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This House To Let.



HERE it was, most unquestionably—in fact, black letters—

"This house to let—and no mistake about it," either," mused Mr. Briggs, stirring his cup of cold coffee and looking distastefully at the one boiled egg that lay before him. "The fact is, I'm sick of keeping this house, coal always out, taxes always due. I won't stand it any longer."

He turned a lively scarlet as the door slowly swung open and his housekeeper stalked majestically in. "In fact, Mr. Briggs was a little afraid of Mrs. Parley, but Mr. Briggs was resolved to break the baleful spell."

"Mr. Briggs," began the lady, solemnly, "can I believe my eyes?" "Well, ma'am," said the old bachelor, "I never heard that anything was amiss with your eyesight."

"Is it possible that you have posted a bill on the front of this house without consulting me?" "Quite so, ma'am," responded Nahum. "And you intend—"

"To shut up shop—to close the establishment—to break up housekeeping," said Nahum. "That's exactly my intention."

"Very well, sir," said Mrs. Parley, grimly. "If you will settle the trifling question of salary between us, I will take my departure."

Mrs. Parley withdrew, and Nahum was left to his own meditations. They took the shape of a species of war dance, executed in the middle of the floor.

"Bravo! bravo! three cheers and a tiger!" chuckled our hero. "If ever there was a miserable slave I've been one to that hatched faced old woman, and now it's my turn."

He stopped abruptly; there was a ring at the door bell. A spectacled old lady stood on the doorsteps, in a shabby bombazine and furs that looked as if they might have grown on the back of some dissipated cat.

"This 'ere house to let?" "Yes, ma'am."

"Water pipes in order? Cellar dry? Paint new? Furnace work good? Roof sound? Chandeliers go with the house? Possession right off? Neighborhood good? Methodist church anywhere near? Any objection to children? Ventilators in the rooms? Cheery closets off the dining room?"

"Ma'am!" ejaculated poor Nahum, fairly stunned by the torrent of questions. "What's the rent?" "Twelve hundred dollars."

"Twelve hundred fiddlesticks!" shrieked the old lady. "Why, you must be crazy. Say \$900, and I'll look at the rooms."

"I won't say anything of the sort." So saying, Nahum Briggs closed the door in the face of the old lady with the furs.

Scarcely had the old lady got safely round the corner and Mr. Briggs recovered his ruffled faculties, when there came another sharp tinninnabulation of the bell—a languid young lady this time, with a stiff looking gentleman, who appeared engaged in holding on his mustache. With this couple Mr. Nahum trotted to the very top of the house and down again.

"Adorable my dear," said the lady. "Walk, my dear?" "Don't you think these ceilings are very low? And then the back yard is so very small. And the dining room is so inconvenient. And—I'm really afraid there are obnoxious insects in the bedrooms."

"Really, ma'am," said Nahum, bristling up, "is there any other fault to find? Because, if there isn't, there's the front door."

Two young damsels and a spinster aunt followed, and after a lengthy inspection of the premises came to a state council in the parlors. "I like the house very much," said the spinster aunt, solemnly, "and with a few slight alterations I will engage it for my brother's family."

"Very good, ma'am," said Nahum, rubbing his hands and scenting a speedy termination to his trials. "Name 'em."

"The door handles must be all gilded, and I should like the house new papered and repainted and the partition between the parlors taken down and replaced by an arch, and an extension dining room built out behind, and a bay window thrown out of the parlor, and a new style of range in the kitchen, and a dumb waiter put in, and new bronze chandeliers throughout, and another furnace in the sub-bellar, and—"

"Hold on, ma'am—just hold on one minute," said Nahum, gasping for breath. "Wouldn't you like the old house carted away and a new one put in its place? I think it would be rather less trouble than to make the trifling alterations you suggest."

With plain dignity the lady marshaled her two charges out, muttering something about "the extortionate ideas of some landlords nowadays."

though he was, could see how very shabby it was. Yet she was pretty, with big, blue eyes and shining brown hair, and cheeks tinged with a faint, fleeting color, where the velvety roses of youth had once bloomed in vivid carmine.

And the golden haired little lassies who clung to her dress were as like her as tiny lily buds to full bloomed flower bells.

