

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1892.

BOTH SIDES.

Landlords and Tenants Tell Their Stories.

THE EASY GOING KIND.

"Make-Believe" House Hunters Who Never Move.

THE LANDLORD'S DUMB WAITER AND BASEMENT KITCHEN.

The Man Who Snores and Has a Long Lease—Rats and Other Objectionable Features, Including Back Yards—Small Rooms and Large Rents—All Want Folding Doors and Modern Improvements Without Number.

That it is one thing to "decide to move," and another to get a house that comes up to one's expectations is shown by the contributions PROGRESS prints today. They are all interesting, particularly to the footsore men and women who have wandered all over town with the "To Let" columns of the daily paper in their pockets, and a keen eye for a printed ticket in the window of a desirable looking house.

There are two sides to the story—the tenant's and the landlord's; while the "present occupant," it seems, frequently has a tale to tell, that is of vital interest to the house hunter. But PROGRESS' correspondents cover the ground pretty thoroughly. It will be noticed that in many cases the search for a more convenient house was not successful and it was decided to "stay on," while a few did not get all they wanted, but decided to make the best of it.

When PROGRESS offered a prize for the "best experience" no limit was made as to space; and the result has been a number of contributions longer than it was intended they should be. Nearly every one of them, however, shows a different view of the case, and is worth reading.

The landlords have only one defender, and although his contribution is long, it will prove a revelation to many house hunters who imagine that they are the only ones who have an unpleasant experience.

Owing to the number and length of the contributions received, it is impossible to print them all in one issue of PROGRESS. More experiences will be given next week, when the prize winner will also be announced.

ALL HAD DRAWBACKS.

"Sally" Gets the Opinion of "The Present Occupant" in one Place.

This year for the first time I was under the necessity of going forth to seek a new place of abode for the coming year. Accompanied by my sister and armed with copies of sundry newspapers, with all eligible (or rather supposed to be eligible) places marked therein, I went forth. We first applied to a gentleman who had advertised a "very convenient" and "pleasantly situated" flat at a rent of only \$150. The gentleman we found was a Hibernian, had most affable manners and would show us the "tinnint" with the greatest of pleasure. The house we found was "pleasantly situated" at what used to be known in old times as the "Back Shore" and was within a stone's throw of one of the huge dumps which still exist there. But the house-owner's mind soared above these unprepossessing surroundings and he expatiated grandly upon the "lojine view" to be had out across the flats of Courtney Bay. We then started to go through the premises. The evidence of convenience we discovered was that the seven rooms of the place all seemed to open into each other. To get into number two it was necessary to go through number one. To reach number three you passed through numbers one and two and so on. The other "conveniences" were almost too numerous to mention and included the fact that there was no yard and also that the out-buildings were used in common with another tenant. We did not take this place but passed on to the next on our list. This proved to be a really pleasant house to the eye, but alas! we discovered after a short time it was not to the nose. The sewerage was defective and many of the rooms decidedly "odorous."

The third place was also prepossessing in appearance, but the present occupant we found, reported that it was "as cold as Greenland," had very thin partitions and floors and there was a man upstairs with a five years' lease who snored so loudly he knocked the very plaster off the walls. Fourth place: an upper flat, reached by a long, dark and narrow pair of stairs; no windows to speak of in it; did not seem to have been papered for fifteen years at least; bore a generally "seedy" look, and the landlord never was known to make any "improvements." Fifth place: had the cellar in the attic and the wood-shed about a quarter of a mile off across an open space. Also, it "snowed" soot a great deal of the time there, from neighbouring chimneys, which would be a serious trouble on washday. We visited six more places, the "drawbacks" in which ranged from a defective flue to an upstairs neighbor with seven small, noisy and dirty children. The last place of all was the best—a charming abode on avenue—but, alas! there was one bedroom less than we could possibly do with,

and, besides that, the hard hearted landlord wouldn't take less than \$300 rent, whereas we were limited to \$250. So our search ended. We reached home weary and wan, and at a family caucus in the evening unanimously voted to stay where we were and "rather bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of." Such in brief was my house-hunting experience of this year. SALLY LUNN.

