MR. : MEEKS' : PRISONER.

HE said his name was Meeks, and it struck thoughtful ones in Buffalo Horn that the patronymic was singularly appropriate; for the gentleman himself was a mild-eyed, "sandy-lookin'" little man, with a self-deprecatory air that suggested a standing apology on his part for presuming to exist. He floated into town quietly, and so unobtrusive and modest was he that it was several days before his presence began to be noticed, and then only on account of a rumor that had gained circulation to the effect that he was an officer of the United States Secret Service. Then Buffalo Hornites smiled. Of course, like all Western people, they understood that it is not best to judge from appearances; but, oh! what a chump Uncle Sam must be, to send a wee bit of a man like this to arrest an Oklahoma malefactor!

To be sure, nobody had the temerity to suggest this to Mr. Meeks. There are communities in which the one who presumes upon appearances is taking very long chances, and Buffalo Horn was one of these. Therefore, Mr. Meeks was treated with great show of respect by all the leading citizens, who squared things with themselves by privately "giving him the horse-laugh." And, all unconscious, Mr. Meeks kept on his way, or, rather, stayed where he was and lay in wait for some certain criminal who was wanted for violating a score, more or less, of the Federal statutes.

In strictest confidence, and with child-like faith, he had imparted more or less information concerning his mission to Mart Winslow, the landlord of the little hotel where he was staying—and Mart being, after the manner of his kind, an inveterate gossip, soon spread what information he had gleaned from the stranger, thereby causing a broad grin to appear whenever his guest was mentioned.

"Oh, but ain't 'e easy?" chuckled Mart to a couple of friends, one day, as he nodded towards the bar-room, where Mr. Meeks was engaged in "settin' 'em up" to the ever-ready crowd. "D' ye ever see sech a sucker? Comes yere an' 'xpec's th' duck 'e's layin' fer t' lope right intuh th' camp an' give 'lsself up, I s'pose; so yere'e stays, diggin' up fifteen a week f'r board an' spendin' copious at th' bar. Oh, I c'n stand it awhile."

"Gawd! S'posin' th' man sh'd come in, all of a suddint?" said Jim Wylie, the city marshal. "Say, I bet 'e'd die o' scare!"

"What is it th' little feller wants, Mart?" asked some one sitting by the window.

"Sh-h-h! Easy, Frank! • • • Oh, I d'no', not now. But I'll bet ye one thing—'tain't nobody he's a-goin' t' ketch right off."

It came to be rumored, within a day or two, that "Kingfisher" Williams was the man Mr. Weeks was after, this rumor being based upon the fact that the little man had been—very quietly, of course—making inquiries concerning that notorious person, whom numerous county and national officers were more or less anxious to meet. He was not known personally to any one in Buffalo Horn, but Mr. Wylie assured the little man that Kingfisher Williams was a very bad man, indeed, and that if Mr. Meeks effected his capture it would be a great feather in his cap—whereupon the little man swelled up considerably and invited Mr. Wylie to join him at the bar.

It was about a week after this conversation that the secret-service officer and the city marshal were standing in the bar-room, discussing some question or other, when the door opened and a stranger entered and, walking up to the bar, called for whisky. Mr. Meeks was looking earnestly upward into the big marshal's face as the stranger entered, but withdrew his gaze for a moment to glance at the new-comer. Then he reached for his revolver.

"There's my man!" he remarked, calmly, in an undertone, to the marshal. "Get back from the bar, please."

Wylie, dumbfounded, did as he was bidden, in time to see the stranger look up just as Mr. Meeks got him covered.

"Hands up, Mr. Williams!" commanded the little man. "I want you!"

With an oath, the other "drew," and for a few seconds there was a confusion of shots, in which the city marshal could take no part by reason of his revolver getting stuck and refusing to come forth. Then the stranger threw up both hands, in token of surrender.

"Have you—er—a pair of handcuffs, Mr. Wylie?" asked Mr. Meeks. "Put 'em on him, please. Sorry, Mr. Williams, but I can't take any chances with you."

Williams did not answer, but growled angrily under his breath as he submitted to being handcuffed.

"I'll git you for this!" he said to Wylie, as the latter stepped back after finishing the operation.

"Oh, ye will, will ye? Wait ontell my friend, Mr. Meeks, gits through 'ith ye, Mr. Williams," was the cheerful reply.

"Wan' t' put 'im in th' cooler?" asked the marshal, presently.

"No, thanks. He'll bunk with me tonight, and to-morrow we leave. Much obliged, all the same."

It was not more than an hour before every one in Buffalo Horn knew that little Mr. Meeks had, single-handed, captured the notorious Kingfisher Williams, after a short battle in which nobody was hurt; and the general sentiment was of the "Well, I'll be doggoned!" variety.

