CHOLLY KNICKERBOCKER'S CHATTER.

What People Are Saying About the Social "Thirty-Eight."

FOR all that we have been looking forward to the great display of hospitality by Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Sr., there is not likely to be any unusual entertainment in the mansion at Fifth avenue and Fifty-eighth street until after the holidays. Even then I fancy that the functions will not be as numerous as was expected.

Only one entertainment has been definitely arranged thus far that I have heard of. This is to be a party in January for their daughter, Miss Gladys Vanderbilt. Inasmuch as all the younger set will be invited to participate in this festivity it will undoubtedly be one of the liveliest of the season.

The Vanderbilt clan will be more numerously represented in New York next month than it has been for several years. George and his wife will come up from Biltmore, his vast estate in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Willie K. will be in the city. The Fred Vanderbilts are near at hand, and all the Sloanes, Twombleys, Shepards, Webbs and other connections have either come to town for the Winter or will be here at that time.

Mr. and Mrs. William Douglas Sloane, who have spent many months in knocking the big Vanderbilt structure between Fifty-first and Fifty-second streets all to pieces in an effort to reconstruct a modern establishment out of what was formerly their own home and that of Mrs. Elliot F. Shepard, have decided not to enter the list of entertainers until they take formal possession of their reconstructed and enlarged habitat.

Just when this will be it is impossible to say. Work is being rushed to the utmost, but contractors are always uncertain, and it is more than likely that the season will be well advanced before invitations from the Sloanes are received.

The Henry Sloanes Will Not Entertain.

And speaking of the Sloanes reminds me that Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sloane, who are not connected with the Vanderbilts, will not entertain at all this Winter.

At least this is the statement that has been made to me by at least a score of people, every one of whom expressed the deepest regret in making it.

Mrs. Sloane is a woman of exquisite taste and Mr. Sloane is a man of great refinement—qualities that have ever been apparent in their entertainments. These entertainments have not always been numerous, but they have been select.

Last year, for instance, they gave two balls in their new house in Seventy-second street, which were indisputably among the finest of the season. The floral decorations at both functions were superb and the favors distributed were well worth preserving as souvenirs. On each occasion two elaborate suppers were served—one early, so that those who did not wish to remain for the cotillion should not have to go home supperless, and one late, that those who had danced in the cotillion might be refreshed afterward.

It is the memory of such functions as these that makes the social world express its regret that the Henry Sloanes have abandoned the field of entertainment.

Just why they have abandoned it no one seems to know. It may be that Mrs. Sloane's interest in the daughter that she is to bring out next Winter is so absorbing that she doesn't care to do any more entertaining until the young lady's debut.

It may be—but what's the use of guessing? I don't know why the Henry Sloanes have decided not to entertain this year, and I daresay that the vast majority of the people that do pretend to know are as ignorant of the facts as I am.

Cupid Defies Jack Frost.

This is mighty cold weather for weddings, but Jack Frost doesn't appear to have put Hymen out of business. The god of marriage continues at the same old stand, whether the mercury is 10 degrees below zero or 100 above it.

Bridegrooms and brides seem to be utterly oblivious of temperature, but the rest of us are only too well aware of the weather's discomforts, and cannot help saying so.

At the Livermore-Brooks wedding on Wednesday it was so beastly cold that I thought we must surely be frost-bitten. Many of the old ladies actually shivered in their furs as they sought places in which to warm themselves.

The church was heated by hot air, and the way some of the high-born dowagers hunted the radiators was a caution to see. The younger women avoided these hot-air craters, but the older ones stood over them, and the way their skirts stood out and swelled up made each of them look like an inflated balloon. But none of them minded that. It was the heat they were after, and the manner of getting it didn't matter.

There were lots of things about this wedding that have been talked about since. They are little things, and of no consequence whatever, but they serve to make conversation, and in that way they are quite as important as anything else that occupies the attention of the ordinary society conversationalist.

The bridesmaids' hats, some said, were not as pretty as the descriptions of them would lead one to think. They were of white felt, trimmed with white feathers and faced with blue. The effect, however, was not particularly attractive. The costumes otherwise were as pretty as have been shown this season.

The bride's gown was an object of great interest, for everybody knew that it had just come over from Worth, and that the greatest pains had been taken in its construction; hence it was that every woman present studied it very carefully.