THE LANDLORD'S SIDE OF IT.

He Only Had One House But it Kept Him Pretty Busy.

When the B-'s gave notice a year ago that they intended to vacate my house on May 1st, 1891, I made no effort to re-let it, and during the time it remained vacant I added the thousand and one contrivances known as "modern improvements." But now the 1st of Feb. had come again, all too soon, and I groaned in spirit, thinking of the inevitable trials which accompany the invasion of house hunters.

I thought I knew the characteristics of every one of them, from long and bitter experience, but it has been my privilege to meet with several new types during the last two months.

Feeling that my business would suffer irremediably, were I to leave my office in accordance with every applicant's desire to "see the premises," I determined to put each new comer through a rigorous examination, and give my time and attention to those whose ideas on rent, etc., coincided entirely with my own.

The next day when a tall graceful woman with a sweet face, opened my office door, and said inquiringly, "Mr. McQuire?" I felt in my bones that "that very desirable residence" I owed the pleasure of this visit. As usual, I was right.

My list of questions drew forth such satisfactory responses, that I walked up town with Mrs. D.—and unlocked the doors of "No 20."

"Electric bells" she remarked in an appreciative tone. A ray of hope that she might take in the painful necessity of dreary interviews ad infinitum, filled my breast and shed a pleasant glow upon my eulogistic remarks as to the advantages the house offered. Although it had remained empty a year, the accumulation of dust failed to shock Mrs. D.—The drawing-room took her fancy, and a passing glance sufficed to assure her of the suitability of the kitchen.

I reflected, "she's sure to be all for show," and I trembled. That species of house-keeper rarely leaves a house in the spotless order in which she finds it; but anything to escape the hordes of women I foresaw looming upon the horizon.

We had travelled from attic to cellar and again returned to the parlor. "If I could only persuade Jim to move," she began, when I interrupted her with withering sarcasm:

"Don't you mean to move, Madam?" "No," she replied quickly, quite unabashed, "Not this year. We can't afford it."

She looked quite sad, and it is more than probable that I looked quite mad. If I didn't I am one of those who can hide their strongest feelings. I couldn't speak—didn't dare to. I opened the door and she went out.

When the wife of my bosom enquired with a bland smile that evening if the house was taken, I must have uttered the simple negative in a novel fashion, for she smiled more sweetly than ever, and with added suavely murmured, "As Carlyle says it's such a comfort to be born a person of sense, even with the temper of a rat trap." I must just remark here, in passing, that I can't see that her quotation was remarkably apropos.

From that day forth the first question I put to applicants was, "Do you mean to move this year?" It was certainly a most awkward question for the old ladies known as "permanent boarders" and whose only recreation was house-hunting. They invariably "went away sorrowful"—that is when they told the truth.

Mrs. McR. dropped in one day with her ally Mrs. T. I had been expecting Mrs. McR., for during the 18 years of her married life she had made an honorable record of 23 moves, and naturally, eligible houses were becoming scarce. My turn had come at last. She assured me that she intended to move and had given notice, and not a house could she find to suit. Wouldn't I give her half an hour? It was only two o'clock I said to young Timson, my clerk, "I will be back about five," and joined the ladies.

We opened the outside door, but the inside lock worked badly. I twisted and tugged at the key, but the door wouldn't open. I heard Mrs. T. give an apprehensive cough and Mrs. McR.—respond with a sniff. I felt certain they were shaking their heads sorrowfully. I saw I was not using the latch key but my office key. I rectified my little mistake and we went in. Mrs. T.'s sharp eyes spied the dust and remarked confidentially to Mrs. McR.—"I never did have much opinion of Mary V.—'s house-keeping." I felt it incumbent upon me to clear Mrs. V.—'s character, and spoke of all I had done in way of improvements. "Nice room this," ejaculated Mrs. McR.—Mrs. T.—preserved a non-committal silence, seemingly she was not enraptured.