As Nahum Briggs stood looking at her there came back to him the sunny days of his youth—a field of clover and a blue-eyed girl leaning over the fence, with her bright hair parted with sunset gold, and he knew that he was standing face to face with the girl whose blue eyes had kept him an old bachelor all his life long.

"This house is to let, I believe," she asked, timidly. "I believe it is, Barbara Wylie."

"She looked up, starting with a sudden flush of recognition. "Well, you please, Mr. Briggs, I will look at the house, I am a widow now, and very poor, and—I think of keeping a boarding house to earn my bread, I hope the rent is not very high."

"We'll talk about the rent afterward," said Nahum, swallowing a big lump in his throat. "Come here, little girl, and kiss me; I used to know your mamma when she wasn't much bigger than you are."

"Barbara, with her blue eyes still drooping, went all over the house without finding a word of fault, and Nahum Briggs walked at her side, wondering if it was really fifteen years since the June sunshine lay so brightly on the clover field."

"I think the house is beautiful," said Mr. Briggs. "Will you rent it to me?" "Well, yes," said Nahum, thoughtfully. "I'll let you have the house if you want it, Barbara."

"With the privilege of keeping a few boarders?" "No!" Barbara stopped and looked wistfully at him.

"But I don't think you understand how very poor I am, Mr. Briggs." "I'll let you have the house if you want it, Barbara," said Mr. Briggs, dictating. "I'll give you the privilege of keeping just one boarder, and him you've got to keep all your life if you once take him."

"I don't think I quite understand you, Mr. Briggs," said Barbara. But one is rather inclined to think she told a little fib.

"What do you say to me for a boarder, Barbara?" said the old bachelor, taking both the widow's hands in his. "Barbara, I'll do my best to be a good husband to you if you'll be my wife."

Barbara blushed again and hesitated, but Nahum was not to be eluded. "Shall I take down the 'to let,' Barbara?" "Yes," she murmured, almost under her breath.

"And when shall we be married, Barbara?" "In the summer, perhaps," said Mrs. Barbara shyly. "To-morrow," said Nahum, decisively; "to-morrow" it was.

The probabilities are that neither Mr. Nahum Briggs nor his brown stone house will be in the market again "to let."—Boston Globe.

SALMON IN THE HUDSON.

Results of Work Done by the United States Fish Commission.

For a number of years the United States fish commission co-operating with the New York commission, has been engaged in stocking the Hudson and its tributaries with salmon fry. This river, though never a salmon river, seemed to present the natural conditions for the establishment of the species.

There are, however, on both the main river and the tributaries natural obstructions which would prevent the ascent of salmon to the spawning grounds at the outlet of the stream. It was, therefore, determined to test possibilities in this direction by continuing to hatch out and plant the fry in the headwaters, in the expectation that they would go to sea and on their return show themselves at the different obstructions in the river.

Several hundred thousand fry have been placed in the river each season for a number of years, and two years ago 10,000 yearling fish from the Maine station were also planted in the river above the Troy dam. Though no salmon fishery is prosecuted in the river, and the salmon were taken only incidentally in the shad nets, recent reports from Mr. E. C. Blackford of New York indicate the taking during the present season of more than 800 salmon varying from ten to twenty-five pounds in weight.

With proper protection in reference to the fishing, and with provision made to permit the salmon to reach the headwaters of the river, there is now no reason to doubt that the Hudson will become as important a stream in this respect as is the Penobscot in Maine.

Cleanliness. The following words of the late Dr. Richardson should be ever kept in mind: "Cleanliness covers the whole field of sanitary labor. Cleanliness, that is purity of air; cleanliness, that is purity of water; cleanliness in and around the house; cleanliness of person; cleanliness of dress; cleanliness of food and feeding; cleanliness in work; cleanliness in habits of the individual man and woman; cleanliness of life and conversation; purity of life, temperance, all these are in man's power."

Anything But the Chain Gang. A negro caught stealing in Augusta, Ga., the other day was given the choice of the chain gang or 100 lashes. He chose the lash. "Beat me, boss, beat me," he exclaimed. He took the punishment stolidly for awhile, but it was laid on with a strong arm and he soon began to yell, and continued it till the end. When it was all over, he whined: "It jes like slavery times, but it beat de chain gang."

