been satisfactorily settled upon, and the things which rolled over the floor as that stand drawer unexpectedly fell out having been restored to their place, the date line is completed, and "Dear Mother" started. The pen is a home pen of bashful mould, and whenever it starts a line it requires a half-dozen passes to make it give down. All home pens do this. And all home sheets of paper have weak spots which the ink refuses to cross, thus creating some remarkable divisions of words, and considerable confusion among sentences. Some of these spots are two inches in diameter, and anybody in the next room can tell the moment the writer comes to them, just as well as if he was looking over his shoulder. When the letter is completed, which generally occurs at the end of the fifth hour from the commencement, it is carefully read over, and supplied with absent words, and then gone over again and artistically touched up with the pen at the bare places. Then it is folded up ready for the envelope, and the discovery is made that there is no envelope in the house, and the letter is tucked in behind the clock until the want is supplied.—*Danbury News.*

A GOOD lady who, on the death of her first husband, married his brother, has a portrait of the former hanging in her dining-room. One day a visitor, remarking the painting, asked, "Is that a member of your family?" "Oh, that's my poor brother-in-law," was the ingenuous reply.

SCENE IN AN OPIUM SHOP.

One who has never visited an opium shop can have no conception of the fatal fascination that holds its victims fast bound—mind, heart, soul, and conscience, all absolutely dead to every impulse but the insatiable, ever-increasing thirst for the damning poison. I entered one of these dens but once, but I can never forget the terrible sights and sounds of that "place of torment." The apartment was spacious, and might have been pleasant but for its foul odors and still fouler scenes of unutterable woe—the footprints of sin trodden deep in the furrows of those haggard faces and emaciated forms. On all four sides of the room were couches placed thickly against the walls, and others were scattered over the apartment wherever there was room for them. On each of these lay extended the wreck of what was once a man. Some few were old—all were hollow-eyed, with sunken cheeks and cadaverous countenances; many were clothed in rags, having probably smoked away their last dollar; while others were offering to pawn their only decent garment for an additional dose of the deadly drug. A decrepit old man raised himself as we entered, drew a long sigh, and then with a half-uttered imprecation on his own folly proceeded to refill his pipe. This he did by scraping off, with a five-inch steel needle, some opium from the lid of a tiny shell box, rolling the paste into a pill, and then, after heating it in the blaze of a lamp, deposit it within the small aperture of his pipe. Several short whiffs followed; then the smoker would remove the pipe from his mouth and lie back motionless; then replace the pipe, and with fast-glazing eyes blow the smoke slowly through the pallid nostrils. As the narcotic effects of the opium began to work he fell back on the couch in a state of silly stupefaction that was alike pitiable and disgusting. Another smoker, a mere youth, lay with his face buried in his hands, and as he lifted his head there was a look of despair such as I have seldom seen. Though so young, he was a complete wreck, with hollow eyes, sunken chest, and a nervous twitching in every muscle. I spoke to him, and learned that six months before he had lost his whole patrimony by gambling, and came hither to quaff forgetfulness from these Lethæan cups; hoping, he said, to find death as well as oblivion. By far the larger proportion of smokers were so entirely under the influence of the stupefying poison as to preclude any attempt at conversation, and we passed out from this moral pest-house sick at heart as we thought of these infatuated victims of self-indulgence and their starving families at home. This baneful habit, once formed, is seldom given up, and from three to five years indulgence will utterly wreck the firmest constitution, the frame becoming daily more emaciated, the eyes more sunken, and the countenance more cadaverous, till the brain ceases to perform its functions, and death places its seal on the wasted life.—*Lippincott's Magazine.*

LEMONS AND SILVER.

The native jewellers of India never touch silverware with any abrasive substance. For all articles of the kind, even the most delicate, the method of cleaning is by rubbing briskly with slices of juicy lemons. For delicate jewelry the Indians cut a large lime nearly in half, and insert the ornament; they then close up the halves tightly, and put it away for a few hours. The articles are then removed, rinsed in two or three waters, and consigned to a saucepan of nearly boiling soapsuds, well stirred about, taken out, again brushed, rinsed, and finally dried on a metal plate over hot water, finishing the process by a little rub of wash-leather (if smooth work). For very old, neglected, and corroded silver, the article is dipped, with a slow stirring motion, in a rather weak solution of cyanide of potassium; but this process requires care and practice, as it is by dissolving off the dirty silver the effect is so obtained. Green tamarind pods (containing oxide of potash) are greater detergents of gold and silver articles than lemons, and are much more employed by the artisan for the removal of oxides and firemarks.

LIQUID AMERICA.

Writing from Vienna, a correspondent of the *Baltimore Gazette* gives the following list of the plain American drinks that our German friends are beginning to learn to like, which are served up, smothered in crushed ice, at thirty, fifty, sixty, and eighty kreutzers, or at twenty-five, thirty, and forty cents in American currency, under the title of "American mixed drinks": Apple-jack and cocktail Jersey, brandy and soda (English), brandy champagne, brandy crusta, brandy fix, brandy julep, brandy punch, brandy sangaree, brandy sling, brandy smash, brandy sour, brandy toddy, Baltimore egg-nogg, Boehm and Wieh's favorite claret cup, claret cobbler, claret punch, claret sangaree, Catawba cobbler, Catawba punch, champagne cocktail, egg flip, eye-opener, French cocktail, gin cocktail, gin julep, gin crusta, gin punch, gin sling, gin smash, gin sour, gin toddy, hock cobbler, John Collins (English), Indian wigwag punch, Jamaica rum punch, Jamaica rum sour, Knickerbocker, lemonade (plain), lemonade (with a stick), lemonade (fancy), milk punch, Metropolitan punch, (U.S.A.), pousse-café (New York style), pousse-café (New Orleans), pectoral