THE HOUSE AND THE VINE.

The house is old—its windows racked;
  Its doors are falling down;
Where once the dainty tintings were
  Is now a faded brown.
The steps are rotting; in the porch
  Great gaping holes are seen;
The roof-tree's broken; with thick mold
  The boards are fairly green.

The yard is filled with weeds and trash;
  The walk is crumbling fast;
The trees and shrubs are broken—all
  Their beauty-days are past.
The sagging rails tug at their posts
  As though they fain would drop.
Aye, all is drear and desolate
  From floor to chimney top.

And yet about the crazy door
  And round the tottering stoop
Clambers and clings a tendriled vine
  In many a verdant loop;
And on that vine bright blossoms glow
  And smile through all the day;
From every dainty flow'r the bees
  Sweet burdens bear away.

The broken house—a ruined man
  With blighted life and fame;
Soul-windows dimmed, a tarnished coat—
  A more than tarnished name.
The clinging vine, a woman's love—
  Perchance a mem'ry dear
Whose fragrant blossoms bless the world
  Through all the changing years.
—S. W. Gillilan, in Los Angeles Herald.

The Ambition of the Kaufman Family

"SPEAKING of police stupidity and queer crimes," said the captain musingly, "reminds me of my first big case, how cutely I worked it and what a failure it turned out to be from the public point of view. I was a green hand, but I had risen to the degree of 'plain clothes,' and was beginning to get a reputation with the department and the newspapers when the Kaufman case came up and put me to the bad for keeps, especially with the police reporters.

"Old man Kaufman was cashier of the Dexter National Bank and lived in Cedar Grove, a suburb chiefly noted for 'exclusive society.' Half the population kept poor trying to cut a wide social swath, and the other half lived in misery from envying their neighbors. Nobody was very rich, and nobody was very poor, and it was one of those places where the people are always talking about 'our first families,' pulling off 'functions' and pitying the 'plain people.' Of course I didn't class up very well, being a detective, but old man Kaufman overlooked that and was the best, perhaps the only friend I had among the swells.

"He had a big family, about seven children—all grown young women of the 'high-society' kind—and they didn't do a thing to the old man's finances. What with summer tours and winter gayeties, pink teas, soirees, theatre parties and all that sort of doings, made the Kaufman ladies wild, and as Heckburg's was a dingy sort of a cottage, built right up against Kaufman's lot, the old fellow, his wife and his high-toned daughters had their hearts set on buying it.

"'It ain't worth more than $3000,' Kaufman explained to me one night, 'and I could have had it for $2500 last summer when Heckburg went broke on the races. I'll get him in the same fix again, I hope. He won't sell now. Never will sell so long as he's flush, but the first time he goes broke I'll get the place. Last time I didn't have the cash, and, gambler-like, he wanted it right off—wouldn't wait a day. I'm ready for him now, though.'

"And Kaufman tapped his breast and whispered, 'I got $3000 in my inside pocket. Carry it there all the time, ready for Heckburg to go broke.' I told the old man that he was foolish to carry so much cash around with him, but he said Heckburg was one of those men that couldn't be induced to let go for anything but ready money. 'I carry it in my inside vest pocket, and nobody knows it but you and me,' he said. I was a little surprised to know that he had so much cash of his own, but I didn't think much about it till a few days later, when, as I said I got my first big case.

"Of course I didn't live in the swell part of Cedar Grove, but at that my room wasn't more than six or seven blocks from Kaufman's. It was about three o'clock one winter morning, just before Christmas, when I was routed out of bed by Kaufman's coachman. I lit the gas and let him in, and while I was dressing he told me that the old man had just been murdered. 'Taint more'n three days ago he told me if anything ever happened to call you, and so I came here first.' I thanked my stars that I was to have the first chance, and in five minutes we were trudging through the snow to the Kaufman house. From the coachman's talk I learned that the first indication of trouble had come about a half-hour before, when he and the family were awakened by the report of a shotgun, followed almost immediately by a pistol shot.