Breach of Promise. Breaches of promise of marriage were first taken cognizance of by the canon law, which punished them by ecclesiastical censures. According to the ancient jurisprudence of France damages could be recovered for the non-fulfillment of the engagement of matrimony and a considerable amount, which showed a considerable liberality on the subject.

WOMAN'S BUILDING.

A GLIMPSE INTO ONE OF THE BIG ROOMS.

The Women of Cincinnati Have Made an Excellent Showing in Many Departments of Woman's Advancement—Some Pen Pictures.

(World's Fair Letter.)

THE CINCINNATI room in the Woman's building probably attracts the greatest number of visitors and calls for more general admiration than any other one apartment. It is admirably lighted and has in addition to this qualification, spaciousness and pleasing proportions. While every article exhibited is deserving the closest study, the room has not, been overcrowded and has not, therefore, any of the characteristics of a hazy or a bric-a-brac collection.

The two branches of art in which Cincinnati has become famous are wood-carving and china painting.

A good many years ago I was in New York and visited a well-known art school. Its merits were carefully recounted, and then the superintendent added, as if nothing further could be said:

"Our teachers of wood carving and china painting are from Cincinnati." "China painting is a very crude term,

for to the Cincinnati women the decorative work in color has been the least of their study. They have exercised an equal amount of skill and labor in form and in experimenting with the decorations in clays of various kinds, in glazing, metal work and in reproducing the lovely effects attained in Venetian glass.

The two women identified in their respective lines, fine specimens of whose handicraft may be studied in this beautiful Cincinnati room, are Miss Louise McLaughlin, who discovered the process of limoges faience in 1877, and Miss Laura Fry, who has been the instructor of wood-carving at Chautauqua for a number of years. The Frys are a family of artists, and grandfather, sons, and grandchildren work together in their studios, all inheriting the great gifts of their artist ancestor.

The Hookwood pottery at first gave a great impetus to china painting in Cincinnati, and many women discovered that they possessed a talent of which they had been wholly unaware. The opportunity to work and have their work fired in the pottery, which soon became celebrated, opened up a field that furnished employment for scores of women. That day is passed, however, and the pottery has shut its doors, leaving upon it, for the most part, those employed at a state salary, having succumbed to the mercantile spirit of the age.

With Miss Fry and Miss McLaughlin have been associated Miss Alice Holabird, Clara Newton, Frances M. Banks, Helen Peachey, Anna Hoye, Mesdames Gen. E. F. Noyes, C. A. Plynton and others, and all are admirably represented.

The prevailing tint of the room is pink, and it is shown in ceiling, walls, hangings, and carpet. The frieze, which attracts immediate attention, is a beautiful and graceful arrangement of peach blossoms, was designed and painted by Miss Agnes Pitman, who enjoys the distinction of being the first woman wood-carver of note in the United States. A desk of mahogany carved by Miss Kate C. Peachey is loaned by Miss Helen Peachey. An upright piano, with a case of mahogany, is an evidence of what a transformation that most inartistic of instruments may un-

dergo. On either side the front of the case is a panel, a leafy bough, upon which sits a singing bird. Its head is lifted and its throat seems to vibrate in the fervor of its song. Between these panels is another of conventionalized honeysuckle leaves and blossoms. All the delicate beading is hand wrought, and above the pedals under the key board is a wreath of conventionalized marguerites. This was the combined work of Mrs. Louise K. Murphy, Miss Annie Cunningham, and Miss Laura A. Fry. The bench, which is also of mahogany, was carved by Miss Kate C. Peachey. Across the top is a flat scroll of music, over which a branch of laurel with its leaves and berries has been carefully tossed.

A magnificent hanging cabinet loaned by Ben Pitman is worthy the hands that made it—Mrs. Ben Pit-

man, Miss Mary Nourse, Mrs. Mary E. Trivet, Miss Agnes Pitman, Mrs. Albert R. Valentine, Miss Susan McAurou and Miss Lillian Norton. In all this display of fine carving conventionalized flowers—dogwood, marguerites, honeysuckle and wild roses—are the favorite forms, and the work is characterized by accuracy, delicacy and strength. There are no uncertain strokes, no imperfect lines or confusion in designs, but an idea, without exception, is cleverly carried out and wrought with the skill that betokens laborious training and more than ordinary talent to begin with.

