IN SOUTHERN COTTON FIELDS

FUN FOR THE DARKIES IN PICKING TIME.

NIMBLE FINGERS THAT GATHER GREAT HEAPS IN A DAY—GINNING THE SNOWY HARVEST AND SENDING IT TO MARKET.

From the 1st of September until after the Christmas fires are lighted on the hearth, cotton is the absorbing topic on the Southern plantation. Early in the morning, the pickers assemble; little and big, young and old, light and dark, and arming themselves with bags, baskets and sheets, take their way to the fields, chattering as they go, merry and light-hearted.

"I's went to de moonlight pickin' last night to Abe Whetstone's; dey had a heap o' frolickin' ober dere," one tall girl remarks to the short girl by her side.

"Nobody neber went from us house," announces the short girl. "Poppie low he neber aim to hab no gelderin' to his place for no cotton-pickin' and he don't 'tend for us to mix up wid none. He say de people get to frolickin' and grab een trash and dead leaf and ebry sort ob someting tryin' so hard to git ahead ob one anudder."

"Dat dey does," agreed the tall girl, "but by habin' a pickin' dese bright moonlight nights dey gits a sight o' cotton took een out de fiel' for nuthin'. Don't cost 'em nuthin' scusin' de supper."

"What did dey gie you all for supper?" asked her companion.

"Aunt Manda gie 'em a very good layout, biled greens, wif dumplin's, corn dumplin's een 'em, and dey had rice and bacon, and tater tarts. Eberybody most git help twice round; leastways I know I did and all dêm gals from de New-Hope place."

"Who dance fo' 'em arter dey git done pickin'?" asked the short girl.

"Boysie Zatum. And Son Geldrick git out een de middle and low to dance Boysie down, but he neber touch him, and de people jist shout and shout and laugh at Son undertekin' to down de head dancer."

"Boysie is a powerful hand to play on de mouth organ," said the listener. "I neber did hear a nigger wid sich a good pull to his lip. I's goin' to hab good pickin' to-day," she continued, as they entered the field; "dis piece ob cotton open awful purty."

At 12 o'clock, and again at nightfall, on every big plantation and little farm throughout the South, they are weighing the cotton that has been picked. If the hands are not hired by the month, they have been paid off at the rate of fifty cents a hundred pounds. Fifty cents is the uniform price, though occasionally the farmers club together and all agree that they will not give over forty cents, and again the pickers band together and declare that they cannot pick for less than sixty cents a hundred. A good average day's work for an adult is to pick 150 pounds, but one colored girl is known to pick from 250 to 300 pounds and not work the entire day. Instances where 350 and even 400 pounds are gathered by one person in a day are not rare, by any means, but such a result requires the closest application with no cessation from labor. Some wise planters refuse to have these exceptionally expert pickers in the fields, because it is supposed that they gather in the cotton so hastily that they grab dead leaves and half-opened bolls and all sorts of trash in their hurry. This foreign matter would not only injure the gin-saws, but materially lower the grade of the bale in which it happened to be packed.

A great deal depends on the special crop of cotton that is being gathered; if the bolls are nearly all opened at the same time—fully blown—in thick clusters, much more can be picked in the same space of time than in a field where only a few bolls were opened on each stalk. A farmer running what is called a "two-horse farm," say of fifty acres, most of which is planted in cotton, can make expenses by having the picking done by his family. Young women, and sometimes those no longer young, in the family of a well-to-do farmer, have what they call a "side crop" (that is, a small acreage independent of the general fund) of cotton planted in some spot near their dwelling, under the orchard trees perhaps, and they pick this themselves. By thus saving the expense of having it gathered, they realize a little sum for "pin money."

Few "pickers" of this sort ever become very expert; it takes nimble fingers and a certain knack to pick rapidly. There is a tradition among the negroes that it takes three acres of cotton averaging six bolls to each stalk to make a bale of cotton on poor land, and a bale to every acre is calculated on where the land is rich and highly fertilized. The present extremely low price of cotton makes a difference of a great deal over $1,000 on the sale of a hundred bales as compared with the price a few years ago, but then, as old January says, "cotton does receive (deceive) you so." January is the cotton packer at the gin, and he looks as if he were going to a masquerade ball as "Snow" during the months of the ginning, little lumps and flakes of cotton sticking all over his clothes from head to foot, and even to his closely knotted woolly hair.

