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House Number - Making the Home a Family Center

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HOUSE NUMBER Making the Home a Family Center

By DOROTHY COOKE, H. Ec. '24

Coventry Patmore says of the home:

"For something that abode endued
With Temple-like repose: an air
Of life's kind purpose pursued
With ordered freedom, sweet and fair;
A tent, pitched in a world not right
It seemed, whose inmates, every one
On tranquil faces bore the light
Of duties beautifully done."

Does the average American home measure up to this sentiment so beautifully expressed? If not, why does it not, and how can it? The field of discussion of means of making the home a family center has not been much explored, altho the need has been felt. We shall consider, first, the need for such means and, second, some feasible methods of making it such.

Mothers and fathers all over the country are continually facing the tragedy of the fact that home seems to be merely a point of departure, a place where the children sleep, snatch a few bites of food, hurriedly change a costume, and rush off again. Altho they face this situation continually, parents seemingly never analyze the reason for it—nor would they dream that the fault might lie partially with them.

Why is it that "The Crowd" always goes to Mary's home in preference to Jane's? How common is the remark of the small boy, who, when invited over to his playmate's home, said, "No, let's stay here—it's funner at my house."

The rate at which homes are being broken up is appalling. Apparently one of the main reasons for this is that young people build for the present rather than the future and such a life is certain to be full of selfishness and resultant dissatisfaction. It should be worth while, then, to analyze some of the essential factors in making the home a family center.

The primary essential is a combination of qualities within the family. The first of these qualities is a love between father and mother that is real and abiding. Love is a very difficult thing to define, but Elizabeth Barrett Browning has given an almost perfect

picture of what real love should be when she wrote about her own love:

"How do I love thee? Let me count
the ways
I love thee to the depth and breadth
and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out
of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle
light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for
right
I love thee purely, as they turn from
praise."

Especially fine seems the thought of loving to the level of every day's most quiet need, for it is that every day, lasting love that the husband and wife will need to lean upon when the storms arise and monotony threatens the ship "Romance". If husband and wife love rightly and do not neglect to show it by word and deed, one can be reasonably certain that the same spirit of love will permeate the entire household—and who does not enjoy abiding where love is?

Another important quality that must find lodgment in the household is the spirit of cooperation. There must be a continual sharing of responsibility and household tasks. The wise mother begins giving little tasks to the children to perform while they are still very young. Tact must be employed so that the child will consider it a privilege to help, rather than a duty. Boys and girls should share alike in household duties. The father in the ideal home will feel responsible for his share of the home duties, altho they may be no more difficult than hanging his clothes in their proper place and turning down his bed covers to air. Members of the family must all feel that the home belongs to each one of them and is not singly, "Mother's Workshop". Cooperation may well take the form of punctuality at meals or of any similar little act which may lighten the burden of any other member of the family.

A third quality is unselfishness or thoughtfulness of others. Of utmost

importance are the little courtesies within the home that are too often in evidence only outside of its walls. Who more deserves them than those who do the most for the happiness of the family? The home is a training camp for life, and the conduct of the children there will determine their conduct in homes which they will form in the future.

Unselfishness embraces the physical and social phases of family life. A keen awareness of the sacredness of personality should exist within every home and if mother has a rest period or retires to her room, her privacy must not be infringed upon. The same is true with each family member—there should be always present a certain amount of reserve in the family relationships. If this is true, these qualities of love, cooperation and unselfishness will tend to give the family a feeling of unity and loyalty that will keep them constantly striving toward the goal of more complete satisfaction.

After the combination of qualities within the family, the next essential is care to provide attractive surroundings. The locality and environment chosen should be wholesome and should provide for the proper advantages. Attention should be given to the house and grounds.

The family with a moderate income is, of course, living within a budget, so the house must come within the allotted sum for shelter and it need not be pretentious. It should, however, be well built, neat looking and attractively painted. The inside should be arranged as conveniently as possible, providing a sleeping room for each child and the parents, or, if that is not possible, for each two children. The walls must be elastic, so that they will admit the children's friends and older guests, for genuine hospitality is one of the greatest means of drawing the family together.