Among the display of needlework there is a collection prepared for the Centennial—a Swiss bedspread with pillow-shams "to match," embroidered by Miss Revard and I need by the art museum. The design comprises flags, stars, and other patriotic symbols, all done in fine French embroidery. A piece of ecclesiastical lace for a surplice exhibit and this is the work of Mrs. Louise Kohl, who also exhibits a wedding veil with a design of roses and a very beautiful communion veil.

There are dollies, centerpieces, tablecovers, one oblong in blue orchids, by Miss Van Antwerp that is greatly admired; tray covers, sofa pillows and portieres—a rich array of color, design and workmanship, and not a commonplace thing among them all.

The display in the ceramic exhibit is equally full, and, as might be expected, superior in every way to any similar collection in the Exposition. There are, of course, immediate inquiries for Miss McLaughlin's work, for her name is identified with ceramics in this country as no other is.

The specimens shown cover a wide field—plaques, plates, vases, jars, and work on metal. One beautiful piece of cloisonne is said to be the first work of the kind ever done in this country. It is badly placed, being on a cabinet in the north end of the room. At first glance it appears to be done in color, and it is only by stooping that the metallic luster of the copper can be seen. It should be all means, displace a much more ordinary vase which occupies the place of honor on the topmost row. A vase of black tin gives one some idea of the possibilities of this despised metal.

In its finely contrasting lights and shades it resembles oxidized silver. An aluminum plate is also shown by Miss McLaughlin, and there are specimens of etched silver of equal merit. Miss Clara Shipman Newton, very fairly divides the honors with Miss McLaughlin, and one can only pause in bewilderment before the lovely vases, trays, cups and plates which bear her name, trying to determine which to prefer.

The experiments in clay are extremely interesting, showing what may be done with the common earth beneath our feet. It is used in decoration. There are strongly contrasting shades through all the shades—cream, red brown to black—as in a specimen of Indiana clay.

Upon one vase decorated with these uncolored clays a scene in a street in Cairo has been portrayed—minarets, camels and camel-drivers, in which the finest effects have been obtained. There is an excellent collection of pictures, each of which will repay careful study. The portrait of Miss Jane Bowler by Miss Cassidy, "The Garden," by Miss Elizabeth Nourse; "Colons," by Miss Altha Haydock, and "Love or Money" are of especial worth.

In the department of sculpture Miss Laura A. Fry exhibits a charming statuette of Evangeline in terra cotta. There is an admirable bust of Rabbi Wise by Miss Florence Strasburg, a portrait bust by Miss Kate Nilsen, and a bas-relief of George Eliot.

The Ariadne of Mrs. Anna M. Valentine, however, is the most beautiful, as it is the most ambitious work not only in the Cincinnati room but in the entire Woman's building. It is the nude figure of a young girl half reclining. The face is upturned and the hands uplifted. The expression is that which has come upon the face when she first becomes conscious that she is alone, but before she has realized the grief and shame which the peridy of Theseus have brought upon her—an expression of pain, wonder, and bewilderment. It is the work of a sculptor and a genius.

MARY A. KNOUT. Onychophagia. Biting the fingernails is being called among the "phobias" by a member of the French academy. He calls the practice "onychophagia," which is Greek for "nail eating," and has been making a long and careful study of it. Perhaps he goes too far in pronouncing the habit to be a sign of degeneracy, though it is probably rightly placed among the "incontinen-

encies," and treated as an indication of nervous weakness. The child man who is constantly biting his fingernails down to the quick will often be found to be of an impulsive character and liable to err on the side opposed to self-control. It is an old English saying that nail biting and bad temper go together. But the force of example has also to be reckoned with. The child that associates with a nail-biting child will almost certainly become a nail-biter.

Kingdom of Guost. Guost, the smallest separate and independent territory in the world is situated in the lower Pyrenees, about ten miles from Oleron, between the boundaries of France and Spain. The people speak a language of their own, a cross between French and Spanish.

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