

Florida's Curious "Garden of Eden" Still Waiting for Eve



The Open-Air "Music Room" of the Strange Florida City, "Garden of Eden," Built of Huge Chunks of Limestone. The Ponderous Monolith With a Crescent Top, Seen in the Background, Weighs More than 50,000 Pounds.

Edward Leedskalnins, the Creator of the Rocky "Garden of Eden," Sitting in a Limestone Chair That Weighs a Ton, and Which, He Hopes, Will Some Day Hold His Intended Bride, Who Lives in Latvia.



Mr. Leedskalnins in a Corner of His Odd Garden. The Crude Stone Chairs in the Foreground Are Arranged About a Rock Table That Is Cut in the Shape of the State of Florida.

It was about 15 years ago that Edward Leedskalnins arrived in Florida City, Florida, to begin building one of the strangest abodes that a man ever put up. At first his neighbors couldn't make out what he was doing with all the ponderous blocks of limestone he was hewing into circles, crescents and stars. But in time the explanation was forthcoming from Mr. Leedskalnins himself.

He was, he said, an engineer by profession and had left behind him, in Latvia, a girl whom he hoped to make his wife, although he had been unable to induce her to come to America with him. Some day she would see the light and then there would be a wedding and he would be the happiest man in Florida.

All those stones, said Mr. Leedskalnins, were furnishings and decorations for a sort of Garden of Eden which he

was building against the day of his bride-to-be's coming. It was slow work, of course, but it would keep his mind and his hands occupied and when his love did come to him she would find a home the like of which could not be found anywhere else in the wide world.

If the "Eve" for which this strange Garden of Eden is intended ever does arrive—she hasn't yet—she certainly will be greeted by a residence that is unique, as the photographs on this page show. Much of the man-made Paradise is taken up by a spacious patio with a floor of great blocks of limestone. Scattered about this place, shaded by a few tropical trees, are dozens of limestone chairs and divans, some of which weigh several tons.

In one corner of the patio is a gargantuan table hewn in the shape of the State of Florida and surrounded by stone chairs for a dozen people. Hol-

lowed out of the upper surface of the table, and in just the spot that it should be, is a deep depression which represents Lake Okeechobee. This is usually filled with water, but its creator says that it would make a perfect punch bowl.

One wall of the patio is a gigantic monolith, a solid block of stone weighing 50,000 pounds. It is topped by a big crescent and, of course, represents the moon. Opposite this is another 50,000-pound monolith bearing a star. From moon to star a radio aerial is strung and Mr. Leedskalnins has the notion that the broadcast music picked up on that aerial is drawn from the heavens.

Close by the rocky representation of the State of Florida are a circular divan and a circular fish pool. The divan, which looks none too comfortable, is large enough to accommodate four people and it is so balanced that it can be ro-

tated so that anyone reclining on the stone can keep in the sun, or the shade, as whimsey dictates.

The fish pool is quite as ingenious. It has a coping around it just the proper height for brides or guests to rest their elbows on and watch the fish disport themselves. In the center of the fountain is a star-shaped chunk of limestone through which the water spouts geyser-like. Beside the pool is a crescent chair so designed, according

to its maker, that it invites relaxation and is as comfortable as a chair with a down-filled back.

There are people in Florida City who do not agree with Mr. Leedskalnins' notion of what constitutes a comfortable and attractive Garden of Eden, but they know him for a highly individualistic and imaginative fellow and grant him the right to go as far as he likes with his earthly Paradise. And they do think it will be a shame if the young woman for whom he has done a prodigious amount of work forgets to come over and play Eve among the odd assortment of Stone Age furniture.

Mr. Leedskalnins hasn't overlooked a thing in his stony establishment. He has a huge chair, cut from a solid block of stone, which he calls Repentance Corner. "Some day," he says, "my bride will be cross and sulky. Well, I'll just bring her to this corner and she can stay here in the warm sun-

shine alone with her thoughts until she is happy again."

He knows the feminine mind well enough to assume that his wife (if any) will sometimes want to gossip, so he has installed another chair or two in what he calls Gossip Corner.

And last, but not least, the Garden of Eden's bath is a model of primitive comfort and convenience. It is cut from a solid block of stone and is filled with soft rain water, which is warmed by the vitalizing rays of the sun.

Edward Leedskalnins is the sort of fellow in whom hope springs eternal. He believes that his onetime fiancée will show up, some of these days, and will keep on the building job until she does. He doesn't explain exactly how he handles some of the big stones alone, but tells the curious that he uses the same principles that the builders of Ancient Egypt did when they put up the pyramids.

A Real Live "Boogey Man"



Whenever the Primitive Blacks of the Hausa Tribe, in the African Sudan, Put on a Ceremonial, This Monstrous Outfit (Which Has a Medicine Man Inside of It) Plays the Role of an Animated "Boogey Man" to Scare Off Evil Spirits.

FEW white men have seen the primitive ceremonials of the Hausa tribesmen who inhabit the jungles of West Africa. But the few who have say that a prominent figure in the wild dances is an elongated and evil-looking fellow who, to all intents and purposes, is a "boogey man." The photograph at the left is one of the few ever taken of this man-made half-god who is to be found among the "props" of every Hausan village.

The African "boogey man" is half scarecrow and half human. His legs belong to a tribal dancer who assists the medicine men. The dancer holds on to a pole inside, on which rests the queer figure's stuffed head, and he peeks out through two slits cut in the folds of the figure's jacket.

