

House To Let

It Changed the Life of a Clubman.
A Spinster Was Also Interested in It

By F. A. MITCHEL
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Jenkins was an eminently respectable bachelor of forty.

One day he received an invitation to go with a friend who lived in the suburbs for dinner and the night. The difference between a house with a woman, in it, to say nothing of several impish children, and his own solitary apartments was appalling. In his own bedroom he would awaken in the morning amid a tomblike silence. In this abode of a family he lay awake for nearly an hour listening to unceasing sounds that seemed like music to him.

There were a constant opening and shutting of doors, water pouring in a bathroom, children running, children shouting, children scolding, children pouting; now a few deep tones from a father warning Johnny that if he didn't stop fooling and dress himself he would get a spanking and now a feminine call to Edie to "come and let me do your hair." It was the contrast of this life about him—this union of hearts and interests—with his silent chamber that made him yearn for the one and hate the other.

Jenkins returned to the city, spent the day in his office, went to his room—heaving a sigh as he entered it—dressed for the evening and started for his club. Shortly before reaching it he passed a neat looking two story stone front dwelling in a window of which was a placard "To Let." He stood leaning on his cane looking at the house; then went on muttering: "It's no use. I've no wife."

He went on to his club, sat down in the reading room and listlessly took up a paper. But he did not read. He was going over the women of his acquaintance in a vain effort to pick out one he could love, one with whom he could make a home. This, too, was a failure. They all seemed to him like so many wax figures in a show window. No responsive chord to draw him to any of them or to him.

The next morning passing the house to let he thought that, after all, it would be better than his rooms and he would go in and look at it. At the moment a feminine voice said to him: "There doesn't appear to be any word on the notice where to apply."

Jenkins turned and saw a young woman whose appearance was as refined as her voice. Her attention was all directed to the house, and Jenkins believed that she had made the observation to herself rather than to him. Nevertheless he raised his hat and said: "Perhaps, there being no such directions, it means that one may inquire within."

"It doesn't matter," said the lady, still making her replies more to herself than him.

The words were spoken in the same tone with which the day before he had said to himself: "It's no use. I've no wife."

"I'll ring if you like," said Jenkins.

"Oh, thank you. Never mind on my account."

"I'm intending to make inquiries for myself, though I have no definite idea of taking a house. I don't need one."

"Nor I."

He went up on to the stoop and rang the bell. His summons was answered by a middle aged person who lived in the basement, evidently a caretaker. The lady waited for Jenkins to act as spokesman, but he hesitated. He did not know whether to say "this lady wishes to look at the house" or "I wish to look at the house." The first would be assuming what he had not been authorized to assume; the second would look as if he proposed to stand in the lady's way. He compromised.

"We would like to look at the house," he said.

"Oh! Walk in!"

"There are eight rooms," said the caretaker, leading the way through the apartments. "On this floor parlor, dining room, library and kitchen." Then, leading them upstairs: "Four bedrooms up here. This front room will make a beautiful room for you and your wife, sir, and this little room adjoining is just big enough for the children, if you have them. There's another small room back that would make a good nursery and a guests' room. The bathroom is at the end of the hall."

If the poor woman had been cognizant of the terrible blunder she was making she would have been deeply pained. And yet she would have had no cause to be pained. Though Jenkins put on a wooden expression, there was a very pleasant feeling about his heart. Though the lady blushed a rosy red, there was a suspicion of a smile playing on her lips.

"How many children have you, ma'am?" asked the woman, suddenly breaking in upon her description of the house.

"No children," replied the lady, ignoring the woman's inference that the two were married.

"No children? Oh, dear! Somehow it doesn't seem to me that people are married till the little tots come. Without their parents are liable to run to cats and dogs, a poor makeshift for children. Dear little souls! How nice

it is to see them romp and play! They have their own tiny joys and sorrows, in which their parents take as much interest as themselves. I like the girls best, of course, but little boys are nice, too, especially when they're fine, manly little fellows. But in every family there should be both boys and girls."

While the woman was running on, unconscious that the picture she was drawing was the unfulfilled desire of the two people she was talking to, that they were not married and both had for years wished to be married, especially for the home she had suggested by her remarks upon children, Jenkins was looking at the ceiling, out of the window, any place except where he might be expected to look. Suddenly he turned his eyes upon the lady beside him and saw blushing coming and going like an aurora borealis, with smiles on the lips like sunlight on ripples of water. Then their eyes met.

