OREG

SCHOOL CLOSES

THE EVENT OF THE YEAR IN COUNTRY DISTRICTS.

Everybody Looks Forward to It with Keenly Joyful Expectations—Even the Stern Teacher Divests Himself of His Mien of Austerity.

The Last Day.

No day was so great as the last day of school. Three months of study seemed eternally long. Looked forward to from the beginning of the term it seemed a simply impossible distance. No pupil's conception could leap across these interminable days, weeks, months and ages and distinguish the end of the term. Children grew skeptic, and felt sure there was nothing but the present ever had been, and could not be. Last days of school were dreams and fictions, or like the morals in the reading lessons.

SAILOR BOY'S DREAM.

And as the days of embittering work went by how firm a hatred of the teacher grew up in each child's heart. It was a certain thing he showed partiality. He couldn't work all the examples in the arithmetic, for John Rhinehart "slatted him" on one in partial payments. He made a mistake in grammar, and said Hartford was on the Kennebec River. He made Jenny Drake sit with the boys, when her mother forbade his ever doing such a thing, and he flogged Jimmy Thompson unmercifully. But just wait until Jimmy's big brother comes home.

There are good days and bad—mostly the latter. Lessons are broken off in something like rations, and each day's "stint" has to be done, for the class has started to get through the book, and there is no time to halt by the wayside. Pupils who cannot keep up must pretend they are keeping up. The class cannot be held back for them. The gait of the fastest is the gait of the school. There was no grading as there is now, and there was no semblance of an examination.

The teacher achieved a post of toleration. Of course he was wrong, and to be spoken ill of at all times. That being fixed, pupils might safely treat him with cordiality now and then, and yet not imperil their standing in the school. It might even be admitted of him, indeed, that he was, in some respects, not much worse than the last winter's incumbent. One thing in his favor was his ability as a ball player. Never was a teacher in the schoolhouse could throw a ball as straight as this man, and none could catch as well, either, come to think. And he did write a good hand, to be sure, and could explain some things. Besides, he did not act decent about the treats at Christmas.

For it has taken somewhat more than half the term to work this grudging transformation. There is no retreating, understand, from the settled position that this teacher is simply bearable—no more. He is yet much the worst from all points of view that ever hung up his hat in the schoolhouse. He is yet the common enemy.

And just here comes talk of the last day of school. The girls begin it, with their plans for "an exhibition." The talk grows. It consumes part of the time of study and a good many hours at home. The nearer approaches the end of the term the more fully is study sacrificed to preparation for the last day of school. Clearly it cannot be subordinated to anything. Much as he is disliked, the teacher is solicited to aid, and fitting as refusal would have been to his established character, his acquiescence is received with applause.

The weather gets warmer as "the last day" approaches. Indeed, one or two of the larger boys have had to quit school and go to work on the farm. It is almost time to begin spring plowing. The big girls come to school with something comely relieving the monotony of their winter frocks. The little boys, who know no authority that cannot see and lay hands upon them, go barefoot at recess and have the audacity to live.

Some little girl finds a wood violet and brings it to the teacher, and he accepts it gratefully, but calmly. It recurs to the opinion-makers that since the last day of school is so near there is no need correcting the little girl for her error.

And then comes the last week, and it melts away a day at a time—and "tomorrow is the last day of school." Tomorrow comes, fair and full of a vernal heat. The schoolhouse was never so clean. Big boys scrubbed it last night and big girls hung evergreen and dogwood bloom and red bud all about the windows. And the teacher's desk is a bower of beauty. Every pupil is there very early on the last day of school, dressed in his best and bringing the little children—those too young to pay the regular price for the joys of a "last day." Several guests come from other schools, escorted by pupils of this. The house is very full all the morning. The teacher is dressed very much the same. Of course. What more could be expected? Sometimes they would have a teacher—if So-and-so had got the school, instead of this teacher—or if such a teacher as this guest tells about had been employed here.

"THE DEFENSE OF CATALINE."

But there isn't much study or recitation in the forenoon. And at "recess" the big boys who had left for the spring work drop around and conclude to stay. The noon intermission is uncommonly long. It begins rather before the usual time and it is unaccountably extended.

A ONE-ACT DRAMA IS PLAYED.

A DUET, "OH! COME, COME AWAY."

Every one does have such an excellent time playing, and the day is so delightfully warm!

Then come the exercises—"the exhibition." The big girls have a curtain stretched across the end of the room and behind it is impenetrable mystery. There are a few lessons on drilled topics, so that parents may be proud of children who answer wonderful things correctly. And when that is done the curtain rises and "Miss Clarissa Pipplnger" recites "Stay, Jailer, Stay," receiving a very formidable applause when she bows and signals the curtain to go down.

