

LENA'S FRENCH DOG

Clever Ruse Whereby Popular Maiden Rids Herself of Superfluous Admirers.

By LAWRENCE ALFRED CLAY.

Miss Lena Walters was troubled in her mind. When a girl has four different admirers and can't say which she prefers, it's a mighty solemn situation. Well might she pause and reflect. Nations have risen or fallen over easier problems than that.

No. 1 had curly hair and a lip. He was simply delightful.

No. 2 had a drooping mustache and arched eyebrows. He was charming.

No. 3 not only had the poetic expression, but he also wrote sonnets. He had written one sonnet to her eyes and another to her chin.

No. 4 sat and sighed most of the time when he called, and he had eyes out of which a lost soul seemed to be gazing.

Mr. Walters was a business man and rather brusque. He paid very little attention to society, and to who came and went, but after pumping against a score of young men in the hall at one time or other he said to his daughter:

"Lena, you tell the cook to have her young men come to the kitchen door after this."

"Why, the cook is a married woman," was the reply.

"Are they chums of the butler?"

"Of course not."

"Then what do they want here?"

"Why, papa, they are my callers."

"Humph! Better get rid of all but one. They wear out the rugs."

And, being troubled in her mind, Miss Lena did a much more sensible thing than to retire to her room and fling herself on the bed and weep. She put on her hat and took a stroll to do some serious thinking.

The father hadn't spoken seriously, and none of the four admirers would be bounced, but suppose that crisis had come? Suppose the young lady found herself compelled to say to number one:

"Birdie Rockingham, your hair curls in the most delightful profusion and confusion, and that lip is something to make an angel sit up and listen for more, but this is a life of sadness and disappointments. I wish you well, and I will be a sister to you, but you must make your hike. Find some other angel and be happy with her."

Miss Lena was finding cold chills creeping over her when a voice at her elbow addressed her:

"Say, you, don't you want to buy a dog?"

It was a gamin of about twelve, and in his arms he had a dog—a French bull dog.

"Mercy on me, is that a dog?" cried the girl as she started back.

"You bet. He's worth \$50, but I'll take 25 cents!"

The French nation sends us chic dresses and hats and cloaks, but when it comes to bulldogs they are a dead failure. It is as if they took a coon, a rabbit, a sugar beet and a cabbage head and boiled them down together and poured the hodge-podge into a mold and called it a dog. They are warranted to scare babies into fits and the elephants of the country in a single night.

"He can't be a dog," protested Miss Lena.

"He sure is, miss," was the reply. "He's homely, but he's all the go in society. The terrier and the poodle are not in it with him."

"But you have stolen him!"

"Not a bit of it."

"But you can't own a \$50 dog."

"Say, lemme tell you something. He was given to me this morning by a young lady."

"Then he can't be a nice dog."

"Hold on a minute. Why did she give him to me? Bekase she had bows."

"That's no excuse."

"It hain't, eh? Not when he's bitten every one of her bows and driven them away? They have all swore that either the dog must go or they would."

"He bit the young men that came to call on her, did he?" asked Miss Lena, all at once interested.

"Fiercely."

"And she gave him to you on that account?"

"I'll cross my heart on it."

"Maybe I'd buy him if he wasn't so homely."

"That's what high society is after—homely dogs. The homelier the better. Got any bows?"

"Yes," admitted the girl with a blush.

"Any you want to get rid of?"

"Yes."

"Then don't be two mints closin' this deal! One of your bows come in and bows and scrapes and takes a cheer. About the time he has got his legs crossed and is ready to talk love Nero sneaks around and takes a bite."

"And what follows?"

"What follows? Lemme tell you that what follers would make a hen laugh! There's a sudden jumpin' up. There's a sudden swear-word. There's a giggling in which you do all the work. Then there's a sudden 'good-night,' and a-gettin' out doors, and that bow never comes within a block of the house agin'. Can't you imagine it?"

"You come back to the house and I'll get the money for you," said the girl, as she softly giggled at the picture the boy had drawn.

The money was paid and Nero changed hands. He made no objections, and he seemed so content and gentle that the new owner had her

doubts about his biting anybody. In fact, her father looked the dog over and doubted if he would bite a mutton-chop.

"What did you get such a rat for a dog?" was asked.

"To bite some of my callers."

"Go ahead. I guess you'll pick out the right one from the gang."

It was the poetic young man's evening for calling. He had spent the whole day composing a sonnet to Miss Lena's nose, and had finished and brought it along. Such was his impatience to read it, and hear her words of praise that he took no notice of the dog. He had scarcely been greeted when he took the manuscript from his pocket and began:

"No blooming rose
With Lena's nose,
In soft repose
Can—the devil!"

"Why, Mr. Davis!" exclaimed the owner of the nose.

"Some darned thing bit me! There it is—a wretched little rat of a cur!"

"Sir!"

"Yes, bit me to the bone, and it may be a case of the rabies!"

"But you can have a case of the rabies and still be a gentleman, can't you?"