That night Mr. Meeks had a levee and blushingly received the congratulations of the best citizens of Buffalo Horn during a period of two hours, while his now staunch friend, Jim Wylie, obligingly guarded his desperate prisoner. Had he been a less temperate man, he might have retired somewhat the worse for liquor, as did most of the citizens of Buffalo Horn; but he kept his wits about him and was as sober as his prisoner when they turned in.

Next morning, a half-score of leading citizens had sufficiently recovered from the night's revelries to accompany him and his prisoner to Four-Mile Creek. This honor was modestly protested against by the little man, who seemed not to see that he had done anything remarkable, but he was hooted down, and when they reached Four-Mile his escort parted from his with three rousing cheers and a volley of revolver-shots by way of salute.

It was about one o'clock in the afternoon when an excited, hatless man, mounted on a panting horse that dripped with perspiration, dashed up to the Hotel Winslow, in front of which a number of citizens were sitting discussing the events of the day and night previous, and hoarsely announced: "Kingfisher—he's killed 'im!"

"What? Who?" asked Winslow. "What ye talkin' about, man?"

The stranger was gasping for breath, but presently managed to explain that, twenty miles south, he had been resting under a tree by a stream, when a little man and a big man, whom he had known in Kingfisher as "Kingfisher" Williams, came along and dismounted near by. The little man was leaning over to get a drink when Williams sneaked up behind him and struck him down with his handcuffs. After this, said the stranger, he saw Williams take the keys from the little man's pocket and unlock his handcuffs. Then he shot the insensible victim with the latter's own gun, mounted, and rode away; and the new-comer hurried into Buffalo Horn the faster because Williams caught sight of him as he was leaving and took a few shots at him.

"W'y didn't ye shoot back—'r else git th' drop on 'im w'en 'e hit little Meeks wi' th' bracelets?" asked Jim Wylie, fiercely.

"'Cause, in the first place, I didn't think 'e'd kill th' man. Second"—and the stranger eyed Wylie quizzically—"I reckon ye hain't real well acquainted 'ith Kingfisher Williams, be ye?"

In less than an hour the little town was practically depopulated of men, all but the cashier of the local bank and a few bar-tenders having gone on the warpath to catch and hang Kingfisher Williams for the murder of Mr. Meeks. The stranger did not accompany them, his horse being blown and himself not being anxious to meet Mr. Williams.

Thus, nearly every one being gone southward to mete out justice to the alleged murderer of Mr. Meeks, it was really child's play for that gentleman and Mr. Williams, emerging from their hiding-place in the hills just north of the town, and joining the stranger who had brought the news, to loot the bank, three stores, the hotel, and every saloon in the place, and to get safely away on fresh horses at least three hours before the pursuit could be organized.

And that is why every officer whose business takes him into Buffalo Horn and neighboring towns is looked upon with suspicion until his credentials are approved.—Lester Ketchum, in the San Francisco Argonaut.

EUROPE'S FAIREST QUEEN.

Queen Natalie of Servia and How She Retains Her Beauty.

One of the fairest Queens in Europe is Queen Natalie, of Servia, and her greatest beauty is her neck.

The Queen takes frequent and regular exercise with a heavy pitcher on her head. The result of this is to straighten and strengthen her neck, and to give it the form which the highest standard of female beauty requires. Not only does the exercise add to present beauty, but it arrests the ravages which time makes more quickly in the female neck than in any other place.

She appears in the park surrounding her castle at about 8 o'clock each morning taking a brisk walk with her pitcher on her shapely head.

Queen Natalie has abundant black hair and a rich coloring. Her figure is very strong and erect, and her carriage is perfect, for her favorite exercise tends to develop the latter quality as well as to beautify the neck and shoulders. Her flesh has the firmness of marble.

Her head is placed on her shoulders after the manner of that of the Venus of Milo. There are no protruding bones, no wrinkles, no hollows, but neither is there any superfluous fatness.

The exercise to which Natalie owes so much of her charm is one which has been practiced by women of the poorer classes in many countries. Rachel, it may be remembered, met Jacob when she was going to the well with her pitcher. The women of the Oriental countries, of Greece, and of Italy, have always been accustomed to carry pitchers and burdens on their heads.

Eugene Aram.

The idea of the story of Eugene Aram, as told by Bulwer Lytton in his novel of the same name, was borrowed from an incident which also supplied material for a poem by Thomas Hood and a drama by Wills. It is a story of a Knaresborough schoolmaster, a man of education and refinement, who, in 1745, committed a murder under exceedingly peculiar circumstances. The case, on account of its psychological features, excited wide interest at the time, and was the occasion of much discussion among the students of mental phenomena. Of Bulwer's novels of crime this is undoubtedly the most interesting study, though how a man of education and religious impulses could commit a crime of the kind, even under the circumstances detailed, is impossible to understand.

Only That.

Old Gentleman (to railway porter)—Porter, the rain is dripping in from the lamphole all over my trousers.

Porter (reassuringly)—No, sir, it's quite water-tight, I assure you. It's only the oil leaking a bit.—Household Words

WILLIE AND TAD LINCOLN.

