

RENTING A SUMMER COTTAGE

By DOROTHY BLACKMORE

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Dolly Meadows hesitated on the steps of the tiny office of the Suburb Land company and closed her pretty parasol. Then, summoning courage, she stepped within.

The man at the desk did not look up. It was his business to seem very much occupied.

"Do you—" began Dolly, and the man, whirling about in his chair, beheld her.

"I beg your pardon, madam," apologized the man, jumping to his feet and taking off his hat. "I—did not hear anyone come in."

Dolly blushed. She had never been in a real estate office before. "I came to see about renting a summer cottage—a bungalow—if possible," she explained, searching in her lace chateleine for a card.

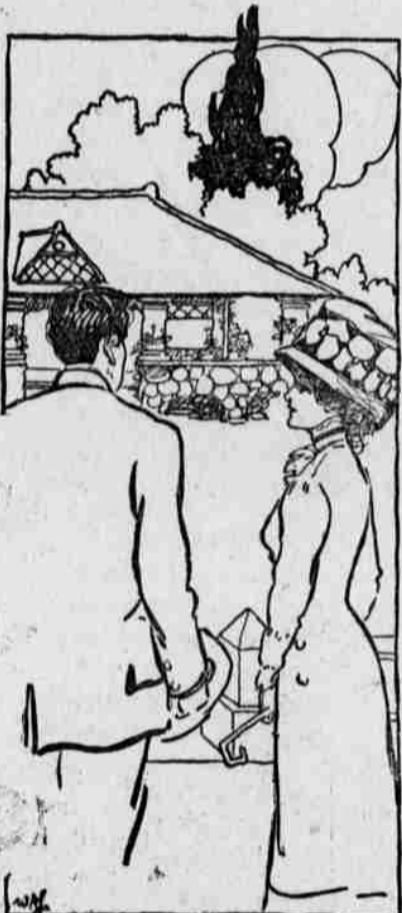
"Certainly," replied the man, offering her a chair. "We have several ready for occupancy. Be seated, please."

Dolly had unearthed the object of her search and was handing the man the card. "You may know my—husband," she said.

"Mrs. J. Lawrence Meadows," the agent read on the bit of pasteboard he held. "Oh, I know of him. I have not met him personally."

"I—that is—we want a six-room cottage with a little ground."

"Exactly," the man nodded. "Would you care to come out now and see



Dolly Thought She Had Never Seen Anything So Beautiful.

what we have? Our machine is at the door and it will facilitate matters to go straight to the available cottages, Mrs. Meadows."

Dolly watched him as he stepped outside into the miniature garden that surrounded the suburban office.

He assisted her to the tonneau of the great car and, instructing the chauffeur, took the seat beside her. Dolly, to keep the sun from her eyes, raised her parasol and sat within its warm pink glow telling the real estate man exactly what she desired in the way of a cottage.

They drove about the parkway of the attractive new suburb and Dolly commented on the beauty of the flowers and shrubbery. "You owe a great deal to the landscape artist who did this work for you," she remarked, as they passed an arched retreat in which were rustic benches, tete-a-tete seats and clambering blossoms everywhere.

"I myself am that artist," the man replied, not without a touch of vanity. "I was a landscape artist before I became a real estate man," he added.

They were approaching an artistic little Devonshire cottage set well back from the road and the man explained that the place would be ready for occupancy by the first of the month.

"I'd love to look at it," exclaimed Dolly.

"We shall do so," the man told her, as the machine turned into the blue-stone driveway.

In many respects, Dolly discovered, the cottage was what they wanted, but there was one chamber too few, and she decided that the exposure of the dining room was not exactly what she had in mind.

"I do love the morning sun for breakfast," she explained, "and I'm sure it can't get round here until after noon." Dolly looked very wise, indeed, and when she looked wise her dimples were not at all in evidence.

The next house on the route was a pure type of bungalow with five rooms, all on one floor and with a porch all the way around. Dolly's objection to the place was its close proximity to the neighbors, so they entered the car and went in search of something else. "Here," the man began, as they approached a pretty hedged-in place, "is a Queen Anne cottage with seven rooms, including the nursery on the top floor."

"Oh, how lovely!" exclaimed Dolly, jumping lightly from the car. They stood in front of a pale gray cement cottage with the long slanting roof of the Queen Anne type, and Dolly thought she never had seen anything so beautiful as the way in which the delicate pink of the Dorothy Perkins climbers lay against the house and clambered over the windows. The children could have a place to play in rainy days, for they surely would be out of doors at all other times. Do let me see it."

