

SONGS OF THE HEART

By FORREST CRISSEY
AUTHOR OF "THE COUNTRY BOY," ETC.

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Did you ever sit in the theater listening to the best songs, the most catchy lyrics of modern light opera, and then suddenly be filled with a heart-hunger for a song with a soul in it—a song in which tender, wistful melody is not married to words of sickening, grotesque sentimentality or salacious suggestion? I have until it hurt! And, curiously, this revulsion has been quickest aroused, in my own case, not by the blatantly nonsensical song, but by the lyric that had a thread of the real running through the shoddy—just enough trace of the genuine to make the counterfeit seem all the more abhorrent. At such times a mellow loneliness has crept over me, and I have longed to hear a real song, ringing true and clear and breathing a spirit instead of a sound—longed for it as for an absent friend, or as for "the days that are no more."

And out of such moments and moods has grown the question: How long shall we suffer under the scourge of the rapid, puerile, and suggestive in the songs of the day? Is the generation which places the laurel of popularity upon "Gee, Be Sweet To Me, Kid," and fills streets and homes with the multiplied repetitions of "I Simply Cannot Make My Eyes Behave," beyond the appreciation of honest sentiment? And if a new G. Clifton Bingham were to arise and give us a peer to "Love's Old Sweet Song," would it fall upon dead ears? I put the question, only the other day, to a publisher of popular music of the better sort. Here is his reply: "I believe that the people are hungry for songs that ring true, songs that go straight to the heart, songs that have the glow of honest sentiment instead of opera bouffe sentimentality. Human nature is not, at bottom, greatly changed since John Howard Payne gave us 'Home, Sweet Home,' or Samuel Woodworth wrote 'The Old Oaken Bucket,' or Stephen C. Foster set the world singing 'The Old Folks at Home.' The sophisticated and the base may give popularity to the song of false motive and the cultured may scorn all songs save these which bear the hallmark of the genuine—but the common people are as ready today to give fame to a new maker of songs which will reach the heart of the multitude in the same old way, as was the nation back in 1832 to thrill with a new sense of love of country when Samuel Francis Smith put into the lyrics of the common people the ringing measure of 'America.' And some poet—probably a humble one—will answer to the call of the hour, and sound the first note of a new song era which will reveal the tawdry spuriousness of the present-day favorites in all their cheapness and tinsel. We have the musicians who are equal to the task. The witchery and charm with which they clothe the feeble and frivolous offerings of the lyric writers are proof enough of their ability. Give them lines that have the vital spark and they will weave melodies that will echo from a million lips. Take the good old songs I have named—and we have none greater—they are as inextinguishable as the fires of Vulcan. As well try to put out the sun as to hush those songs in the homes of the American people! And why? Because they have real sentiment instead of the counterfeit; because they mean something that awakens a response in the soul of every human being who is not dead to love of home, of kindred and of country."

"But each generation should add to our national asset by its own songs, voicing its own spirit. And the call for the contribution from this generation is more strong. I believe that it will be answered and that the next few years will be richer in new songs which have the real fire than the period through which we have just been passing, and in which we are still lingering—the period of the comic opera, of the musical farce."

That expression, "Our national asset," caught my ear. Are songs a national asset? Give your own answer, but here is mine: Yes; an asset unthinkable, precious and valuable beyond the power of the multiplication table to express. Which would be the greater patriotic loss to this country—to strike from the sight of our eyes every United States flag in existence and banish for a century from the vision of the people the physical emblem of our nation, or to hush the strains of "America" or "The Star-Spangled Banner" in this land for a hundred years? Thousands of children look unthinkingly upon the stars and stripes every day without an added heart-beat. But is there a boy or girl, in all the myriad of school rooms of the land, who hears the strain of our national emblem without a conscious thrill?

None. And what is recognized as the quickest and surest way of awakening the love of "land of the free and the home of the brave" in the hearts of the im-

migrant children who swarm to our shores? Teach them to sing "America!" This is the rule and practice in every school room of this country where children born to a foreign tongue are taught.