One of these told me that the real novel feature of the gown were the big empire bows made of orange blossoms which caught the deep white lace flounce on the front skirt. Elsewhere the rich white satin, except the train, was smothered with point lace. Everybody said it was a magnificent garment, and it really seemed so.

The scarf pins that Jack Livermore gave his ushers were little diamond birds, each of which held a pearl in its claws.

The Baron Was Quite Vivacious.

Baron Raymond Selliere, young Livermore's stepfather, was as gay as a cricket at the wedding. I think he must have read my remarks about his lumbago and his rheumatism and sciatica and all the rest of it last Sunday, and wanted to show that he was not so sorely afflicted as had been represented.

He certainly was vivacious. He hopped from one place to another in his urbane anxiety to assist the ushers and beamed all the while like a rising sun.

The Baroness looked stunning in her Marie Antoinette gown of blue satin, brocaded with huge velvet figures. On her shapely head was a little pearl bonnet, at the back of which she wore a great diamond sunburst. The sable cape which the Baroness threw over her shoulders in the church was the envy and despair of many of the women who sat behind her and some of those who sat in front of her.

But the Baroness de Selliere was not the only handsomely gowned woman at that wedding.

Mrs. Burke Roche was there, and where Mrs. Burke Roche is a woman has to be handsome indeed to be handsomer than she is. She was gowned in black velvet and fur, and she was regal in appearance.

Mrs. Burke Roche is going abroad before a great while. She will travel with her brother, George Work, who has never recovered from the break in his health two years ago.

Other noticeable costumes were as follows: Mrs. Paul G. Thebaud, a cousin of the bride, wore a black velvet gown, on the front waist of which was about the biggest diamond sunburst I have ever seen. Miss Evelyn Burden wore purple velvet throughout, with a sweeping pale blue feather as a relief. Mrs. Clarence H. Mackay's gown was of black spangled net. Mrs. William D. Sloane, whose pretty youngest daughter was one of the bridesmaids, wore a gray net, covered with a glittering mass of spangles. Mrs. Livingston wore blue velvet, with a big white rose and a bunch of violets on her fur capote. Miss Isabel Cameron wore a cloth suit, which was almost old rose in color.

Miss Cameron is so big and jolly and good looking that she always attracts attention no matter what she wears.

There were numerous other costumes as handsome as these, but I have mentioned enough to establish the point that the Livermore-Brooks wedding was conspicuous for the clothes that it brought out.

Together with News of Others Outside that Sacred Number.

Mrs. James Brown Potter's Charming Daughter.

One of the most interesting girls in society to-day is Miss Anne Urquhart Potter, the daughter of that brilliant and beautiful woman, Cora Urquhart Potter, who married into the Good Bishop's family and then shocked the social world at large and the Potters in particular by adopting the stage as a profession.

Miss Anne Urquhart Potter lives out at Tuxedo, and lately has formed a great attachment for Miss Elsie Clews, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Clews. I give to Mrs. Clews her share of the credit of parentage, because Miss Clews is a clever girl, and her mother has as much individuality as her father.

But to return to Miss Potter. She is even handsomer than her mother. Her features are not so delicate, but they are more striking and more impressive.

Miss Potter has been brought up at Tuxedo, and has all the love of out-door sports that might have been expected from her training under such conditions. She is a capital whip and a good golf player.

As her father has taken the Chanler villa on Cliff avenue, Newport, for next Summer, she will undoubtedly be one of the belles of that gay resort.

The friends of Mrs. J. H. A. Tremenheere, and they are numerous, will be pleased to know that this lady has decided to give up India and make New York her permanent abiding place.

As Jessie R. Van Auken, Mrs. Tremenheere established a reputation for brilliancy before her marriage. She was also an heiress, having inherited a large fortune from her grandfather, Commodore Garrison, and this did not detract from her at all.

The reason that Mrs. Tremenheere is giving up India and coming back to New York is that her husband's official position in the former country is about to expire.

It is so seldom that American girls who marry English men of distinction return to this country to live that the determination of the Tremenheeres is causing not a little gossip.

CHOLLY KNICKERBOCKER.

FINE FEATHERS AND FUR OF FINE FOLK.

(Sketched last Sunday night at St. Nicholas Rink.)