"and I can't say I admire the mantel. I don't like the looking glass" (I was not surprised. Neither did Queen Elizabeth when she was as old as Mrs. T.)

"Why, Madam?" I objected, "it is the newest pattern."

"There ain't no necessity for sticking looking glasses in your fire-places. If your bonnet's crooked they may be handy, but the bed room is the place for mirrors and for bonnets too."

"No, Sarah, I don't agree with you on that point. I must say I love a bit of looking-glass."

"I felt I had the majority with me, and quite elated, I led the way down stairs. "There's never a basement kitchen, surely?"

"Yes," I admitted meekly. The advantage of a mirror in the "setting-room" would, I was sure, be overbalanced by that of a dumb-waiter.

"I would never trust my china on one of them pesky waiters."

This was in such an emphatic and conclusive tone, that I felt we might as well part at once. They, however, seemed to enjoy my society, and roamed from one room to another in search of defects. They found little else. That wretched dumb-waiter headed the list, then came the darkness and dampness of the cellar, the limited amount of closet room, the gloominess of the low hall, the size of the front porch, the shape of the hall window, and the steepness of the back stairs. The want of an attic might have been overlooked, but with all these grievances Mrs. McR.—candidly admitted her disinclination to take the house.

"I never could bear the situation anyhow," Mrs. T.—whispered, as some balm for Mrs. McR.—'s disappointment. "Let's go and have a look at the M.'s house." We had just come out and I was locking the front door when a gentleman came rushing up the steps. "So glad to catch you—have been waiting at your office for over an hour. Can't you show me around now—an very busy, you see, very busy—Thanks" as I re-opened the doors. He darted ahead of me into the parlors, shot through them, and was in the sitting-room before I caught up to him. He made a rapid inventory of the room's merits and passed into the dining-room.

"Dumb waiter?" he remarked. I proceeded to demonstrate its methods. "Oh, yes! I see. Very ingenious. Infinitely preferable to the maids running in and out of the room. Yes, yes!" His nervous brown eyes glanced hastily around each room as we entered, and with few remarks I ventured, were invariably cut short by "Yes! ah! I see!"

He pulled out his watch. "Sorry, but I'm very busy in the office today—"Dunbar & Co., you know, but I'll send Mrs. Dunbar tomorrow," and he slammed the door after him.

Before Mrs. Dunbar appeared I had time for reflection, and the remembrance that I had not made one rational enquiry, led me to jot down a few leading questions on a slip of paper, to which I might refer should Mrs. D. like her lord and master, deprive me of my conversational powers.

When she entered I saw she was not a la steel trap. She was a very faded, nervous little woman, whose energy seemed to have departed long since.

"Mr. Dunbar wishes to move this spring madam?" was my first enquiry as I looked her a chair. "Yes," she assented, sinking limply into it. "Isn't it just too bad?"

This appeal for sympathy led me to make one of those neat speeches which have gained me the enviable reputation of being "quite a ladies' man." "You see I have only just got over the gripe and we have been boarding a few months since we moved from Boston. I couldn't keep house. We tried it for years there but I can't cook and didn't like it."

A wave of pity surged over me—for Mr. Dunbar. Young Simpson's shoulders were shaking convulsively as he crouched over the desk.

"Excuse me, madam, for one moment. Simpson run over to Terry's and see if he can let me have that today."

Simpson departed reluctantly and I referred to my questions.

No. 2.—What rent do you think of giving? I put this to her mildly. She "didn't know."

No. 3.—How many children, etc? "Tears filled her big blue eyes, and I shuddered. "Only seven" she sobbed. "Madam! Only seven," I remonstrated. "Yes, that's all. We've lost two. Little Annie died with gripe, and Willie died of scarlet fever. They were such sweet little things."