"He slept in a room over the barn, but had run over to the house and reached the side porch before anyone in the house had appeared. He found old Kaufman lying face down, dying, on the porch floor. His shotgun lay beside him, and, further away, a pistol, which he supposed must have been dropped by the burglar. When I got to the house it was all lighted up, the women were upstairs screaming and going on, and two or three neighbors, attracted by the shots, were just arriving. The poor old banker was yet where he had fallen, and nobody seemed to have the nerve to take even a second look at him. I made everybody stay in the house, got a lantern and stationed the coachman at the front gate to keep newcomers from tracking up the snow.

"One of the first things I did after making sure that Kaufman was dead was to examine his pockets. His watch, a good gold one, was in his vest, which was unbottoned as if he might have hurriedly thrown it and the coat on. He was fully dressed even to the lacing of his shoes. I remembered about the $3000 which he was in the habit of carrying in his inside vest pocket and looked for it. It was gone. The pistol ball had entered his forehead, was powder burned. I looked for tracks in the snow and found only the single trail of the coachman as he came from the stable and those of a fox terrier, Kaufman's, which was now following me about in the yard. As most of the snowfall had come since midnight I began to be mystified about the burglar—how he had come and how he had gone. Then I looked about for signs of the single discharge of the shotgun, and found the shot had imbedded itself in the side of Heckburg's house, just across the lawn from Kaufman's porch.

"Well, the town authorities soon arrived, and the coroner and all of them made a thorough examination of the whole premises. They decided that Kaufman had frightened the burglar away before the latter had a chance to rob him. The neighbors began to tell yarns about 'suspicious-looking tramps' having been seen, and of course the next day's papers played it for a mysterious murder, which was 'baffling the whole police department.' I got charge of the case and was still working on it when the Kaufman family moved away to town. All I found from them was that 'poor papa had been late that night searching the house for some paper he had lost two days before,' and that since his loss he had been much worried.

The next day I went to the President of the Dexter National Bank, and after swearing to keep the secret, learned that the semi-annual count of the bank's money made by the directors on the day after Kaufman's murder disclosed a shortage. 'How much was it?' I asked him. 'Three thousand dollars,' said he. 'I may get it back for you, I told him, only asking that he maintain the same secrecy he had required of me. Meanwhile the papers and the people of Cedar Grove were roasting the police in general and me in particular for not catching the burglar and murderer. I got the keys of the Kaufman house and lived there alone, searching it for three days before I got a clew. And what do you suppose it was?

"I simply found a lot of chewed-up greenbacks in the empty doghouse in the back yard! Then I knew that the fox terrier was the burglar. I sifted the old straw, waited until the snow was gone, and raked over every inch of that yard, looking for pieces of the money. I found nearly a hatful of faded, tattered shreds. You can guess the rest. I took the old pistol found beside poor Kaufman and showed it to every pawnbroker in town. I wanted to find out who bought it, for I knew that Kaufman never kept a pistol in the house and never carried one. At last I landed in an old junk-shop on the West Side and showed the pistol. The owner recognized it at once. He knew me and made a straight story of it. He had sold the gun to a fine-looking old man who wore side whiskers and was very nervous. 'He told me he vanted to kill a wicious dog mit it,' explained the dealer. But I knew all I wanted to know.

"'But you haven't explained everything?' objected the lock-up man, who was dull.

"'You're a fat-headed Denny,' sneered the Captain, 'Can't you see the dog carried off the money? Well, when the old man couldn't find it and remembered that next day was 'count' day at the bank he just bought the pistol, took a shot at Heckburg's house as a blind, and then killed himself with the 'burglar's' pistol. And it was a slick game, too, for it's no disgrace to be killed by a burglar, but an embezzler! Why, the very hint of it would have ruined the social prospects of the Kaufman ladies forever, and the poor old cashier was all wrapped up in his family.

"'And what did you get, Cap'n?' marveled the lock-up.