So far as explorers have been able to find out, such caricatures have been a part of a Hausan ritual for centuries and the "boogey man's" chief job is to scare away any evil spirits that might come around to make trouble in that section of the Dark Continent.

Strange sounds accompany the figure's antics whether the occasion is a feast celebrating a successful hunt or the sombre ceremonies that are staged at the passing of a chieftain. These sounds, of course, come from the mouth of the native concealed beneath the clothes of the "boogey man," but in the superstitious ears of the men, women and children of the village they are not human noises. The growls and wails and shrieks are the warnings of a tribal spirit to those invisible shades of evil that bring disease, pestilence, famine and death in their wake.

Happily for the medicine men who manipulate the "boogey man" and who invest him with supposedly supernatural powers, they never have to take the blame when an evil spirit or two declines to be sent on its way.

If no trouble befalls the village, then the "boogey man" gets the credit and his prestige is enhanced—and when misfortune does descend on the settlement then the semi-god with the fearsome face is angry because he had not been shown the proper respect and is reprimanding those who were thoughtless enough to arouse his wrath.

In such cases some poor native who is unpopular with the tribal priests has to take the rap, so to speak. Sometimes he is driven from the village and sent out into the jungle to shift for himself. Sometimes he is publicly flayed to cleanse him of his alleged sin and, in rare cases, he is tortured and dispatched to whatever gods there be.

This is an inhuman form of jungle justice but so long as the West African medicine men are in power, their "boogey man" just can't be wrong.



"Beauty and the Beast," Said the Judges of the First Annual Dog Show, Recently Held on the Beach at Venice, California. When Pretty Billie Yuill Posed With "Steve," a Thoroughbred English Bulldog. It Should Be Explained, However, That "Steve," Despite His Undershot Jaw, His Wide Stance and His Plug-Ugly Expression, Is an Exceptionally Good-Natured Fellow, and That He Waddled Away With the First-Prize Cup Acclaiming Him Not Only the Best Bulldog Present, but the No. 1 Dog of the Show.

Skunks and Mice Help Science

MOST people have no use at all for the smelly skunk and the marauding mouse. In their minds these animals are worse than useless creatures that the world would be better off without. But the scientists of Uncle Sam's Department of Agriculture, in their never-ending search for ways of keeping down and, if possible, annihilating destructive insect pests, have found that skunks and mice can be conscripted to help rid the world of "critters" much less desirable than themselves.

This interesting discovery was made by government entomologists in their war against the pestiferous Japanese beetle which has eaten millions of dollars' worth of crops since it, in some way, found its way to this country.

Among the enemies of the beetle certain species of mice and skunks were found to be most active in gobbling up the grubs of the beetle. Mice

lost loose in gardens and orchards overrun with the grubs made short work of them, swallowing them half a dozen at a time where they were thickly distributed. The scientists thus got the idea that one way to clean up an area infested with Japanese beetles is to put a hungry lot of mice on the job.

Skunks, they learned in the course of their researches, are relentless hunters of white grubs and their taste runs especially to the grubs of the Japanese beetle. A good hungry skunk will spend the better part of a day rooting diligently in the ground for one of his favorite delicacies and, in several hours of rustling will consume many scores of the pests.

The scientists are a little leery about using mice to fight the beetles, because the rodents themselves are likely to become pests, but the skunk is a harmless fellow and may prove a valuable ally in the war against the insect enemies.

Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Snake?

LONDON.

THE "bobbies" in Bond Street had quite a time of it the other day keeping the street in front of a department store window clear of traffic. One of them pushed through the crowd collected before the window to find out what was so interesting and saw a comely young model wrapped from neck to heel in the mottled fabric of a snake skin. Scattered about her were handbags, shoes, pocketbooks and a dozen other articles of commerce all fashioned of the hides of serpents.

The spectators understood, of course, that the young woman's function was to boom business for things made of snakeskin, but they likewise knew that her gown was one of the most remarkable reptilian pelts that ever had been seen in the British capital, or anywhere else. The skin was beautifully marked with a repeated and intricate design that Mother Nature reserves for the bigger pythons and a placard explained that the rare outfit that the good-looking model was wearing was, before the tanners cured it, the complexion of a whopping python 25 feet long.

Beside the placard was a large photograph of the snake taken a few minutes after it had been shot down from a tree in the jungles of Indo-China. The monster was still alive and no less than 25 uneasy natives were gripping the hawser-like body to extend it to its full length for the cameraman. A white hunter, in a helmet, held an automatic pistol at the evil-looking head of the reptile ready to administer the "coup de grace."

More than a few of the curious on-lookers voiced the fear that most people feel for anything reptilian, and pythons in particular, and they remarked that it would make them uncomfortable just to have the brute's skin wrapped about them. But the pretty young woman wasn't afraid of the big, bad snake skin and she did look extremely fetching in her one-piece outfit that looked like a modish and form-fitting evening gown.

Few of the prospective customers who blocked traffic to gaze upon this unusual advertising display had any idea what the pelt that encircled the girl was worth. If any of them had developed a desire to buy the skin they would have been told that the hide was worth more than \$1,500 and that it would, some day, be worth much more than that in the form of shoes, handbags, umbrella handles and what not.

During the past ten years, and since the snake-skin vogue became popular, the python and several of his serpentine relatives have been headed for extinction because it has been so profitable for hunters to stalk them.



This Good-Looking English Girl Is Wrapped in the Skin of a 25-Foot Python. But She's Not Afraid of the Big, Bad Snake Since the Tanning Factory Made Him Into Raw Material for Shoes and Handbags.