The usual happening from such a meeting of eyes under such circumstances might be embarrassment, or it might be half embarrassment and half amusement, or it might be anger. The look between these two was neither of these. There was more in that glance than has been written in many a volume, and no volume could express as much. The man's eyes said, "Let us fulfill the picture." The woman's said, "I will."

Marriage, or rather mating, is a natural instinct. The reason neither of these two had mated was because they had from childhood been surrounded by artificial conditions. He had looked upon a woman critically, judicially, taking time to deliberate whether he wanted her or not—if he could get her—while she had considered the men of her acquaintance in the same fashion. While all these considerations, pro and con, had failed to make a mating, suddenly a spark had flashed between them and made them one.

Nor does it matter that there was a great deal of the artificial to stand between them and realization. What was to follow was not a process of building up a love, but of breaking down barriers. When they left the house both knew that the artificial condition by which they were surrounded required that they proceed step by step. In one respect they were very near, in another they were far apart. They had pledged a silent troth and yet they were strangers.

"Do you think you will take the house?" asked Jenkins as they stood on the sidewalk about to part.

"Rather, do you think you'll take it?" was the reply.

"I am certainly not so ungallant as to stand in a lady's way."

"Nor would I think of taking it if you want it."

Jenkins stood thinking for a moment before replying. It was their artificial relations that were occupying his thoughts.

"Suppose," he said, taking out his card, "you send me word as to your decision."

"I will," she replied in a low tone.

"On second thought, I will not put you to so much trouble. If you will let me know where I could get your reply I would be pleased to call for it."

"I should be happy to have you do so." She gave him her address.

"Good morning!"

"Good morning!"

Not a very warm parting for an engaged couple. Nevertheless both went away with satisfaction in their hearts. For the first time in their lives they had listened to the voice of nature unalloyed by artificial conditions.

In a few days Jenkins called upon the caretaker, with whom the renting of the house had been left, with a couple of lenses in his pocket and executed one for the owner and another for himself.

"When will you move in, sir?" asked the woman.

"I don't know. I would like to have you remain as you are and take care of the house for me for the present."

"That would suit me very well. If Mrs. Jenkins wishes any cleaning done, sir, I'll be glad to attend to it for her."

Jenkins said he would let her know. But as there was as yet no Mrs. Jenkins and a great many artificial barriers to be broken down before there could be the woman was not likely to receive any hurried order. He fully intended to occupy the house with the woman the caretaker supposed was Mrs. Jenkins, but before that a great deal must be done. Not even a word of love had been spoken. What had been looked and understood was another matter.

Months passed before the caretaker got her order to do the cleaning. Then everything was made spick and span, and furniture began to arrive. Jenkins went to the house and saw that it was arranged as properly and with as much taste as could be expected of a bachelor, then when all was finished left it in charge of the woman and went away.

The next she saw of him he drove up to the door in a carriage, wearing a frock coat, a silk hat and a chrysanthemum in his buttonhole. He handed out the lady who had inspected the house in his company, and when inside and her wraps were thrown off she was very beautifully dressed.

"The children, ma'am! Where are the children? Oh, I forgot; you told me there are no children. But I hope they'll come soon."

Years have passed since these two strangers met at the "house to let" and later went to live in it as man and wife. A family such as the caretaker described are there, and all are happy. The house is but a stone's throw from the club, but Jenkins never goes there. He says he has no use for it.

SURPRISED THE SULTAN.

Girl Gains Coin Through Her Knowledge of Turkish Words.

Recently a party of Americans visited Constantinople and were permitted to enter Yildiz Kiosk. The Sultan, who was walking alone in the gardens, entered into conversation with the visitors and addressed himself to a bright, looking girl. His Majesty said, "We speak here French, English, German and Russian, but our visitors seldom know our language. We pardon them, for it is very difficult. I suppose, miss, you do not know a word?"

"Pardon, sire," replied the girl, "I know two Turkish words."

"What are they, miss?" asked the Sultan. Assuming the whining tone of the mendicants, she replied: "Baschik, efendi!" (a sou monsieur), pointing at the same time to the Sultan's pocket. His Majesty presented her with a gold coin, and then she answered sweetly, "Tachacudarin, ghazi!" (thank you, seigneur).

The Sultan wondered, for he was ignorant of the little pocket dictionary, Turco-English.—London Globe.

A Ride is An Investment.