The boys on the plantation, white and black, of high and low degree, enjoy the ginning season very much. They love to leap into the downy, yielding mass which the packer is crowding into the bagging-lined cavity and which presently will assume the shape of a bale, and sink out of sight, to come up later transformed into snow men by the fleecy particles which cling to them. They love to ride in from the fields on the tops of wagons piled high with the white staple in which they can stretch as on a luxurious couch. And they particularly enjoy playing on the new-made cotton bales, piled tier upon tier, alongside the fence near the dwelling-house, and forming a royally elevated playground for such games as "hide and seek," "toucher," etc.; then, too, if they are anxious to make pocket money with which to buy some long-coveted article dear to a boy's soul, an opportunity awaits them in the newly opened fields, where persons of small stature possessing nimble little fingers have the best chance for success.

There is cotton everywhere, cotton stowed away in houses made for it, in spare rooms in the cabins, often in rooms that cannot well be spared, hoarded until sufficient is got together to be carried to the gin. There is cotton with the seeds in it, packed in quantities in the bin-like compartments of the ginhouse which serve to divide one man's bale from the other, all waiting to feed the insatiable jaws of the gin, jaws that will tear and cut, grind and gnaw, at the mass tumbled into them until the little globular seeds are freed from their fibrous enthralment and the staple rolls out from beneath the machinery in sheets wide and smooth and white. There is cotton in clouds in the "lint room," which resembles nothing so much as a tremendously thick snowstorm. Wagons are met on the public highway loaded with cotton, two-horse and one-horse wagons, four-mule and five-mule wagons, wagons hauled resignedly by two meek-eyed oxen, and small carts with one bale, one negro and one solitary ox straining under his load and resenting his unique harness and lack of a yoked companion—all carrying South Carolina's tribute to the great markets of the world. The railway sheds and freight cars are full of the staple, and the pulse of all the business marts of the fair Southland, from the little interior country town to the crowded wharf in front of the factor's office in the seaboard city, rises higher when the year's crop of cotton is going to market.

Cotton-picking time is the gladdest time of the year for the small farmers, black and white. All through the summer articles are bought on credit to be paid for when the people "start to pick." A few pounds of cotton taken from time to time from a big field would never be missed by the owner, and small peculations of that description became so prevalent that the Legislature in several States passed laws making it illegal for merchants to buy seed-cotton in small quantities until after a certain date in December, by which time it was supposed most of the cotton crop would be gathered, ginned and packed in bales. Of course there are ways of evading the law, but few would take the trouble to hide away small stolen lots until such time as they could lawfully dispose of them, and the farmers find their harvest fields better protected than they were before the statute was enacted.

PROPOSED CANAL IMPROVEMENTS.

Albany, Nov. 24.—State Engineer Campbell W. Adams becomes more confident daily of the feasibility of his scheme to substitute for the sixteen locks above Cohoes on the Erie Canal a steel lift lock several hundred feet long, which may be raised or lowered 140 feet. He is receiving communications from business men all over the State favoring the change, which would result in the saving of many hours for boats traversing that portion of the canal. The State Engineer has already begun the survey of the ground in the vicinity of the "sixteens" in order to present to the Legislature early in January a report on the proposed improvement.

Lost and Found.

LOST—Monday, chamois bag, containing four diamond rings and medallion pin set in gold and diamonds. Most liberal reward. Room 2, 122 East 25th-st.

Real Estate for Exchange.

EXTRA FINE 7-story fireproof investment property, near Fifth Avenue Hotel; exchange for city or country property and cash. MARTIN, owner, 11 Wall-st.

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F. C. TAYLOR, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, HOUSTON, TEXAS.

Special attention given to looking up land claims and heirs in Texas.

A.—PHILIP A. SMYTH, Auctioneer. SMYTH & RYAN sell at auction Wednesday, December 5, at 12 o'clock, at New-York Real Estate Salesroom, 111 Broadway, 337 WEST 25TH-ST. near 9th-ave., 3½ story, basement and cellar, brick dwelling, 21.6x60x98.9. LIBERAL TERMS—IMMEDIATE POSSESSION. Maps, etc., at Auctioneer's Office, 111 Broadway.

