

No. 3. "Continued from last week."

The mere possession of a Stieff piano puts the seal of supreme approval upon the musical tastes of its owner. It may cost a little more, but the recollection of quality remains long after price is forgotten.

The Presbyterian College, Charlotte; Salem Academy and College, Winston-Salem; Limestone College, Gaffney, S. C.; Wintrop Normal, Rock Hill (purchased six last month); Converse College, Spartanburg, S. C.; use Stieff pianos, and Brenau Conservatory, Gainesville, Ga.; Methodist College, Columbia, S. C.; Due West Female College, Due West, S. C.; use Stieff pianos exclusively.

PLAIN PIANO TALK

ON TUNING AND VALUABLE USE FOR OLD SQUARE PIANOS

It is to be regretted that many owners of pianos do not keep them in tune. It is excusable to a certain extent, because few persons know when a piano is in or out of tune, and for the same reason so many are imposed on by "Jack leg tuners," especially in rural districts and smaller towns. In many instances these fellows represent themselves as being connected with our house or other reliable firms.

The sure way to keep your piano in perfect condition is to have it attended to by our firm. It may cost a little more, but you run no risk. Our tuners find many pianos in deplorable condition and are often told the last man that tuned the piano claimed to have been with Stieff. It's not sufficient evidence of competency for a tuner to say he had been with our firm—he must be with us now to guarantee his work to be artistic.

In connection with our Charlotte wareroom we have a repair shop equal in equipment to a small piano factory and are prepared to do all kinds of repairing and rebuilding, and we make a specialty of refinishing. In this department we are converting many old square pianos into beautiful library and sewing tables.

It's quite a fad not to trade an old square piano on a new modern piano, but send it to us and have it converted into a handsome library table for Father or sewing table for Mother. The veneers on old square pianos are usually handsome and when properly finished are exquisite. It's the most appropriate method we can suggest to convert an old worthless heirloom into a beautiful and useful piece of furniture. The cost is trivial compared to usefulness.

"Continued next week."

Don't Delay. Order Your Christmas Piano From STIEFF To-Day.

Manufacturer of the Artistic Stieff Shaw and Stieff Self-Player Pianos

Chas. M. Stieff

C. H. WILMOTH, MANAGER.

Southern Wareroom: 5 West Trade St. CHARLOTTE, N. C.

Homespun Philosophy

BY THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH.

It was the Scribbler who had found the Bohemian. There was nothing of the Bohemia about the sitting room except its simplicity and cordial welcome. The Bohemian and his violin fitted well together. Both were old and in a way, fine and good to see. The Bohemian's eyes were soft and dark and full of dreams. His beautiful white hair and snowy beard curled together and surrounded the curiously young face which was like some tropical flower withering in a snow wreath.

The coziness of the sitting room contrasted deliciously with the winter storm raging outside. The fire glowed brightly, the windows were like covets of frightened, hunted birds, found their way to hiding places, sending out wild, whispering sounds when, for a moment, the long slender violin bow was silent.

"The Scribbler, proud of his find and firm in the belief that a story lay behind it all waited delightedly, while the College Girl fastened frivolous little scarlet bows to a Christmas work basket while she smiled at him gratefully. Sometimes the music tangled itself with her bright white hair and her eyes became dreamy and her hands rested idly among the frivolous scarlet bows while the Christmas work basket waited for its most unsuitable adornment.

"That was a singularly weird little piece," said the gardener from the corner where he sat patiently holding the akin of sphy which the Plain Little Woman as patiently wound into soft pink balls. "It's beautiful in a sort of shivery, uncanny way. One hears the lap of water and the flap of sails and the whistle of the wind among tall, thin trees."

The Bohemian's eyes shone in their setting of bushy brows. His violin went out a little voluntary quiver of melody that scarcely stirred the silence. "Then you hear it, I thought that you would. It's all there," he said.

"A sea song?" questioned the Scribbler sniffing for the story and a little impatient, now that its beginning seemed near.