"No, sir—no, sir, I can't! If you have started in to keep a mad dog in the house you must—ahem—excuse me from—"

And out he bounced and made his way to the first hospital to be treated.

It wasn't the evening of No. 2 to call, but being at the umbrella mender's on the corner, he thought he'd run in for a moment and ask Miss Lena if her father's business had been unfavorably affected by the tariff. He was cordially greeted, but hardly had he opened the subject nearest his heart when he jumped a foot high and yelled out:

"Holy smoke, but I've run against a live wire!"

"It's only Nero," the girl calmly assured him.

"What, that little cur? Why, he's bitten me!"

"Yes, he bites most every one!"

"Well, you must excuse me if I don't call again until I hear of his death!"

"Oh, certainly!"

Number four—he of the sad eyes and sadder sighs—called the next evening to ask for Lena's hand and heart. It was patent to her the moment she looked into those sad eyes, and she looked furtively around to see if Nero was on the job. He was. He was looking at the sad-eyed man's right leg.

"Miss Walters—Lena—you must have seen—you must realize that I—I thunder and blazes!"

"Why, Mr. Pilgrim!"

"Your infernal little cur has bitten me!"

"Yes?"

"And—and—"

"And I'm going to keep him right along!"

"Then—then," and out went the sad-eyed man, never to call again.

There was only one more left—he of the lip and the curly hair. He called next evening. Nero was ready for him, but the moments fled into hours, and there was no crisis. At length he proposed matrimony and his case was taken under advisement.

Next day Miss Lena asked her father:

"Papa, will a man who let's a dog bite his leg for two hours and never make a complaint make a good husband?"

"Tip-top!" was the answer. "Better have the wedding next month!"

The bridal tour had been made when the bride said to her husband:

"Have you any scars where Nero bit you that night?"

"Not a single scar! I was wearing sole-leather leggings!"

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First Night Critics.

In an article in the American Magazine, Walter Prichard Eaton writes:

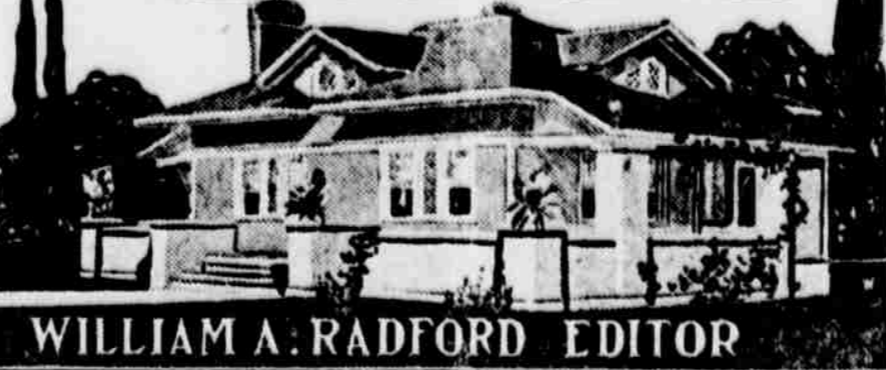
"The theater door man is an important person on first nights, because as he passes out return checks between acts he hears the comments of the audience. His ears are wide open on such occasions, and, mingling with the crowd in the lobby, are other attaches of the theater, all seeking to overhear the comments, and all rushing to report to the manager. Not long ago the last act of a play in New York was entirely changed after the opening night, solely because the women in the audience, as they left the house, were nearly all complaining of the tragic finish. When a piece hangs in the balance between success and failure, when 'tinkering' can perhaps turn the scale, these frank comments overheard in the lobby are of great importance to author and manager. In other cases they are a barometer of success or failure, though the ultimate test, of course, is the subtle attitude of the audience in the auditorium, its spontaneous enthusiasm or its coldness and signs of boredom."

Sand Pot for Flowers.

A sand pot kept conveniently at hand on one of the porch tables, where slips broken accidentally or in the necessary pruning from the various bloomers may be stuck immediately, is a great convenience for the home gardener. The majority of slips will root without further trouble if the sand is kept moist.

A novel plan for keeping cut flowers fresh also calls for a sand pot, or an opaque vase that will not show the sand. Arrange the flowers in the vase and fill with water, as usual; then carefully sift into the vase, by means of a funnel, sufficient sand to fill it nearly to the top, shaking it to settle the sand about the stems. Cut flowers in ornamental porch vases keep a long time by this method.—Ladies World.

