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The “Little House” That You Will Like

Planned and Furnished by HELEN PASCHAL

WHAT WOMAN is there who hasn’t some time or other in her life planned or wished for a place which she knew she could make perfect if only she had the chance and the means. This woman with the most perfect house in the world needs only to wait for the chance for it to be perfect.

Perhaps it was a house at which an architect would scoff. In fact it may have been the kind which may be made only of dream stuffs and will not lend themselves to the tiresome un-wildness of wood and stone and cement. But even so, the house was tiny; it was appearance of being spacious.

This is a story of just such a small house except that—wonder of wonders—this four room cottage not only grew out of a dream but has been approved by an architect as well. It has been planned with an eye for convenience and yet it looks spacious. It is a house which could be simply and easily furnished without too great an expense.

The large living room and dining room—the most important room in a small house—is on the south and east—the sunniest and most cheerful part of the house. In a room which promises to be sunny (since the year round as this room does, almost any kind of a color scheme might be used.) Blues which would not do at all for a north room could look very lovely color background here. In the living room especially, deep rose could be used to introduce a warm friendly note as a safe guard against the time when the weather man might send a gloomy day. Soft cream or buff walls would make a harmonious background for such a color scheme.

For draperies in this room, since the walls are plain, it would be lovely to use some plain heavy curtain stuff dyed to match the walls and kind which could hang gracefully on a piece of the material before the drapes were dyed. If the drapes were purchased, they would not be of a heavy napped material but more likely of some of the pretty inexpensive blue and rose cornettes which could be found in any fair sized dry goods store.

Glass curtains of transparent weave would go splendidly with such drapes. Since there are seven windows in this room, the curtains would have to be carefully selected in order that they would be nice looking without being too expensive.

Expenditures for rugs always depend largely on the kind of floor in the room. If the room is wood look the 8x10 rug for the living room and two or three small rag rugs for the dining room would cover the floor sufficiently. If the floors are not particularly decorative, two medium rugs of the same size would be best to use. It is so easy to buy really good looking rug rugs now that both rugs might be of this old fashioned stuff; or a clever house wife could make the rugs or dye the stuff and have everything was just within reach of everything else.

The rugs which would not need to be purchased would be nice looking without being too expensive.

A piano would fit snugly into the corner next to the hall and the front of the house. Or there might be no piano then a Victrola might fit into the same place—for there must be music in the house.

The place for the davenport is marked on the plan. It could be one of those blue tapestry affairs that one sees nowadays—days which are so good looking and come in much cheaper than they were a few years ago and an ordinary sized one would not cut such a terrible slash in a moderate purse.

No doubt two floor lamps would be too great an extravagance, even tho the clever housewife might make the rose shades herself. But if it were possible to place one from the davenport and one between the table and the fire-place seat, wouldn’t the living room be a most attrative place on a cold wintry night with a bro burning in the substantial brick fire-place.

This completes the living room furniture except for the chairs, (two would be enough, one of wicker and one of tapestry) and the table for the magazines. The books would be kept in the built-in book cases.

The table in the dining room would be one on which could be used unbleached muslin and other inexpensive lunch cloths. There would be four chairs or more to match the table. Since there are pieces of furniture which is uglier than a buffet which has gone out of style a plainly built service table could take it’s place nicely as far as holding good. 

The drawers and cupboards in the kitchen would offer a storage place for the supply of silver and linen usually kept in the dining room. Pictures in this case would want to be few in number and good in quality. One picture above the service table would be enough in the dining room—but let it be one which will add to the appearance of the room instead of a “fruit” picture, a string of “pussycats” or a panel of stupid flowers.

The hall of the house is the pride of the designer’s heart. It adds at least fifty percent to the air of roominess which is a unique characteristic of so small a house. It would contain a corner table of walnut or mahogany with a mirror above. It is surprising what lovely looking tables can be made from an old table or desk. I saw one, not long ago, which was made from an old walnut drop leaf table which had belonged to the grandmother of a friend of mine. It had been an ordinary old table with the native beauty of it’s wood over which were ordered over with fresh stain had been removed leaving the beautiful walnut in it’s natural color. One of the drop leaves was raised up at the back of the table and one was left hanging down at the front. When the wood was polished it was as beautiful a console table as one could wish. One or two wall sconces from rags would be sufficient floor covering for the hall.

Bedrooms are for comfort and rest and so the beds need contain only simple furniture. The owner’s room on the northwest is large, 12x15, with four high casement windows on the west and an ordinary one on the north. A bed, a dressing table and bench, and a dresser would suffice. The room would be nicest furnished without any fancy border. There is nothing prettier for a bedroom than white or ivory furniture, but if one could afford mahogany, walnut or any of the better woods for a suite they are well worth paying a good price for. Cheap suites could be purchased, if these were made in good style, and re-finished in white or ivory. Sandpaper, at least three coats of white or ivory paint and varnish will transform even old furniture, so that it would be a credit to any bedroom. In my own room I have the dresser and bedside with which my mother “set up” housekeeping. In their gray enamel coats they look very little like that old battered bureau and bed which mother put away in the attic some years ago.

The rugs which would not need to be larger than 7x5 could be of a good quality of service type which is easily cleaned and is fresh and inviting in the warmest weather. Because of their inexpensiveness and attractiveness, people are using these in more and more for their bedroom floors.

That brings us to wall paper. The general rule that figured wall paper is “taboo,” could be violated in such a bedroom if it is of a fabric which is easily cleaned and is fresh and inviting in the warmest weather. Because of their inexpensiveness and attractiveness, people are using these in more and more for their bedroom floors.

The curtaining of the casement windows would be the most difficult problem of this room. Perhaps the best way to solve it would be to have a curtain for each window a net or muslin curtain fastened above and below with patent sash curtain springs. Then the group might be outlined with a strip of velvet to form a valance hung across the top of all four. If the wall paper be plain the mistress of the house might exercise her originality.

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in selecting figured material for the side drapes and valance.

In general these plans would also hold good for the guest room. Darker wood here, if light finish is used in the other bedroom, would give variety. A bed and dresser would be enough for the guest room.

Dotted swiss or dimity could be used for the curtains. A nice suggestion is to ruffle the curtains down the middle and across the bottom, hang two at a window and tie them back with a small cord about one-fourth of the way from the bottom.

Last of all we might look at the kitchen of the house. Could there be a much more convenient kitchen than this one? The ironing board fits into the wall cabinet; ice may be put into the refrigerator from the outside and food is placed on it's shelves from the kitchen; the work table is on casters, making it movable to any part of the room and all sorts of storage space is provided by the shelves and drawers on the east. In case gas was not available a chimney would have to be built back of the stove, in the corner of the basement stairway.

Linoleum, the only practical covering for a kitchen floor, might be purchased in rug form as it is easier to put down and permits better cleaning than that purchased by the yard. The casement window over the sink gives a more pleasant outlook than bare walls for the dull task of dish washing. Curtains of checkered gingham may be hung by patent springs as were the bedroom curtains. Sash curtains of the gingham may be pushed to the sides of the large window.

This in general is a suggestion for furnishing this small model house. In a small house more than anywhere else, simplicity in furnishings is the rule, and whatever individuality one uses in planning, furnishing and decorating the small house will be guided by this principle.

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British girls and women may now take a "Brides Year" at King's College, London. The course includes household management, housewifery, physiology, hygiene, infant hygiene, business affairs, biology and general economics.

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