"Yes, it's a sea song. A sailor boy whistled it for me just before he heard it one night last summer." The College Girl looked up from her frivolous scarlet bows. Her eyes were full of a soft questioning. "We were on a little boat. He was at work, but I—well, I was just there. It's a way I have. It was a night without a breath of wind, a pale, sweet yellow night, all sea and sky, with a tiny rim of shore over to the left of us. We were becalmed and while we waited for the wind, I played for the boys. But the silence of the night crept into me and my hands were still. I could hear nothing but the lap of the water against the boat. One of the boys turned a white, listening face toward the shore. 'It's the little girl singing,' he said, and the other faces whitened. But only one heard the song. The violin vibrated, as a good violin always does when another perfectly tuned instrument is touched. While somebody got down a small life boat the sailor boy whistled the melody for me. The older men trembled at the sound and

protested vehemently, but he finished it of the violin caught it." And again he played the low, weird thing that sent queer little shivers through the fascinated listeners.

"Was it the song of a siren, or a mermaid combing her tresses in the moonlight?" asked the College Girl breathlessly, leaning forward and looking up into the Bohemian's face.

"Does it sound like the song of a siren luring men into danger, or of a mermaid idly making herself more fair? Ah, no." And the Bohemian shook his gray head slowly. "The sailors believe that it is an angel singing in a nearby cavern, the captain and his little daughter were drowned. The child had loved the sea and the sailors, and her life was spent aboard her father's vessel. From the night of her death she became the guardian angel of the ship and when any sailor is nearing a perilous hour he hears the child's sweet voice singing the little melody that I have just played. It is the sailor's duty to leave the boat at once. They wait for nothing but the necessary preparations."

"What a pretty fancy!" exclaimed the College Girl. "And only the man who is in danger hears it!"

"Do you think it no more than a fancy?" The Bohemian looked at her with his inscrutable smile.

"Well, it is more graceful and delicate than sailor's superstitions usually are, is it not?" she asked, going back to the frivolous scarlet bows and the heriboned basket.

"But what do you mean by superstition, and where do you draw the line? Perhaps the men who are much at home between throbbing and bending sky feel more keenly the influence of the Unknown. They are simpler and not so beset by the persistent cares of the world. Between waves and stars in a little simple world of their own, is it any wonder that they dream dreams and see visions? And what are these but dim, perverted pictures of the unknown—the supernatural?"

"There is no error so crooked but it hath in it some lines of truth," said the Quiet Man. "Superstition is our blind, unguided acknowledgment of the power that creates and controls. If error comes in like a flood, it mixeth with streams of truth. The new day reveals the earth grotesque and ill defined in its wrappings of mist and vapor. Objects seem dimly through clouds seem misshapen and strange. They become clear and beautiful when the clouds are gone. Ignorance is our enfolding cloud. Superstition is a sort of natural human faith that lacks the strength of conviction and the shapeliness of belief and the firmness of confidence. Spirit is not a seeming error, but lies below its surface for the hidden and ever present truth."

"There is much that no man can explain," said the Oracle, whose contemplation of the glowing coals had been uninterrupted. "I suppose that we have each a pet superstition. It may be big and gruesome, or it may be small and silly. One man is disconcerted if a rabbit runs across the road in front of him. Another goes on fairly well till his great grand-

father's ghost walks the corridors of his ancestral home. Only a few evenings ago some of us were congratulating ourselves upon having had a clear and proper view of the new moon. How all these small superstitions have crept into our minds, no man can tell. But they are there. The uncanny loneliness of an old empty house at night is more than the natural need of cheerful companionship. There is no desolation in the depths of the forest that is like it, no emptiness in the wilderness that compares with it. The space that was once a human home where little children were born and men and women lived and enjoyed and suffered and died—the walls, the roof and the foot-marked floor—the hearthstone and the windows and the doors—the doors through which the generations have passed!

"If superstitions gather more thickly about the water folk, the great loneliness and mystery of the throbbing sea with its millions of whispering lips, its changeful voices and varying moods must be held responsible. An ignorant man may hear a melody and know only that it is a sound pleasant to the ear. A musician divides it into bars and chords and a corner of a cubon, which he clearly so that another reading may reproduce every faintest note. Where the clouds are thinnest we catch sight of something that is beyond, but we are too ignorant to fashion the impression into sentences. For want of words we are dumb, or striving for speech we find men smiling indulgently at what we have to say, and when it is repeated there is merely a new rendering of an old superstition."