Benny Collins recites "The Sailor Boy's Dream." Kate Calloway and Norah Hattery sing "Oh, Come, Come Away," as a duet, and long John Smith thunders through the defense of Cataline.

Sandwiched in between the big people are exercises from all the little youngsters, whose mothers—whose fathers, too, possibly—are present, and a one-act drama is presented to the entire satisfaction of the audience—and Duse can do no more than that.

And, then, somehow or other, when the last "song of the school" has been sung, when the curtain has been lifted and lowered for the last time, when there is a sense of grounding this side of port—that unspeakable teacher is up and talking. For the first time the sense of pupils takes in this larger fact. "Last day of school" means a severance of ties, a farewell to some things that were pleasant, a loss of this man—and it is a loss. It must be, for looking back from this height not a thing can be recalled wherein he did wrong. On what basis sat the framework of his bad character no one can see, for not a memory there retains a charge against him.

He is crying a little himself. The women are all crying because their children are crying to see him cry. And the men are altogether serious. The big boys blow their noses to hide the rise of tears, and the big girls dry their eyes very daringly.

There is a luncheon spread all over the desks and benches later, and from wagons hitched along the road outside come baskets full of country dainties. There is an abundance of honest cheer. The windows and doors are open, for the afternoon is so warm.

And then come farewells, when the teacher shakes hands with boys who have hated him bitterly all winter—boys who cordially honor him now; when he just misses being tender in his good-by to the girls; when he finally rounds out the work with mingled grief and pleasure, locks the door, gives the key to the director, watches the bundles of books and bundles of pupils tread slowly away, hearts big with the greatness of "the last day of school," and then turns from the whole picture forever.

Modern schools have added many features the old system needed. No doubt there are better results from graded work, since the books say so. But there is no last day of school so stupendous in its interest, so sweet to erase antipathies, so strong to weld friendships, as the last day of school which has drifted one-third of a century into the past.

Of course examinations are good things, since all the teachers have them, but they do not lend a gracious blessing to the last day of school. They spill a drop of bitterness into the pupil's cup of bliss on this final day of a long companionship, and they make promotion very dearly purchased. Of course they are good. Of course they are right. That is conceded by every teacher's institute in forty commonwealths. But that, or the city style, or stage effects, or a decorous absence on the part of parents or a promised departure on the part of the teacher has deprived creation of its "last day of school."

His Brother Was Deaf.

A millionaire railway king has a brother who is hard of hearing, while he himself is remarkable as having a very prominent nose. Once the railway king dined at a friend's house, when he sat between two ladies, who talked to him very loudly, rather to his annoyance, but he said nothing. Finally one of them shouted a commonplace remark, and then said in an ordinary tone to the other: "Did you ever see such a nose in your life?" "Pardon me, ladies," said the millionaire, "it's my brother who is deaf." Imagine the horror of the lady.

After a girl gets married she queers the unmarried girls by looking tough when she comes down town.

WHEN IN THE COUNTRY.

Live Close to Nature, Seek Repose and Cultivate Serenity of Manner.

In an editorial in the Ladies' Home Journal Edward W. Bok discusses "When We Are in the Country," a text he employs to show how far we are departing from the purpose residents of cities used to have in going to the country during the summer time. Formerly going into the country meant an escape from city conventionalities; a living close to Nature, in the pure and bright sunlight; a change of scenes, of interests, and of pastimes; absolute freedom from the tyranny of fashion. Mr. Bok contends that this has been entirely changed, and the benefits of the summer outings have been largely lost. Conventionalities have robbed the country of its greatest charm; and the diversions, pastimes, the nervous rush and hurry of the city have been transplanted to the country, and Mr. Bok well says: "We cannot afford to conventionalize the country. There is no truer saying than that 'God made the country and man made the town,' and we ought to carry out the spirit of those words. When we go to the country let us get out of it what we go for: rest, outdoor life and early hours—early, I mean, at night, as well as in the morning. Let us live truly in the country, and do as the country people do. Let us dismiss, during the only restful time of the year—as the summer is to so many of us—thoughts of dress, of indoor amusements, of matters of any kind that are apt to keep the mind at work and the body indoors. Let us seek repose—something which so many of us need. Our life during the winter makes us carry about with us an air of distraction and nervous worry. In summer let us cultivate serenity of manner. There is a restfulness about the restless sea that is peculiarly soothing and wondrously helpful to city people. There is a quietness in a leafy bower not to be had anywhere else on God's footstool. Nature speaks to us unerringly amid such surroundings. It is the absolute calm and quiet of leisurely enjoyment which so many natures crave, and which should be given them. And it is possible to attain this in the country if we will only seek for it and make up our minds to have it. Let us then use the country in this way, forgetting for the time being that there are such things as dresses, as cards, dances, bazaars and doilies, throwing our whole natures into the spirit of our surroundings. Then will we extract from Nature what she is always willing to give us, what God intended us all to have: the calm and quiet of peaceful repose."