"Oh, I got $100 from the bank for turning in the scraps and keeping still, and from everybody else I got—roasted. To this day the newspapers keep talking about how "the Kaufman murder was never avenged." "—John T. Raftery, in the Chicago Record-Herald.

"HE TOLD ME HE VANTED TO KILL A WICIOUS DOG MIT IT."

A Satisfactory Breakfast.

A man's idea of a satisfactory breakfast is the kind that he can eat using only one hand while the other holds his newspaper.—New York Press.

SCIENTIFIC & INDUSTRIAL

An Englishman has invented a process for treating China grass, which grows in India and the Straits Settlements, so that it can be used to manufacture textile fabrics. The cloth made therefrom is said to resemble silk, and to cost little more than cotton.

While drilling for oil in the Colorado desert in South California the drilling tools, which reached a depth of 500 feet, were suddenly thrown out and the well began to spout hot water and steam. Volcanic substances were showered about the surrounding country, says the Railway and Engineering Review, and the men lost no time in escaping from the derrick. Some distance from the point where the well was drilled is a region where signs of volcanic conditions underneath frequently appear, and it was thought that the well was drilled down to this stratum.

Some enterprising Danes, who established dairies in Siberia, have been met by discouraging conditions on account of the ignorance of the peasants there. Many dairies have been destroyed by mobs, because it was believed that the Danes had been sent there by the devil to turn milk into gunpowder for the Chinese. Things were made only worse when a drought came, for the peasants demanded that the dairymen bring rain by waving their handkerchiefs, and when this was not done they became so furious that the Cossacks had to be called on to disperse them. Siberia's most crying need is the establishment of public schools.

Apiculture, far from being a minor industry in this country, patronized by a few gentlemen farmers and country housewives, is one of very promising growth. The apicultural product of the country at present is estimated at $20,000,000 annually, but this is but a small part of the benefit which the country derives as a whole from the industry, since the part the bees play in the proper cross-fertilization of seed crops and fruits is of inestimable value. At present there is a demand for information in regard to the diseases peculiar to bees. Whole colonies are often carried away by contagious diseases, and epidemics occasionally occur that sweep whole sections of the country. A study of bee diseases is to be undertaken by the Division of Entomology during the coming year.

Mention nougat, or pistache ice cream, and immediately the mind wanders off to the sunny slopes of the Mediterranean, the native home of the pistache nut. It will come as a surprise, therefore, to learn that the Bureau of Plant Industry considers this nut suitable for introduction in this country. Already a few scions have been imported, and its culture is now to be vigorously prosecuted. The experts believe that if it does not succeed in this country, it will, at least, prove a valuable plant for introduction in Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines, and active work in this direction is being undertaken. Some work has already also been started on the guava, one of the most important of household fruits of the tropics and subtropics. A number of seedlings are being grown, with the main idea of producing a variety with fewer seeds than those now known.

There is a wide spread popular notion that twilight in the tropics is very bright and that daylight is almost immediately succeeded by night. Twilight lasts until the sun is about eighteen degrees below the horizon, and even in the tropics it requires more than an hour for the sun to reach this depression. Professor Bailey, of the Harvard College Observing Station at Arequipa, in Peru, has lately printed observations bearing on the point in question, as follows: "On Sunday, June 25, 1899, the sun set at 5.30 p. m., local time. At 6 he could read ordinary print with perfect ease. At 6.30 time could be told from a watch face. Until 6.55 p. m. (nearly an hour and a half after sunset), the shadow of an opaque body on a white surface was still visible. Similar observations were made at another tropical station on August 27, with like results. Coarse print could still be read forty-seven minutes after sunset.

Health Slates.

"Antiseptic slates" are the things that the careful, germ-fearing mother buys for her children nowadays. They are made of some lightweight material, papier mache, perhaps, and there is no temptation to spit on this slate or even to use a sponge on it. A piece of cotton flannel is all that is necessary for an eraser.—New York Press.