The man, if he marveled at the fact that this lovely young woman was the mother of at least two children, did not look it. He took every opportunity, unobserved, to drink in the beauty of her face, and every minute that he remained with her disclosed some new and charming characteristic. Perhaps, he was thinking, it would be as well for him if she could not find a suitable cottage in this suburb.

"What a lovely living room!" Dolly exclaimed as they stepped within the great room. "And what a love of a fireplace! How I hate flats!" she added vehemently and then she turned to look the man squarely in the eyes. "That very hatred of those coops called homes in the city is what makes your business thrive, isn't it?" she asked, by way of explaining her impulsive outburst.

The man nodded. "Yes," he admitted, "that's it. It's good for our business and bad—very bad—for the doctors." He was wondering what further dimples the young woman would display. He had just caught sight of another in her chin. He began to believe that her very soul must be dimpled.

They began to ascend the broad low stairs that rose from the living room and crossed, Juliet-fashion, to the extreme end of the room before continuing their upward way. "I'm just crazy about this sort of a staircase," Dolly was saying. "You can put the piano beneath—right down there," she explained, leaning so far over the railing that the man was fearful lest she fall, "and when someone is singing—well, say a love song—he can look up in the most effective fashion if—for instance—there is a girl standing—here."

Dolly had almost forgotten that she was on the dignified mission of renting a cottage. She had dropped into her habitual frivolous manner and the real estate man was marveling at every turn.

"One—two," Dolly counted, looking from the upper hall into the chambers opening from it, "three—and a bath." "And the nursery!" the man added. "Oh, yes—for Dolly and John and Muriel!"

"Three?" the man asked, mildly surprised.

Dolly nodded. "Yes—but Muriel is only two months old."

"I see," breathed the real estate man. "Your hands are full."

Dolly blushed. "I'm so glad you don't object to children, as so many house owners do," she said. "We've had such a time," she sighed as with the weight of the world on her pretty shoulders.

After that they looked at various cottages and at last returned to the gray Queen Anne nestling among the pink roses.

"This," said Dolly, wisely, "seems to be the most nearly suited to our needs. I shall have them come and see it tomorrow," she said, pointedly, and looking down at the tip of her parasol.

She felt, rather than saw, the look the man at her side gave her. They were standing on the porch near a rose vine.

"They?" he asked. "I thought it was for you, Mrs. Meadows."

"I am Miss Meadows, and it is for my brother and Mrs. Meadows—and their children and—myself, that I am looking," she explained wickedly.

"And the card?" he asked.

Dolly laughed. "I thought I might get more attention if you believed I was married and looking in earnest for a cottage."

"In this case—if I may say it," he said, "you might have had more attention under the reverse circumstances."

"But—I'll be here all summer," she said. "Then if we like it we'd like an opportunity to buy—to build," she added. "We would take the house with that option."

"Certainly."

But at the end of the summer it was Dolly and the real estate man who wanted to build a home as nearly like the Queen Anne as possible—even to the Juliet stairway.

"Those stairways are so nice for—love songs," the real estate man explained as he stood, at the end of the summer on the landing saying good night to Dolly.

ALLOTMENT OF FARMING LAND

Three Families to Each Farm is Case in U. S. Today—Soil is Source of Everything.

(By W. C. PALMER, North Dakota Agricultural College.)

Three families to each farm is the case in the United States today. One on the farm and two in town, but all dependent on the farm. Two generations ago nearly everybody lived on the land and it was the look-out of each family how they worked the land. Now with two-thirds of the people in town, it not only concerns the men on the farm whether the crop is good or not but also the man in town who is dependent on the produce of the land for his living. Whether the crop be poor or good really affects the city man more than it does the farmer who can keep out enough for himself. If there is no surplus it is not hard to see who will suffer most.

As industry develops we get more and more dependent on each other. The farmer, however, remains the most independent, and the way he carries on his work is of the most vital importance to us all.

The soil is the source of everything that calls forth the efforts of industry. The people who till the soil have charge of the source of supply and the rest have to go accordingly. If we want more to do with the farmer must produce more. To do that he must have more knowledge and skill in his work. As long as the land was virgin it would produce with any kind of husbanding. That farming is hardy on a permanent basis yet is shown by the abandoned farms in the east, and the decreasing values of these lands in the face of increasing markets.

As long as the farmer can only make the soil produce one-third of what it is capable, so long must our manufacturing, transportation, merchandising and banking remain at approximately one-third of what it would be, and largely for lack of special training for his work on the part of the farmer.

Who is most interested in the man who tills the soil being trained for his work? Without a doubt it is the man in the city. He is the one who should be the most insistent on agriculture being taught in the public schools, and that the agricultural colleges be given liberal support.

