

DISFIGURING THE LANDSCAPE.

An agricultural paper makes a strong protest against the too common practice in the rural districts of "disfiguring fences, barns and other buildings, trees, etc., with glaring signs."

The use of the automobile has increased with great rapidity, and it has become inevitable that with the increase in use there would be an increase in the number of accidents.

A young woman living near Syracuse has just died as the result of a "joke." Someone pulled a chair from under her while she was out in company.

"There never can be any real lasting peace in this country until world's championship baseball games have been eliminated from the sporting calendar," says the Chicago Tribune.

It is now said that steamboats and trains spread disease. But this in no sense lifts the responsibility for the same ill-doing from the house fly and the mosquito.

It is considered worthy of note that a laborer with \$50,000 continued to labor at two dollars a day. He might just as well have blown it acquiring a headache.

Counterfeiting has decreased in this country during the past year, according to police reports. The gang must be working on those new \$1,000 bills.

Los Angeles has opened a school where girls are taught dressing as a fine art. If they were taught dressing as a culinary art, there might be some good accomplished.

The Paris Matin tells us that the man who understands women is never desired of them. But this disability will not handicap most men of average intelligence.

A woman has just died from blood poisoning, due to sticking her hat pin into her head. Usually some one besides the user of the pin has been the victim.

Aviators in Germany are paid \$37 a month—that and death compensation for the secrecy of German aviators.

Chicago has a school for brides, but all graduates are not guaranteed a position.

One fashion authority has it that women are to wear socks; another that they are to wear larger stockings. And Christmas not far off.

"A woman always blames her lawyer when she loses," a New York attorney exclaims. Probably because he's assured her she can't lose.

The secretary of the navy draws the line at 100 feet when submarines go down among the big fishes.

The SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS



Columbine.

On the left, just past the weather hen's nest, and not more than two steps from the box where they keep the cuckoo, there is the long bed where roses bloom all the year round.

If you know the way, and the Cheshire cat will let you, you walk down the garden path, past the butterfly lime, and arrive at the nearest little cottage in Olympus.

Now this is the dwelling place of the Harlequin set—Harlequin, Columbine, Clown and Pantaloon. It is one cottage in a little colony on the lower slopes of Mount Olympus.

The Clerk of the Weather lives a little higher up. The Four Queens and Kings live in a square of pagoda-like houses, and are waited upon by the Knaves. Pierrot and Pierrette live in romantic seclusion by a pool in a tumble-down place covered with wild roses.

When it gets to be about Christmas there is a sort of aroma of excitement on the lower slopes of Olympus, and, especially in the house where Harlequin lives—a delicious sense of something exciting happening.

Columbine opens the lid of the well that looks down into the world, and there comes up a murmur of children's voices, and you can hear the quaintest things being said about the hanging up of stockings, and about Santa Claus and the likely width of chimneys, and the running power of reindeer.

Now when the candles begin to get ripe, which happens at the same time that geese and turkeys hang in rows in shops and grow rosettes all over them, Harlequin takes an old, oaken pipe from a cupboard under the stairs, and they all sit round while he puts it to his lips and blows.

As he plays, dreams come to them of their ancient days, for Harlequin is first cousin to Mercury, and wears a black mask to hide the light of his face when he visits Columbine, who is Psyche, the Soul; the Clown is Momus, the Spirit of Laughter; and Pantaloon is Charon, who has that grim work of ferrying the souls over the Styx.

There's an odd link of memories and of things held all through the centuries, but the most charming is this: Columbine is a flower-like person, and there is a flower called Columbine, and it is so called because it is like four doves with outspread wings, and the French dove is colombe, and the dove is the symbol of the soul.

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All this, beautified by the essence of Time, like things put away in a cedar chest, comes back when Harlequin blows on his pipe that air the shepherds learnt in Greece from Pan.

