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Mr. Van Gamp's Goat

By CLARA C. HOLDES Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.

R. VAN GAMP is pardonable for buying the Babbits' stated Victoria, Mr. Van Gamp's unsophisticated sister. Expected to com-

ment, I replied:

Your brother has

the reputation of being an expert tradeshe bought the goal to trade." -

"Van does trade farm stock, but he didn't buy the goat to trade, persisted Victoria:

As I saw no logical reason why a shrewd tradesman should buy goat for the mere sake of owning a goat, I made no answer. Victoria continued:

"It's like this. Miss Leonard: Van was brought up from childhood deprived of playthings. Our neighbors, the Hubbards, were well-todo; their boys had everything—bicycles, guns, pigeons and goats. Our boys only had garden tools and a wheelbarrow. Van used to run away and stay in the pasture with the Hubbard goats. It's only a childish whim of Van's now to have a goat of his own."

"The Babbit girls told me a woeful story about Rags. Last Monday afternoon he chewed off his tether rope and then went to the clothesline and chewed up the week's wash."

"I'll have Van keep Rags in the barnyard," vowed. Victoria. "I'll

have him fix the fence. Van did; he worked hours adding an extra top-rail. With evil eyes the goat stood watching, ready to butt viciously whenever Van ventured inside.

Although he built a corral, Mr. Van Gamp had no intention of keeping Rags in it. A summer boarder at Van Gamps', I assumed a neutral attitude in their family differences. Therefore, when Van let the goat out back of the barn, bravely harnessing him into a goat-cart to go driving around Rockhill, I knew all about the affair, while Victoria, who puritanically would not tolerate any such tomfoolery, did not know.

The first house across Meadowbrook bridge is Van Gamps'. Behind this house rises a round-topped hill, abounding in boulders, the rocky pasture sloping to Meadowbrook pond. Hitherward, to the pond, this Saturday morning, in my bathing suit, went I; and hitherwardriding in his iron goat-cart to Rockhill, went Mr. Van Gamp. I barely had time to gather my important manuscript papers and scramble out of the way to avoid being run over. With momentum the goat speeded down and out into the Bottomless Pit, where the iron cart forthwith sank...

Solicitously I looked down into the still, deep water, but I saw nobody, nothing. In my bathing suit I went up into the pasture. When I shouted. only mournful rock echoes came mockingly back to me. At last I scudded home.

Victoria was in the kitchen, mak-

ing ples.
"Where is Mr. Van Gamp?" inquired I. "I s'pose he's in the meadow lot

planting potatoes." "Well, he's had a runaway." "That sorrel mare again," fumed

Victoria. "I've advised Van to trade off that nervous mare. She ran away from me one day, leaving me at the postoffice to walk home. Didn't you see Van?" "No, but his team dashed down

into the pond." Victoria continued to make pies.

"I wonder what could have happened to Mr. Van Gamp?" persisted "Well, I can't leave my pies very

well," declared Victoria dutifully, "but I'll telephone for men to help." Victoria went to the telephone while I returned to the dale of the disaster.

I found the goat chewing up my shoes and silk stockings which I had mindlessly left behind me.

Presently came Victoria's helppolicemen, coast guardsmen, men of the fire department, followed by the endless throng of week-end joy riders.

Needless to say, they found Mr. Van Gamp; they found him leaning bewildered against a boulder with a gash in his head. He supposed he

had been asleep 20 years. On Monday following, Van traded the goat with Billy Brown's father for a rooster.

"I didn't want pay; I gave Billy the goat," Van explained to me confidentially. "But Brown offered a rooster I'd been wanting. That's how we happened to swap."

Deprecate and Depreciate

To deprecate means to express regret or to plead against; depreciate means to lessen in price or estimation. The other day, a banker said: "I deprecate all this talk of a strike in the cotton trade; it only tends to depreciate the value of cotton shares."

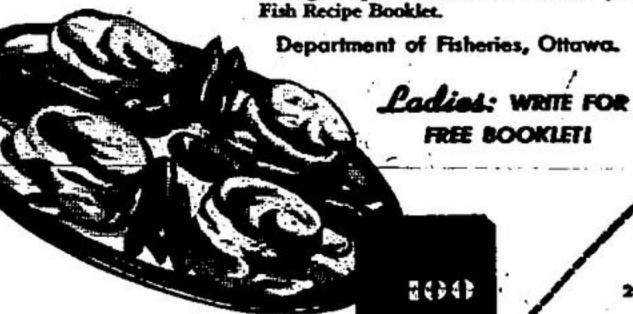
Rabbits Very Small at Birth Eyes of young rabbits open on about the eleventh day. On the seventeenth day they are usually. away from the nest. Little rabbits weigh about an ounce and a half at birth. By the time they are 36 days old, they weigh a pound



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