The Two Sons of the Great President and Their Natures.

Julia Taft Bayne contributes an article to St. Nicholas on "Willie and Tad Lincoln," who were playmates of her brother during the time that they lived in the White House. Mrs. Bayne says: Willie Lincoln was the most lovable boy I ever know—sensible, sweet-tempered, and gentle-mannered. He was rather fair, with blue-gray eyes, while Tad had quick, dark eyes, and a fiery temper. Though very affectionate when he chose, Tad was unyielding in his dislikes. His peculiar defect of speech made it difficult for strangers to understand him, but those who saw him every day had no difficulty.

The two Lincoln boys were then a little over 10 and 8 years of age, my two brothers being a year or two older. The elder, Horatio, or "Budd," as he was always called, was fair, like Willie Lincoln, while Hally was dark. This resemblance of the two pairs of boys was often remarked upon.

Willie and Tad were two healthy, rollicking Western boys who had never been accustomed to restraint. The notice which their father's exalted station brought upon them was at times distasteful. Willie once said: "Wasn't there ever a President who had children before? I wish they wouldn't stare at us so!"

The first time they went to church with us, Willie said: "Will he pray for us, do you think? Preachers always pray so long for Pa." Dr. Smith did pray for them, as he recognized them in our pew. Willie's cheeks grew very red, but Tad was sitting on the floor of the pew, and heeded not. He was so uneasy that he always sat on the floor a good part of the service, drawing pictures, and amusing himself with whatever he could find in his pockets.

On another Sunday, when he was unusually restless, a young officer friend of ours gave him a knife, which he thought Tad would not open, but he did, and cut his finger, and I had to do it up in my best embroidered handkerchief.

On this occasion I was goaded to say: "I'll never take you to church again, Thomas Lincoln!"—he hated of all things to be called Thomas—"I just suffer agonies all the time!" "Well," said Tad, "wasn't Willie sitting up there, good as pie, and you poked me with your toe?"

A Teller's Mistake.

Beware of the man who professes never to make mistakes. The caution is general, but is particularly applicable to banking men. A national bank examiner, who was conversing recently with a reporter for the Pittsburg Dispatch, says that as a rule errors are of daily occurrence in every large bank. Most of them are at once corrected, of course, but now and then a really serious error seems for a time to be utterly inexplicable. Upon this point the examiner recalled an interesting case which happened under his own eye.

A curious error was discovered some years ago in one of the banks of this city, let us call it the Sixth National, while under examination. I was weighing the gold in the vault with the teller, and found a bag marked five thousand dollars, which weighed about twenty-four troy ounces less than it should have done. I opened the bag and counted four thousand five hundred dollars only.

A search was made, lasting far into the night, for the missing five hundred dollars. The teller's cash book showed no "overs" or "shorts" of any large amounts recently, and his character for honesty and integrity was unquestionable. In my report to the comptroller I spoke of it as one of those errors which will sometimes occur, but which for the time being are inexplicable, and added that as the teller was heavily bonded, no loss could occur to the bank.

I pass over the mental sufferings of the teller, and of the officials, who feared there might be a thief in the bank, but could not tell whom to suspect.

Two or three weeks afterward I was weighing the gold in another bank then under examination—let us call it the Seventh National—and found a bag marked five thousand dollars, which weighed five thousand five hundred dollars. The seal showed that it had come from the Sixth National, and had been received by the Seventh in payment of clearing-house exchanges. I explained to the cashier the error discovered in the Sixth, and he promptly sent for the teller and restored him his money.

The mistake had been made in the simplest manner possible, as you may suppose. The teller of the Sixth had two open bags of gold on his counter; one contained five thousand dollers, as he knew, and the other four thousand five hundred dollars. At the close of the day's business he put five hundred dollars into the wrong bag, tied and sealed up both without first weighing them, labeled each five thousand dollars, and put them into his safe. It is not necessary to say that no such carelessness on his part ever occurred again.

How to Cure Trouble.

Work is your true remedy. If misfortune hits you hard, hit you something else hard; go at something with a will. There is nothing like good, solid, absorbing, exhausting work to cure trouble. If you have met with losses, you do not want to lie awake thinking about them. You want sweet, calm, sound sleep, and to eat your dinner with appetite. But you cannot unless you work.

There are some great troubles that only time heals, and perhaps some that can never be healed at all; but all can be helped by the great panacea, work. Try it, you who are afflicted. It is not a patent medicine. It is an official remedy. All good physicians in regular standing prescribe it in cases of mental and moral disease. It operates kindly and well, leaving no disagreeable or ill effects. It will cure more complaints than any nostrum in the Materia Medica, and comes nearer to being a "cure-all" than any drug or compound of drugs in the market; and it will not sicken you if you do not take it sugar-coated.

Fire Without Matches.