Safely Home.

In the early days of America, window-glass, being expensive, was often carried a long distance with great care.

The story is told in "Old Times on the Saco" of a settler who built a log-house, and after moving his family in, went to Gorhamtown to purchase twelve lights of seven-by-nine glass for the two small windows. This was well tied in a large handkerchief, and he started on his return.

He selected even places for his feet at every step, and avoided all possible obstacles; thus he moved slowly homeward. All went well until he reached his own dooryard. As he approached the house, he saw his wife standing in the doorway, and shouted:

"Well, Sally, I've got my glass home!"

Alas! his attention had been diverted; he caught his foot in a small bush by the path, and fell headlong. Quick as thought, he raised his hand high to shield the glass, but it came down with full swing upon a flat stone, and was broken into fragments. Then and there he registered a vow that he would never look through glass in that house, and he kept his word.

"If I'd fell half-way to Gorhamtown," he said, "I wouldn't ha' keered; but it seemed to everlastin' bad to go down and smash 't right off agin my own door!"

Walled In.

About twelve months since there was a good deal of talk about the walled-in people of Montmartre. Now a case of the same kind has happened on the Avenue de Saint-Ouen, near the fortifications. The landlord, being unable to obtain any rent from three women who lived together, gave them notice to quit. They refused to obey the injunction, so he had a wall built around the door leading to the miserable room where the needy tenants resided. Accordingly the women were forced to climb out of a window, at the risk of breaking their limbs; but some of their neighbors remonstrated with the landlord, who agreed to demolish the wall, on the condition that the unprofitable trio should leave his premises on Thursday next.—From Paris Letter.

He Was Certainly Candid.

An English paper tells a story of the late earl of Portarlington, who was always forgetting the names of people whom he had met. Once, on receiving a gracious nod from Queen Victoria at a Marlborough house garden party, accompanied by a few words of kindly inquiry after his health, he replied: "You are very kind, madam; your face seems strangely familiar to me, but for the life of me I cannot remember your name."

Stick to Retail Trade.

Young Father (anxiously)—Is it a boy or a girl, nurse?

Nurse—It's three of 'em, sir! Three lovely boys!

Young Father—Good gracious! This comes of marrying a girl whose father was in the wholesale line of business.—Woonsocket Reporter.

Noon Hour.

"Papa, what is a noon hour?"

"Well, son, at our bank it is from 12 until half-past for the clerks, but the officers generally get from half-past 11 to 3."—Louisville Courier-Journal

COUNT AND COUNTESS DE CASTELLANE.

One of the most notable weddings in this country of recent years was that of Count de Castellane, the descendant of a noted French family, to Miss Anna Gould, youngest daughter of the late Jay Gould. The report that a serious disagreement over money matters has already taken place between the young couple will surprise the countess' friends in this country, who were led to believe that it was a pure love match.

DESIGNS IN SWISS STYLE.

Adapted to Rural Surroundings and a Mountainous Landscape.

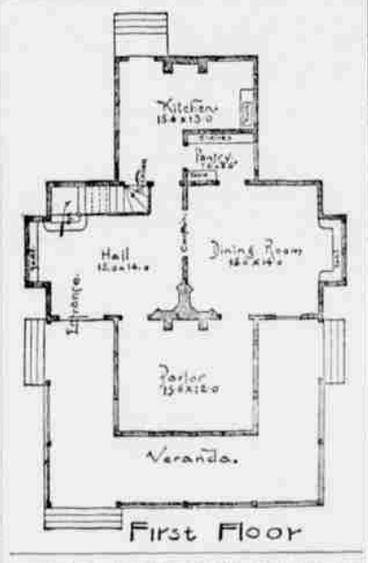
There are some styles that are particularly fitted to the American climate and social conditions. There are others that can seldom be used with good effect, but inasmuch as there are occasional calls for the construction of houses in these styles, it is fitting that they should be considered.

A SWISS COTTAGE.