Mrs. George Slocum, wife of the well-known tennis player, wore a dark gray tweed skirt, made perfectly plain and fitting closely over the hips, and a short tailor-made black jacket, which was thrown open to show a violet and white silk waist. Her hat was one of the new Alpines so fashionable just now. It was pale gray in color, trimmed around the crown with dark gray velvet folds. A group of white wings were caught at the left side.

Mrs. "Jack" Stewart, wife of "Jack" Stewart, the well-known cross-country rider, wore a costume of black Venetian cloth and a toque of royal purple velvet, trimmed in an odd fashion with white breasts. A jabot of cream lace adorned the bodice of her gown, and her collarette was of sable.

Miss Sullivan's costume was of deep green corduroy, trimmed with sable. The fur was used in bands around the bottom of the skirt, the neck and sleeves. The coat was worn open, showing a black and white check silk waist, made with a full jabot down the front. The hat carried out the black and white color scheme of the skirt waist. It was of black felt, small and worn off the forehead, and was trimmed with quills and with soft white silk sprinkled with black dots. Miss Sullivan is the daughter of the late Algernon Sidney Sullivan, the famous lawyer.

Miss Adele Fitzgerald, daughter of Mrs. Louis Fitzgerald, wore a costume which was most effective. The skirt was of plaid cloth in shades of brown, varying from ecru to a rich dark tint. With this she wore a gaudy Eton coat of black broadcloth over a brilliant red silk waist. About her neck was a broad red chiffon scarf, which was tied in front in a big bow. Her hat was of light brown felt, trimmed with corded velvet and owls' feathers.

Mrs. George Salisbury wore a deep violet cloth skating skirt, with a close fitting violet velvet coat of the same shade. Her furs were of silver fox. A boa was thrown about her neck so that a chiffon jabot was visible. The jabot was in changing shades of violet, and looked very effective against the silvery gray fur. A violet velvet toque with quills of the same shade completed the costume.

Miss Ethel Phelps, the most graceful skater of the Monday Night Club, wore a very simple costume. Her skirt was of black broadcloth, made perfectly plain. Her waist was of emerald green bengaline, made in shirt waist fashion, with deep tucked cuffs. With this costume she wore a fetching little toque, made almost entirely of a big black velvet bow.

Miss Clarisse Livingston wore an effective all-black costume. Her coat was unusually short and elaborately braided. The braiding extended across the back in a deep sailor collar and in front formed wide revers. The skirt was untrimmed. With this costume she wore a black velvet toque perched far back on her head. The toque was trimmed with a black velvet bow and black quills.

THE PASSING OF WALHALLA HALL.

From Society's Idle Pleasures to Anarchy's Sullen Murmurs.

A Typical Study of New York Social Development.

WALHALLA HALL is to be torn down to make way for a row of tenements. Tempora mutantur! Time was when they would rather have torn down the City Hall to make way for a saloon than to disturb the dingy stones of Walhalla. But the old place is out of keeping with the times, and in a few weeks a big hole in a long row of dreary tenements will be all that is left to show where Walhalla Hall once stood.

There are tenements enough in Orchard street, and God knows that many of them are little more than floor upon floor of misery. They might have spared Walhalla Hall.

* * *

When the civil war ended Orchard street and Grand street and East Broadway, and all that neighborhood which to-day comprises that little world known as "The East Side," were inhabited by exceedingly "genteel" folks who, while they worked six days in the week, could afford, if they had so chosen, to lie idle two or three days at a time without suffering hunger. In fact, another step and they would have been aristocratic.

It was in their time that Walhalla Hall was built at No. 48 Orchard street, and it was their habits and manners that came to be reflected in the character of the hall. Walhalla Hall was exceedingly "genteel."

The barroom was the scene of nightly gathering of the storekeepers, clerks and householders of the neighborhood. They played cards, sang songs, drank beer and Rhine wine in a very "genteel" way.

On Saturday nights the big hall upstairs was illuminated for a ball. The nature of these gatherings, and the kind of dances they danced and the things they spoke about, I know but little of them. They belong to a past generation. But I do know that among the aristocracy of this city to-day there are matrons of high-sounding names and great wealth whose social debut was made upon the waxed floor of Walhalla Hall. How they must shudder at the recollection of it! And many of the kind-hearted old ladies who watched the young people disport themselves, and many of the good natured fathers and grandfathers who when their dames were not looking stole out for just one drink of beer—many of these have been slumbering in their graves for nearly a quarter of a century, and the young people have grown gray, and some of them, when they see this, will turn to their children and say:

"Yes, I danced in Walhalla Hall with your mamma thirty years ago."