A single page of Charles Lamb's handwriting, containing his sister's poem to Emma Isola, was sold in London recently for $135.

WHO?

"Who befriended Uncle Sam?"
  "I," said John Bull,
"I used my pull.
"I befriended Uncle Sam."

"Who helped him lick Spain?"
  "I," said the Kaiser.
"I stood right by, sir.
"I helped him lick Spain."

"Who stood off the Powers?"
  "I," said the Czar,
"I was right thar,
I stood off the Powers."

"Who's his friend now?"
  "I," said they all,
With unanimous bawl.
"I'm his real friend now!"
—Chicago Tribune.

FIN-A-C FACETIOUS VEIN

He—"He thinks her complexion is genuine." She—"Oh, well, love is sometimes color blind."—Judge.

"Oh, John," said the young wife, gleefully, "baby's got a tooth." "Is that what he's trying to tell the neighbors about?"—Brooklyn Life.

He popped, and then it came to pass
  That, having briefly stated
His love, the lass refused. Alas!
  His heart was lass-erated.
—Philadelphia Record.

La Mont—"Science is trying to prove that laziness is a disease." La Moyne—"Great goodness! There are enough incurable diseases already."—Chicago News.

The Owner—"The tenants complain that you are surly and unaccommodating." The Janitor—"Well, sir, ain't I here to protect your interests?"—Indianapolis News.

The bore, though scantily admired,
  Is none the less a happy elf.
He talks till every one is tired
  And thus is never bored himself.
—Washington Star.

Friend—"A scientist needs a great deal of patience." The Professor—"Yes, indeed. A man may toil for years without attracting enough attention to be denounced as a humbug."—Brooklyn Life.

"Hello, Tommy! Not gone back to school yet?" "No; I'm in luck. Sis is going in for measles. But how is it you haven't gone?" "Oh, I'm in luck, too! Our baby is having whooping cough!"—Punch.

"What has been the greatest difficulty with which you have had to contend, Mrs. Kinder, in your struggle with the servant girl problem?" "Preventing the good ones getting married."—Indianapolis News.

Miss Koy (in street car)—"It's really very kind of you, Mr. Crabbe, to give me your seat." Mr. Crabbe—"Not at all. We men are getting tired of being accused of never giving up our seats except to pretty girls."—Philadelphia Press.

Husband—"I am surprised, Emily, that you should have such bad taste as to wear the hair of another woman on your head." Wife—"And I am surprised that you should wear the wool of another sheep on your back."—Tit-Bits.

Burt—"Hendry says he has enlarged the circle of his acquaintance very much the last year." Styles—"What does he mean by that? That he has acted so that his acquaintances keep further away from him?"—Boston Transcript.

Integrity is the Price of Promotion.

If those who are not succeeding in proportion to the amount of effort they exert would examine themselves closely, they would find, as a rule, that their locomotives are off the track. Not realizing where or what the trouble is, they merely intensify it by putting on more steam, and, the more they put on, the deeper they sink into the mud and the harder it is to move.

If they would stop long enough to examine their machinery intelligently, and make a thorough investigation of the causes that prevent its working properly, they would probably succeed in getting their locomotives on the right track before they waste all their steam plowing in the sand and mud. Even if they do not discover, until after middle life, the secret of their failure to get on, they may ultimately reach their destination.—Success.

A Far-Reaching Lighthouse.

A blinding beam of electric light, thirteen inches wide, is a new warning to ships off the dangerous shoals of Cape Hatteras. Diamond Shoal Lightship, No. 71, has been fitted with a 3000 candle-power search light, the first of its kind ever placed at sea as a mariner's beacon, and it is expected to be visible forty miles, twenty-two miles further than the regular beacon lights of the lightships can be seen. The chief element in the effectiveness of the new light is found in the fact that, the lightships never being at rest, the beam of light will sway in a varying angle and always be distinguishable. If expectations are not disappointed, Sandy Hook, Fire Island, and Nantucket Shoals will be equipped with similar electrical apparatus.—Success.