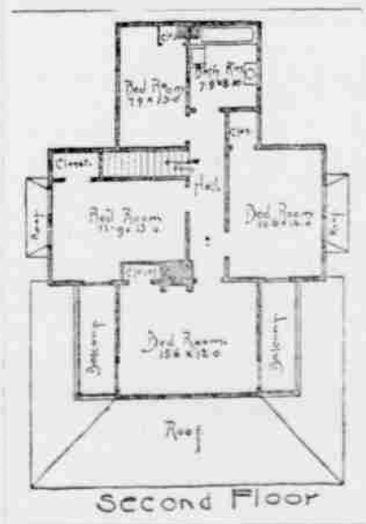
The design illustrated herewith is that of a Swiss cottage. Swiss architecture is the outgrowth of the needs and conditions of the inhabitants of Switzerland, and, like all national institutions, is most appropriate to its natural surroundings. The life of the Swiss peasant is divided by his occupations into two seasons, the summer, when he is watching and tending his cattle on the high Alps, and the winter, when he is forced to find shelter from the rigorous climate, with its fierce storms, in the low-lying, secluded valleys.

Swiss architecture, as built in this country, has been—shall we say?—somewhat Americanized, and the accompanying sketch shows a structure that would be effective and pleasing if erected in a suitable location. The latter point is one upon which all architect, versed as well in the technical points of landscape, should be consulted, as many a man spending his money freely but not discreetly in the erection of a house has found too late that he has made a serious mistake in trusting too confidently to his own taste.

It may be found necessary for him to sell a house that has cost him thousands of dollars, and because of its expressing too strongly his own individuality, finds he will not be able to realize a third of his investment. It is the proper duty of the architect not only to draw plans but to advise with his client upon the general style, accommodation and arrangement of the house to be chosen, as well as, and perhaps above all, to see that it harmonizes with its surroundings and suits the artistic demands of the neighborhood.



First Floor



Second Floor

The design illustrating this article would be much out of place by the seashore, but for a country residence or the suburbs of a city, where the land is not flat, but rather mountainous or hilly, its tasteful and striking appearance would be most appropriate. A brief description is given as follows:

General dimensions: Width (over all), 36 feet; depth, including veranda, 48 feet 2 inches.

Heights of stories: Cellar, 7 feet; first story, 10 feet; second story, 9 feet.

Exterior materials: Foundation, brick; first story, clapboards; second story, gables and roofs, shingles. Outside, blinds.

Interior finish: Hard white plaster, plaster cornices in hall, parlor, dining-room and three chambers; soft wood flooring and trim; ash stairway; panels under windows in parlor, hall and dining-room; bath-room and kitchen wainscotted; interior woodwork finished in hard oil.

The principal rooms and their sizes, closets, etc., are shown by the floor plans.

Cellar under kitchen and pantry. Fireplaces with hardwood mantels in hall, parlor, dining-room, and one bedroom and kitchen range included in estimate. The cost of this design as described is $3,516, not including heater, the estimate being based on New York prices for materials and labor, but in many sections of the country the cost should be less.

Curiosity Gratified.

When an innkeeper sets up a conundrum as a sign-board he must expect to have to answer a good many questions; but even the most enigmatic sign does not excuse such rudeness as a certain American traveler in Europe is said to have once perpetrated. The story, quoted in the Washington Post, is thus told by a Minnesota politician:

I was traveling through England and Ireland on foot with a knapsack on my back, and in company with a facetious friend of mine named Morrison, and in our wanderings we came to an inn. It was late at night, but by the bright moonlight we were able to see that the sign bore a counterfeit presentment of two asses' heads, with this not unfamiliar legend over the picture:

When shall we three meet again?

We stood for a moment gazing at it. Then Morrison went to the inner door and began thumping upon it with his cane, while the echoes rang through the house. I was just going to expostulate with him over his unseemly conduct when an upper window was thrown open, and the innkeeper thrust out his head, and in an indignant tone demanded what in the name of all the demons we wanted.

"That's all right, old man. Don't get excited," called up my friend in the most affable voice. "There are only two asses' heads on the sign, and I just wanted to see the other one."

And with that we started up the road.

A Curious Little Plant.

A young man who works at a desk in a Broadway office came from his home in Rahway, N. J., with a curious looking plant imbedded in some moist moss and earth. When his associates asked him what it was he said: "Just watch it."

They did. It was placed on his desk near a window. In less than two hours every petal was filled with a dead fly. Then he explained to the clerk that this plant was a fly-eater. It killed and absorbed the flies. "My sister belonged to a botany class," he said, "and she dug this from a swamp near Perth Amboy. She loaned it to me to astonish you fellows. It is very rare."

A fellow clerk from Savannah took a look at it and said: "When I come back from luncheon I will show you something. He brought in a small bottle of spirits of camphor and put one drop on each of the petals. Instantly the flies were released and the petals closed tight as a clam. "Now," he said, "that plant will have a fit of indigestion for about three days and then it will survive for about as many weeks. They are common enough in the South."—New York World.

Her Temper.

"That Mrs. Naglet has the worst all-round bad temper I ever knew."

"Yes, even her hair snarls!"—Cleveland Plaindealer.