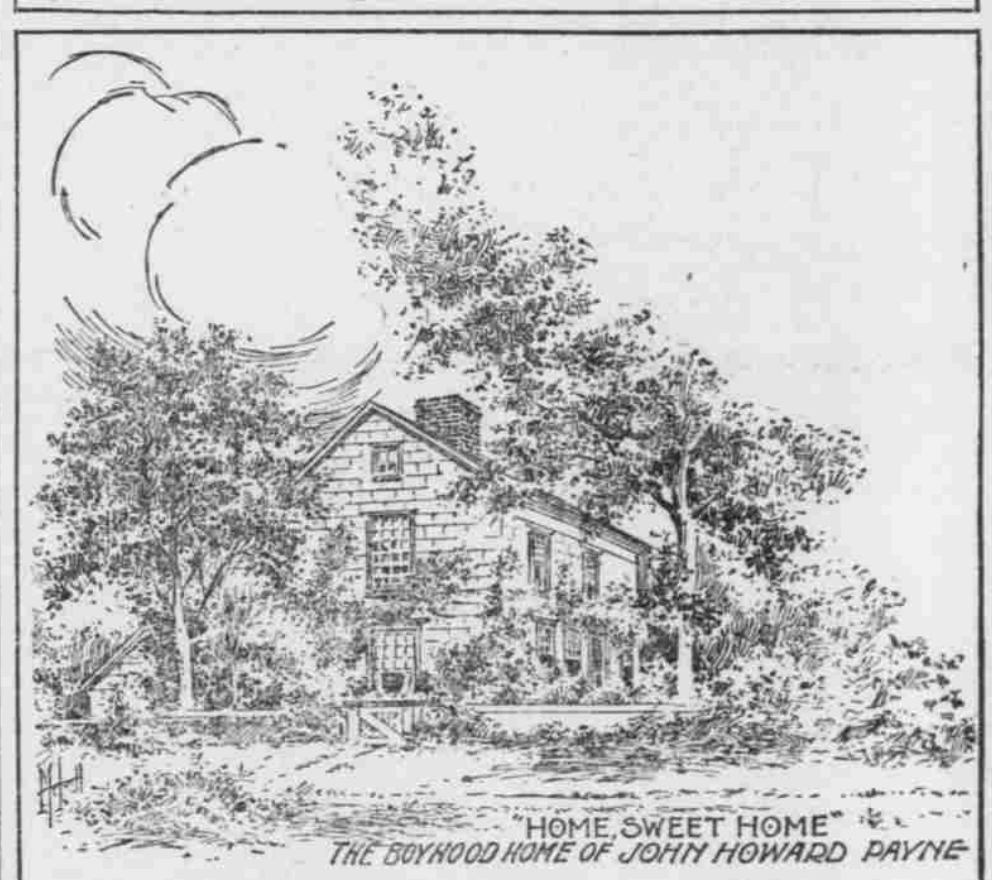
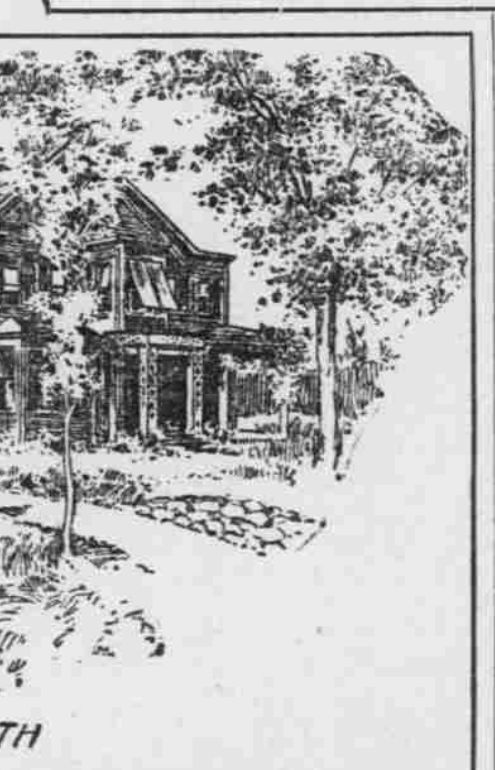
And what do you think would be the loss to American family life if "Home, Sweet Home," "The Old Folks at Home," "The Old Oaken Bucket" and the other immortal hymns of the hearthstone were stricken from our speech? Would it be small? How many children have caught the home ideal as these songs have warmed their hearts to a new and glowing understanding—caught

