NOW AND THEN

BY CHARLES DICKENS

Oh, a dainty plant is the Ivy Green,
That creepeth o'er ruins old!
Of right choice food are his meals I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
The wall must be crumbled, the stone decayed,
To pleasure his dainty whim;
And the moulding dust that the years have made
Is a merry meal for him.
Creeping where no life is scene.
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

Whole ages have fled and their works decayed,
And nations have scattered been;
But the stout old Ivy shall never fade,
From its hale and hearty green.
The brave old plant in its lonely days
Shall fatten upon the past;
For the stateliest building man can raise
Is the Ivy's food at last
Creeping on where time has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

DICKENS BIRTHDAY

Last Monday was the 126th Anniversary of the birth of Dickens, the 7th day of February.

His votaries met together at the usual attractive home to celebrate this event and to do honor to their creator. Mrs. Vaneering, the hostess, met her guests at the door carrying her remarkable baby, who seemed to understand all that was going on.

Among those present were; Mrs. Lirriper who left her cares and boarders at home and came to celebrate this great event, Mr. Pipkin, too, was there, ready to fall upon his knees to all the young ladies present, and Mrs. Flinching who was very young and girlish in spite of her mature years. She talked all the time, while Mr. F's aunt, a legacy, left her by her late husband, trailed behind her, she being any thing but a pleasant addition. Mrs. Varden brought her book with her so that she might read it, and not be tempted to gossip. Mr. Jeddler looked very handsome as he discoursed of his home and his daughters, while Georgiana Podsnap seemed to enjoy herself in spite of her inferiority complex.

Of course Mrs. Boffin took the cake, as she told of her dear Noddy, and of their coming up in society.

And then the feast! All the guests wended out into the dining room where the beautiful candle lighted table was loaded with the viands that the author tells about in his books.

There was the notable ham and "weal" pie, the punch made by his own recipe, and a host of other things all of which he would have approved. A merry party it was and to cap the climax, Georgiana Podsnap forgot her shyness and gave a superfine toast to Dickens, after wheih all arose and drank to his immortal memory.

In his memory, too they all joined in singing.

"God Save The King," after which they bade their hostess an revoir. Mrs. Boffin carrying with her as the prize the lovely centre piece, Dicken's favorite flower, a red geranium.

And here just before us is Valentines Day. Mrs. Alice Mathews has sent us one of her poems. "A Valentine."

A VALENTINE

By Alice Mathews

Through Wintery msits that intervene
This Valentine would bring to you
The tender love that lies between
The separation—gap we view.
And with a touch of you reveal
O'er the pathway of the years
A Spring-time flower's sweet appeal
To hush away all sorrowing tears.
Let me recount, O soul so true,
In a love song, defiant flung,
My faithful love again for you,
In this brief Valentine, high hung!

ST. VALENTINE

Old St. Valentine received his name from the uneducated people around. Not knowing how to write, and yet longing to communicate with their loved ones, these would assemble in the market place where Valentine would be ready to write for them. It surely was a great boon to these people, and no wonder they thought of him as a saint.

Writing in those days was very difficult. The pens had to be made, the ink squeezed from the juice of berries, and the paper very scarce, so Valentine's duties were not very light.

Red-Shouldered Hawk Beneficial

The red-shouldered hawk is said to be one of the most beneficial birds of prey, living principally on small rodents. It is common and one of the slow-flying hawk species.

WOMANS COLUMN

HOLLAND NOT WISHING A KING

No, they are not disappointed these Hollanders at the birth of a girl—There's a saying in Holland that "so long as we can see our Queen sewing in her window, Holland will not seek a republican form of government." This week throngs gather throughout the Netherlands to celebrate the birth of a princess to Crown Princess Juliana. There's little regret that the newcomer to the royal house is not a boy, even though a boy now or later would mean that a king would reign at the conclusion of Juliana's regime. But the burghers are satisfied with their new Princess Beatrix. They're satisfied, because Queen Wilhelmina—who since 1890 has ruled with such sagacity that the nation is now one of the richest in the world—still democratically rides her bicycle through the streets, still sits sewing in the window of her comparatively modest palace. The Dutch know how to value good housewifery—in a queen or in a huisrouw, a nation or a home.

SAMUEL PEPYS

Samuel Pepys was a famous diarist. But he loved above all to sing and play.