A.—PHILIP A. SMYTH, Auctioneer. SMYTH & RYAN sell at auction Wednesday, December 5, at 12 o'clock, at New-York Real Estate Salesroom, 111 Broadway. EXECUTORS' SALE. 307TH-ST., NEAR 9TH-AVE. Nos. 414 to 420; plot, 85x88.9; with old building, suitable for first-class flats. Maps, etc., at Auctioneer's Office, 111 Broadway.

RICHARD V. HARNETT & CO., AUCTIONEERS, WILL SELL AT AUCTION, TUESDAY, NOV. 27, at 12 o'clock, noon, at the Real Estate Exchange and Auction Room, 59 to 65 Liberty-st. 46 AND 48 EAST 87TH-ST., 3-story and basement brownstone dwellings. No. 46 is 21.2.2-3x75x100.8; No. 48 is 20x75x100.8.

144 CLINTON-AVE., Brooklyn, 2-story and mansard-roof frame residence, with extension. Lot, 46x125.

128 WILLOUGHBY-AVE., Brooklyn, 4-story and basement mansard-roof brownstone dwelling. Lot, 17x100.

MAMARONECK, Westchester Co., N. Y., 11.492-1000 acres, with 3-story and cellar frame country residence, stables and outhouses, known as the Constantine Place.

Maps at Auctioneers', 71 and 73 Liberty-st.

RICHARD V. HARNETT & CO., AUCTIONEERS, WILL SELL AT AUCTION, TUESDAY, DEC. 4, at 12 o'clock, noon, at the Real Estate Exchange and Auction Room, 59 to 65 Liberty-st.

125TH-ST., COLUMBUS-AVE. and HANCOCK PLACE. 6 very handsome 5-story and cellar brick and terra cotta flats (to be sold as one parcel), containing 36 stores and 48 apartments, on plot 150 feet on 125th-st., 52.10 on Columbus-ave., 109 on Hancock Place. The apartments are all hardwood finish and decorated. Maps at Auctioneers', 71 and 73 Liberty-st.

RICHARD V. HARNETT & CO., AUCTIONEERS, will sell at auction Tuesday, Dec. 4, at 12 o'clock noon, at the Real Estate Exchange and Auction Room, 59 to 65 Liberty-st., N. Y., the magnificent building plot at NEWPORT, R. I.

Located on Rhode Island Avenue and Red Cross Avenue, and containing 31,450 square feet, being 50 feet on Rhode Island Avenue, 150 feet on Red Cross Avenue, by 423 feet deep. Within ten minutes' walk of "The Chains," Bathing Beach, and Bellevue Avenue. Will be sold in three parcels, as follows: Two on Rhode Island Avenue, 75x208 ft. each; one on Rhode Island Avenue, 50x120 ft. Maps at Auctioneers', 71 and 73 Liberty-st.

RICHARD V. HARNETT & CO., Auctrs., will sell at auction, Tuesday, Nov. 27, at 12 o'clock noon, at the Real Estate Exchange and Auction Rooms, 59 to 65 Liberty-st., 420 West 206th-st., 5-story brick tenement, with two stores, 25x about 74x85.9; 453 West 46th-st., 5-story brick tenement, with one store, 24.2x about 87x100.5.

TOWNSEND & McILVAINE, Attorneys, 25 Pine-st. Maps at Auctioneers', 71 and 73 Liberty-st.

City Property For Sale.

A.—SMALL HOUSES FOR SALE. The three-story and basement brownstone houses situated on the north side of 121st-st., east of Morningside Park, a location unsurpassed for healthfulness and first-class surroundings; private residences in front and rear; houses 60 feet deep; abundance of closet room; thoroughly well built in every particular; easy payments if desired; prices exceedingly low.

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A STRICTLY FIRST-CLASS HOUSE, 30 ft. wide, house near 5th-ave., below the Park, for sale cheap. WM. P. SEYMOUR, 171 Broadway.

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FOR SALE—In 57th-st., superb residence, covering entire plot, 22.6x100.5, including dining-room extension; fine rear light; faultlessly planned; absolutely perfect in condition; bay window library; handsome music room, grand staircase and entrance hall; bathroom on each floor; new and expensive plumbing throughout the house; stylish decorations and carved woodwork; price $80,000; possession immediately; our instructions are to sell without delay. CHAS. A. SEYMOUR & Co., 5th Ave., northeast corner 42d St.

TWO THREE-STORY and basement private dwellings; modern in every respect; decorated chandeliers; restricted neighborhood; can be had at bargain. JOHN S. PICKEN, Owner, 236 West 113th-st., near 7th-ave. drive.