the cottage, at East Hampton, Long Island, in which John Howard Payne spent his boyhood days—or even to see an adequate picture of it—is to gain a clearer and more intimate understanding of why, in the garish scenes of Parisian life, his heart hungered for the roof of his childhood, and he wrote: "A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there, 'Which seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere. Home! Home! Sweet, sweet home. No more from that cottage again will I roam, 'My heart with rapture thrills 'Like that above!'" Samuel Francis Smith was only a stu-

spiration. The house which was "Home" to the author of "America" when he wrote that splendid piece of patriotism is another example of the kind of architecture that compels associations and breeds attachments. Look at the old Smith Home in Newton Center, and you will know that it must have been built and inhabited by men and women of stalwart Americanism, of a strain that could feel to the full the words: "I love thy rocks and rills, 'Thy woods and templed hills, 'My heart with rapture thrills 'Like that above!'" Samuel Francis Smith was only a stu-

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Chords and Discords

Neighborhood Scandals.
The Smiths live quietly and comfortably. They have no children. Smith's business is such that he is frequently out of the city. Occasionally he takes a long trip. Recently he left, stating that it would be a month probably before he would return. The Smiths are a "chummy" couple. They don't mix socially to the degree that it would be expected that people of their circumstances and youth would. Mrs. Smith files the theater. She and her husband rarely miss a good attraction.
Mrs. Smith, during the absence of her husband—in fact, he had been gone a day only—appeared at the theater with a handsome young man. They seemed greatly interested in one another. Three rows behind Mrs. Smith and her escort were Mrs. Jones and her husband, and in another part of the house were the Browns. Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Brown live in the same block. The Smith home is a short distance from them. Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Brown are intimates. They "shop" together

and move in the same social set. Each had had as her guests the Smiths. The Browns and the Joneses rode home together in the car after the performance. The car was crowded and it was impossible for Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Brown to get confidential. All they did was to exchange knowing glances.
However, the following morning, before their husbands had cleared the front porches on their way to their businesses, they were on the telephone. Mrs. Brown would be right over. She had children and it was impossible for her to have a quiet talk without their eavesdropping.
"My husband tells me that Mrs. Smith's new crush is a relative—just like the men, you know," said Mrs. Brown after the two had become comfortably seated in the library upstairs, with the door closed. "Of course, I made him believe that his story was correct, but I know differently. Have you ever noticed that she does not get friendly with any of the neighboring women? I have done my best to make

her feel free with me, but she always struck me as chilly—as though she had something she wanted to cover up. My husband sort of admires her. He says she is a little woman who attends strictly to her own knitting and expects others to do likewise. Of course, one of those 'still waters run deep' style. Don't understand me as wishing to reflect in the slightest on her character. I hope she is a good woman. But, to say the least, she is brazenly indiscreet.
"I wouldn't for the world have you say anything to anyone what I tell you," interposed Mrs. Jones, who finally got an opening. "I heard a long while back that Mrs. Smith had a flame. One can't believe all one hears, but this latest stunt satisfies me that all is not right in the Smith household. Smith is such a good provider. And he is so considerate of her. Look at the clothes he buys for her, and she does not have to turn her hand in the house. It would be better for her and for the future happiness of their home if he would make her do the housework. That's what she needs. She's got men on the brain. Yes, I've heard the relative story, but I refuse to be-