"A frequent similar effect argueth a constant cause; yet who hath counted the links that connect us on to its issue?" said the Quiet Man slowly. "For the soul hath its feelers, cobwebs floating in the wind, that catch events in their approach with sure and apt presentment."

The Optimist shivered and begged for a corner of a cushion, which the College Girl, shivering too, and fearful of the scarlet bows, generously granted.

"Where does he find the gruesome wording of his gloomy thoughts?" whispered the Optimist. "I shall find the dark peopled with goblins when the time comes that I must fare forth! Hear the wind!"

TWO PRETTY GIRLS.



The upper picture is that of little Miss Josephine DeVane, aged 6 years, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. DeVane, of Brevard. The lower picture is Lela May Hagler, the cute little daughter of Mr. A. G. Hagler, of Charlotte.

this. But I know now that travelers find the same type of negro training and worshiping elephants in certain African Provinces. Does the exiled slave who never saw his home remember? What is instinct? The negro is untaught. He knows nothing of the history, or traditions of his people. But somehow down through the generations there has come with the blood that is in him the love of the animal that means so much to his countrymen.

and tracking back through ranks of ordinary men and commonplace women we find away back on the rim of the forgotten an old hymn writer or a woman who sat idly and listened to the winds and waves while others at useful tasks—somebody that cared or harmonious sound. And a drop of Gipsy blood asserts itself and makes of a man a wanderer."

The Bohemian's slender brown hand crept carelessly to the violin's strings and a faint breath of melody pervaded the room. There was something in his manner and expression that made the College Girl shiver in delightful anticipation while the wind shook the windows and the fallen leaves swept noisily through the dark like restless ghost of a dead summer.

The Scribbler with his eyes upon the fire, turned an attentive ear toward the Bohemian. The Plain Little Woman glanced up timidly from her soft pink sephy, but the Gardener's reassuring smile sent her back to her pretty, patient work with a bit of pink color in her cheeks. The Motherly Woman's shining needle found its way slowly among the roses of her embroidery.

"I know all about the drop of Gipsy blood," the Bohemian said, glancing around the circle of interest faces. "It is my inheritance. It was my Grandfather who discovered it, searching patiently back through many branches of the family. But he knew that it belonged to me. He was a great musician and we lived in an old German town. I was the child of his only daughter and she died before I was old enough to know. My Grandfather divided all the love of his great true heart between his music and me." He stopped. But there was no resting the appeal of silent attention.

"I never knew much about earning money and I knew even less about keeping it. I know that my Grandfather was often anxious about my future. This Stradivarius was the darling of his heart." And the Bohemian stroked the violin lovingly. "He tested all his compositions with it. Indeed he used to compose alone in the dark with his Stradivarius, while I, who had benefited little by his excellent teaching, jotted the exquisite notes roughly on paper. As I grew older, the limits of our German town became too narrow. The drop of Gipsy blood was a trait. My Grandfather knew it and we began to roam."

"We'll keep together, we three, Laddie, you and the violin and me. We'll always keep together." I noticed as he grew older and the natural parting seemed to be drawing nearer that he was never anxious about me. "You'll get on, Laddie. We three need never be separated. The old Stradivarius will keep us together."

bed where pain held him fast. 'Go in my place, Laddie,' he said. I might have thought that he was joking, but for the strangely compelling look in his eyes. 'Take the Stradivarius and go!' I had never touched the precious violin. The command puzzled me; for I knew that the engagement was an important one, and he was quite ashamed of my poor playing. As if he read my thought he answered it, 'I shall need only your strong young arms, Laddie; lend them to me tonight.'

"I took the violin and went. He was right. The violin played itself. The people were wild. They said that the mantle of the old man had fallen upon the boy. When I went home, the landlady told me that my Grandfather had been very ill. She had gone in to ask how he fared, knowing that he had been too unwell to come. And she had found him white and still as if a deep sleep had fallen upon him."

"After this I went frequently in his place, but my Grandfather always locked himself in his room. After awhile he died and the Stradivarius was mine. I have never been able to play on my other violin. Call it superstition, fancy, transmigration, what you please. I think the little inscription here means something."