SPRING OPENING

LATEST LONDON, PARIS AND BERLIN FASHIONS IN

Black and Colored Cloth Jackets, Newmarket and Sac Coats.

Novelties in Fancy Style, Colored Jackets, all sizes, 30 to 44 inch Black Jackets.

French Novelties in three-quarter Cloth Capes, Lace and Jet, Lace and Ribbon Capes and Mantelettes.

Ladies out of Town ordering Mantles or Jackets for approval, will please state if Black or Colored is required, State limit in price, and send the following measurements: Bust, Waist, around Neck, length of Waist in the Back, and length of (under-arm) seam of Sleeve.

MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON.

should lay a hardwood floor in the hall, and hang the walls with a tapestry with some oldlandish name.

This was all so new to me that I let them go on, and deluded them into thinking me the most obliging landlord extant.

There was some discussion as to the treatment of the eilings and cornices, but "Margaret love" carried the day, voting for "a pale yellow centre varied with warmer tones."

"Every door in the house must needs be removed, a few enlarged; stained glass was absolutely necessary to their comfort in certain places, and they demanded a large bay window out in the sitting room."

When we were in the drawing-room, they talked a good deal about "lewy cans," and I wanted to ask my wife what they're like, but her talents lie in the way of sarcasm, so I am reserving that little point till I meet a milk man willing to impart information. He ought to know more about cans than anyone else.

But to resume— Never a word said she with regard to the cellar, the kitchen or the back yard, (probably her talents don't lie in that direction) but she showered her attention on the bedrooms, halls, and staircase—arranging a "symphony" for each in her "mind's eye."

Not till "Reginald, dear" had the audacity to demand a skylight cut in the large north room "for a studio" did I tell them "I saw they wished to turn the house inside out and upside down, and would sell cheap, but it would be quite out of the question to lease it to them under the terms they proposed."

Just as I was meditating the advisability of destroying the place with a bomb, my sorrowful eyes ended by the most lovable young couple I have ever had the happiness to meet. They had been boarding ever since their marriage, and to her girlish eyes every prospect was pleasing, and naturally, what pleased her pleased him.

Their tour round the place would, perhaps, have been more amusing to the average landlord than any of the preceding visitors, but to me it was most natural, for she was my only daughter.

JOSEPH McQUIRE.

NO HOUSE LIKE THE OLD ONE.

This Man Got Left in the One Sided and None of the Others Suited.

About six or seven months ago, Sara (that's my wife), and I kinder made up our (Sara's) minds to move, and in consequence had to undergo a series of experiences, which, being summarised would be about as follows: Enquiring of every one if they were like minded, and being in return advised of places that would just suit us. Some of them would and others wouldn't, some that would, our incomes wouldn't, and others that wouldn't we wouldn't too, for instance, the Rugby Cottage nigh unto a Mount called Pleasant, escaped our interior investigation, and we merely gave it a passing scrutiny, as we concluded that part of our income should go towards the maintenance of our family, but contiguous to this cottage was another, which, if it was re-shingled and repainted and fenced, wouldn't be too bad. Being informed the rent was \$180 which to my way of figuring means \$80 for the house and \$100 for "respectability," and the latter sum being in excess of the amount we lay by annually for this luxury, concluded to try elsewhere. Elsewhere is quite a place, Sara and I concluded to look separately for a place, and every place I looked Sara would go the next day and look too. My description of the various places always pleased Sara until she saw them herself; then I caught it for having such poor judgment about a house, locality and so on.

One place I enquired if they had rooms to let and for reply was asked if I had a family, to which I replied, what do you think I'd want a house for it I hadn't! At another a lady came to the door, apologizing for having to do so, remarking that this was the girl's day out, and she had so much on her hands. After scrutinizing those members I agreed with her, they were adorned with six or seven rings of more or less value, the girl was her daughter.