lieve it. If he was what she is trying to make it appear he is, she would have us over to meet him. Smith is one of those men who implicitly trust their wives. But those are the men who turn bitterly when they make a discovery such as Smith is bound to eventually. I feel so sorry for him."
The young "admirer" was an occasional caller during the absence from the city of Smith. Smith returned. The "admirer" continued to call. He was a son of Mrs. Smith's sister, whose home is in the west. Mrs. Smith or

her husband had not seen the nephew for several years. He happened to be in a neighboring city in connection with a contract which the company by which he is employed was seeking to secure. He is happily married, and at the request of Smith kept the latter's wife from becoming lonesome during his trip.
Brother Jones' Sermonettes.
My Deah Folks: Sermons an' too long. Deay don seem to sink in. I doan mean to confer dat you am thick skulled; nor dat it am a "flection" on me when Bill Wilkins goes to sleep at de crucial pint of de discourse. But Bill hain't wukkin', and I kain't understand why he should fall asleep every meetin'. However, we will have brief talks of de haht to haht variety heah-ah-ah.
"In dis connection I desires to bring up a mattah dat am agitatin' our people, and dat is, what am we goin' to do with de Indians?"
"Let 'em alone," suggested Brother Martin.
"Dat sounds well, but dis heah mattah am serious. De govment am supposed to take care of them. They

I doan mean to give the impression that I am so all-fired smart, but I have been a great student in my life. My life has been one of sacrifice. Mah climb has been gradual. I started in life as a hawdcarrier. But, to the Indians, I would favah a collection next Sunday to pay the expense of a co'se of action with the gov'ment to try to place these heah bad men which they belong. We must have peace and safety in this heah lan' of freedom and plenty."
Brother Martin inquired to know who was to take up the collection.
"I will pu'nally sup'vise this mattah of money," announced Brother Jones. "And in this connection I desire to say that the Ladies' Sewing circle will meet at my home for work next Thursday afternoon. Wintah is coming on a-pace, and we need more heavy clothes."
"Who needs them?" Brother Martin asked.
The question was ignored.
HELPS FOR THE HANDHOLDERS.
By Sophronia Slammer.
Stick to the Trolley Circuit.
Dear Miss Slammer: I love a girl. We go to parties together. Her girl friend has an admirer who seems to have plenty of money. When there is a dance he takes his girl in a carriage and buys her flowers. We ride on the cars and I can't afford to buy flowers. My girl has been chided by her girl friend. The latter says I am a tightwad, when the fact is I have been saving money to buy a home. What would you advise?
ALBERT W.
Your case is not unusual. Flowers fade; a home don't. You might look up some poetry suggesting this sentiment. Read it to your lady friend. The soft pedal is a winner nine times in ten. The other young man, mark my words, will burn out before the holidays. Exposure attendant on carriage riding in cold weather might undermine the girl's health. The cars are heated. These are points that will hold in an argument if you haven't already surrendered your goat. Then you might take your fair one to the bank with you when you make your weekly or monthly deposit. Let her carry the book. She can't get the money anyway. This display of confidence on your part will help much. You might also take her out and show her the lot you are going to buy.
MISS SLAMMER

DIARY OF AN ORDINARY HUSBAND.
By Gertrude Fairfax.
Sept. 12.—Mrs. Morton tells my wife she has a letter from a friend in the city where Mrs. Andrews lived before coming here. The letter tells, confidentially, that Mrs. Andrews almost created trouble because of her repeated winnings of prizes at the card club that she belonged to there. One afternoon another woman accused her of cheating, and they said some unkind things to each other in the presence of the entire company. Mrs. Andrews, the letter says, threatened to pull the other woman's hair. The other woman threatened to do likewise. And the letter says it was fortunate that this clash did not occur, as Mrs. Andrews has very little hair of her own. This was news to Mrs. Morton and my wife.
(To be Continued.)

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