

A SOLOMON IN SKIRTS.

Difficult Situation Easily Solved Up and Simplified by the Wise Woman.

In a cozy little flat two bachelor girls were keeping house, and somehow things seemed to go wrong, relates Elliot Flower in the Brooklyn Eagle. Although each of the bachelor girls considered herself too far advanced to be bound down to a mere matter of housekeeping...

Now, a short distance away there was another cozy little flat, which also suffered, but in a different way. In this flat two young men were domiciled, and it suffered from lack of supervision. Here, too, an attempt was made to work the problem out on an alternate basis...

Thus, while two people, in spite of all rules, were constantly occupied with the details of the management of one flat, two other people, also in spite of all rules, were constantly occupied with efforts to escape the details of the management of the other flat.

"For Heaven's sake!" one of the young men would say, "you'd better take care here, for you're a good deal better at this sort of thing than I am."

"Goodness me!" one of the bachelor girls would exclaim about the same time, "you'd better leave all of the housekeeping to me, for I simply can't stand careless management in the home."

But neither the other bachelor girl nor the other young man would agree to such propositions, and things grew so steadily worse in the two flats that all four finally sought out a wise woman to learn wherein the trouble lay.

"Is it possible," asked the girls, "that two people cannot live harmoniously in one cozy little flat? In spite of our best resolves, there is constant friction and we are ever striving to usurp the temporary authority and responsibility, each of the other?"

"Can it be," demanded the young men, "that two people cannot live together peacefully in a home of their own? In spite of our best resolves, there is constant friction and we are ever striving to escape the temporary authority and responsibility that is a necessary feature of domestic success?"

"Upon the wise woman smiled in a superior way. This," she said, "is one of the simplest problems that ever was brought to my notice. The explanation of your troubles is easy, and the solution quite as easy."

"Shall we give up the flats?" they asked.

"No," replied the wise woman. "Keep both flats, but get a clerkman, and two marriage licenses. You are divided up wrong."

WONDERFUL REGION.

WILL BE OPENED FOR DEVELOPMENT BY PANAMA CANAL.

Agricultural and Mineral Wealth of Great Country Can Be Cheaply Transported—Other Products.

The construction of the Panama canal being now a foregone conclusion, together with the belief that work on the projected railroads to the Pacific coast may be resumed at an early date, points the way to a rich and almost neglected field for commercial enterprise, says Modern Mexico.

The main object of the trip, as told by Prof. Niven to a representative of Modern Mexico, was to visit the land of Copala, owned by the governor of the state of Guerrero. They are situated in the district of Allende, and extend approximately 20 miles along the coast, and are some ten miles in width.

Near the south boundary of the tract, and about 100 yards from the ocean, at a place called Coacoyule, there are about 8,000 acres densely covered with all kinds of hard woods, including mahogany, ebony, palo amarillo, roble (oak), caca-huite, palo verde, huayavilla, chilca-huite from 12 to 30 inches in thickness, and from 25 to 40 feet stumpy, also granadillo, palo morado, cupapiole, palo de vera, achote (a yellow dyewood), nanchi (a tannin bark), tepahuic, can-huanachi, fatatia, frate, tejurucis, guinote, mangle, campeche (a black dyewood), huamuchil, parota, etc.

There are also great groves of sangre de drago and linaloe. The gum of the latter is said to be the basis of many perfumes, and \$80 per ounce is paid for it. Considerable is shipped from this section yearly; a distillation plant on the ground would doubtless be a profitable enterprise.

This district, being located just north of the tropical rain belt, has six months of dry season, as in California. The climate is, therefore, remarkably healthful and agreeable. The temperature in February was found by test to be as follows:

The cool, refreshing salt breezes from the Pacific give this locality a fine, equable climate, free from yellow fever all the year round, with cool nights, there being a notable absence of intense, oppressive heat or of troublesome insect life.

All kinds of fruit trees were found, but appear to receive neither cultivation nor attention; there are mangoes, oranges, lemons, limes, pineapples, apples, coconuts, bananas, coquillo, also cacao, ginger, quina, etc.