Another invited me in and gave as a reason for moving that she required more commodious quarters, and after inspecting the scantily filled rooms could not but sympathize with her. I'm after the same kind of quarters myself, the kind that don't take so many to form a dollar. Looked at Capt. Bradall's flat and reported to Sara, who happening to know it, was very angry because I had not taken it, so next day she called, but a counter-jumper had jumped at it in the meantime at an increase of ten pounds more than the captain was paying, which soothed Sara's injured feelings, owing to her recognition of the fact that the manipulator of the yard stick and tape line was no more able to pay the increased rent than we were; but respectability must be maintained at greater odds

even than the slight increases in rent. Sara's great on respectability. I sauntered along, keeping both eyes open for the first suitable house with "To Let;" and as my nearness became nearer, I mentally ejaculated "Eureka," as I thought what advantages this house afforded above all others so far.

The knocker or bell refusing to do duty, I applied my blackthorn to the portals of this, my expectant future home, made known my wants, invited inside, most conspicuous article an old English piano.

The absence of so much furniture I was informed was due to the fact that they were all piled away upstairs ready for a move, were going to "take in" boarders, was "awful" proud to think I was a boarder, never like to be "taken in;" however I put on my best behavior, which caused the lady to remark that as I was such a nice gentleman, she hoped I would take it, no doubt my behavior misled the lady, as there are many others who think themselves that, that would be astonished to know the estimation in which they are held by some. However, being informed the amount of rent required to inhabit this house, I immediately got a divorce—cause—incompatibility of pocket.

Another house visited, was advised not to take it, as the next door neighbor had a full view of their back yard, and lost no time retailing the results of their observations. And so Sara is out there a good deal, was going to pay the lady for advice. Sara has been doing so much running around after houses, that she is now nursing herself back to health with the wonderful cure-alls so extensively advertised. Her experiences amounted to this, at one house she was told to call Thursday, at another, you can't see this house today; no house escaped her scrutiny (regardless of rents) except those placarded "diphtheria" or "scarlet fever," and every house she visited possessed advantages that none of the others could boast. She only saw one house that the occupants would admit were afflicted with insects, and in that one the lady said that as Charley had so little exercise during the day, he everlastingly slaughtered the cock-roaches on the kitchen table floor and walls every night.

Although no placard decorated the windows of our house, yet dozens called to see it was to let. After becoming footsore and weary we read the "ads." in the papers, and could pick out any number that would suit but for something, viz., not enough room, too much room, no playground for the children, too high rent, poor locality, over a rum shop, too near the "Salvation Army," too far from anywhere, wouldn't live on a ground flat, no accommodations. So after exhausting ourselves physically, and reading more to let than we ever will again, we concluded that if the landlord would make certain improvements we would remain in the domicile now occupied by us, and as we are all alone, and not far from my place of business, and pretty centrally located, and healthy for the children, and beautiful place in the summer, and better satisfied than ever, we do not think we could better ourselves.

PAUL MUGGINS.

NO FRONT "ENTRANCE."

But There Were A Number of Other Interesting Features.

I have visited many places in the city and met with many curious incidents, but, the one which I am about to mention, takes the cake in my estimation. I saw flat to let in a very respectable looking house with a shop. I went in and asked the lady tending the shop if I could see the flat. She told me I could, so I went up stairs and the tenant came to the door; she told me to come in; she showed me the parlor, it was not too bad, then we went to the kitchen. She said, we have a fine view out of those windows, the owner of the house having moved a back kitchen, up against this part of the house, so if you wish to see the pleasant view we have please step up on a chair and you may see the blue water and perchance to see a musk rat now and then sailing down; that was about all I wanted to see on that side of the house. Now, the opposite side of the house was to rent also. I went to look at it. I was met at the door by four or five women, and they all said, come in, come in, come in; I did go in, but was glad when I got out; the parlor, as usual, was not too bad, only it was used for a parlor, sitting-room, and all combined. She showed me the kitchen and begged me to take notice the many leaks in the ceiling, there was also a lamp hanging in the centre of the ceiling, and also some fragments of blinds on the windows; the woman said it was of no use fixing this part of the house up, as when the rain came in it fixed things up in great style. I asked the question, was their any Yankee settlers in this establishment? She answered me very politely, no; but we have slathers of bed-