According to the Electric Railway Journal, one of the best investments which it is possible for a man to make is when he spends 5 cents for a street car ride of ordinary length, say three miles or so. The man who earns as little as 15 cents an hour for his labor would, in walking to his work, consume at least 10 cents worth of time, instead of the 5 cents spent on the street car. In addition to this, the nickel surrendered to the street car company is an assurance to him against accident, while if he rides in an automobile, or even if he walks to his work, he would be obliged to pay all damages in case of accident. Furthermore, the time spent on the street car can be spent in reading.

Cabby and Chauffeur.

The broken down cabby regarded with a gleam of delight the taxi which had broken down. But he spoke no word. The chauffeur began operating on his machine. He turned it and twisted it and banged it and screwed it, but to no avail. And still the cabby spoke not. The chauffeur banged again. He did things to ignition sparks that wouldn't ignite and cranks that refused to be anything but cranky. And still the cabby, sour or visage, lay low and said nuffin. Then the chauffeur wiped his beadsy brow and then the cabby, still with the gleam in his eye, crossed over. "Ere!" he exclaimed grimly, holding out his whip. "Ere yare, mister! 'Tx 'im with this!"—Answers.

Radium in Sea Water.

Some fresh determinations of the amount of radium present in sea water have been made with specimens taken from the Atlantic at various places. All possible precautions were taken to eliminate error, and the mean result for the six samples was 9x10-16th grams a gram of sea water. This is only about one-seventeenth of the value (1.6x10-14th) obtained by Joly, but agrees fairly well with the value 6x10-16th previously obtained by A. S. Eve. It is also shown that, when testing for the quantity of radium emanation present in a given solution, about equal accuracy is obtained by collecting the emanation over water or over mercury.

An Anglicized American.

The duchess of Roxburgh is unlike the former Miss Vanderbilt in that she manifests not the slightest desire to visit her native land. Since her marriage to the Scotch duke the heiress to the Goslet millions has been content to stop on the other side of the Atlantic. The duchess of Roxburgh, in fact, has become wholly Anglicized. She talks with an English accent, and follows with undivided interest the exclusively English news from day to day. A year ago it was said she intended returning for a short time to New York, but she disappointed her friends.

Deer Head of 50 Points.

What is said to be the largest head ever found on a red or cotton tail deer in the country has lately been received in Bangor from Hill Gould of Grand Lake Stream. The head has fifty points or prongs on the antlers. The head is very even, having twenty-six points on one side and twenty-four on the other and is a beauty in every way. It spreads 28 inches in the widest place and has broad webs on each antler, which spread 7 inches. The fifty points are all well defined prongs.—Kennebec Journal.

Railway Ties Treated.

The use of treated ties by the railroad and trolley companies of this country is rapidly increasing. The number of treated ties made use of during the year 1908 was 23,776,000 pieces. This was slightly more than 21 per cent. of the total, while in 1907 it was a little less than 13 per cent., and the year before a trifle more than 12 per cent. The use of treated ties seems to be more general with the steam railroads than with the electric lines.

Sound-Proof Building.

For the purpose of making the telephone booth really sound-proof, a German inventor lined it with tin. It seems that the lining is in every way most efficient. The result is that a German publication now advises all architects to either use tin or aluminum in the walls of houses generally to deaden sound.

Points For Mothers



If it's a shame to give a dog a bad name, how much more deplorable is it to thus brand a little child, says a recent correspondent. Yet some parents proceed to do this very thing with the utmost unconcern. They give their little child the worst heritage that they have in their power to burden him with, the consciousness that he is not a good boy and hence that goodness can hardly be expected of him.

Perhaps the first thing that any man or woman has to learn in undertaking any business of life is the lesson of confidence in his own worth. If a man believes himself a failure, success would be a miracle or an accident.

And it's pretty much the same way with behavior. Unconsciously we model our behavior after the type of person that we imagine ourselves to be.

But all these things are platitudes which every parent knows. Yet, knowing them, how often does he proceed to give his little child that worst of all gifts—a willingness to think evil of himself!

Perhaps one reason why this is so is the almost general failure of grown people to realize how early in life impressions are made. It must be remembered that before a child can talk coherently he can understand, or at least gain definite impressions, from conversation which he overhears. This is proved time and time again by the chance remarks a baby makes which show that he has heard and understood something not meant for his ears.

And yet how often his parents take him out and apologize for his behavior or imply by their conversation that he is a "terror!"

"Well, there will be no peace for us now that Johnny is up from his nap," says Johnny's mother in the presence of her small son.

Far be it from Johnny to disappoint the expectations of his maternal relative.

This is only a sample of the sort of thing that grown people repeatedly say in the presence of children. And it's a very great pity. Give the child at least a fair chance and don't brand him at the start with a bad name.

