

HUNTING A HOME

By JAMES P. HAVERRON.

RENTS are going up, and folk are house-hunting. A certain measure of prosperity seems to have returned to town, so that those who have doubled up to tide over the war stringency in the money-market by living two in a house, appear to be again able to seek each his own private and particular abode. The result of this is a searching of real estate offices for desirable prospects and an inspection of these prospects when found.

Some lucky folk there be, who, seeking a new habitation, find ready to their hand just that place in which they desire to dwell. But others there, are and their name is legion, who must inspect much to find little. It is now that you hear discussions of open plumbing, double car fares, structural defects and desirable neighborhoods, all of which are a part of the great business of house-hunting.

The man who goes house-hunting looks to find war-time rents, low and easy. He expects to get the habitation of the bank magnate who went bust last week, for the rent fit to be paid by that trench-digger of peace, the navvie. Did you ever go house-hunting? Believe me, it is some job. The preliminary center is an interview with the real estate man in his Persian-rugged and mahogany-adorned den. This one is a savage of aboriginal cruelty, but of modern cunning and finesse. Immediately upon encounter, he will produce long lists filled with cryptic figures. From these he proceeds to recite glowing prospects of happy homes. He speaks of open vistas and open plumbing, of select neighborhoods and reasonable rents. Smilingly he delves into his lists to produce roseate dreams of ideal habitations.

For a time one sits at the feet of the spell-binder, the activities of his brain soothed to slumber by the hypnotic influence of his words. Then Mr. Real Estate Man rises briskly to his feet. He conducts his victim to the waiting motor and whirls him forth to view realities.

With his critical faculties still doped to dormancy by the fine words of his guide, the victim goes forth. He is shown houses, flats or cottage homes as he has indicated his desire. The beautiful views depicted in the real estate office becomes vistas of chimney pots and neighboring roofs. The select neighborhoods become districts of mud and dilapidated domiciles. What views one gets of prospective neighbors generate doubt and despair. All is not gold that glitters, it may for instance be a busted beer bottle in an ash can scintillating in the setting sun.

Suppose one chose a central location, it is all too apt to prove the centre of congestion. Should one seek a suburban home, the question of "two car fares" arises, and whether or not this be involved, there is the matter of long walks where none or submerged sidewalks pave the way.

"No car line," says you.

"There's a jitney," says he.

And you, according as your belief rests or does not rest upon jitneys, takes his word.

Plumbing is a matter for thought. It may be open as the day and yet contain dark secrets of plugged drains and other atrocities of civil life.

I had a friend who took his wife to hunt a

**Dire Days Be These for
Folks Who, Learning
That They Need Not
Longer "Double Up,"
Go Out Into the Byways
Of the City's Outer
Circle to Search a New
Abode—Or Dissatisfied,
Decide There Are Five
Hundred Houses Better
Than the One They're In,
To Discover by
Reconnaissance That There's
No Place Like the Home
They've Got.**

home. Having attached themselves to the dragoman of an insurance office, they sallied forth. He showed them houses in rows and in the glacial isolation of the suburbs. He showed them flats and apartments. While the wily guide led the unsuspecting wife to the front, my friend constituted himself inspector of backyards and for every virtue described in front, discovered two defects behind.

Where the agent spoke of select locality, he observed the faces of peering neighbors in nearby windows. A southern exposure, he matched with a flooded cellar, and so the game went on until at last the pair returned to what had been, and still was to be, their home, hot, tired and discomforted, but content to remain where they were, preferring the ills they knew to others that they knew not of or only guessed in part.

I have often wondered at the names of houses and locations. "Lakeview" more often means the survey of a back-yard puddle. "Palace Drive" is more than apt to be beyond two garish gate



posts of stone, imposing upon approach, but later found to stand as monuments upon the grave of the speculator's hopes. But last and most devilish of all was the name of "Woodlands" found upon a residence, whose sole and only title to such a description was the fact that from a back window one looked out upon a poor misguided and discouraged tree, waving its gnarled old arms in a fantastic rhythmic dance of despair.

This is the office boy's story. He suggested it, but, alas, it has proved too sad for humor. Even back in the days when shrapnel was known as grape-shot, before grape-nuts were discovered and while appendicitis was only a glorified stomach ache, the matter of house-hunting was tragedy, indeed.

The photographer was sent out to take pictures to illustrate this story. He took the pictures, but also so great was his grief in recalling a house-hunting expedition of his own, that he was moved to tears and spoiled most of the plates.

But Skuce, with the ardent air of the artistic temperament, was able to produce a picture for this dire and desperate feature of human life.

Of house-hunting we have little personal experience, but would urge upon the unwary either to remain under whatever roof chance or the Fates may have cast him, or, like the Arab, to dwell beneath a tent, so that he may move to whatever place he pleases.