bugs and rats to numerous to count; they would jump up on the table and deliberately walk off with the bread; the landlady also came up with me, and the woman of the house closed the door in her face and told her it was of no use coming up here wearing out her shoe leather to show this flat, as she could do it, and, Mr. Editor, she did it to perfection. I have almost given up the idea of house hunting any more, as I have a terror of rats and bed-bugs, and so far have had such a bitter experience. I have almost forgot to tell you that their is no front interence, that is the word she used.

NO CHILDREN OR DOGS.

Where the Landlady of a Desirable House Drew the Line.

I will take a family containing eight, father, mother and six children. Now, for a family of that size you want quite a large house, containing about eight or nine rooms. Well the house this family are living in don't suit them at all, the rooms are small and they haven't folding doors in their parlors. These folks moved in about May and don't want to stay any longer if they can help themselves.

Now they think they will start house hunting, but first they look in the daily papers to see what places are to let, and to give them an idea where to start first.

So they start on their journey and oh! how they dread it. So they come to a house with to let up in the window, and they go to the door and inquire and the people living in the house take them through, and then ask the ladies how much the rent is, and they nearly drop when they hear it; it is high (well anyway rents are high this year) the folks like this house very much too, and think it would just suit their family, but the rent is so high, so they leave there and when they get outside of the door they commence talking about the house they have just seen. One will say that it is a lovely house inside and such lovely clothes-presses, and a lovely large hall to put a hall stove in, and the bedrooms are so nice and airy and there are folding doors in the parlors, just what we want and everything on the one flat, no up and down stairs to it like the house we are living in now. But oh! think of the rent, well, anyway, I will ask my husband about it when I go home. So this is the way they talk till they come to another house with to let up; they go in this house and go through, but this don't suit them at all. The house is old-fashioned, the ceilings are bad, and anyway they don't care much for the street the house is on, but anyway they ask the rent and it is just the amount they would like to pay but they didn't think the house was worth it.

So they leave there and come to another house that is to let, and they go to the door and the landlady comes, an old lady, and looks as if she was cross enough to bite the head off of you any time, but she takes the ladies in and shows them around, but before they get through the landlady asks the ladies if they have any children or dogs, and of course they say yes, for they have children anyhow, and then the landlady said that she didn't want either children or dogs around her place. The ladies go away, but they did not ask the rent, as children were not welcome, and they said between themselves that they would not live in a place with such a landlady around, if they never got a house to suit them.

So they think they will make for home now, as it is near tea time and then start out again tomorrow. When they get home they have to tell the whole family their story and what they did see and what they didn't see. So that night when they are asleep they dream of house hunting and fight with some cross old landlady. When tomorrow comes they think that they will start in a different direction from what they did the day before, but when they come to think they don't want to give their husbands too long a walk to their work, or their children a long walk to school.

But anyway they start again and when they come to a house that is to let, they go in and are taken through and they think it is a very nice little house, and like the inside of it very much, so they come to the kitchen, but all of a sudden they stop for two big rats just run across the floor in front of them, and the ladies shriek and nearly faint with fright.

They give up that house and they come to another, but this doesn't suit them. For there are three or more families living in the house, and besides the hall is very small,—no place to put a hall stove in winter, and this they want if nothing more. They go home with no success, and they keep up this house hunting business, which they dread, for a week, and maybe longer, and at last get a house; but still there is some fault—the rooms are small, but they thought they could make them do, as they were sick and tired of house hunting, and the boss of the house, I mean the husband, would not pay a high rent.

S. F. E.