Fancy Work For Children.

The children often come to you and ask for something to do, something to make, for a child's ideas are always creative. Here is some rainy day work for busy fingers:

A wall match holder can be made on a foundation of cardboard cut out in a diamond, the upper portion of which is much larger than the lower. Fold the two lower ends upward so as to form a pocket and cover the whole with silk or any bright colored fabric. Then bind with heavy cord and attach a ring to hang it up by.

A hanging pin cushion is also easily made. Cut out two pieces about five or six inches square from bristol board and cover one with figured material and one with plain. Sew them together and then bend the square thus formed into a cornucopia shape, with the plain side as the lining. Bind with cord and leave a loop to hang by. Fill with absorbent cotton or with bran all the way to the top and sew silk tightly over it. Cotton is better, as bran is rather heavy.

A button penwiper may be made by cutting a circle of bright colored silk, buttonholed to cardboard or cartridge paper, and then several other circles of chamois a bit smaller. Fasten all together with a large ornamental button. Even the smallest child can make this.

A simple footstool should be made of a strong wooden box with the lid nailed firmly down. Screw on small casters and pad the top of the box. Cover with coarse canvas. Now cut out a piece of brocade in the shape of a cross and large enough to cover the top and sides of the box after padding. Nail this down and finish off the edges by furniture gimp held down by tiny brass tacks. This is something for the boys to make.

Hoops For Children.

The opinion is expressed by men who have made a study of exercises for health that it is a pity the skipping rope and hoop have gone out of fashion for children.

It is suggested they are more excellent mediums for the physical development than bicycles and roller skates. The fact that small children are allowed to have bicycles and consequently make no use of nature's means of progression is offered as an objection to them.

The skipping rope and hoop require them to run and walk. Young children should be encouraged to do this as much as possible, and always with a spring step. They need to use their feet and legs, and exercise that brings these into play is beneficial.

In the Nursery.

Babies about a year old take a great delight in throwing their toys on the ground, often for the pleasure of seeing the mother pick them up again or to hear the noise made in falling. Tie the toys with soft strings to the child's chair and they will be easily replaced without any effort on the mother's or nurse's part.

The Baths of Caracalla.

The Romans appear to have been well off in the matter of bathing places in the first and second centuries. In the baths of Caracalla 1,000 bathers could be accommodated at one time. The inclosed area was 360 square yards, but it included a course for foot racing. The bathing establishment was 240 yards in length by 124 wide. The remains of the walls are eight and ten feet thick and in some places as much as fifty feet high.

A Cumulative Test.

As the thin man and the stout one were talking of diet and food in general the thin man said: "You can get an excellent dinner at Clapham's, the restaurant near my office, for 25 cents. Ever try one of his dinners?"

"One of 'em! Yes, I should say I had," said the stout man. "Why, I ate four of 'em one day last week!"

The Best Thing.

"What do you mean by kissing me Herr Frisch?"

"My aunt told me to. She told me to come and help myself to the best thing I could find in the kitchen."—Flegende Blatter.

Just Men.

If any one says that he has seen a just man in want of bread I answer that it was in some place where there was no other just man.—St. Clement.

Can Afford It.

"Has the doctor a large practice?"

"So large that when people have nothing the matter with them he tells them so."—Pittsburg Post.

Cat's Peculiar Fad.

There is a cat in a grocery store in Columbus avenue whose fad is to ride dogs. This cat, medium-sized male, striped and wise looking, ambushes himself behind a barrel or box, watching for a dog. When one comes along the cat makes a flying leap and lands on his back. Of course the dog is greatly alarmed, and starts off on the dead run, usually yelping as he flies along. The cat crouches down on the dog's back, leiding on with its claws. He rides a block or two, then jumps off and trots back to his store. He has been riding dogs for more than three years, and no one knows why he does it. Perhaps it is the desire of a rush or that speed madness that sometimes seizes on automobiles.—New York Telegraph.

Catching Big "Cats" in Missouri.

The Osage River appears to have been raising big catfish in secret places, for in spite of all the fishing that has been done in some of Missouri's oldest counties, the big fish are being pulled out this season in greater numbers than for several years.

A 68 pound fish has just been taken from the Osage River. These big "yellow cats" are caught close to the banks on lines baited with fish as large as a man's hand. The fishing parties set a dozen poles and watch them all night. The experts nearly always come back with a catch, for where fish grow so large even one sample is a "mess."—Kansas City Star.

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