* * *

In a great city—it applies to London, Paris and Berlin, as well as to New York—the growth of neighborhoods seems to run like this: First the squatter settlement; second, the sudden eradication of the squatter and the rapid growth of an aristocratic settlement; third, the slow descent from the aristocratic to the "genteel," and last and most lasting, the decay of the "genteel" into poverty and the "low."

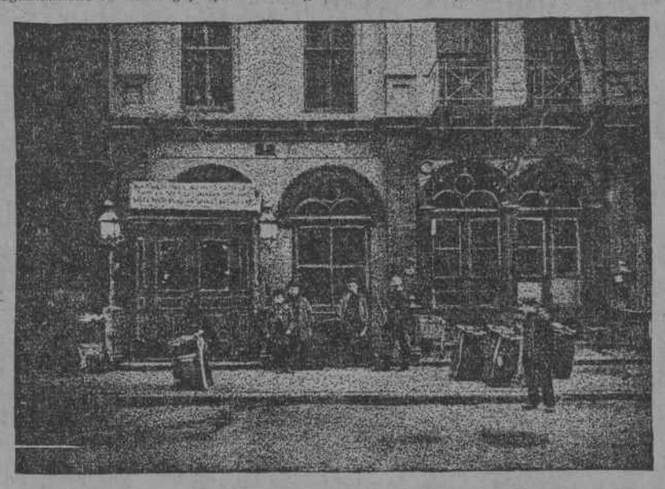
The region about Walhalla Hall became "low," and the hall, like a mirror, came to reflect its surroundings. There is something very comprehensive about this word "low" as it is applied by you, sir, and you, too, madame, to the neighborhood of Walhalla Hall. It is not an intellectual or an educational distinction, for how can you know the calibre of these folks unless you have lived with them? Nor is it a moral distinction for the morality of the East Side, the morality of the "low," were it placed side by side with that of the "high" would shine brightly in the comparison. No, sir; and, no, madame; the "low" class is the class that works from the time it gets out of bed until it goes to sleep again and does not get enough in return to buy good clothes or feed its children.

It is an exquisite distinction! The young girl who works in a cigarette factory twelve hours a day in order to keep alive is not low. Heaven forbid that you should say so! But the five thousand of them are "low." And their social affairs are low affairs, and their circle is a low circle. And so it is with the cloakmakers and the hatmakers and the tailors and the pedlers and all that heterogeneous mass of Germans and Irish and Jews and Americans who make up the life of the East Side.

Such a delightful place to go slumming! Misery is so picturesque in Orchard street!

* * *

Walhalla Hall became "low." The big room was the nightly scene of receptions and dances of social organizations of working people. One night it was the "John Smith Social Coterie's" ball; the next, the "Brotherhood of Hatters" held a reception; then the "Cigarette Girls' Association" gave a masquerade ball, and so it would go, night after night, through the long Winters—making Walhalla Hall an oasis of light and revelry in that desert of suffering and hopeless darkness.



WALHALLA HALL TO-DAY.

I have watched them dance and laugh and play through the long night, the girls bright-eyed and flushed with the joy of the music and the lights, and the lads so happy, and then, when the sun rose, they all would go, without wink of sleep, to the factory to resume the treadmill. For, you see, they had been looking forward to that night for so long and its anticipation and realization and the memory of it were all so brimful of happiness that they gladly sacrificed a night's sleep to enjoy so rare a treat.

The newspapers described, the other day, the brilliancy of the first Assembly ball of the season at the Waldorf-Astoria, and it brought to my mind a ball at Walhalla Hall some fifteen years ago, where I saw the beginning of a story. It was a gathering of girls who worked in fur houses—an annual reunion in which they took great pride. They were not pretty girls for the most part; their occupation is not conducive to the enhancement of physical beauty. They seemed weazen-faced and pale, as if they had spent the greater part of their lives in straining their eyes and inhaling sickening odors.