A short distance from the forest there is a salt lake over three miles long, which is said to be one of the best producers of salt on the Pacific coast. This salt deposit is worked by Indians, who pay a royalty to the owner of the lands of \$4.50 per ton. It is shipped by mule freight into the interior of the state, even as far as Iquique.

Immense turtles, a meter in length, are found abundantly along the coast near Coacoyule, also oysters, lobsters, shrimps, etc. There are alligators, sharks, and great flocks of pelican, ducks, geese, pheasants, etc., also tigers, mountain lions, jabalina (wild pigs), wildcats, coons, rabbits, etc.

The most attractive feature of these rich, fertile lands is, however, their admirable adaptability for the successful cultivation of cotton.

From 8,000 to 12,000 pounds are produced annually by the poor natives in this district, this value being at the rate of 50 cents per arroba, or two cents per pound, which is the highest price paid to them for the raw material. It is raised in small patches of a few acres and upwards, and they have neither the proper implements nor the knowledge of modern methods of cultivation.

THE LIBRARIES OF SIBERIA.

Civilization in the Vast Country East of Russia, at Various Centers of Population.

In the surprising short time of 70 years from Yermak's entrance to the valley of the Obi, Russian pioneers had reached the Pacific ocean, and penetrated to the mouth of the Lena, and established important centers of civilization at numerous points which have continued to increase to the present day. Tobolsk, Omsk, Tomsk, Krasnoyarsk, Minusinsk, Irkutsk, Yakutsk, Verkhne, Udinsk and Nerchinsk have behind them as long a history as Salem and Boston.

But at Tomsk one will find a university which will compare favorably with any in the United States 50 years ago. At Krasnoyarsk he will find a library of a wealthy Siberian, filled with many treasures which any European library would covet, but could not obtain.

In this collection are 60,000 specimens well housed in a two-story brick building and arranged and classified after the most approved methods, with an equally commodious library building adjoining it. All this has been accomplished by private subscription. And this is only a specimen of what is to be found in nearly every Siberian town of more than 10,000 inhabitants.

Irkutsk, nearly 4,000 miles east of St. Petersburg, though containing only about 60,000 inhabitants, has, beside its large museum, an elegant opera house, vying in proportions and fullness of equipment, with anything found in America outside of New York city. It has a public reading room and a library, containing books and magazines in all the leading languages of Europe.

ACQUIRED THE APPETITE.

But Actor Mansfield's Last Penny Was Gone and He Got Nothing to Eat.

Richard Mansfield was not always a successful actor. On a recent visit to Chicago he related to a group of friends one of his early experiences, says one of the papers of that city.

"I was in London in the middle of summer," he said, "the theatrical business was particularly dull, and besides it was at a period of my career when managers were not wildly desirous of securing my signature to a contract. In fact, I was in such a state financially that I had but the price of one meal left, after that all was anguish uncertainty. My clothes were none too good, my shoes were worn from much wearing tramping of the streets, and I was dodging my old acquaintances."

"Suddenly my arm was seized by a flashily dressed individual whom I recognized as a garrulous friend of recent days. He asked me where I was going, and then before I had time to reply, he invited me to drink with him. Before I could decline he was dragging me in the direction of the nearest bar. They serve the finest ale in all England at this place," he said. "You must try some of it. It will give you a magnificent appetite."

"Now, I didn't need a better edge on my appetite than I already had, but my friend followed up his invitation to imbibe with the further invitation to dine with him. I ceased expostulating and accompanied him to the bar. After the first drink he ordered another. 'You will drink he ordered another,' he kept repeating. 'This ale is noted for its qualities as an appetizer.'"

"As we finished drinking he felt through his pockets, once, then a second time, more hurriedly, after which he turned to me with an apologetic grin. 'Blast the luck, old chap,' he said, 'but I've left me money at home in my other clothes, you know. Just settle for this, will you, and I'll fix it with you when we meet again, you know.'"

"I paid my last two shillings for the ale and went out of there with a magnificent appetite."

"The Mince Pled Piper." "An awful dream!" cried the piper, after his wife had shaken him by the shoulder and awakened him. "An awful dream! I groaned, did I? It was no wonder. Listen!"