Although the ancients had no knowledge of the friction matches of these times, still they had quite a number of ways of obtaining fire. The ignlara were contrivances similar to those in use to-day by savage tribes, and the fire was produced by the friction of a pointed stick of wood in the hollow of another piece.

An Exception.

Yeast—When a man accepts anything it hardly looks right for him to give it away.

Crimsonbeak—Well, I don't know about that. When an editor accepts a poem you like to see him give it to the public.—Yonkers Statesman.

An engaged girl is as worthless as a man with the toothache.

FOUGHT FOR A CRUST.

Starving Gerhardt Oechsle Steals that He May Be Put in Jail.

Without having had a morsel of food for five days and almost famished and crazed with hunger, Gerhardt Oechsle the other night fought with a lodger in the Cottage Grove avenue police station at Chicago for the possession of a piece of bread.

Desk Sergeant McKinzie happened to make his appearance in the cellroom at the time, and though he tried his best he could not overpower the prisoner, who held on to the bread and literally forced it down his throat.

"Give that man his bread back," commanded the sergeant. "Your supper will be here in a few minutes, and you will get all you want to eat."

"I can't help it," replied the prisoner, "I haven't eaten a thing since Thursday."

The answer astonished even the police officer, hardened by experience to tales of want. He hastened to the nearest restaurant and within a few minutes returned with a tray loaded with a supper. It was a sight worth watching the way Oechsle made the meal disappear. He did not stop to masticate the food, but devoured it with the ferociousness of an animal.

Oechsle broke into jail to get something to eat. He is a stalwart young man, 26 years old and a roofer. He has been out of work several months, and said he was not able to beg enough food to keep him from starving. From Thursday to Monday, he declared, not a crust of bread had passed his lips. He wandered the streets during the day and slept in hallways at night, tired, worn and hungry.

He resolved to get food. He broke into the house of Fred Veneble, 2215 Wabash avenue, and stole a broken bicycle which had not been used for five years. Then he walked down the street and waited for an officer. Detectives Culhane and O'Connell saw him and he told them at once he had stolen to get food. The police doubted the prisoner's story at first. It was not until he had been taken downstairs and had fought for the loaf of bread a lodger was eating that they were convinced of the truth of his statement. The owner of the wheel declared he would not prosecute Oechsle.

White House Etiquette.

All good Americans may be supposed to feel an interest in the social doings of the President and the President's wife. High station, even in a republic, has its own code of etiquette. Things must be done, even simple every-day things, according to established precedent; for in one sense, there are no people in the United States who have so little liberty to consult their own wishes and tastes as the occupants of the White House. The Illustrated American thus sets forth some of the unwritten laws to which they are strictly subject:

When the President and his wife drive out, the President sits upon the right-hand seat and his wife on the left. If there are others in the carriage, whether ladies or gentlemen, they must sit with their backs to the horses. When the President's wife drives alone, she sits in the right-hand corner—the place of honor.

The lady of the White House cannot set foot within those splendid houses in Washington whose flagstaffs mark the foreign embassy or legation. She could not go without the President, and as an embassy or legation is technically a part of the country it represents, the President could not go—so that she never sees the inside of a diplomatic house as long as she presides at the executive mansion.

The President dines only at cabinet houses, and his wife cannot dine anywhere without him. President Arthur dined with judges of the Supreme Court and with Senators—but as he had no wife, the whole system was very much simplified for him. The President's wife may, if she chooses, go to luncheons where there are no gentlemen, or to teas, both being regarded as strictly informal, but the danger of giving offense by accepting one invitation and declining another is so great that it is seldom or never risked.

At a state dinner the etiquette of the White House is exactly the reverse of the custom at a private dinner. The guests assemble in the east room and await the President and his wife, who appear on the stroke of the clock. Woe betide the late guest! He has committed a national or international breach of etiquette. At the table the President is served first, his wife next, then the guests in order of precedence.

An invitation to the White House is a command, and takes precedence of all others, even of a dinner at one's own house. An infringement of this rule would be regarded as a shocking breach of the amenities.

The President's sister may be at the head of the White House, as Mrs. McElroy was during President Arthur's administration, and Miss Rose Cleveland during a part of Mr. Cleveland's first administration; but her position is never like that of the President's wife. She has much more latitude, and although she follows in a general way the etiquette laid down for the President's wife, she has by no means the recognized official standing of the "first lady of the land."

The younger and more inexperienced a woman is when she enters the White House, the more likely she is to succeed; since she is likely to do as she is told, without presuming to act upon her own judgment. This is one secret of Mrs. Cleveland's success.

Realism in Literature.

"The movement for realism in literature has given to the best current fiction a verity and value as a reflection of the times that the novels of no other era possess," writes "Droch" in the Ladies' Home Journal. "This is not saying, by any means, that our novelists are greater than any of previous epochs. But never before could a reader of fiction accumulate a vivid, true and varied picture of so many sides of human nature, so many conditions of actual life. It therefore broadens the horizon of a judicious reader in a way that books of travel never did. It ought to, and often does, broaden the sympathies of the reader, so that the prejudices of class and nationality are broken down, and there is a more charitable judgment of human nature which can't help being 'different.'"