Above all, have the house liveable. No child will enjoy coming to your home nor will the home folk enjoy remaining there if they live in constant fear of disturbing some chair or changing the position of a lamp. The furni-

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"Get an ideal, life becomes real."—
Spanish Proverb.

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AND
VOGUE
PATTERNS

—•••••—

to have French-like things. French people used more elaborate furniture and so American furniture copied from the French had more carving, more curves and graceful lines.

Not all of us can have a house full of our great, great-grandmother's lovely furniture, but we can have a piece or two, which will dignify our whole house and show to others that we do appreciate nice furniture.

Many a club girl has already rescued a lovely little table, or a day-bed, or a chair. Still there are many, many pieces hiding away for other club girls to find them and make them a part of her own room.

Mary Carolyn Davies has expressed the appreciation of little lovely things we may have from our great, great-grandmothers when she says:

"Furniture, pottery, pewter and brass, And a little gray home will come to pass,
A sink and a cook stove, windows, trees,
A little brave home is born of these. Calico covers on painted chairs;
A strip of carpet on curving stairs,
Glass and silver and iron and tin,
And a mat at the door that says 'Come in'."

Ingeniousness Brings Distinction Here

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great-grandmother. For the lamp she has made a parchment shade.

The oval walnut picture frame belonged to an aunt. For this, Nina found a picture of a lady with a quaint lace collar and a blue and old rose dress.

For a cover for the lovely old bed, Nina copied the quilt that belonged to her father. The design known as "Rob Peter to Pay Paul" was worked out in plain blue gingham and a print material of tiny blue figures on an old background. Two braided rag rugs of gray blue and red rose for the floor fit perfectly into the scheme. The curtains were made of soft, creamy ruffled voile.

Last, but not least, is an old discarded sugar bowl that serves as flower container. The picture speaks for itself. Any of us would be proud to own this room. It was no small piece of work to bring the room to pass, but ah! the joy!

What did it cost to rejuvenate this room? Eight dollars and fifty-nine cents is the small sum.

Nina, a small miss with golden hair and blue eyes, fits into the color scheme of gray, blue, old rose and apple green and fine old furniture with memories

of the past, good wood, lovely lines and substantial structure.

Not all girls have been as fortunate as Nina has in falling heir to furniture like this. Maybe you have odd pieces of soft wood. Many Iowa girls have had fascinating results with the paint pot and these odd pieces. Every girl wants a pretty room.

Making a House a Home

(Continued from page 1)

ture must be "boy-proof" and one should not have too much of that, for the furniture must not interfere with the activities of the home. One must remember that a kitchen is made for candy pulls, fireplaces were invented so that children might lie before them "stomach down" and pop corn and toast marshmallows over the glowing embers.

If parents would hark back to their own childhood days and enter into the spirit of child life around them, they would be rather surprised at the urgent requests which they would receive to become a part of young frolics. They would not be made to feel that their presence cast a damper on the fun. Their neighbors' children and their own might honestly prefer their company to anyone's.

Outside the house enough ground should be provided so that everything from a dog kennel to a tennis court may be built upon it. Many a boy has spent an unhappy childhood because he was denied pets and was not allowed to "clutter up the yard" with his loved equipment. Father and mother should enter into the play of their children. The child's heart swells with pride if father can jump higher than he can or can "whitewash" him in a game of tennis. It may take some sacrifice on the part of parents to keep physically fit in their sports of college days, but it will mean far more to them than a few dollars or cents added to the bank account, for it will mean health and happiness and gaining the complete confidence of the child. It will also provide easy means of teaching rules of sportsmanship that must apply to the entire game of life. Then, too, the children will consider father and mother with a new respect for they become "individuals" to them and not just parents in a relationship taken for granted.

The children should be encouraged in beautifying the lawn by planting flowers and shrubbery, building lattice work and bird houses so that they will take a personal interest in the appearance of the home and so that they may feel that they have had a share in the result obtained. One result of this

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FOR THE TOILET

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will be that the intangible something called "atmosphere" will become as you have dreamed it should be—whole-some, loving and very happy.

