CEMENT FLOORS.

How Long They Last and What They Cost. How to Lay Them.

A correspondent who has tested cement floors writes about them as follows in a communication to Burnt New Yorker:

The first cement floor I ever laid was in my dwelling house cellar 22 years ago last fall. It is as solid and good to day as ever. Farmers generally wish to know the cost first. As nearly as I can figure, the money outlay for material does not exceed 2½ cents per square foot.

Fresh Akron cement and good coarse gravel are mixed in the proportions of one part cement to 5½ parts gravel. The cement must be as high and, say about one-fifth, in the gravel so that when mixed with the cement it will bind the whole together solid. Gravel as it is mostly dug from the pits will contain enough sand. Care must be taken that the sand is such that if sifted from the gravel it will make good plastering mortar and is not adulterated. This is a very important point. The gravel should not contain stones more than 1½ inches thick; 2½ the gravel and cement thoroughly dry, seven shovels gravel and two of cement. This is for coarse gravel not more than used with sand. More cement will be required for fine gravel. After getting a good pile well mixed dry, care must be taken that all the mixture is thoroughly wet into dry lumps and a soft the consistency of good plastering mortar which is ready to put on the lath. It will take two or three good hands to prepare and bring the cement to one man to lay it, according to the distance it has to be carried.

For a common house cellar or any other place not exposed to frost, if the soil is firm, all that is necessary is to grade it level, sloping a very little to one side to facilitate cleaning, taking care to fill all depressions with clay and tramp down solid. If the bottom is springy, it is better to lay some tile just low enough so that the tops will be level with the grading, taking care that they connect with drains. I use a good strong dishing shovel and a brick trowel to lay the cement. If there be any slope to the grading, begin at the upper side, lay down a good straight 2 by 4 scantling flatwise 10 inches from the wall and parallel with it; fill in this space between the wall and scantling with the wet cement and pound down solid with the back of the shovel, setting all the coarse gravel and stones well to the bottom of the layer. This forms the fine sand and cement to the top. Level with the shovel to the top of the scantling and then smooth off with the trowel. This makes the floor two inches thick. Now move the scantling another 20 inches and proceed as before, and so till the whole is laid. There will be no trouble about the cement staying in its place when moving the scantling if it is mixed right.

This cement sets quickly, but requires some time to thoroughly harden and is better to be covered with damp straw for some time after being laid, or in case of horse stable a cheap temporary board floor. One may then use it over. For a wagon house or grain barn fill in with a foot of cobblestones and then lay cement—one is then safe from frost, and there is no harbor for rats, skunks, mice, etc. If the farmers throughout the country would adopt this one improvement in farm buildings, the pecuniary gain, directly and indirectly, would be almost beyond computation.

PURITAN MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

Startling Ethic Tests Sometimes Selected For the Wedding Season.

A marriage in church was rare, writes Alice Morse Earle in The Ladies' Home Journal, in an article on "Courtship and Marriage in Puritan Days." Occasionally one took place in the new house of the young couple. This was held to be somewhat unlucky. Thanksgiving day was a favorite time to choose to be married, as friends were then gathered from afar.

The bride was universally advised to wear

> Something old, something new,
> Something borrowed, something blue,

and though she could dress before a mirror she must not look in the glass when once her toilet was completed, else ill luck, in vagary defined but positive form, were the result. Sunday was really the exhibition day for the bride. Indeed she found it meeting the sole place in which she could appear before an assembled public, and for this exhibition the happy pair donned their finest bridal attire. The bride and groom and bridal party spread the close by ponderously walking in a little procession through the narrow aisle to the meeting house on the Sabbath following the marriage.

In Larned's "History of Windham County, Conn.," we read a description of such an ancient wedding in Brooklyn, Conn. Further public notice was given to the bride by allowing her to circumvent the foot for the crowds gathered on the first Sunday of the reading out of the newly married couple. Much ingenuity was exercised in finding appropriate and sometimes startling Bible texts for these wedding sermons.

The instances are well known of the marriage of Parson Smith's two daughters, one of whom selected the text, "Mary hath chosen that good part," while the daughter Abby, who married John Adams, decided upon the text, "Abide rather neither calling nor thinking, and they say he hath a third."

Inconsiderate Treatment.

She had bought a "general admission," and before the first act was over she slipped down to a place near the front and seated herself. Two minutes later an usher came down, motioning a man. The man held the coupon to the man she occupied, and the usher told her to. That she gathered up her skirts angrily, picked up her parcel, which she had deposited against her neighbor's knee, wrathfully scrambled in front of the three people, and when she reached the aisle transferred the man with an angry glance and muttered audibly, "What check some people have!"—Chicago Times.

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