

The Farm Home

A Plain Country Wedding.

Before.

By Megyra.

There are times and seasons for everything, but weddings seem to be in season all the year round.

There are many minor points about which the bride and her helpers are in doubt. As I have recently been a helper, I am going to tell you, not how everything should be done, but how we produced very satisfactory results.

If I were setting out to give advice, I should advise the bridal pair, without fuss, finery, or friends, to go to the home of the minister and have the knot securely tied, with the necessary witnesses, only, present. People seldom take advice unless it accords with their preconceived ideas.

In the present case I am not prepared to say how the young man proceeded with the courtship and proposal, but I suppose in some manner he came to the point and said, "—, will you have me?" and she replied "Yes, sir." But, when the day was set, the question of invitations arose. Who shall be invited? The young folks said, "only young folks." Their elders said, "only the older people." However, it was left for the parents to decide, and, consequently, a list was made out including all the aunts and uncles of the bride and the older cousins, and, as she was so soon to "belong" to her husband, it was only fitting that her new relatives should also be invited. The complete list made the number considerably over a hundred. To write and deliver so many notes would mean much work. Verbal messages would mean more work, so the more formal invitation card was adopted; but it was not considered necessary to send one to each guest, but to address the outer envelope to the head of the house, and on the inner envelope was written:

Mrs. and Mr. John Smith,

Miss Mary and Mr. William.

These were sent two weeks before the day set for the wedding.

The wedding cake was made and sent to the confectioner's for its trimmings.

As the trousseau, with the exception of the dresser had been previously prepared, the mother and daughter went shopping and a good quality of white cashmere was considered most serviceable as a bridal robe with satin and pearl trimming, and suiting cloth of grey serge, and an extra waist of a very becoming shade of pretty silk were selected. Instead of taking these goods to a dressmaker, two were

brought to the house, where the work was done much more expeditiously.

"Wedding breakfast hot or cold?" was the next question. As many of the guests were coming long distances and the weather cold, a hot dinner was chosen and instead of seating all at one table, we decided that we could have a jollier party with a table of honor and quartette tables. The father being a "handy man" gathered up lumber and tools and went to work and constructed the required number, seven, each three feet long and two and a half wide. The legs were hard wood planed, being about two inches or two and a half square, the corners being finished with, I should judge, a spoke-shave. The frame and top were of soft wood also planed. It would not surprise me if some of these figure in the furnishing of the new home as kitchen table, dressing table or even with a fancy cover as a sitting-room table.

As the wedding was set for Wednesday evening, we thought it best to get much of the work done the latter part of the previous week, so five of us proceeded to the warm stables where we killed and picked the unlucky number of fowls, thirteen turkeys and ducks. These were also drawn and dressed ready for the oven and placed in a cool room. The crusts for twenty lemon pies were also baked.

The week of the wedding has arrived, and an extra stove placed in the kitchen. During the day the baking and icing of cakes, the cooking of cranberry sauce, and the finishing of the pies, was done, and in the evening the decorations were arranged. Lambs of evergreen, clothes-line ropes, binder twine, and balls of carpet warp were brought into the dining-room. The children broke off small branches, and with the warp the older girls tied these to the ropes and twine. When completed these were secured to the upper corners of the room, and caught up to the ceiling in the centre, going diagonally across, and were also festooned around the walls on the picture nails.

A bell-shaped frame of fence wire (not barbed) was made large enough to hang over the bride and groom. On this was stretched half-inch white tape, leaving six with diamond-shaped openings, and at each crossing a sprig of evergreen and bridal roses were pinned. Natural flowers being impossible, unless at great expense, from the city conservatories, we substituted white tissue paper, making several dozens of roses. The tongue of the bell was made of picture wire, with a bunch of roses in which a pasteboard candle-holder was placed, which contained a tiny wax candle. This was suspended in one corner of the parlor.

The wedding presents having begun to arrive we removed the furniture from the parlor bed-room, and replaced it with tables on which we arranged the china, glass, silver, and linen, and of course had room on the floor for such gifts as chairs, music stands, etc.

As no farm-house contains sufficient for one hundred guests, the son of the house visited his near-by aunts and returned with his sleigh loaded with chairs and dishes.

(To be continued.)

The Loss of the Buster.

By H. Phelps Whitmarsh in Saturday Evening Post.

"Were I ever shipwrecked?"

Captain Rattlin smiled in a peculiar way as he asked this question.

"Were I ever shipwrecked?" he repeated, sniffing contemptuously and casting his weather eye down the beach in search of a possible customer. "Wy, what a question to hask of a mas'er mariner as 'as bin sailing all over the blessed ocean for nigh onto fifty years! I might as well hask you young gentlemen if you hever robbed a orchard."

The old salt laughed loudly at his sally. The three "young gentlemen" from Doctor Kenyon's Academy also laughed.

"Wy, bless yer innocent 'earts, I've bin cast away more times than there is 'airs on the top of my 'ead."

As the captain's sou-wester was jammed down tightly over his ears the boys could not estimate with accuracy the number of his experiences. They were impressed, however, with the statement, and begged that he would tell them one, just one, of his "farns."

"It's agin my principles," said the captain, settling himself comfortably on the side of his boat, "to give my hexperiences, except in the way of business. Only the other day a gent as writes for the magazines comes along and says, 'Captin,' he says, 'I've got five gold soverins in my pocket for you if you'll let me take down one of your shipwrecks.'"

"Much obliged, sir," says I, "but them ere shipwrecks o' mine is part of my stock in trade, and if they comes out in print I'm done for. The parties as goes out sailing in my boat would be saying, 'Wy, captin, we read that story in the so-and-so, written by the celebrated hauthor, Mr. So-and-so,' and they'd think I was lyin' to 'em. 'No, sir,' I says, 'I'm thankful to ye, but I'm not selling my shipwrecks to-day.'"

The captain looked out to sea with the air of a man who had had his say. Then he began to cut himself up a pipetful of tobacco in a provokingly slow manner. The boys meanwhile,