"Not Guilty ob 'Leben."

When Joshua Smith, the colored man who received the chickens stolen by the Accoo brothers, was asked at his trial recently in Woodbury, N. Y., whether he was or was not guilty of receiving eleven fowls, he looked at the court in an undecided manner and answered:

"Not guilty ob gettin' 'leben, kase dere was only nine in de bunch."—Philadelphia Record.

Slaughter of Deer.

Nearly 6,000 deer were killed in New York State last year. Of the number 1,233 were killed by right hunting, 2,634 by hounds, and the remainder by still hunting.

How Bullets Make Clouds.

Photographs of flying bullets recently made in Italy show dark streaks and blurs just in front of the projectiles, and it is thought that these are the images of little clouds formed by the sudden condensation of moisture as the advancing bullet compresses the air ahead of it.

Lions Disappearing.

Just as the buffalo has been exterminated from our great Western plains, so lions are disappearing from India before the rifle of the hunter and the ax and plow of the farmer. In Kathiawar, whose forests have furnished one of the last retreats of the retiring king of beasts, an attempt is being made to save the animals from complete extinction by prohibiting lion-hunting during a period of six years. It is said, however, that the gradual clearing away of the forests will in itself result in the extermination of the lions.

The Moon and the Earth.

The strangeness of the scenery of the moon, and the enormous size of its crater-shaped mountains, have led some astronomers to think that its past history must have been quite different from that of the earth. This, however, is not the opinion of Messieurs. Loewy and Pulseux, who, in a recent communication to the Academy of Sciences in Paris, say that a study of the latest lunar photographs tends to show that the condition of the moon's surface has been produced by the action of the same natural forces now at work on the earth.

A Shower of Ants.

A correspondent of Cosmos describes a remarkable phenomenon witnessed in Jerusalem at the beginning of July. A swarm of flying ants settled upon the city and filled the air from sunrise until 9 o'clock. Visitors to the Holy Sepulchre were obliged to use their handkerchiefs constantly in order to keep the insects out of their eyes and nostrils. The natives asserted that this extraordinary flight of ants was the precursor of an earthquake. Whether there was an real connection between the two phenomena or not, as a matter of fact two slight shocks of earthquake were felt in Jerusalem on the evening of the same day.

The Eye of the Storm.

The modern science of meteorology teaches us that in great storms, both on sea and land, the wind circles in spirals, which may be hundreds, or even thousands, of miles in diameter. At the center, especially when the storm occurs on the level surface of the sea, there is a calm called the "eye of the storm." Here the sun or the stars can sometimes be seen shining through a vast opening in the clouds, while all around a furious tempest is raging. Recently Prof. Cornu, the French savant, gave an illustrated lecture on storms in London, at which he reproduced the phenomena of a great cyclone on his lecture table, including the "eye of the storm." His apparatus was a flat, circular disk, some three feet in diameter, which was caused by rotate rapidly above a table which was covered with pins carrying little flags. The flags indicated by their motions the direction of the winds set in circulation by the whirling of the disk above. As the disk was moved across the table the eye of the storm moved with it, and wherever the eye was the little flags lay motionless, while those around them were flapping and snapping in the miniature tempest. A barometer placed beneath a hole in the table indicated a decrease of pressure as the center of the mimic storm passed over the hole. A similar fall of the barometer occurs in a real storm.

Egg Candling Business.

The business of egg candling, or egg testing, does not look difficult and apparently requires no especial proficiency. The South Water street expert in that line paused in his work long enough to tell a different story.

"Egg candling," he said, "is no fool job and only the man who has been at it a long time can make good money. It requires keen sight and a practical eye and just about one man out of ten is good at the business. You've got to have a steady hand, too, and the man who drinks much can't candle eggs very long. The breakage would soon take all the profit off every crate of eggs. In New York they have an egg candlers, or egg testers, union and one of its rules is that no man who drinks steadily can be admitted. It is composed mostly of east side Hebrews and is very old, one of the oldest labor organizations in New York. Men in our business who are really first-class get good wages. You can always tell a good man by the light, easy way he touches an egg. He can tell an egg that is addled at a glance, where even people quite familiar with the article will say it is in first-class condition."—Chicago Chronicle.

Humidity.

It being granted that humidity in dwellings is the cause of many diseases, the following simple method of testing is suggested. It directs that doors and windows of the room must be closed to prevent the entrance of exterior air, and that a piece of fresh quicklime should be left in the room for twenty-four hours. In an ordinary room, if three-quarters of an ounce of water is absorbed by the lime, the room may be considered unhealthy. The amount absorbed is determined, of course, by weighing the lime before and after exposure and calculating the difference.

Expenses of the White House.