The next night Clown will take out another kind of pipe, a long churchwarden of white clay, and fill it with tobacco, and then as the fragrant clouds roll up into the rafters, memories come of all the great people of the Harlequines they play down in the world, all inspired by them, and they see the figure of Turlington, who was the first clown, and invented the very clothes they now wear, and in him with Grimaldi, that great clown, and they seem to see all the great Italian Harlequins, and the dainty French Columbines, and the old dandies of fifteenth-century Venice whose clothes Pantaloon wears.

Do you know that elderly gentlemen in the World smell that magic tobacco, or something like it, and they forget their panaches, or their bald heads, and they sit and dream of the time they went to their first pantomime? Was it "Cinderella," or "Beauty and the Beast"? Or was it that splendid thing "Mother Goose," or that entrancing production "The Yellow Dwarf"?

Such things are conjured up by just that one pipe of tobacco smoked in the cottage on Olympus, and on that night a gentle breeze blows up through the well, laden with the poignant, eternal memories of childhood, and the candles on the Christmas tree are

all ready to be lighted. They are so ready that when Pantaloon looks out of his window before making up his face for the day he sees that the candles have burst into flame-flowers in the night.

Then Columbine takes out a pipe, and she puts some magic soap into nectar and stirs it round with the bowl of the pipe until frothy suds appear. And then she blows bubbles that float up and out of the window until they reach the Christmas tree, when they turn into great, glittering glass balls, all sorts of colors, and show pictures of the world all colored and shining.

The children in the World look up and think they see Harlequin and Columbine floating down as gently as feathers, but they don't say so because their elders would only tell them it was the clouds. But it is Harlequin and Columbine, and Pantaloon and Clown follow soon after, bringing the tree with them.

Now their work begins, own job and hers. Clown the laughter spring up in and ripple as barley field Harlequin to for common things must tiful now, must buy the Indies. And Pantaloon to stirring up old memories in dull people, so that useless must remember all their nephews in remembering when they were nephews themselves, and had a peculiar hunger at Christmas.

Columbine is awfully practical. Her sentiment extends from the joy of watching the making of baby-clothes to the pleasure of remembering to put nice soap in the spare rooms. It is she who sees that children get the right presents, and when they don't it is not her fault, but the fault of some stupid person in a shop.

It is she who suggests the secret delight of keeping presents hidden at the bottom of the wardrobe, and it is she who suggests the secret delight of peering at children when they are asleep.

of the good old times! Holly and mistletoe and robins, and church bells sounding over the snow. And hampers all packed to be sent away, and plenty to eat at home.

And then Columbine steals up to the windows, and taps them with the rose from her hair, and she whispers:

"Open, open to me all you who have no children and no friends and no hope, and I will be the warm, nestling thing you covet for your frozen hearts, and you shall feel my soft cheek against yours till the tears come and your heart takes life again. You shall give joy to other people's children. And if you have no friends who have children, are there not a thousand, thousand children who have no friends? Go to them, and give them all you can, and you will be rewarded almost more than you can bear, for there is a link between those who suffer. Are there not some you have forgotten or neglected? This lonely man, that lonely woman whom you have left uncared for, perhaps for years. Put on your hat and your coat, and put your heart on your sleeve, so that all may know your errand."

To see her pleading before black, sombre houses where a thin light shines under a blind; to see her face pressed against the window of some big mansion where a man or a woman sits alone with hearts like stone; to see her tears as she essays to melt an aching heart is to see something so touching and beautiful that one almost wonders the doors and windows are not instantly opened to admit the spirit of love she begs for so pitifully.

"Look at yourselves, Messieurs et Mesdames Importance, and remember the funny little things you used to be when you bit at coral and bells, and wore bibs, and thought everybody in the world had enough to eat; when you hated to go to bed early, and crept downstairs in your nightgown to listen over the bannisters to the voices in the dining room; when no jam for tea was a tragedy. And when your mother's knee was the throne of justice and mercy, for you buried your head there with her hand in your hair, and forgot to be afraid of the dark."