And he turned the violin over and pointed to an exquisitely fine line of carving.

"The Scribbler leaned over and read the line of carved letters. 'Me'll keep together, Laddie, you and the violin and I.'"

And then there came into the Bohemian's eyes an odd little gleam, the violin found its way to his shoulder where it seemed to nestled lovingly. The bow bounded and trembled and swept the waiting strings.

And the little audience sat spell-bound.

A NEGRO COMMITS SUICIDE.

Treasurer of a Church Spends His Money and Ends His Trouble by Jumping Into a Well.

Troy, Nov. 30.—To-day Jim Butler, who was for a long time porter for the Central Hotel, at this place, committed suicide by jumping into a well. He was treasurer of a new church for the colored people at this place, and when called on for the money he was unable to respond, having used it in his private business. He owned some real estate and had made arrangements to borrow the money, but his wife refused to sign the conveyance with him and he told her if she would not he would jump into the well and kill himself. Jim was an industrious negro and a member of the colored Masonic lodge at this place.

A REAL WONDERLAND.

South Dakota, with its rich silver mines, bonanza farms, wide ranges and strange natural formations, is a veritable wonderland. At Mount City, in the home of Mrs. E. D. Clapp, a wonderful case of healing has lately occurred. Her son seemed near death with lung and throat trouble. "Exhausting coughing spells occurred every five minutes," writes Mrs. Clapp, "when I began giving Dr. King's New Discovery, the great medicine, that saved his life and completely cured him." Guaranteed for coughs and colds, throat and lung troubles, by all druggists. 50c and \$1. Trial bottles free.

PUTS IN FOR REPAIRS.

Vanderbilt's Private Yacht Encounters a Gale on Her Trip to Florida and is Damaged—Chicago Architect to Locate at Wilmington—Book Club Making a Study of I. E. Avery. Special to The Observer.

Wilmington, Nov. 30.—The Tarantula, the private yacht of Mr. William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., of New York, is in port for some repairs made necessary by encountering a gale this week on her trip down from New York between Cape Lookout and Frying Pan. She is on Skinner's marine railway and after completing repairs will proceed to Florida waters, where she will be joined later by her owner and a party of friends. The Tarantula was formerly a torpedo boat of the United States navy, but is now quite handsomely fitted up as a pleasure craft. Four other yachts are here and at Southport, all bound for Florida, where they will be met by their owners from the North. These are Eleanor Third, belonging to Herbert Mills, of Chicago; Grainger, owned by James Harvey, of Philadelphia; the Huntress, owned by Dr. H. V. Pierce, the famous proprietary medicine manufacturer of Buffalo, N. Y., and the Nan, owned by Gus Ahman, of New York, who is on board with his wife, Buret H. Stephens, of Chicago, who built the half-million-dollar plant of the Swift refinery works here, and decided to locate in Wilmington as an architect and general engineer. He will retain his connection with the Swifts, but is prepared to handle outside work on his own account and will be in charge of the construction work in which he hopes to get interested in the State.

At the regular Friday Afternoon Book Club meeting this week at the home of Miss Susie Price, the subject of study for the past two weeks was resumed, that of the life of the late Isaac Erwin Avery. A very interesting sketch of his career was contributed by Mrs. Charles N. Evans, who was a close personal friend of the distinguished young North Carolinian, and bore testimony of his fine traits of character and his beautiful disposition. The usual dainty refreshments were served and a very pleasant evening was spent by all in attendance.

Chinese Education.

New York, Nov. 30.—There are no free schools in China, and if there were they would have no pupils. The poor people educate their own sons and daughters, and it does not take them long. When a boy can count up to ten, feel the difference between kind of money and can catch fish or snare a duck, he is thought to have all the education needed. When a girl can sew and wash dishes and tell the time of day by the clock she must ask for no more.

If one were to ask one thousand common Chinamen what other countries comprised the world, the answer would be that China was the whole show.

NOTICE TO OUR CUSTOMERS.

We are pleased to announce that Foley's Honey and Tar for coughs, colds and lung troubles is not affected by the National Pure Food and Drug law as it contains no opiates or other harmful drugs, and we recommend it as a safe remedy for children and adults. F. H. Jorling & Co.