The railroads are doing a great deal in encouraging the teaching of agriculture. Many have placed trains at the services of the agricultural colleges that they might equip it with apparatus, appliances and instructors, and thus carry the teachings of better farming to a great many people in a short time. Bankers are also active in encouraging the spread of better farming.

There are no more northwestern states to open up so that the only way to make any material increase in production is by making each acre, now under cultivation, produce more. Three families to the farm and all dependent on it for a living—which is the most interested in good farming, the family on the farm or the two in town?

FOOD VALUE OF SKIM MILK

If Allowed to Sour and Then Churned Until Curd is Broken, It Makes Excellent Drink.

(By JOHN B. PICKERING.)

Freshness and cleanliness must be considered as well as composition. Milk which has been received from the milkman and allowed to stand long enough to skim should probably never be given to children under 2 years of age. For older people the mere fact of its being old need not be taken into consideration. If skim milk is bought as such, however, it should always be thoroughly cooked, unless it is known to have been handled carefully and to be clean.

Skim milk seems to some people rather thin for use as a beverage, but others value it for this very quality. If it is allowed to stand until it sours and is then churned or beaten until the curd is broken up into small particles, it makes a familiar and wholesome drink, often used under the name of buttermilk, for much of the commercial buttermilk is thus made from skim milk, some cream or butter fat being sometimes added. For cooking, the lack of fat and any consequent lack of flavor can be easily made up, as butter or less expensive fats can be used with it. Pork and bacon fat make a particularly savory addition.

In the very interesting experiment of serving penny lunches to anemic children in the Boston schools, one of the combinations of food that it was found possible to sell for the low price of 1 cent was skimmed milk and bread and butter.

Though not much different in nutritive value, buttermilk obtained as a by-product in butter making has a different quality or texture and a different flavor from so-called skim-milk buttermilk referred to above.

RETAIN NITROGEN IN MANURE

Every Effort Should Be Made to Save Valuable Properties Contained in Poultry Droppings.

(By RODNEY M. WEST.)

Fresh poultry manure has approximately twice the fertilizing value of cattle manure, if a comparison of the two products is based upon their nitrogen content. The nitrogenous compounds contained in poultry manure, however, are very unstable, and decompose readily into ammonia and volatile ammonium compounds. Consequently, unless proper care is taken, large quantities of nitrogen, which might be used for fertilizing, are lost.

Several methods have been suggested for retaining this nitrogen. They consist in mixing with the excrement either an absorbing substance or an acid compound which will chemically combine with the ammonia as fast as formed.

Experience has shown that poultry manure, untreated, as well as that mixed with sawdust, lost half of its nitrogen in the course of six months. Where the manure was stored with half of its weight of gypsum (land plaster) it lost a third, while that mixed with an equal weight of gypsum and about one-fifth of its weight of sawdust retained all of the original nitrogen. Equally good results were obtained by using from one-third to one-fourth of the weight of the manure of either kainite or acid phosphate.

From the standpoint of the mechanical condition, the mixture with land plaster gives the least desirable product, although the addition of sawdust aids materially in preventing the formation of hard cakes.

When the manure is to be kept only a few days before applying, good results may be obtained with dry loam or peat as an absorbent.

The absorbent used should be sprinkled daily in the required quantity on the floor of the hen house, from which, in combination with the excrement, it may be removed when desired.

The difficulties experienced in spreading poultry manure on account of its sticky consistency may be obviated by mixing with loam, peat or common stable manure. For economical use it should be spread in relatively smaller amounts than other manures.

The admixture of lime or wood ashes is not advised, since decomposition is sufficiently rapid without their use.

It should be borne in mind that each of the absorbents suggested is in itself of value as a fertilizer; the least valuable being sawdust.

FERNS IN THE LIVING ROOM

Whitman's, One of Most Beautiful Varieties of Recent Introduction, is Recommended.

(By HELEN G. WEST.)

If your room is heated with hot water you can grow ferns in it that would soon die if kept in a room heated by steam, or hot air, or a wood fire. For such a room I would advise Whitman's, one of the most beautiful varieties of recent introduction.

It is a sport from the old Boston fern. It has shorter fronds than that variety, but they are broader, and the leaflets on them are developed into miniature fronds, thus making it a most graceful plant, when well grown. Its fronds have a plume-like effect that make a fine specimen of it one of the most ornamental of all decorative plants.

Give it a soil of leaf mold, or turfy matter kept it well watered, and out of the sunshine, and it will do well in rooms where the heat is not intense and dry. I would not advise trying to grow it under other conditions.