THE AMERICAN HOME



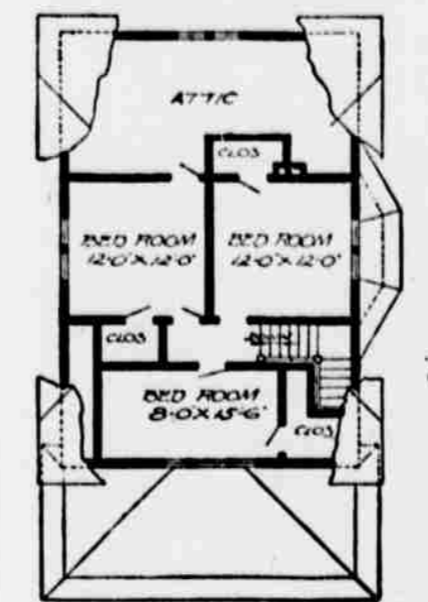
WILLIAM A. RADFORD EDITOR

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A seven-room cottage house that may be built for about \$2,000 under favorable circumstances, is illustrated in the architect's perspective and floor-plans here given. Downstairs there are a parlor, dining room, and kitchen, with one bedroom, besides a bathroom having one entrance from the bedroom and another entrance from the kitchen, which facilitates warming the bathroom from the kitchen when there is no fire in the furnace. There is a convenient grade entrance to the cellar, which may be reached by four steps down from the kitchen. This arrangement leaves room in the corner of the entrance for a good-sized refrigerator—a provision that is valuable in any house, and one that is appreciated by every housekeeper.

The size of this little cottage is 28 feet wide by 38 feet long, exclusive of the porch, which is not very large on the ground and not very high; but there is room for four rooms downstairs and three rooms upstairs, with a good, unfinished attic for storage; and there is plenty of closet room. A woman never gets too many closets. Architects are often worried because of the demand for more closets than they can find room for. One advantage of arranging bedrooms in a roof like this, is that the low portions of the roof may be used to advantage for this purpose. Some women prefer an attic over the bedroom, but many would rather have a storeroom of this kind because it saves climbing two pairs of stairs. It is impossible to have every good thing included in one plan. Cottage houses may be lighter in construction than two-story houses, and they are more economical where the roof space is utilized as it is in this house. The three bedrooms on the second floor represent just that

"Rose Cottage," as he called his little home, was talked about, and soon became known away beyond its immediate neighborhood, because it was such a neat, pretty home. It was built soon after the hard times in the early nineties, when building materials were plentiful and money was scarce, when grass grew between the piles of lumber in the yards, and lumber was rotting in the piles while good mechanics were begging for work at any kind of wages. The lot cost \$700; and the house was completed, including plumbing, furnace, and piping for gas, for less than \$1,000, making the whole property cost about \$1,675, which was



Second Floor Plan.

\$1,000 more than the owner had to put into it. It required good persuasive powers to induce a money-lender to advance such a fabulous sum as \$1,000, and the borrower had to put up personal security as a side issue to a money shark to get the deal through—all of which illustrates the difference between doing business in good times and bad times.

It will be noticed that the rooms, while not large, are big enough to accommodate the necessary furniture, and big enough for comfort. There is

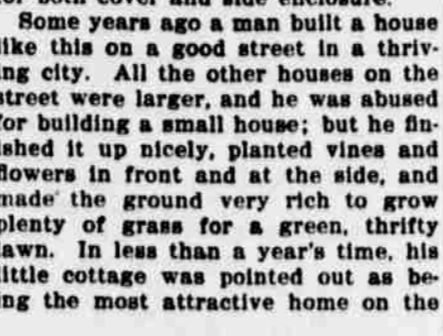


much room that you do not have to provide siding for. The roof answers for both cover and side enclosure.

Some years ago a man built a house like this on a good street in a thriving city. All the other houses on the street were larger, and he was abused for building a small house; but he finished it up nicely, planted vines and flowers in front and at the side, and made the ground very rich to grow plenty of grass for a green, thrifty lawn. In less than a year's time, his little cottage was pointed out as being the most attractive home on the

not a room in the house that is small enough or awkward enough to be ashamed of. A house of this size gives an opportunity to have a bedroom downstairs—a convenience that every house does not possess. There is generally, in most families, at least one old person who objects to climbing stairs. It would be difficult to arrange a more comfortable bedroom than this one; in fact, few large houses have a room of this kind. As a usual thing, when building, too little attention is paid to the comfort of the old people. They have spent their lives in the interests of the family, and it is only right that they should be remembered in their old age. We frequently see aged people who are compelled to stay upstairs day after day because they dread the trip up and down.

The appearance of this house depends a good deal on the colors and stains used for outside decoration. On general principles, it is a good plan to avoid all shades of green. Green paint is almost certain to fade; and during the process, it is likely to take on some very sickly shades of color that are extremely disappointing. Nothing looks better than a light shade of green when it is first put on; but nothing looks worse after it has been exposed to the sun and storms for five or six months. If a man ever wants to kick himself for doing something absurd in the decoration line, it is for painting a house green. Drabs and browns are always agreeable; and generally such paints are lasting. Colors, however, depend so much on the quality of the materials used that great care is necessary in making the purchase if you buy the paint yourself, or in making a contract if you have a painter do the job.



First Floor Plan.

street. Instead of being a damage to other property, it was a valuable acquisition. A great deal depends on the way things are done. It is easy to put up a big barn or a house that no one likes, and it is just as easy to build a cottage house like this for a small outlay and make it into a very interesting property proposition.

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