Congress appropriates between $40,000 and $50,000 annually for the current expenses of the Executive Mansion to meet clerk hire, including that of the President's private secretary, which is $5,000 a year; stenographer, typewriters, telegraph operators, messengers, doorkeepers, a steward, and housekeeper, and light and heat.

A Good Precedent.

Mother—Johnny, when you take jam out of the pantry do you know you are breaking one of thecommandments?

Johnny—Well, teacher at Sunday school said yesterday that Moses broke them all one day on a hill and he was good.—Cleveland Leader.

Whenever two women get together, and there is a man in an adjoining room, they soon begin to whisper

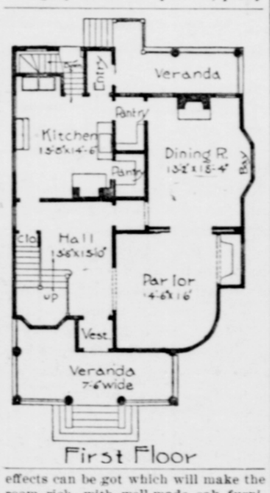
THE DINING-ROOM.

Colonial Effects in Furnishing and Decorating Are Most Becoming.

There is no more barbarous contrivance than the basement dining-room in the ordinary city house. Although it may be made necessary by consideration of economy and convenience, these facts do not make it any more admirable. Architectural limitations are such that the basement dining-room must of necessity have a low ceiling, little natural light, and an unattractive outlook. These are drawbacks very difficult to overcome by any scheme of decoration or furnishing. For various reasons rooms of this kind are dismissed from consideration in this article. City houses are always built with certain restrictions and limitations in mind, and each house must be a law unto itself. But aside from the question of means, the builder of a detached villa house has free reign and can consult his own taste and inclination in the arrangement of the various rooms.

One who plans the erection of such a house will be wise if he gives his greatest care and attention to the dining-room, for no room is more important, nor contributes more to the character of the house. The dining-room is in use but a small part of each day, but it is made the scene of what should be the most formal function of every day life in the household. Nothing is a surer index of good breeding than reserve and elegance at the table, and

the character of the room should be such as to emphasize these qualities. In the first place if there is to be gayety at the table, there must be plenty of light, for a gloomy room will surely be reflected in the conversation and demeanor of those you dine. If possible, there should be windows in more than one side of the room. It is not always possible to command the outlook from the windows of the house, but at least one can avoid having the dining-room windows face one's own outhouses, or the blank walls of some other part of the house. No handsomer room was ever designed than a colonial dining-room, and it will be well to follow their general style unless it forms too violent a contrast with the remainder of the house. The walls should be warm, red-brown tint, or be covered with some warm-colored paper, with a simple, formal design. By far the most effective furniture for the dining-room is mahogany, but this is costly. With mahogany out of the question, pretty

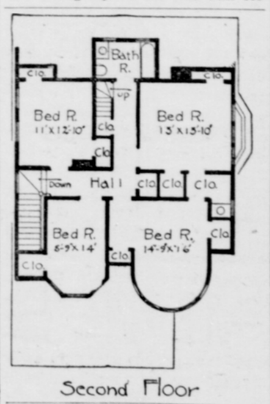


First Floor

effects can be got which will make the room rich, with well-made oak furniture, provided it is simple in design and not disfigured with machine carving and glued ornaments.

A hardwood floor costs no more than fine carpet, and is far more appropriate. There is no need for ornamentation other than pure and simple porcelain, glass and silverware, which can be made to do good service, if not huddled away in closets. A few good pictures in modern frames, chosen with some idea of the "eternal fitness of things." It might be thought unnecessary to say this, but one can recall dining-rooms ruined by cheap chromos of fruit and flowers, pictures of dead fish, and other abominations of still life.

The accompanying design shows a dining-room which lends itself reality to the treatment described in this article. The width of this house is thirty-four feet six inches, and the depth, including veranda, fifty feet four inches. With first story nine feet six inches, and second story nine feet, with attic eight feet, secures a comfortable dwelling, easily heated. The size of the dining-room is shown by the floor plans. The room is finished in oak, with oak floor. The two windows are leaded with diamond-shaped panes, looking out over the veranda. The walls are covered with a paper of yellow brown color, with a stiff, formal design in red brown. This runs to the ceiling, with no frieze, but with oak picture rail about twenty inches below the cornice. The ceiling repeats the side wall col-



Second Floor

ors, though the pattern of the paper is not so pronounced. The fire place is faced with dark, brown brick. The furniture is rich mahogany with brass mountings. The sideboard, on which are a few pieces of fine glass, reflected by the fire light, glistens a welcome. Bright china gives points of rich color for the eye to rest itself. A Smyrna rug in deep reds and browns laid on the polished oak floor adds still more color to the room, and a few choice hunting scenes finish the walls. The cost to build the design, illustrating this article, in the vicinity of New York City, is $3,500, not including the heating apparatus. In many sections of the country the cost should be much less.