Perhaps the most satisfactory fern, all things considered, for the amateur florist, is the good old Boston sort. This does well in almost all places if frequently showered.

It is greatly benefited by keeping water constantly evaporating on stoves or registers. It likes best a soil of leaf-mould and sand, but does very well in loam.

Have good drainage and there is no fear of injury from over watering. Best results are secured by keeping the plant at some distance from the light. Not in a dark corner, by any means, but far enough from the glass to allow the fronds to spread and droop gracefully in their efforts to secure the benefit of the light. It is most effective when grown on brackets.

NOTES OF THE HOG LOT.

Feed a large variety of food, but avoid sudden changes. That is, do not change the whole ration at any one time.

To produce the full development of bone the work must be commenced before the animal is born by feeding the dam plentifully with bone-producing foods while she is pregnant.

The development of the bone in a pig carries with it the development of the vital organs and a large increase in the amount of lean meat in the carcass.

BATHTUBS FOR HOGS

PIGS TO OBSERVE SATURDAY NIGHT IN SANITARY WAY.

Experts Urge Kansas Farmers to Provide Clean "Dip" for Porkers in Place of Old Mud Wallows—Novel Plan is Favored.

Topeka, Kan.—Kansas farmers are being urged to remove the old mud hog-wallows in their feed lots and provide modern, sanitary bathtubs for their hogs.

"The hog likes to take a bath a good deal oftener than most humans," says Dr. Schoenleber. "In hot weather he just dotes on bathing. It is not necessary to provide a porcelain or enamel-lined bathtub for his Highness the Hog, but the porker will properly appreciate a nice cement bathtub which may be drained and filled again with clean water."

"He will return the favor, too, by putting on more fat and growing faster and eating less than when he has a muddy hole in which to wallow. A hog-wallow is absolutely necessary for the peace and happiness of the hog. He is so constructed that wallowing in water is necessary to preserve his health and keep him growing. People do not feel right unless they bathe frequently, and the same applies to the hog."

"Give the hog every possible chance to take a bath. Build a cement basin in the hog lot. Have it drained and then provide it with fresh water. There is no need for hot and cold water. In the water put about one part of any of the commercial dips to 100 parts water. This will keep off germs and parasites from the pigs and forestall many of the common hog diseases which kill thousands of Kansas hogs every year. If given his choice, the hog will walk into the cement wallow every time. It is just as necessary to keep hogs clean and healthy as it is to give them good feed and to have good breeds to start with."

HORSE IS KILLED BY DOGS

Torn to Death in Pasture at Night by Lost and Hungry Hunting Animals.

Monticello, N. Y.—A horse belonging to John C. Fulton of White Lake, Sullivan county, while in pasture the other night was torn to death by dogs. About midnight the owner of the horse was awakened by the barking of dogs.

He got his shotgun and, going to the rear of his house, discovered the horse on the ground, while the dogs were tearing him to pieces.

Again and again he shot at the dogs without stopping the maddened animals. Hearing the shooting, farmers who lived near by, with pitchforks and clubs, drove the dogs away. It is believed that hunting dogs lost by hunters have become wild.

BASS CAPTURES FISHERMAN

Fish Swims Around Man, Wrapping Line Around His Legs in Deep Pool.

Allentown, Pa.—Alderman Elmer J. Schroyer was captured by a bass in Ontonagon river, and he thanks Joseph Albright, a fisherman of seventy years, that he was not drowned; also that the bass was landed.

Schroyer was wading, when he hooked the bass. He knew it was a large one and was wading out to play it, when it turned and swam around him, wrapping the line around his legs. Schroyer then discovered that he was on the edge of a deep pool, and that he was slipping into it.

His cries brought Albright, who rescued the fisherman and caught the fish.

Tooth in Woman's Lung.

Toledo, O.—By means of minute electric lamps, which made it possible to see down a woman's throat and into the lower lobe of the right lung, and to insert through the trachea extensible forceps, a Toledo physician removed a fragment of a tooth from the right lung of Mrs. G. Cole of Van Wert, and without doubt saved her life.

Last February, while under the influence of an anaesthetic, Mrs. Cole had several teeth extracted. Shortly after she began to fail in health and her symptoms pointed, apparently, to tuberculosis.

Certain aspects of the case indicated the possibility of a foreign substance in the lung and an X-ray examination proved that a portion of a tooth had slipped down into the lung.

Marries Son's Widow.

St. Clairsville, Ohio.—William Davis, aged 62 years, was married to Mrs. Anna Elizabeth Davis, aged 39 years, who is the widow of his son. Both live at Morristown. He had been married twice, both of his wives having died.