$12,000 CASH BALANCE on mortgage for 20 years, five-story and basement apartment houses, 75x87x98; price, $112,000; rent, $11,304; near 8th-ave. and 23d-st., will net 35% on investment. Particulars, E. MICHAELIS & SON, 85 2d Ave.

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TO RENT—FURNISHED. 16TH ST., NEAR FIFTH AVENUE. (For season only.) Superbly furnished dwelling, three-quarter house, with large dining-room extension. Permits and particulars of GEO. R. READ, 9 PINE-ST., 1 MADISON-AVE.

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TO COLLECTORS OF CURIOS.—I offer for sale to highest bidder an original ballot for President and Vice-President of the Confederacy, voted by James A. Rives, Virginia, Nov. 6, 1861. Box 213, Ocoee, Florida.

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ORIGINAL AND ONLY ACTINA CO. REMOVED to 19 Union Sq., 2d Door from 15th St.

Amusements.

ABBEY'S THEATRE, B'way, cor. 38th-st. Evenings, 8:15. Matinee Thanksgiving Day at 2. FOURTH WEEK OF THE ENGAGEMENT OF **LILLIAN RUSSELL** OPERA COMPANY. Last 6 Nights of the spectacular opera, the **QUEEN OF BRILLIANTS.** Book by H. B. W. Dam. Music by E. Jacobowski. LAST MATINEE THURSDAY, THANKSGIVING DAY. NOTICE—No Matinee will be given next Saturday, owing to the preparations for the production on Tuesday, Dec. 4th, of Offenbach's Opera Bouffe, **"THE GRAND DUCHESS."** The Theatre will be closed Monday, Dec. 3d, for final dress rehearsal. SEAT SALE OPENS NEXT THURSDAY.

AMERICAN. 42D-ST. AND 8TH-AVE. MATINEE SATURDAY. Manager ..... MR. T. H. FRENCH. EXTRA MATINEE THANKSGIVING. The distinguished author-actor, **MR. WILSON BARRETT,** in his latest romance, adapted from Hall Caine's famous story, THE MANXMAN. THE MANXMAN. THE MANXMAN. THE MANXMAN. "The 'Manxman' deserves a place in the stage triumph of this generation."—Pall Mall Gazette. Seats on sale two weeks in advance.

A. A. A. A. A. A. 14TH STREET THEATRE, near 6th-ave. MATINEES WED., SAT. and THANKSGIVING. THE SEASON'S BIG SENSATION. PALMER COX'S **BROWNIES** COMMENCING NEXT WEEK. MATINEES EVERY TUESDAY, THURSDAY AND SATURDAY.

A SERIES of FREE ORGAN CONCERTS by MR. WILLIAM C. CARL, the distinguished organist of the FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Fifth Ave. and 12th Street). Third concert to-morrow, Monday, November 26th, at 4 o'clock. Prominent soloists. Admission without card.

BROADWAY THEATRE. EVENINGS AT 8. SATURDAY AT 2. Manager ..... MR. T. H. FRENCH. TRIUMPHANT MELODY. VICTORIOUS COMEDY. THE FAMOUS **BOSTONIANS** have achieved another triumph in **PRINCE ANANIAS,** By Victor Herbert and Francis Neilson. THE VERDICT. Conquered public favor.—Herald. Costumes and scenery above criticism.—World. Success and cause for congratulation.—Tribune. The sentimental numbers delightful in finish.—Sun. It made a great hit—an enormous hit.—Recorder. Melodies bright, clean cut, full of vim.—Times. Sweet music and a bright libretto.—Press. Prevented a large audience from sighing for Robin Hood, and that was a triumph.—Advertiser. Extra Matinee Thanksgiving, Nov. 29.

BIJOU THEATRE. Broadway, near 30th-st. **Hello! BILL OLD HOSS HOEY.** IN A NEW ONE, THE FLAMS.

