Esthetic Essays on Esthetic Subjects

About The Habits And Habitat Of The Country Store Keeper.

ered buildings in the center of a prosperous farming community in central Nebraska, stands a small weather-beatand the opportunity to take a look into it must not be allowed to pass. This is the great emporium that sells everything from tacks and harness to sugar and blueing-paddles, and sends out through the channels of trade sustenance to many human beings. Within sits the propreitor, floor-walker and head clerk, all cemented into one solitary be-nighted-looking individual upon whose shoulders rest business cares untold. He sits enjoying the pleasures and comfort afforded by a cobpipe of uncertain age and sanitary condition. From his settled posture if !s evident that he is not accustomed to be disturbed by such intruders as a

His garb is simple and glaringly unpretentious-a shirt faded from black to green, a pair of tobocco-colored jeans, held up by one of what was formerly a pair of suspenders, a couple of substantial, if not, artistic shoes, comprising his attire. Thunder and lightning! The red handkerchief tied in a knot about his neck must not be forgotten. What vizualization would be complete without the red handkerchief? His hair hangs in streaks and it is barely possible that he may have had a shave within the last decade.

sadly and reproachfully at them, as if of a young woman who was not a true in rebuke for disturbing his ease. Then teacher, but who, had a relative on with a martyred air and with a multiplicity of complicated movements and was permitted to teach and draw a sala creaking of unwilling joints, he rises ary. and attends to their order. With a torturous effort he ties up the articles purchased, the final act of breaking the string seming to cost him an abnormal amount of interior sufferingperhaps in regret at parting with so much precious cordage. He reluctantly shoves the aticles toward the customers, gripping them tightly, as if in fear lest they might grab them up and make off with them without stopping to settle. He handles the money handelse is wanted he looks insulted and wronged and then shuffles back to his in the midst of his possessions.

and of sugar, flour and salt barrels, the assortnemt of harness and hardware, and the various other commodities stacked wherever they can find a resting place form the bulk of his staple groceries. Parallel rows of shelves on either side of the room contain the precious burden of his imported and fancy articles. From the nature of his stock it would appear that he was making a collection of curios, large in varieties, but limited in duplicates. Lamps, shoe-blacking, canned fruit, parents were abroad. All things necetc., form an odd mixture on his shelves-a thousand and one articles contributing to make up an assortment as odd as it is wonderful. What may be seen of the show-cases through the apertures left by the sheets of fly paper -containing victims of many yearscast irregularly about—is certainly in teresting. Pipes, playing cards, cigars and candies and a hundred useless arrangements, that never sell, form a wildly disordered chaos that nothing can straighten out.

Having investigated the stock, let us return to the proprietor again. A glance at his face leaves an impression bound to be a lasting one. It is the face of a man whose ideas have become narrowed through his isolation and monotonous course of life. True, he does have visitors occasionally, but the subjects of conversation never change and the sluggish channels cu his mind are seldom stirred up by pleasure or excitement of any kind.

Upon him seems to rest the seal of fate. The days pass by with practically no interruption in the monotony that governs the course of his life. His profits are just sufficient to support eases of the eye, ear and throat. himself and family after a fashion, and Rooms 207-08 Richards block, 'Phone there is no progress possible for him, 1666.

Looming conspicuously up in the nor yet is it sought. He grows neither midst of a little group of dust-cov- richer nor poorer, but continues on in the same old routine. He is simply dragging out his allotted time, because he has to live, and his life is inen edifice a structure celebrated in deed a journey to the grave and he song and legend. It is a country store cares little when the goal may be

Filthy Lucre.

In the far east an American dollar entered the world as pure in its silver gleam as the soul of a flower, for all of the fact that it was an extra one which came into the hands of the coiner wrongfully, by a slight change in the scales. It went into the hands of a baker, who obtained it by selling smaller loaves that was usual to his customers. It was several months before he obtained it, so it did not appear out of place. He could not keep it then, but was forced to pay it for an extra five-gallon can of kerosene oil. It had taken several years to collect enough quarter-cents to make this amount, but the oil magnate pocketed it with a smile of content. He had occasion to find a certain office and took a cab. The cabman drove him six blocks out of his way and charged him an extra dollar for the trip, takit with a feeling of satisfied revenge. The cabman went to the saloon that night and spent it for liquor. In that way it become blood-money and was paid into the city treasury as part of the tax. When the teachers of the pub-As two customers enter, he stares lie schools were paid it fell to the lot the school board, and who, therefore,

One day she went to a dressmaker to order the making of some article of wearing apparel. The price charged was agreeable so the work was done. But when she went for it there was an extra dollar to pay. She paid it and went her way.

The dressmaker put it into some shares of a mine in which her brotherin-law was interested. The mining stock decreased in value and she lost her money. The brother-in-law did ed to him with an air of curiosity as not, however. He put the dollar along if he were unaccustomed to such a with nine hundred and ninety-nine othsight. When informed that nothing ers and bought the mine, which was worth twice as much, so that three or four hundred other people just like the accustomed place, to reign undisturbed dressmaker lost their shares. The man from whom he bought the mine And his possessions are certainly a obtained a small amount of stock in it urious lot. The piles of soap boxes, for more than it was worth, so the silver dollar came back into hands of the new owner of the mine, who by the way, was the same one who, long before, had done the coining of the dollar. In this way it came back to its original possession, now a mine magnate, and a "bloated bond holder."

It had been tarnished and blackened by contact with the many hands through which it had passed.

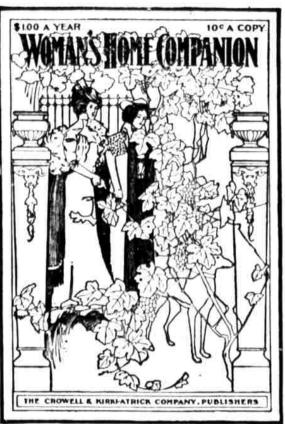
There was a Home in the city where a child was being trained while its essary for its development were provided except toys and games, so the child worked and worried, being dwarfed in one respect by lack of pleasures. The mine magname came and offered it the extra silver dollar for some games. When the parents heard the news they telegraphed the keeper of the Home not to touch the vile dollar for it was blood-money. Now the child wanted the toys, so it wept and asked: "But where can you get a dollar that is not blood money?" This the parents did not answer, so the child pined away and finally died. The mine owner took the dollar and bought a Havana cigar made in Chicago. It was worthy 25 cents, and the dollar was no better than it had been in the first place.

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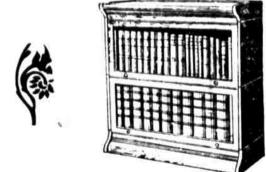
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