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"For a Man's House Is His Castle" - Making the House Liveable

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Many women spend days planning and selecting their decor and are much gratified when they receive the commendation of their friends. How much more important and lasting are the results from time and study spent upon securing a comfortable and beautiful home.

Let us regard our furnishings as the pigments with which we can make a picture upon the background of ceiling, walls and floors. The background seems the logical first consideration, walls with a floor and ceiling. Let these all be unobtrusive and more or less neutral. The floors darkest, walls medium and ceiling lightest in color. The color chosen depends upon the "exposure" of the rooms, north rooms requiring warm colors, south cold and sunfast, east or west depending more upon personal taste. Have harmony in color: if the doors and woodwork of your rooms are stained your scheme must be darker than when painted woodwork is in use.

One general principle applies in all cases, avoid shiny surfaces, except in kitchen and bathrooms where they may be accepted as an aid to cleanliness.

The doors are a part of the wall surface and the windows are often landscapes far more beautiful than those we aspire to purchase "some day" to hang upon our walls. Art holds the mirror up to nature so do not shut out your glimpse of ever changing branch tracery against blue skies by using ugly stiff "shades" pulled religiously to the center rail of the double hung windows. Have the shades by all means to use when sunlight is too glaring or when privacy is desired, but use your windows as pictures, your draperies as frames to soften the transition from solid walls to landscape.

Do not have walls or rugs conspicuously gay or they will no longer remain in the background. If walls are plain use rugs with a pattern and the reverse is also advisable.

When the rooms are arranged with large openings between hall, living room and dining room, do not treat each as a separate unit, but consider the whole as a living room and treat the walls in the same manner throughout. If the walls are of sand finished plaster use flat paint. If they are smooth, hard finish, use Japanese grass cloth or wall paper all over or hung in panels. Ceilings should not be white but a light shade of the wall color.

Nothing runs a more varied course than our floor coverings; from the lowly rag carpet of colonial days to the sophistication of oriental. Each has its place, only choose wisely. Use the braided Navajo in the porch, the velvet, oriental or Anglo-Persian in the living rooms and the braided or woven rag rugs will help connect them with the old four-poster in the guest room.

Happy the household which has inherited fine old furniture or even old furniture which is not so fine, as much may be done by renovation. Even the ornate golden oak may have the ornaments and gesso varnish removed and be stained and refinished until it becomes a fit associate for its peers. If you do not have heirlooms, buy some. Do not allow yourself to be talked into buying a "set" for each room but look at each piece before purchasing as something which you expect to live with for many years and then hand down to your descendants.

Fortunately we have emerged from the era of golden oak, composition ornament, flowered carpets and what-nots, into a day when the manufacturers have felt the demand for the well made reproduction of fine old furniture. Everyone may decide as to the relative merits, and the fitness for its place in his house, of Shearton, Jaseobian, Queen Anne or Italian and feel moderately certain of finding the furniture required in the chosen style. Not all in the same shop perhaps, but patience, perseverance and a bank account will accomplish all things. Good furniture is always good, age only adds to its beauty.

Have a furniture fund in your family or buy it for anniversaries presents each year—something of real worth; a nest of tables, a winged chair, a tapestry or picture. Study your house and your friend's houses and learn by their experience. Study and change until the effect desired is reached and you have the "harmonious whole." The so much discussed Whistler once said, "a finished thing is to use a dead thing. There is no longer any urge to interest myself."

The livability of a room depends largely upon the manner in which the furniture is placed and the relation of the pieces to each other and to the needs of the family. In arranging your rooms it is a good plan to have bits of furniture in which the effect is to separate and the relation of the double hung windows. Have the shade by all means to use when sunlight is too glaring or when privacy is desired, but use your windows as pictures, your draperies as frames to soften the transition from solid walls to landscape.

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flowers or leaves and berries. Good vases of pottery and lustre or brass or copper—bowls have a decorative value when placed on table mantle or bookcase, with or without flowers, and a colorful glass bowl with flanking candlesticks of glass, wood, or brass, holding brilliant candles would turn many a dull spot into a place of beauty.