CARNEGIE HALL, 7th-ave., 56th to 57th st. Carnegie Chamber Music Hall. AVERILL'S SONG RECITAL, Nov. 27, 4 P. M. **PERRY AVERILL'S** SONG RECITAL. ORTON BRADLEY AT THE PIANO. Tickets at $1 at Schuberth's. Friday Aft., Nov. 30, at 2. Sat. Eve., Dec. 1, at 8. Seats, 75c. to $2.00. Now on sale. ORATORIO SOCIETY OF N. Y. Twenty-second season, 1894-95. WALTER DAMROSCH ..... Conductor. Friday Aft., Nov. 30, at 2. Saturday Eve., Dec. 1, at 8. THE CREATION. LILLIAN BLAUVELT, Soprano. CHAS. H. CLARKE, Tenor. EMIL FISCHER, Bass.

EDEN MUSEE. WORLD IN WAX. TWO GRAND CONCERTS BY DANKO GABOR'S GYPSY ORCHESTRA. ADMISSION 25c. TO-DAY.

EMPIRE THEATRE. Eve. 8:15. Mats at 2. Last Week. Nine Matinees Thursday. Regular Matinees Wed. and Sat. JOHN DREW—THE PAYABLE SHOP. Next Monday, THE MASQUERADERS.

GARDEN THEATRE. 8:15. Mats. Wed., Thurs., Sat. GRAND MATINEE THANKSGIVING. RICE'S BURLESQUE COMPANY. RICE'S BURLESQUE COMPANY. In the Burlesque Fairy Extravaganza, LITTLE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. LITTLE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. Great Success of the Engagement. New Kinetic Living Pictures. Both Time Costly Souvenirs Mon., Dec. 31.

HARLEM OPERA HOUSE. Evenings 8:15. Sat. Matinee. WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, NOV. 26. Special Matinee Thanksgiving Day. A GAIETY GIRL. A GAIETY GIRL. Mr. GEORGE EDWARDES'S COMPANY. From Daly's, Wyndham's Theatre, London. Complete in every detail, from Daly's Theatre. Next week—SHENANDOAH.

A GAIETY GIRL. Best Seats and Boxes for Every Evening and Matinees at TYSON'S, WINDSOR HOTEL. Also Best Seats for All Theatres.

KOSTER & BIAL'S. Adm. 50c. THIS WEEK. **CARMENCITA.** Last appearance in America prior to her departure for Europe. NEW SERIES. **LIVING PICTURES.** THE ROSSOWS, BRUET-RIVIERE, THE EVANS'S, BERTOLDI, McAVOY & MAY, MLLE. FOUGERE, MLLE. CHELLI, FORREST BROS., IVAN TSCHERNOFF. Grand Matinee THANKSGIVING DAY.

LYCEUM THEATRE. Charles and 23d-st. At 8:15. Matinees Thursday and Saturday at 2. A WOMAN'S SILENCE. The brilliant success of Sardou's drama. The eighth annual season of the Lyceum Theatre Stock Company.

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN. TUESDAY, NOV. 27 TO DEC. 1. Thursday (Thanksgiving) morning and afternoon, INTERNATIONAL **BICYCLE RACES,** Under the auspices of the Metropolitan Association of Cycling Clubs of New-York and New-Jersey. $10,000.00 IN GOLD COIN AND PRIZES. EIGHT OR MORE RACES EACH EVENING AND MATINEE. ARTHUR A. ZIMMERMAN, THE WORLD'S CHAMPION, has entered and will ride in one or more races at every performance. H. C. WHEELER, Champion of America. A. C. EDWARDS, Champion of England. ADRIEN GUERY, Champion of France. ALOIS VERLINDEN, Champion of Germany. LUIGI COLOMBO, Champion of Italy. LUCIEN LESNA, Champion of Switzerland. H. S. FRICKE, Long Distance Champion of Australia. ENTRIES—100—ENTRIES. AMERICAN PROFESSIONALS. ENTRIES—900—ENTRIES. CLASS A AND B. TUESDAY EVENING, 8:15. Grand Reception to the World's Champion, ARTHUR A. ZIMMERMAN. PRIZES.

1 Mile, Class A. Prizes	$80
1-2 Mile, Class A. Prizes	75
5 Miles, Class A. Prizes	125
1 Mile, 2:15 Class, Class B. Prizes	150
1-2 Mile Heats, Class B. Prizes	70
3 Mile Lap Race, Class B. Prizes	120
1 Mile, Professional, Gold Coin	150
5 Mile, Professional, Gold Coin	150

10 Laps to the Mile. $5,000 in Gold. SEATS, $1.50, $1.00 AND 50 CENTS.

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PROCTOR'S LIVING PICTURES 10 a. m. to 11: