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VENUS AND A PROFESSOR.

You will find the cottage in perfect order," wrote the Professor; "it has been newly furnished throughout, and I think I can say that it is furnished artistically."

"Delightful," cried my wife when I had read so far from the letter in which the owner of a seaside cottage on Long Island Sound described the place we had rented for the season. "Mrs. Rogers told me that Prof. Smith was the best of landlords; and I'm sure, Herbert, if I will please you to go into a cottage for the summer that is furnished artistically. Most summer cottages, as we know, are simply dreadful."

"Simply dreadful," though vague, was understood by me, and I quite agreed with Mrs. Burton in her estimate of the attractiveness, internally, of the average summer cottage, and shared in her delight at the prospect of something better which was held out to our new landlord's letter. A "Professor," of course, would have the proper ideals about art as applied to household decoration. We were already the subject of envy among our friends because we were going to the seaside so early this year, and after we had gone about bragging for a while about the artistic attractions of our cottage this envy amounted to positive dislike.

"What airs those Burtons give themselves!" said our neighbors, little knowing what was ahead of us, and forgetting the adage that "pride goeth before a fall."

The Professor met us at the station, when we arrived at our village. We gazed when we saw him. "He must be a Professor of ploughing or haying," whispered my wife. Under his chin wagged a billy-goat beard, and he was for all the world the figure of the typical farmer. We later found out that early in his youth he was now about seventy—his wife taught in the village school, and that the title of "Professor" had clung to him ever since. However, nobody could have been more courteous or kind than the Professor. He did all he possibly could to make things pleasant for us, and his cottage was, as he had promised, well and newly and comfortably furnished. But the artistic end of the decorations!

"Horrors!" whispered my wife under her breath when her eyes saw the pictures that hung everywhere on the walls. There were oil paintings of a quality that—well, they were what my wife exclaimed horrors. Oil paintings of dogs' heads done in glaring colors, and supposed portraits of dead and gone men and women which made us think that if the originals in any way resembled them it was well they were dead and gone. And they hung on every available foot of the wall. The Professor pointed them out with pride, and told us the history of each one. To him, it was plain to see, they represented the flower of a perfect art. They were mostly family portraits.

"What in the world are we to do about them?" asked my wife, when the Professor departed. "We will be the laughing stock of all our friends who visit us, with those objects on our walls, after all we have said about the artistic merits of our cottage."

"Why, we'll take them down," said I. But Mrs. Burton demurred to this. She is a kind-hearted woman. "It would break the Professor's heart to do that," she said, and I think she was right. So we let them hang. My wife had, however, one of her own pictures with her in her trunk—a splendid little photograph of the Venus of Milo, and this she got out and hung up over her desk in the front room.

"Thank Heavens I brought this," she said; "I'll try not to look at the others." But, alas, for our good intentions, for our desire not to hurt the Professor's feelings!

Venus has caused a lot of trouble in the world, and she brought it into our cottage on the Sound. The Professor was a deacon of the severe old school. He came to the cottage next day to see if we wanted anything, and his horrified eyes fell upon our Venus. It caused him more alarm than his ancestral oil paintings had caused us. He stood for a moment as though stupefied, while we stared at him in wonder, and then he made a mad rush for the wall and began to take down the portraits of his grandparents and other relatives and buried them out of doors, away from the contagion of the calm Venus!

"My folks can't stay in the same house with that hussy!" he cried, and did not stop. He took all his pictures away, and now Venus has the cottage to herself so far as pictures are concerned.

"Well, at any rate," said my wife, "the cottage certainly is artistic now." But the Professor has put us down as objects for earnest prayer.

CONCERNING BORAX.

It Was Known and Used Many Centuries Ago.

Herodotus, the father of history, although he was a very close observer and wrote of almost everything coming under his eyes, does not anywhere speak of borax or of what we know as such. Yet there is no doubt that it was known and used in his time and earlier. In the desert regions, consisting of old lake beds in Thibet and Asia Minor, and from the volcanic regions of Tuscany, in Italy, the world's supply of borax was obtained until about fifty years ago, when North and South America began to present fields nearer home. The favorite regions for its existence, in paying quantities, occur most generally where old, dry lakes are found, situated in volcanic regions. Italy is an exception to this; and, although verdure is abundant at Castelluccio and elsewhere near by where borax acid is produced, yet the region is volcanic, and gases are constantly emanating from the numerous orifices that abound over a large tract of country. In Italy borax, in solution, is produced from the waters of many springs; in Asia Minor and Thibet it is obtained as a white powder and in a crystallized form from the old, dry lake beds. On the Sea of Marmora there are large deposits of borate of lime, in which there exists a large percentage of boracic acid. Of late years an English company has secured these deposits, and for some years has been profitably producing borax from them. As might be expected in such a country, borax was discovered in many places in the high, dry, desert plateaus of South America as early as 1825. About 1835 deposits were discovered at Ascotán, in Bolivia; and about the same time borax discoveries were made in Peru and Chili, where, by rude methods, crystallized borax was made in limited quantities; the quantity of borax then used in the world, compared with that used now, was small, but the prices realized were high, being in most countries from 50 cents to \$1 a pound.

A strange feature about borax is that regions producing it have in no case as yet been exhausted, the mineral in the old lake regions continuing to send up borax from below, as an alkalioid, and where worked this year it may be worked again in the year following. Especially if there be any precipitation of snow or rain at any time of the year, the waters will penetrate the soil and produce chemical action that brings the borax, in either a powdered or crystallized state, to the surface.—Mines and Mining.

His Penance.

Miss Klumbuch—Oh, Mr. Pecawee, you're the very man I wanted to see. Mr. Pecawee—Well, I'm delighted to say that the exhibition is now open. Miss Klumbuch—I want you to help me to persuade your wife—

Mr. Pecawee sadly—I'm very sorry, but I'll do my best to help you. I would only do your cause more harm than good just now. Miss Klumbuch—Why, what do you mean? Mr. Pecawee—Well, you see, I'm on a husk mattress again. Miss Klumbuch—On a what? Mr. Pecawee—Husk mattress. Did you ever have to sleep on a husk mattress? Of all the lumpy, bumpy, knobbed beds of torture it is big IT. You're all up hill and down dale on one, too, and the man never was made who could lie comfortably on one—not even a lawyer. It's all right, though, and sends cold shivers chasing themselves up and down your back every time you touch it. And, besides, it rustles and rattles so every time you make the slightest movement that you have just as much chance of getting to sleep as an idiotic kitten tumbling around in a waste-paper basket. Oh, it's a dandy for real luxurious insomnia. I tell you.

Miss Klumbuch—But what's it for? Mr. Pecawee—I'm not positive, but I think this time it's because I got some very late from a banquet a few nights ago. Maybe it's for something else, but that's the only inquiry I've been up to lately that I can remember. Miss Klumbuch—I mean, why do you sleep on one since you dislike them so much? Mr. Pecawee (gloomily)—Oh, it's not my choice; don't believe that for a second. It's Marle's. It's a little pleasanter of hers. You see, she never blows me up, or nags me, or makes my life a burden in any verbal way when I do something she doesn't approve of. Instead she just ships my good old comfortable hair mattress off to be renovated, since this husk horror on my back can't stay in the same house with that hussy!" he cried, and did not stop. He took all his pictures away, and now Venus has the cottage to herself so far as pictures are concerned.

"Well, at any rate," said my wife, "the cottage certainly is artistic now." But the Professor has put us down as objects for earnest prayer.

Her Proposal Turned Down. There is a small town up the Stato that boasts a female preacher, and the lady's duties are many. One day she may visit the sick, another attend a funeral and the next baptize a baby. One afternoon she was preparing the sermon for the following Sunday, when she heard a timid knock at the parsonage door. Answering the summons she found a bashful young German standing on the step and twirling his straw hat in his hands.

"Good afternoon," the preacher remarked. "What do you wish?" "They say der minister lifted in dis house, hey?"

"Yes, sir." "Ess? Vell I want to me kit married." "All right; I can marry you," she said. The lady's hair is beginning to silver and the German glanced at her. Then he jammed his hat on his head and hurried down the walk. "What's the matter?" she cried after him. "You gits no chance mit me," he called back. "I don't want you; I haf got me a girl already!"—Philadelphia Evening Telegraph.

An Illustrated Arab Proverb. "There is none so poor but there is one poorer."

A poor Arab spent his last bars on a high cliff to eat them and die. As he threw the stones over a lean hand shot out below him and caught them. "Ho," said he, "why do you catch my date stones?" "Because, O Brother," answered a weak voice, "I have not eaten these three days and Allah has sent these stones to save my life." "Praise be to Allah," answered the first man, "for he has saved me also, for here is one poppur than I." And both men went into the city.

STAIN OF YELLOW GOLD.

By Ellen Page Finn.

In poor attire she was and poverty had drawn its gaunt lines on all of her environment, but there was a rich beauty in her face, and the sensuous symmetry of figure seemed to give warmth and color to the thin and faded gown she wore.

Her little room was high up, and near its one window she sat by a small table on which stood a typewriter. A few sheets of paper were strewn around, and half a page on the machine showed her work had ended with no more to follow.

She sat with her hands folded in her lap—clenched, if the tense lines were read aright—and gazed helplessly and hopelessly out toward the gray sky that seemed to come so close down, and yet was so far away. Tear stains were on her cheeks where the pink was fast fading, and what was gentle in her face was growing harder as she fought day by day and night by night the desperate fate that was crowding her to the wall.

That temptation was hers could be easily said for it was beauty in addition to the first food of the tempter? But she had struggled bravely, and the sharp click of her typewriter had been sweeter music to her than the song of the bird in the gilded cage belonging to the girl who occupied the suite of elegant apartments on a lower floor.

Still, she could not help thinking, help contrasting her starvation, her rags, her dreadful poverty with the luxury and ease she saw about her, ready to come to her call.

She was cold, hungry and penniless; the pawnbroker had everything except a gold medallion of her mother which she wore around her neck. She took it in her hand, and as she looked into the face so like her own, the tears came to her eyes again, and throwing her head upon her arms on the typewriter, she sobbed aloud.

"For an instant only she gave way to her feelings; then she rose to her feet and, standing by her typewriter, she laid her hand upon it as if it were sentient and knew.

"Be still now if you will, my dear," she said to it smiling, "but to-morrow you may click again, for I know I will have royal feast, a fire and good cheer. You and I—"

"Come in," she called cheerily, and a man whom she had seen before came in.

"Excuse me, miss," he said, not unkindly; "but I come for the pay for the typewriter. You are two months behind, and the boss said if you couldn't pay I was to take it away."

All the sunshine gone at one short message: all the hope, all the comfort he had always had in to-morrow—all gone, and with a moan she sank into the chair by the table.

The collector in his poor way tried to cheer her, but she only shook her head.

Suddenly she dashed the tears from her eyes, her face grew desperately fierce and hard, and she shook herself as if she would be rid of her burden.

Combined Poultry-House and Pigery. We give herewith a perspective and a sectional view of a small building designed to serve the double purpose of a poultry-house above and a pigery in the basement. It is twenty feet long, ten wide and seven feet high in front above the stone foundation. The front is mainly filled with glazed sash, flooding it with light and

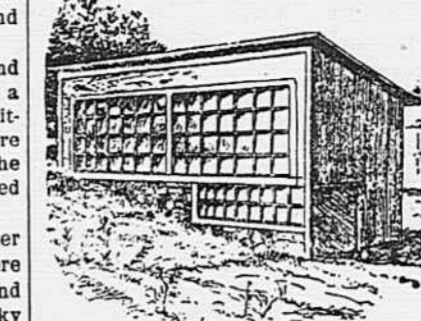


FIG. 1. PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF FIG. GERY AND HENNERY.

The basement is four feet high in the clear, and is also well lighted. Fig. 2 is a vertical section, showing the internal arrangements. At the west end is an entrance door, opening into a room four feet wide, divided from the rest of the house by a partition of pickets or wire netting, extending across the entire width of the house. In the floor is a trap-door, and a spout through which food is conveyed to the trough in the pigery portion. The roosts occupy the central portion of the poultry-house, and at the right are two nest-boxes. Between the lower nestbox and the roost is a

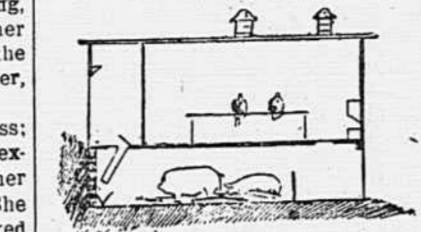


FIG. 2. VERTICAL SECTION.

trapdoor, through which the sweepings are dropped to the pig-pen, from which they are removed with other litter. The plan of the basement is plainly seen in the engraving. The perspective view is given in Fig. 1.

From a Jacky's Diary. Otto Hoffmeister, son of Mrs. Carrie Hoffmeister, 310 Rockford street, and who is a sailor on the U. S. gunboat Prairie, has written his mother a number of interesting letters in the form of a diary of a 16,000 mile trip on the gunboat in the tropical seas. Hoffmeister joined the navy in Indianapolis. His diary in part is as follows:

"We were given our first 'liberty' or permission to go ashore at Trinidad, Port of Spain, Jan. 24, 1902. The streets in Trinidad are of heavy block pavement and are kept clean by a species of bird called 'turkey buzzard,' which is as large as the ordinary buzzard. It is a penalty to kill one of these birds. There are many coolie slaves here, brought from India, and after five years of bondage they are given transportation back to their native land, though very few take advantage of this offer.

"We took a trip to the leper hospital, which is situated just beyond the outskirts of the city, and saw many distressing and pitiful sights among the lepers. The hospital resembles a fine palace, and it is in charge of the sisters of charity.

"After leaving Trinidad we were again given shore leave at 'Pitch Lake,' La Brea, which, by the way, is one of the seven wonders of the world. The lake is about a half mile from the town and the road leading to it is made entirely of pitch, and over seven acres was used in the course of construction. The lake looks like a vast pond. There are many shallow places in it filled with water and there are several small islands covered with tropical vegetation. The lake is of very solid substance, much like black rubber.

"One of the overseers told our party that they had dug down to a depth of 125 feet and had not struck bottom. He said they had been digging in the same place for the past seven years and that the place fills up again with pitch twenty-four hours after they stop. The pitch is taken from the lake to a steam plant, where it is melted and run to the overhead cable cars and transported to the docks, where they are loaded into vessels and shipped all over the world.

"When we were 'crossing the line,' as the sailors term the equator, we were hailed at 8.30 a. m. by Neptune Rex, king of the sea.

"Promptly at 9 a. m. the following day all hands were 'piped to quarters' to receive King Neptune, who came aboard surrounded by his staff and attendants. They paraded to the 'castle,' where a large platform had been raised for the occasion. The roll was then called and each sailor was taken up before Neptune and asked if he knew of any reason why he should not be made a true and loyal subject to 'His Majesty King Neptune.'

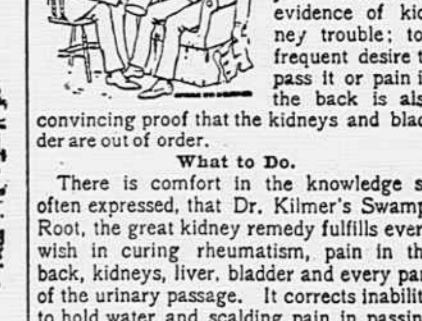
"Each sailor replied that he did not, and he was then turned over to the 'barbers' of Neptune's staff and shaved, first being lathered with a mixture of soap, tar, flour and molasses, which was put on with a white wash brush. After being shaved, each man was placed in a large tank of salt water and held there until the next victim was ready."—Indianapolis Sun.

Playing Cards in Russia. In Russia the manufacture of playing cards is an imperial monopoly. In 1848 14,000 packs were issued daily, but the demand was so much in excess of this that a petition was addressed to the czar praying for a still more liberal supply. Among the card players the Russian soldiers are devotees. They commonly carry packs in their pockets, but when there is an actual call to arms they prepare themselves for the battlefield by making it a point to get rid of all their cards. This is due to a superstition amounting to conviction, which leads them to believe that to retain them upon their persons at such a time would be to court grave disaster.—Ohio Valley Manufacturer.

"Julius, was you ever in business?" "In course I was!" "What business?" "A sugar planter!" "When was that, my colored friend?" "Der day I berried that old sweetheart of mine!"

Thousands Have Kidney Trouble and Don't Know it.

Fill a bottle or common glass with your water and let it stand twenty-four hours; a sediment or getting indicates an unhealthy condition of the kidneys; if it stains your linen it is evidence of kidney trouble; too frequent desire to pass it or pain in the back is also evidence of kidney trouble.



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Ladies' Petticoats, 25c. to 1.00
Ladies' Muslin Underwear at less than can be bought elsewhere.

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