"He told her his dream—in effect the story which has been embodied in the poem concerning his visit to Hamelin Town. 'I am not surprised that you dreamed such a fearful thing,' commented his wife. 'A man who will eat a whole mince pie for lunch before going to bed must be expected to suffer from nightmare.'—Chicago Tribune.

PULP OF BANKNOTES.

RETIREMENT BILLS ARE TO BE MORE THOROUGHLY MACERATED.

For the Reason That Pieces of Notes Taken from Pulp Have Been Presented for Redemption.

Through an order promulgated by the treasurer of the United States, the old macerating machine in the sub-basement of the treasury, at Washington, has been put out of commission, and hereafter all paper money, whether issued by the government or by national banks, will be reduced to pulp in the large macerator at the bureau of engraving and printing.

This order, says the New York Tribune, was brought about by a protest made by national bankers claiming that the old machine failed to do its work perfectly, and that the bank-notes dumped into it not infrequently turned up in sections for redemption by the banks of issue; that the pulp sold to various makers and manufacturers of images, to be resold as souvenirs, was filled with large pieces of bills, and that these were picked from the pulp images and offered for redemption. Notwithstanding the fact that the treasury macerator has been in service for many years, and has reduced to pulp many trillions of dollars in bank-notes which had ceased to be current, this complaint was the first one ever made against its performance of duty, but the treasurer got such positive evidence that the bankers were correct in their assertions that he issued the order.

Washington souvenir dealers have long realized that the pulp images found a heavier demand than any other, and those made from the pulp of the notes last destroyed—or partly so, by the treasury macerator—have always brought a higher price than the ones manufactured from the pulp of the macerator at the bureau of engraving and printing, this being due entirely to the fact that images from the latter contain not a speck of greenback, the notes being reduced to almost a whitish pulp. Naturally, visitors prefer an image "made from real money," in which some of the money would be in evidence. The treasury macerator production, or output, was, therefore, worth a great deal more to the manufacturers, and always brought a much larger price. In fact, the bureau's pulp was almost a drug on the market.

But now the images—busts of presidents, the Washington monument, Uncle Sam's hat, the national emblem, the eagle, the capital, the treasury, cats, dogs, frogs, etc., each representing from \$5,000 to \$15,000—must be made from the bureau pulp, or a first-class counterfeit, for every note destroyed must be in this specially constructed macerator, which works every day and night in the year except Sunday, there being from 21,000,000 to 22,000,000 macerated every 24 hours. This work of maceration and the preparation for it are under the personal direction of representatives of the treasurer, the secretary, the comptroller and the register, and these representatives go with the heavily guarded wagon containing the money to the bureau, where it is taken from the steel boxes, checked off, placed in the macerator, the iron doors closed, locked and sealed, and then the machine begins its work of destruction. The large boiler or vat in which the money is placed is filled with some kind of chemicals and a network of machinery keeps up a continuous churning and grinding until 12 o'clock the following day, when it is stopped, the pulp taken out, and another million or two placed in, to be treated in the same way for the next 24 hours.

By this process of maceration it is utterly impossible for anyone to find any evidences of money in the pulp, even the small silk threads which run through all genuine notes being entirely destroyed save to form a part of the whitish pulp.

With the issuing of the order by the treasurer, there are walls and weepings by a score of old soldiers who have been manufacturing these pulp images. They feel that their occupation is gone, and that sure starvation stares them in the face if compelled to use the bureau pulp, but some of the dealers express the belief that business in the pulp image line will move along as usual, because, as one expressed it, there will not be much difficulty in catching on to the fact that it is not hard work to pinch off a small portion of a bill and stick it on the image, hundreds of them being easily doctored in this way in a short time. Should Chief Wilkie or some of his men catch up with manufacturers or dealers trafficking in this way to make images salable, another chapter would be added.

MUST BE CULTURED.

A small Brooklyn maid, aged five, developed a propensity for climbing a tree near her home, the ascent being accomplished successfully, but, once up, there she stuck, shouting lustily for help until rescued by one of her big brothers. Two or three times this experience was repeated, until the patience of her rescuers was exhausted, and her mother was obliged to threaten punishment if the feat was not discontinued. "But, mamma," remonstrated the child, earnestly, "I really have to do it!" "You have to do it?" repeated her mother, in surprise. "Why do you have to do it?" "Because," was the answer, delivered with much dignity, "I belong to an athletic association, and I do that to develop my muscles!"—Boston Transcript.