Copyright, 1897, by the Co-operative Building Plan Association.

A Story of Gail Hamilton.

A capital story of the power of a bright woman's talk is related by the New York Tribune. The bright woman was Miss Abigail Dodge, better known by her pen name of Gail Hamilton. A Western clergyman, cultivated, well read, but not exactly a man of the world, was in Washington for the first time, eager to make the utmost of his holiday.

He wanted to see all there was to be seen, but most of all he desired to meet and have a word with Gail Hamilton; indeed, he confided to a friend that he should consider such a privilege well worth his journey to the East.

It took him several days to summon up his courage, but at last he presented himself at Mr. Blaine's door and asked for Miss "Hamilton." About three hours afterward the friend met him descending the steps of the house, one broad smile of delight and satisfaction.

"Ah," exclaimed the confidant, "I congratulate you. So you have men your dear Gail Hamilton. I can see it in your face."

That face fell—grew remorseful.

"N-no," he stammered, "I didn't meet her—she didn't come down, and the fact is, I forgot to ask for her."

"Forgot to ask for her!"

"Oh, I sent up my card, of course, but a lady came down, a Miss Dodge, and my dear fellow, you never say such a woman in your life! I suppose Miss Hamilton must have been out; she didn't mention her, but she began to talk to me, and in two minutes I forgot what I had come for. I never could have believed that any person, man or woman, could know so much.

"I believe we talked on every subject in the world, and she knew everything about every one of the subjects. I was never so surprised as when a lot of people came in and I found how long I had been there, and I didn't want to come away then, I can tell you, and till you spoke, I'd forgotten all about Miss Hamilton. I don't believe she can touch Miss Dodge, anyhow!"

His astonishment and delight when he found that he had entertained—or been entertained by—his angel unawares, were very pleasant to see.

In telling the story the narrator added, "I don't know what it is about Miss Dodge, I can never tell how she does it. I heard her tell the funniest story I ever heard in my life, about a drive she took in the country, when her horse had on a harness that practically fell to pieces. The room was full of people and every one laughed himself sore over it, and yet when I came to think it over, there was really nothing to it, nothing to tell—it was a thing that might have happened to any one, and not have borne talking about. Yet she had entertained twenty people for half an hour with it."

Very Extravagant.

By far the most extravagant diner in the world is Abdul Hamid, Sultan of Turkey. His table expenses in the course of a year are enormous.

It is the most costly table, in all probability, that any country has ever seen, particularly as his majesty is not a sociable man and very rarely has guests or visitors.

The Sultan does not even have a dining-room or dining-hall. Turkish custom among the higher classes is for servants to bring the meals to wherever the diners may be, and in the palace of Stamboul the menials at the dinner hour first search out his majesty, and then in long procession bring the banquet, table and all.

The table is a silver one, and perhaps the most exquisite table that has ever been made. It precedes the procession, borne in upon the shoulders of lower-grade servants. Following come a long line of cooks' assistants. On the heads of these Orientals are large tablets, on which the platters are placed. Such a perfect balance do they keep that an accident such as the breaking of a dish has never been known.

The waiters lift the platters from the tablets and present each dish to his majesty, bowing low. The dishes are covered and sealed with the imperial seal, which is put on in the kitchen by the Grand Vizier, the idea being that the Sultan may be certain that his food has not been poisoned or tampered with.

The dishes are all set upon the table, vegetables, meats, ices and confitures, and arranged in front of his majesty without any regard to courses or ordinary dinner regulations. The Sultan is a total abstainer, and never has wine on the table.

Election of United States Senators.

In his paper on "This Country of Ours" in the Ladies' Home Journal ex-President Harrison writes of Congress, and tells how United States Senators are elected. "The law of 1866," he says, "provides that the Legislature chosen next before the expiration of the term of a Senator shall choose his successor, and that it shall proceed to do so on the second Tuesday after it assembles. On that day each House of the Legislature must vote separately, viva voce, for a Senator, and enter the result on its journal; the two Houses must at 12 m. the next day meet in joint session, and if it appears that the same person has received a majority of the votes in each House he is declared elected; if there has been no election the joint assembly must take a vote, and if any one receives a majority of the votes—a majority of all the members elected to both Houses being present and voting—he is to be declared elected. If there is no election the joint assembly proceeds with the balloting, and must meet every day at 12 m., and take at least one ballot each day until a Senator is elected. The Governor of the State is required to certify the election under the seal of the State, to the President of the Senate, the certificate to be countersigned by the Secretary of State of the State."

The Winter Soft Crab.

The winter soft crab differs from its summer cousin only slightly in appearance, being a little narrower in the body. It is, however, more succulent and finer flavored than the choicest specimens of the other kind, a fact that is well known to epicures. Moreover, being a rock-crab, or, as it is called here, a sand crab, it differs in its habits from the other, which lives in the mud, and this difference has much to do with its comparative scarcity in ordinary seasons. It is much harder to find, unless the hunter has sharp eyes and a good knowledge of its ways, and it chooses its hiding places and its time of shedding with a wisdom too great for reason, and attributable only to instinct.