The development of the individual members physically, mentally, socially and spiritually is another big factor in making the home a family center. From earliest childhood, the members of the family should be taught to appreciate those things which are beautiful and worth while in life. They should learn the beauty of simplicity and what constitutes worth in humanity. Reverence for God must be taught from the beginning and a deeply religious sense developed. Then, by rearing the child in the midst of a few really good pictures, some really good music and harmoniously furnished rooms, the parents may hope to cause him to choose unerringly the beautiful thruout life.

Children should be given good books and magazines as their companions, that they may have an ever deepening well of pleasure in things intellectual. These things cannot be gained, however, unless the parents themselves set an unswerving example of physical, mental, social and spiritual four squareness.

Any talent that a child might show should be nurtured and encouraged. The parent must never allow his own plans for the future of the child ruin the plans which God has made for him. There have been cases where musical families have formed a family orchestra. Such family groups afford excellent means of drawing the family together.

Thru emphasizing "family life" the fourth essential must not be forgotten. It is—a civic interest. Even as "no man can live unto himself," no family living can exist apart from the rest of the community. The joy of family living cannot but overflow into the community and the strength of character gained in its midst must go to build up a stronger and better civic life. City Clean Up Clubs, City Beautiful Campaigns and Social Welfare Work offers outlets for the eager helpfulness of the child as well as for parents. As the contributions to the community increase, the contributions to the family increases, and the family slogan should be, "First, last and always, a citizen."

The final and perhaps the greatest essential for making the home a family center is a definite family life, or some time each day when the family is all together and may relax and enjoy one another. This may be at meal time or for a short time before or after a meal, whatever time seems most convenient to the individual members. Whenever it is, all that is selfish and irritating must be barred and each member should come into this "family time" in the manner that Edgar A Guest has described in his poem, "At the Door":

"He wiped his shoes before his door,
But paused to do a little more.
He dusted off the storms of strife
The muss that's incident to life.
The blemishes of careless thought,
The traces of the fight he'd fought,

The selfish humors and the mean,
And when he entered, he was clean."

Every family should have a family council in which each individual has a voice that counts. In such a manner, principles discussed here may be placed on a working basis and the result will be a happy spirit of "our homeness".

Only a glimpse has been offered of the possibilities for making the home a family center, but this combination of love, cooperation and unselfishness within the family; of choosing attractive surroundings and making the home liveable; of developing the individuals; of developing a civic interest and having a definite family life should prove a strong one and might be well worth trying.

Japanese Charm Lies in Gardens

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tribute to the feeling of mystery which an American is sure to feel when he enters a Japanese city.

"At night, the streets are lighted by lanterns, which never seem bright enough to pierce the gloom. 'Ricksha men and people who must be about on the streets also carry lanterns, and it is a wierd sight, indeed, to observe the lanterns, accompanied by what appears to be a huge shadow, disappear into the narrow doors in the wall.

"The 'ricksha men themselves are most interesting in the daylight and their history is not less interesting

than their appearance. Years ago, different petty robbers held sway in spite of or along with the Emperor, but when Perry opened Japan and the Emperor became acknowledged as the real ruler of the country, nothing was left for the servants and vassals of the less important rulers to do. In order to earn a living, they took the carriages in which they had carried their masters and hired their services to whomsoever might desire them, retaining, however, their pride of position and family. The type of 'ricksha used now is said to be the invention of a foreigner. Each man has the coat of arms of his ancient family embossed on the shoulders of his jacket, which is fitted closely and is made of heavy satin. His tight trousers are also of satin and he wears shoes with light, flexible soles.

"I do not care to ride in a 'ricksha, myself," said Miss Weiss. "I do not enjoy the thought of man power being used as we use horses and I feel so much surer in a taxi. I have noticed in the five years that I spent in Japan that the taxi has become much more in demand than the 'ricksha and I believe that they will finally cease to be used. The taxis are really much cheaper and they take the customer up hills, while if he hires a 'ricksha man to take him to his destination, he must walk up the hills.

"The peace of Japanese life is very nice, but I should not care to live in

67 Store Styling Power

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