She Knew Her Business. Husband—The house seems very warm. Shall I shut off the furnace? Wife—No. Jack Hamilton's in the parlor with Lucile, and she's better looking when she's flushed.—Brooklyn Life.

BOX GARDENS FOR WINDOWS.

May Be Easily and Cheaply Arranged by the City Flat Dweller.

The city flat dweller who is also a flower lover need not feel that because she is not able to plant and dig in a garden she must be deprived of the pleasure of having growing greenery about her. With a little time and expense devoted to a window garden she may make her windows not only a joy to herself, says the Brooklyn Eagle, but as well to every passerby.

After getting the box fitted to the window ledge a little less in width, but as long as the ledge, the most important consideration is the soil. The box should be about eight inches deep and have a dozen holes punched in the bottom for drainage. Over this bottom sift a thin layer of ashes and another of small pebbles, on top of this a thick layer of fertilizer and finally good, rich soil. It is a good plan to water the window garden thoroughly every night and sprinkle it again early in the morning. For those who like gay toned blossoms nasturtiums and petunias make a fine showing, and in the early spring sweet peas are excellent box plants. The familiar geranium, with its scarlet or deep pink blossoms and brilliant foliage is about as good a window box flower as can be found. If foliage plants are preferred to the flowery type, there are many varieties that flourish well all summer and fall and fully pay for the trouble that is required to keep a window garden in good condition.

NOTES FOR NEEDLEWOMEN.

Ornamental Bits That May Be Wrought in Their Spare Moments.

Hand-embroidered towels are to be seen worked with white linen flax and show blossoms as the shamrock and clover. Colored bordered towels are not now considered in good taste, although plain white ones sometimes show tiny colored embroidery blossoms on the surface of the border.

To cover wooden button forms with scraps of the gown and quickly embroider a few tiny flowers or dots in several colors upon the tops is occupying many a spare minute these days. The shapes are full and curved, not flat. Only buttons of heavy dress materials or some of the beaten metal ones are flat.

In the way of an easily made trimming for a dan jacket of white point d'esprit or mousseline is the shirring of a white ribbon, lousine or satin, through the middle, the ribbon not to be over half an inch wide, and using it to fasten the bottom of very wide fold tucks or sew on the edge of three or more flounces upon a skirt.

If you carry a handbag take it to the stamping counter and have a rich monogram put upon the face—either on one corner or in the center. A very limited assortment of oil colors and an hour's practice a day will speedily give you confidence enough to paint the monogram, and you may then, by copying, work in a floral decoration around it.

Much individuality is displayed in marking towels. Interlaced letters are used in preference to the monogram. Block and script letters, as well as single letters, are also in vogue, and, as far as the marking is done at the end of the towel, the crest makes a beautiful mark for linen and is greatly favored. This is about two inches in size instead of three, as in the case of the towels. The table cloths, napkins and bed linen will also be marked to correspond with the towels. Sheets are worked on the outside upper corner, or exactly in the middle of the hem. The former is the more practical for identification.

Chocolate Coconut Cake.

One-half cupful of butter, one cupful of sugar, 1 1/2 cupfuls of flour, three eggs, half a cupful of cold water, one heaping spoonful of baking powder sifted in the flour, two tablespoonfuls of cocoa or grated chocolate; mix as usual, folding in the whites, stiffly beaten, with the rest of the flour and bake in a large, square pan; when cold, cut in small squares; have ready in a bowl a boiled chocolate icing and dip each square, using a wooden toothpick, and lay on waxed paper; when this is firm, dip in a white frosting and roll in grated, fresh coconut.—People's Home Journal.

Tea Rolls.

Two cups of flour sifted with three spoonfuls of baking powder four times, one tablespoon butter and same of lard well rubbed into the flour, a small teaspoon of salt, three-fourths cup milk. Handle as little as possible. Bake in quick oven.—Boston Globe.

TO HAVE TOWN BARNS.

WOMEN INSTITUTE REFORM FOR COMFORT OF HORSES.