The real sincere women are those whose prayers at night in a cold room are never abbreviated by the condition of the thermometer.

They Are Needed.

While the people of California are not prejudiced in favor of any particular method of dealing with the subject of road improvement on the part of the State, they are most earnestly in favor of some law which will promote that much desired object. Whether the work is to be done by a State commission or by supervisors it ought certainly to be done by somebody, and the present Legislature will be regarded as negligent of its duty if it does not provide some means for furnishing the people with better highways than they have at present.—San Francisco Call.

Good Roads.

The movement for State aid in building good roads is attracting more and more general attention. At the present time there are good roads bills before the Legislatures of twelve different States, and in every one of these bills the creation of a State highway commission is provided for. New Jersey is considered typical so far as advancement in the actual work of road construction is concerned, and there the State pays one-third of the cost, as has been mentioned in these columns. Three hundred miles have been built or contracted for in New Jersey, and the State has paid for its one-third the sum of $460,505. The total expenditure in six years has been $1,400,000. The motto in New Jersey has been: "Good roads decrease taxation, decrease living expenses, increase property values, increase farmers' incomes, increase railroad business, promote prosperity, promote civilization." The new highways of New Jersey are said to be hard and smooth, and supplied with side paths for pedestrians and bicyclers. Massachusetts is following New Jersey closely, and New York is coming into line. The bill prepared in the New York Legislature provides for a special tax of one-tenth of a mill for the improved road making during the present year.—Davenport Republican.

Success of Rural Free Delivery.

The favorable reports received from the postmasters in localities in which the rural free-delivery system has been put into effect, and the announcement that Postmaster General Wilson will probably report in favor of the continuance of the system for another year, will be cheering news for all who understand the immense benefits involved.

Up to the present, it appears, it has been found entirely practicable to adopt rural free delivery, even with the country roads in their present condition. The local postmasters where the system has been adopted indorse it without reservation, and it need hardly be said that the residents of those localities are heartily in favor of it. When it is considered that the experiment has been conducted only in a tentative way, and that there has not been time to test the full benefits of the system—benefits which will come in the increased use of the mails after a few years—it would be folly to abandon the project now. The cost of rural free delivery is now greatly increased because of the poor condition of the country roads. And, on the other hand, the returns have not increased proportionately because it has not been in operation long enough to produce the desired effect of increasing the use of the mails. Both these results would be accomplished in time, and it is to be kept in mind that, just as good roads will help rural free delivery, rural delivery will help the cause of good roads.

But the benefits of the plan are not confined to the advantages resulting from an expansion of the postal system. Their real importance cannot be estimated save by those who have experienced the isolation and loneliness of country life, and who understand how much that isolation is a factor in breeding national discontent. The gain to be derived from putting every American citizen into daily contact with the world would alone compensate in this way for whatever increased cost might be put temporarily upon the taxpayers.

FIRE-ALARM BOXES.

The Mechanism that Summons Help in Case of Fire.

Charles T. Hill contributes an article entitled "An Alarm of Fire by Telegraph" to St. Nicholas, describing the fire-alarm system of New York. Concerning the fire-alarm boxes, Mr. Hill writes: This box forms part of a lamp-post, the post being so constructed that the box is inserted in the middle. The box is painted a bright red, and the lamp at night shows a red light, thus making it easily discernible either by day or night. The wires from the box are conveyed down through the center of the post to conduits buried in the street, and thence on to fire headquarters.

White letters on a red pane of glass, in the lamp over the box, give directions how to send an alarm—the same directions in raised letters are found on the face of the box. If we turn the large brass handle on the outside as far as it will go, a loud gong will ring inside. This is not the alarm, but simply a warning bell to notify the policeman on the beat that the box is being opened and to prevent the sending in of malicious or false alarms of fire, an offense that is punishable in New York State by a fine of $100 and one year's imprisonment. Turning this handle as far as it will go opens the outer door, and we find inside another door, with a slot at the left hand side, and at the top of this slot a hook projecting. By pulling down this hook once and releasing it, we set at work certain clockwork mechanism inside, and this sends in the alarm.

When the first officer arriving at a fire discovers that it is of enough importance to warrant his sending for reinforcements, he opens this inner door and with the "Morse key" sends in a second, third, fourth, fifth or sixth alarm, as the case may be, or a call for any special apparatus that he may need. The inspectors of boxes can also carry on a conversation in the Morse alphabet with the operator at headquarters on this key and sounder.

Struggle Never Ends.

Gen. Horace Poter's latest mot is that the first half of a man's life is spent in getting his name into the papers, and the last half in a struggle to keep it out.

Poor Medicine.

Mrs. Rubinstein—Der doctor sais d