Columbine has her own very particular work, and she calls it in her mind Secret Delights. She calls it that because she delights in making up odd names for emotions, as, for instance, when she pointed out two lovers to me one day in the spring, who were seated under a hedge, yellow-flushed with primroses; they were holding hands and looking at the hills beyond just as if some wonderful thing was about to come over the hills to tell them what their feelings meant. And the peace was so great and the moment so held that the World seemed to have stopped breathing, and something superhuman to have poured out a cup of silliness. And she called it Liquid Velvet. A Liquid Velvet moment. And I understood.

It is Columbine who watches that beautiful comedy of the newly married, who steal about their house hand-in-hand, fearful of waking the very new servants, fearful of creaking the boards as they gaze enraptured on the very new furniture, looking with joy on the very new pots and pans in the kitchen, turning the electric lights up and down all over the place to see the effect in their new bedroom. And he has a dreadful brooch for her hidden where he keeps his razors; and she has knitted him a tie he will have to wear. But it is all perfectly beautiful.

Someone wrote the other day that people who read are more interested, nowadays, in business than in love, and I'm sorry for that man. He is more blind than I thought anybody could be. Business may be the means to an end, but Love is the beginning and the end. And it is just at this season that Love makes business; hence the shops full of gifts. Imagine a poet writing:

"Cent. per cent. the moon is rising, Watch the stocks upon the bank; Rubber shares are too surprising, Speculators are surmising, Who the deuce they have to thank?"

No one can get a heartbeat out of that, and whatever your business man says, he knows he gets all the good in his life out of heartbeats. So this Christmas Spirit creeps about the world, mocked at, scorned, but alive yet. And you who feel these things may one night see this quaint quartet at work, perhaps for a second at the corner of your street, perhaps just vanishing down the drive, or moving swiftly down a country lane. And you may say wonderingly: "It is a cobweb, a moth, and the branch of a tree, and the starlight makes them look like—like something I remember."

But I tell you who they are—Harlequin, Columbine, Clown and Pantaloon. And if you bear a child's laugh ring up suddenly, and if it brings a new, quick emotion, one of them has conquered you!

The spirit of Christmas doesn't cling to presents in proportion to their cost—unless you are very rich; and if you are very rich the voice of the jeweler and of the furrier and of the motor car maker will seem to you as wise as the word of a happy poor man, though he were a philosopher.

Simple and genuine and glad—strike these notes and the chimes will be very melodiously for you and for those whom you try to make happy. And remember, you can't feign Christmas without being caught as an impostor, both by your own conscience and by the feelings of those about you. The very value of Christmas is that it puts the genuineness of everybody to an unerring test.



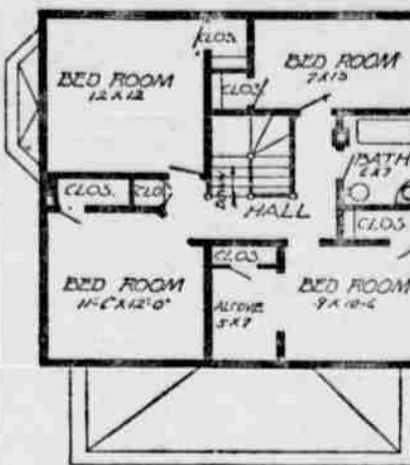
Harlequin.

IDEAS FOR HOME BUILDERS BY WM. A. RADFORD. Mr. William A. Radford will answer questions and give advice FREE OF COST on all subjects pertaining to the subject of building, for the readers of this paper.

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A style of house that is well liked in the middle west is practically square on the ground, with a cottage roof and a heavy veranda extending clear across the front of the house.

The plan here given is 29 feet 6 inches in width, and 28 feet deep, exclusive of the veranda; and it is full two stories high, with an attic large enough to supply all the necessary storage room and upper ventilation.

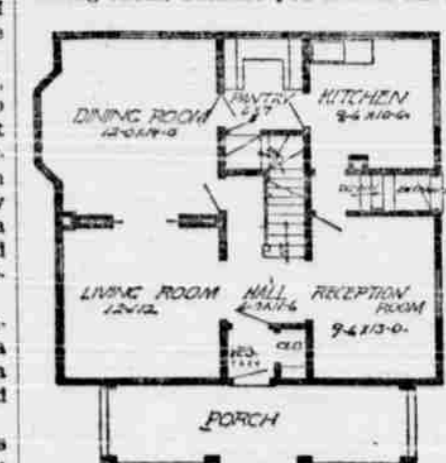


Second Floor Plan.

