1930

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Recommended Citation
Russell, Mabel (1930) "Putting Life Into the Living Room," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 10 : No. 1 , Article 8.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol10/iss1/8

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Putting Life Into the Living Room

By Mabel Russell
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Have you ever noticed how many people need new furniture in their houses? I mean when you talk with them they tell you how badly they need new furniture. It is usually a new davenport, but the one they want costs a hundred and fifty dollars, or an over-stuffed chair, but the latest style, like the one Mrs. Jones has in her new house costs eighty-five dollars and they simply can’t afford it.

In most cases it isn’t an eighty-five dollar chair, or a hundred and fifty dollar davenport they need. Twenty-five or even ten dollars would work such wonders in most living rooms that everyone would forget the shabby furniture and feel only the charm of the room. The starting place is to bury all sentiment and remove everything from the room which is neither useful nor beautiful. Just imagine it is your living room we are rejuvenating. You might start with the pictures. They are always the most difficult to part with. That dingy, faded print in the tawdry gilt frame with one corner chipped off, and that pale, anemic water color might just as well come down. They add neither interest nor beauty to your room. You’ll forget them unless they have their outline on the wall where they hang. If they have, I’ll venture to say the walls look pretty bad in other places and it’s fresh paper or paint your room needs rather than a hundred and fifty dollar davenport. There are undoubtedly other things you might discard now you have started looking at them critically. What about the sofa pillows? Are they preserved for their beauty or because one spent many hours embroidering them ten or twelve years ago and it seems a shame to throw them away? If you really need pillows buy enough material to cover them all alike, in either plain color or figured cretonne. Be sure you don’t get them too light colored, nor too bright colored or they will call too much attention to the old davenport. If your high school daughter has made or acquired a dainty organdy or taffeta and lace pillow, suggest that she might like to have it in her own room. It is an inconsistent thing to put a boudoir pillow on the family davenport as it is to wear hiking boots with a dainty colored organdy or with a pink taffeta dress trimmed with ruffles of lace. As you look around the room aren’t there some useful little vases and other objects on the mantel, the top of the bookcase, the piano, or on the reading table which have served their day and are neither useful nor beautiful? That pile of magazines—it has no claim to beauty and most of them will never be opened again. Do you use all that music stacked on the piano?

While you are discarding, let us think about the window shades you tried rolling the shades clear up or taking them down entirely? In many of the newer houses roller shades are dispensed with, especially in the downstairs rooms. It may be the glass curtains which you will want to discard. Two sets of curtains at your windows are not necessary. If you have gold or silver ones you do not need overdrapes, or if you use overdrapes you do not need glass curtains. Your husband will gladly help you take them down. He has always felt it a nuisance not to be able to look out of the windows. There is often a lovely view or beautiful foliage if one could only see it. If you use drapes, push them well back or loop them back. If for privacy you feel you must use glass curtains, choose some plain, transparent material and hang it in soft folds to cover the entire window. In many houses it is the windows that need special attention and the hundred and fifty dollar davenport can wait. But why don’t you make a slip cover for the davenport? It takes time and careful work to make one look well and incidentally about fifteen yards of material if there are loose cushions.

If in your zeal to discard you decided that old gold etchings could not be needed, you can dispose of them, too. If you saw the glass curtains which you will be the glass curtains which you will be using, hack or loop them back. A few pieces of colorful pottery or a glass, a lamp or two with simple shades, an inviting new magazine, a bowl of fresh flowers and your room will be so attractive I am sure neither you nor your friends will miss the hundred and fifty dollar davenport.

Watch Out for Measles

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and for the scientific care of the patient, which will evolve a high degree of cooperation between parents and schools, the danger from the disease should be minimized. As a result there would be many less deaths, weak eyes, bad ears, damaged kidneys, weakened hearts and tuberculosis.

—Material released by the Iowa State College Hygiene Department.

NEWS FROM ABROAD

In the busy round of college life, do you ever stop to think of the great opportunities and privileges of the American college girl? Do we absorb, contribute and take away all that we might from our classes? Some of us who have been fortunate enough to become acquainted with our students from foreign lands, learn a little of their background and their desire for education of the finest type, begin to realize just a little more poignant what home economics means.

Mrs. Alma Martin, a former student of home economics at Iowa State College, M. S., ’27, writes interestingly of her experiences in aiding the development of home economics in her native land, Estonia.

Upon her return from America, Mrs. Martin began to teach a home economics seminary made up of a group of interested women students. There she had to give her course in two months, which required that she give from six to seven lessons daily. She also wrote many articles for newspapers and magazines and gave several talks on American home and college life. Mrs. Martin says that her students appreciate and feel the need of home economics education as well as the need of higher education in home economics. She says, "It is a pity that America, toward whom we are all looking with appreciation is too far and too expensive for our poor students and we can’t get them from Europe, and our young and small country."