The belle of the evening, however, was exceedingly beautiful. She was seventeen or eighteen years old, brown-haired and blue-eyed, and rosy with health and high spirits. Her laugh was melodious, her movements were graceful; there was a poise to her head that would have befitted a young queen, and I could not help thinking, as I watched her, how glorious she would have looked amid the surroundings of a palace. Seeing me sitting alone, she approached me, neither timidly nor boldly, but with the modest self-assurance of a grand dame, and asked me if she could not procure a partner for me. When I told her I had come merely as a newspaper reporter she blushed with delight and asked eagerly:

"Then you'll put my name in the paper, wont you?"

And when I had promised it she brought over her papa and her mamma and a whole tribe of brothers and sisters, who were all so proud of her beauty and of her high position as "chairlady" of the reception committee.

It was a delight, I assure you, to watch her flitting from group to group, always smiling, with such happy eyes and making all happy who looked upon her. And even while she danced she kept looking here, there, everywhere, to see if perchance some were not reaping the full enjoyment of the hour, and then she would stop dancing to minister to them in her frank, artless way.

So delightful was it all that the following year I went again and saw her. A year had passed, and she looked just that year older—still beautiful and gay and full of happiness; but a wee shade of the rosiness had been brushed from her cheeks and she seemed not quite so tall. And there was another belle, and for the evening my pretty furrier had to content herself with second place. Not being so much in demand, she found the time to tell me a great deal about the life they lead who work at furs.

"I've only been at it a little over a year," she said, "so I can't tell you as much as some of the older girls could."

Then, the next year, I went to the ball again, and once more I saw her. And now she looked fully three years older and had learned a great deal about the fur business. Her face bore all its old-time sweetness, her eyes their sparkling brightness; but she seemed to have become weazened and spiritless. There was a new belle that night.

Year after year found me at this annual reunion, and year after year saw this creature fade slowly into that exhaustion which seemed to sit upon all those girls like an intangible seal of their trade. Each year there was a new belle, who, when the music ceased and the lights were extinguished, took her place in this procession of young souls that moved so swiftly through the months and the years.

And they worked from early morning until late at night making such beautiful wraps and garments of seal and beaver and sable, many of which, I doubt not, were worn in that very Assembly ball which was so brilliantly successful.

My belle is dead. Some lung ailment, her brother told me, aggravated by the atmosphere of the workroom. The procession moves on without her, and the hall where she danced and laughed and looked so beautiful upon the night of her youthful triumph will soon have vanished into the past where her beauty and the beauty of all those belles and their youth and happiness lie buried and forgotten!

* * *

Walhalla Hall sank even lower. The dances and social reunions grew fewer; their place was taken by meetings of discontented workingmen and strikers and Socialists and Anarchists, all of the East Side. The hall became a forum of discontent, and thus drifted further and further out of accord with the times, for strikers and discontented working people cannot pay liberally for the rental of halls, and the estate that owned Walhalla Hall began to grumble.

I have seen those rooms packed to overflowing with men who were honest and earnest and skilled at their trade and yet could not earn enough money to provide bread for their young ones. I have heard a young orator begin, bravely enough, to preach the hopeless doctrine of patience to these masses and, in the midst of it, break down and weep because the picture of his hungry wife had come into his mind.

Yes, they were eloquent, those hungry, impassioned orators. But of what avail was their oratory?

* * *

A few days, "and the sun, in all his course," will behold Walhalla Hall no more. Tall and deep tenements, capable of holding many, many families, will stand where Walhalla Hall once stood. Perhaps, some night, when a child is suffering, the spirit of a young girl will revisit the scene of her one night of triumph on earth and, in the guise of a ministering angel, mingle with the child's dreams!

RUDOLPH BLOCK.

"HANDS FROM PICKING AND STEALING."

Winifred Black on Christmas Shopping and Shoplifting.

Why Will Women Break the Eighth Commandment?

SHOPLIFTING is the souvenir habit grown up. That is all there is to it. Who ever saw a man who would steal an after-dinner coffee spoon and take it home and call it a "souvenir?"

Who has not seen women—nice, respectable, well-bred women—who did not do it, and who gloried in their dishonest possessions? Something for nothing, something for nothing, and yet again something for nothing—that's what the shoplifter wants. It isn't the thing she "lifts." It is anything, anything in the world, so long as she can get it without paying for it. The shoplifter is a woman who will ride three blocks out of her way to "use up" a transfer, which represents to her so much clear gain, insomuch as she gets it for nothing.