Do not be afraid of color when used in small amounts; as accents it cannot be too brilliant. Whatever your color scheme may be follow it consistently with an eye to contrast as well as to harmony. Rooms are often far too neutral in tone. Lamps placed where light is needed add so much to comfort and happiness of effect that we wonder why we have tolerated the fixture with unshaded lights hanging from the center of the room so long. Have numerous base receptacles and floor outlets in your rooms, put one wherever you think a light might be needed; they may all be attached to the switch at the entrance door if thought desirable or turned on separately as needed.Lovely lamps may be made from pottery or metal jars from candlesticks fitted with modern bulbs instead of candles or they may be found in infinite variety in the shops. Sidelights which look like old colonial lamps or double brackets, with or without candles, of wrought iron, silver or brass, or with very fine overhead lights in dining rooms, narrow halls, kitchen, pantry and entrance halls for convenience. In bed rooms have a light dropped just in front of the bureau and the dressing table finished with shades of silk to match the draperies, one of these should be connected to the switch at the entrance door. These two lights with a base receptacle for a reading lamp at bedside would be sufficient for most bedrooms. A bracket light, with long chain on pull socket, placed over the head of the bed, on sleeping porch or in bed rooms, solves the reading light problem where wall space is limited. Japanese lanterns of varnished cloth make very good fixtures for certain rooms. Mirrors carefully placed have a decorative value and will increase the light when hung in rooms with north windows or with windows under arch. Two bracket lights with oriental and Italian mirrors are ideal for hanging over fireplaces, or in small rooms they seem to add space.

The ideal house is the small one with large rooms. A so-called family rooms have a partition removed so as to have at least one room of good size. A room irregular in shape will often furnish more interestingly than a rectangular one of the same area.

Remember, when furnishing, that Rome is not the only worth-while thing which has needed many days for building. And always never feel discouraged on account of small means. Ingenuity will make a much more livable house than money spent without thought.

The Economics of Consumption
By JOHN E. BRINDLEY, Professor and Head of Economic Science

In THE brief space and time at his disposal, the writer can do little more than state a few of the most important problems connected with a subject of such magnitude and complexity as the Economics of Consumption. In its relation to fundamental economic theories of production, distribution, and exchange; in its vital connection with almost numberless special economic and social problems; in its bearing upon living conditions, standards of living and family budgets, poverty, unemployment and crime, immigration and tariff legislation, as a practical science, and in its dependence upon numerous technical studies of food, clothing and other utilities that minister directly to the wants of man—consumption is at once the tangible bond and motive force of the present economic order. Man, as a consumer of economic goods and services—and we all must be consumers—is the end and aim of all the economic activity involved in the production, distribution and exchange of wealth. On the ancient theory, however, the ancient doctrine that first shall be last served, consumption has received scant attention aside from its general recognition as one of the classical divisions of economic science. With the rapid growth of colleges of home economics for the scientific study of the highly technical aspects of the problem, a more complete development of Economics of Consumption is certain to follow.

First of all the reader should have a clear idea of the meaning of consumption of one of the principal divisions of economic science. Consumption is the use of economic goods or services in the direct satisfaction of human wants. So-called productive consumption is therefore not consumption at all but depreciation which is an important technical aspect of the subject of production itself. To the retailer, food, clothing and the winner's supply of coal are production goods, not consumption goods. As a creator of place and time utilities, the retailer is a producer, performing as he does the last step in the frequently long process of production. To the consumer, food, clothing, and the winter's supply of coal are consumption goods, and should be so treated in a study of consumption as contrasted with production. Consumption is therefore a point of view—the point of view of the consumer in the direct satisfaction of his wants.

A second fact, which should be stated in this connection is the value of consumption goods in the United States and the relative increase per capita of this class of goods. King, in his very scholarly work on "Wealth and Income of The People of The United States" estimates that the total value of consumption goods increased from $2,317,000,000 in 1850 to $22,976,000,000 in 1910, a per capita increase during the same period from $72.00 to $284.00. While the figures are not given, it may reasonably be assumed that, measured in dollars at least, the total and per capita increase since 1910 has been very great. Two points stand out in these data as especially significant: first, the vast magnitude of the problem of consumption, quantitatively expressed; and the fact that, contrary to the economic pessimism of Malthus, the supply of consumption goods has increased much more rapidly than the population. When we take into consideration the fact that production goods have increased far more rapidly still, we can form some idea of the rapid progress of economic science. From the point of view both of living conditions and capital goods—the result of the industrial revolution based upon the unparalleled advance in pure and applied science.

In the third place, standards of living, family budgets and closely allied problems should always be treated with the same accurate and scientific manner than has been done in the past. Such works as Comish, "The Standard of Living," and those of Professor Nystrom, "The Economics of Retailing," and Bulletin Number 7 of the Bureau of Applied Economics entitled "Standards of Living" represent good beginnings along this line. A so-called family budget, however, has real meaning only to the extent that it is based upon and properly related to highly technical studies and is not a mere quibble concerning the amount of money spent without thought.