The Old Post in the Road to Be Relegated with Other Obsolete Eyesores from Country Farms.

One of the most successful reforms in treatment of dumb animals that have ever been brought about by women is the town hitching barn, by the use of which horses no longer stand out in the cold of winter and the warm fly-pestering season of midsummer, reports the Chicago Tribune.

Women's clubs and the wives and daughters of farmers started this reform, and it has grown to such an extent that the big barns are seen in practically all of the larger and progressive country towns.

One of these barns has just been completed at Mokena, on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois road. In size it is 132 feet long and 62 feet wide. It has an earth floor and the roof is of sheet iron. Nearly 40 teams may be hitched inside this big inclosure. The horses stand hitched to the vehicle, and the arrangement is such that the rig may be backed out of its place at any time. In place of hitching a team to a fence or posts on the town square, the outfit is driven inside and hitched to a railing on which is a continuous trough. For the privilege of hitching, the farmer is charged ten cents for any length of time during the day. The farmer may fill the trough with his own feed for his team free of charge, but if feed is supplied by the barn owner, ten cents a head is charged for it.

Less than a decade ago teams stood in the biting cold weather for hours at a stretch. The animals befouled their robes and whips. The women of the towns began to complain of this sort of thing as a crime against humanity, and deplored the unsightly condition of the streets. The farmers' wives and daughters objected to being compelled to hitch up in some unsafe location. In summer time the horses were left out in the sweltering sun, and he streets became a festering nuisance. Now, when farm help is scarce, the women are compelled to do nearly all of the driving and errands to town, and they set up a loud cry for a place to hitch.

One of the first Illinois towns to adopt the hitching barn was Dixon, where there is a strong and active women's club, some of the members being wives of farmers. To-day few teams are found hitched outside. There were a few farmers who preferred to hitch their faithful teams in the cold or heat to giving up a time, but they soon grew ashamed of the old practice. The barns sprang up all over Illinois, and in many towns of Indiana. At Ottawa, Ill., all of the hitching posts and fences were torn down one night and carried off. This work was charged up to certain members of the city council, and ever after they were known as "The Destroying Angels."

When a woman has occasion to drive to a town where the hitching barn has been established, she makes her way to the barn and alights at the door, turning the team over to the barn attendant. In many of the country towns young daughters of farmers attend school during the winter, and the methods of the town barn relieve them of much care.

The women of Illinois are not more proud of the result of their movement, carried out and encouraged by them, than they are of the town hitching barn.

IT IS PASSION THAT KILLS.

Not So Often the Burden of Years That Takes Men Out of Life.

Few human beings die by reason of the infirmities of years. Some claim that all persons die of disappointment, personal, mental or bodily, but not accident. The passions kill men sometimes even suddenly, says a medical exchange. The common expression, "killed with rage" has little exaggeration in it, for even though not suddenly fatal, strong passions shorten life. Strong-bodied men often die young, weak men live longer than the strong, for the strong use their strength and the weak have none to use—the latter take care of themselves, the former do not. As it is with the body, so it is with the mind and the temper; the strong are apt to break or, like the candle, run; the weak burn out. The inferior animals, which live temperate lives, have generally their prescribed term of years.

The horse lives 25 years, the ox 15 to 20, the lion about 20, the dog 10 or 12, the rabbit eight, the guinea pig six or seven. The numbers all bear proportion to the time the animal takes to grow its full size. But man, of all animals, is one that seldom comes up to the average. He ought to live 100 years, according to the physiological law, for five times 20 are 100, but, instead of that, he scarcely reaches an average of four times the growing period. The reason is obvious—man is not only the most irregular and most intemperate, but the most laborious and hard-working of all animals. He is always the most irritable, and there is reason to believe, though we cannot tell what an animal secretly feels, that more than any other animal man cherishes wrath to keep it warm, and sometimes himself with the fire of his own reflections.

Righting a Wrong.

Plinks (angrily)—I understand you said my face would stop a clock. Plunks—4 never said it, old man. "Then I have been misinformed." "That's what. Why, instead of stopping at eight of your face any reputable clock would increase its speed."—Cincinnati Enquirer.