The shoplifter is a woman who goes to auctions in the fond hope of getting a very great deal of something for a little bit better than nothing. She buys some old second-hand things, not because she likes them, not because they are cheaper than the very same kind of things brand new in the shops but because they are being sold at a "sacrifice," and she thinks that she's getting them for less money than they are worth.

The shoplifter is the bargain fiend grown overbold.

A woman who will tear all around town, poring over the things at "sales," wearing out her nerves and her temper trying to get the best of some one, doesn't do it because she's so poor she has to buy bargains or nothing. You never see a poorly dressed woman at a "sale."

She does it for the mere love of being what she thinks is shrewd, but what really is grasping and avaricious.

The shoplifter is the food show fiend developed along the Darwinian lines of natural selection. The food show fiend who gorged herself on samples of stuff that she couldn't bear, simply because she got it for nothing, would steal that same stuff if she saw a good chance to do it without being caught.

Why are most shoplifters women?

Just because they are women with women's pet vice of avarice. Why doesn't some one write a story with a woman miser, for a change, and get somewhere near the truth? The Spanish have a proverb which says, "Old age tells the truth." Old age does tell the truth about the person who has grown old. Out of one hundred old women ninety-nine are misers. They have the "squirrel habit" in its worst form.

I never knew an old man with the squirrel habit. I never knew an old woman without it. An old woman, be she rich or poor, kind or cruel, stupid or clever, lives for one thing—"to put things away."

Give her a present—she will never wear it or use it, and she will very seldom even look at it; but she will be happy, because she can "put it away," and chuckle to herself because she is that much ahead of the rest of the world. The woman who develops the squirrel habit is very, very apt to have somewhere in her nature the obscure beginnings of the magpie habit, which the unscientific call by the unpleasant little name of "pilfering."

Men, as a rule, do not pilfer. They steal—or they are honest.

The average woman does not know what abstract honesty means. That's why she fibs so much. A woman can believe anything she wants to. She's had to teach herself that little habit of mental juggling in order to keep from dying of a broken heart.

A woman who allows herself to face things as they really are becomes either an unbearable crank or a patient in an insane asylum. Women have a vague instinct which tells them all these things before they really know them, so they never allow themselves to believe anything which in any way hurts them or influences them to give up their own way.

This is very sensible and practical, and, on the whole, good; but it is fatal to the sense of abstract right and wrong.

When a man steals he's a thief, and he knows it. When a woman steals she "takes things," and she can give you a dozen good reasons which justify her in the belief that she did it "all for the best." I'd be willing to wager a rather decent sum of money that the person who first started the time-honored practice of "robbing Peter to pay Paul" wore a petticoat. There's a queer thing about this shoplifting business. A woman detective in one of the big shops told me about it.

"You mustn't use the name of our store in anything I tell you," she said. "If I catch a shoplifter one day and for some reason or other the papers say something about it—the next day—

All because she is a woman, with a woman's curious, inconsequent, emotional, irritating little way of calling ugly things by a pretty name and believing that the new name settles the whole affair.

WINIFRED BLACK.

FOUR SHOPLIFTERS ARRESTED LAST WEEK, TWO WIVES OF CLERGYMEN, THE THIRD A SOCIETY GIRL.

BY W. C. FRANCE, JR., MANAGER AT VANTINE'S.

I have the direction of our special detective staff, and can answer your question in a word. The "respectable" class of shop thieves steal upon impulse. They see and handle something they desire and cannot afford to buy. No one seems to be looking and they steal. I recognize three classes: the kleptomaniac, who steals because she cannot help it; the professional, whether criminal or merely habitual, and the class for whose acts I have given the motive. The kleptomaniac we watch; the professional we give to the police; others, if the precinct detective does not know them, are let go. Seldom do these women steal deliberately; in nine cases out of ten the act is the result of sudden impulse, bitterly regretted.

BY H. M. BLADEN, HEAD DETECTIVE AT WANAMAKER'S.

The newspaper stories of the detection of other shoplifters have a good deal to do with the average "respectable" woman's temptation to pilfer. She thinks that she can be cleverer than the woman who is caught.

I do not mean by this that the woman who reads one of these accounts makes up her mind then and there to try and be smarter. But when the opportunity and the temptation come she thinks of the other who failed, and in the belief that she is safe she takes the desired article. For that reason it is our policy to keep these things as secret as we can. Most of our shoplifters are persons of evidently respectable connections.