Lost Land Found in Hudson Bay

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cure harbor eight miles to the southward. We made out three big islands. The main island, topographically, is a series of ranges parallel to its length, with a maximum height of 700 to 800 feet. In formation it is similar to the land masses of the north shore of Lake Superior, particularly on Thunder Bay. It is covered with grasses and Arctic vegetation. From the height to which we climbed we could see rolling land masses, studded with silver lakes, which appeared to be great breeding places for wild swan and geese and ducks.

The part we explored is not inhabited by Eskimos, but on an island to the westward we found old stone igloos, partly in ruins, and elaborate stone wind blinds, used by the Eskimos in goose hunting. The whole island area is more than 4000 square miles in extent, with a complete length north and south of nearly 400 miles; that is, from the South Belchers latitude 55 degrees north to latitude 60 degrees north, at the Ottawa Islands. Looking from the hilltops of the main island over sweeps of valley and rise one got an impression of highly cultivated areas, but that was due to the green moss and grass that covered almost everything.

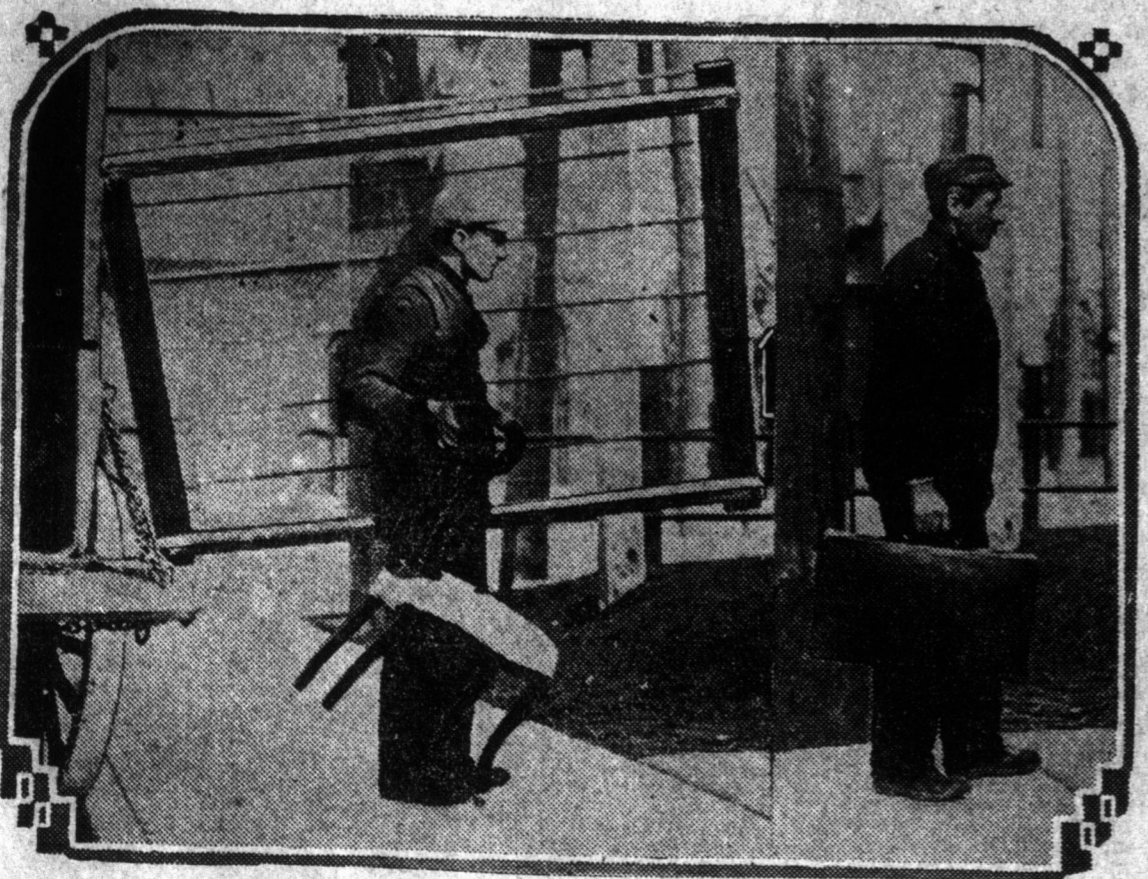
"On the way to Richmond Gulf, on



The winter quarters of the expedition in southern Fox land, Baffin Island, where all photographic finishing of 25,000 feet of film was done.



An Eskimo busy building an igloo while his husky sits and watches.



The photographer says the correct and proper title for this picture is "The Spring Is Here"—Pretty easy.