Fancy houses are not so common as they used to be. The time was when a man thought he must have considerable outward embellishment on a house, to prove to his friends and the public generally that he had money to throw away.



houses generally look well because they are solid and plain. The reception room at the right of the hall in this house is rather unusual; but the plan admits of having it, and it has its uses.



First Floor Plan.

the sliding doors open; and they usually are open at meal time, and it is awkward to close them after strangers have been shown in.

There are, however, other and more important uses for a reception room of this kind. In most families, there are children of school age, and they should have a room adapted to their use in the evening. They need a little help with their lessons; and they want a place to keep their books, pencils, pads, and paper; and most of them have toys or playthings of some kind.

When building, one of the first duties is to provide for the children. They should have bedrooms of their own. This applies to boys as well as girls. It is a shame the way some boys are treated in regard to their sleeping accommodations.

The difference. A boy thinks a good deal when he is not engaged in making more noise. Boys don't cry over such things, or make any noticeable demonstration; but they often feel very keenly without saying a word.

The girls in the family get the nice bedrooms, the new lace curtains, and a nice, bright rug, with paper on the wall to match. That is all right enough; only the boy shouldn't be checked off in the reception room to sleep on a couch and hunt his belongings in the morning like a tramp.



The furniture need not be expensive, but it should be sound and useful. Give him a place to put his books, and another place for his skates, fishing rod, dumb-bells, ball clubs, and a great many other things that are interesting to a growing boy.

In selecting a plan for a house, it would be difficult to find anything better for the money than this design. It may be built in any of the smaller cities for from \$1,500 to \$2,000 without heating, gas fixtures, electric wiring, and probably the final grading.

Big Difference in Place. If any had said at the end of the last Greek war that the crown prince of that country would ever command his forces in the field again he would have been laughed at.

Waiting on the station platform at Larissa in Thessaly, among a group of war correspondents, for the arrival of the diadochos, or successor, as he is called in Greece, when he disembarked with the glittering headquarters staff to take command. But I remember my farewell view of him much better.

Journalism. Young Reporter—These new colleges of journalism will turn out a great number of journalists, don't you think? Old Reporter—Sure thing. Young Reporter—Some competition in the game, eh? Old Reporter—Oh, I guess not! Young Reporter—Why? Old Reporter—Well, we shall be just as shy of newspapermen as ever. —Judge.

VITAL FACTS ABOUT LIFE

Cells of Animals and Plants Alike Proved to Be Governed by the Same Laws.

Protoplasm—the literal translation of which means "the first man made" — was the name given by a German scientist in 1848 to the shiny granular protoplasmic contents of vegetable cells.

Elements—carbon, oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen. It is now recognized as the fundamental basis for all life; the smallest particles of it go through what is known as the cycle of life—free motion, feeling, feeding and reproduction. When in some unconscious way it grows a membrane for a covering, or a little nucleus, a kernel somewhere within it—science calls it a cell. These cells are the

same in plants and animals. Prof. Jacques Loeb showed the importance of this fact. Although plants, he explained, have no nervous systems, they have "instinctive movements." In analysis of instincts, he bound together in the cell common to them the plant and the worm at the root of the plant (as some day, perhaps, the tree of life and the serpent may be bound); and he called their reactions "tropisms." Then he pointed out that tropisms are mechanical acts—that moth and fly and ivy leaf move,

in spite of themselves, in chemical subjection of light, heat and odors (which the scientist calls "emanations").—From the Metropolitan.

Awful to Contemplate. Laying down the volume of Wordsworth, of whom she was an earnest disciple, the precocious child turned to her mother with a sigh. "If Heaven lies about us in our infancy," she said, "the poet says," she queried, "what will happen to us when we are grown up?"—Life.