He would sit up late and rise early, when his warm heart was moved with the longing to sing or fiddle or pipe. To him merrymaking was almost inseparable from music; whether he was sitting up with his wife and servants, or dining with old cronies, or even traveling by boat or coach with jovial strangers, he would spontaneously burst into song, or take out his lute, his flageolet or his "viallin."

One day he was journeying to the Hague by coach—a minor member of the happy party sent to fetch King Charles II from Holland after his "travels." Behind him in the coach sat "two very pretty ladies, very fashionable, and with black patches, who vrey merrily sang all the way and that very well." How could he resist such provocation? He pulled out his gageolet from the long pocket of his wide-skirted jacket and piped a gay, shrill little accompaniment for the singers.

Again, traveling one evening along London's great highway of his day—the Thames—he fell to talking to his fellow-passenger, whom he found so congenial that, within a few minutes, their two voices were echoing in song across the river.

Pepys also found music a solace. One night, all alone on board ship, probably sad at being away from his wife, from whom he could not bear to be parted for long, he poured out his melancholy on the strings of his violin. . . . "Nothing but music with me this morning, to my great content." . . . To a man of such tireless energy and industry—with the indomitable curiosity of a newspaper reporter—music must have been an ineffably soothing influence.

REVIEW OF SOME OF THE BEST SELLERS

THE PRODIGAL PARENTS. By Sinclair Lewis. Doubleday, Doran.

The publishers call his novel "The Revolt of the Parents Against the Revolt of Youth". It concerns the story of a successful business man who suddenly realizes that he has to make some decision about his demanding son and daughter, their friends, and his shiftless relatives. Whether he shall still keep on working to add to his fortune in order that his family shall have more to spend. That decision and his escape from eternal servitude make a novel that stands beside Main Street, Babbitt and Dodsworth. There are a million bewildered Fred and Hazel Cornplows and their demanding sons and daughters. It provides a new Bill of Rights for American Parents and it may bring a new understanding to their children. If you are a father or mother with young or grown-up children; if you are curious about human problems today—Sinclair Lewis' new novel absorb and entertain you.

In order that you may get a cross section of opinion from others, the following is taken from the reviews of some of the most celebrated critics:

William Soskin of the New York Herald-Tribune says "Mr. Lewis's new novel takes a lusty sock at dilettante radicalism and professional Communism, and does it with such chuckling good humor, that the book may create a popular attitude of mind. Readers who look for a Nobel Prize winner will not find these qualities. The novel is not one of Mr. Lewis's large works, but it is up-to-the-minute, ironic and sincere comment on ourselves, made at the psychologically fortunate moment, which is Mr. Lewis's intelligent way". This gentleman evidently liked the story even if he does not go into ecstacies over it.

Elmer Davis in The Saturday Review rates it below Babbitt which he says "was the best of a decade, and a good decade. Lewis always slapped on the satire with a trowel but in the old days it usually stuck; not so often this time. Much space is given to the dabblings of young Sarah Cornplow in communism. The material is all right but the total effect not so good. Elsewhere the average is better, but only a page now a and then, is the old Lewis. The wisdom in this book would have been more effective in a volume of essays". He is hypercritical for he says that "the blight has fallen not only on Lewis and Hemingway as well but on all their generation."

Nearer home we find that Gerald Johnson of the Evening Sun has this to say: "The Prodical Parents in fact is not a novel. It is a polemical essay, directed against an evil that is real enough. It is therefore, not without importance. It is written in an easy, witty, swift running style and is therefore not without merit. A book in which everybody is more or less sound certainly is not a typical Sinclair Lewis novel. However most of us, if we would confess the truth, have no small liking for a first rate fairy tale, and this is a good, easy one, which exercises no strain whatever on the brain cells". It is one of the most amusing of his novels.

It may interest you to know that he was born in Sauk Centre, Minn. His father was a country doctor and his mother a daughter of a physician. He went to Yale three years, then joined a socialist colony in New Jersey. For many years he was not successful. His work was varied. He has gone from Janitor to a Nobel Prize winner but not without discouragement and suffering. His wife is the celebrated Dorothy Thompson whose columns are an important feature of the daily New York Tribune. They have one son, Michael John.



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BY

GEORGE A. HANSON

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