

"Healthful Homes."

by
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Healthful Homes.

a. House-building.

1. Location.

2. Fitness.

b. Sanitation.

1. Ventilation.

2. Light.

3. Drainage.

4. Water.

5. Cellar.

c. Furnishings and Decorations.

d. Food.

1. Selection.

2. Cooking.

I For Family.

II For Children.

III For Sick.

e. The Effect:-

1. Mental.

2. Moral.

3. Physical.

4. Spiritual.

Healthful Homes.

Without a doubt the first requisite of good and healthful home-making is that women should study the subject as a science. Call that subject what you will — Household Economics, Home Science, or Home-Making — it includes the same questions of vital importance; and the truth remains, we must lay aside our attitude of serene satisfaction and take a logical view of its meaning and study its details accurately. When we have done this, we may count ourselves worthy to mold and govern family life.

A house is not a home, it is true the house must exist before there can be a home, yet the house is but the shell of the home; therefore a study of house-needs is the foundation of home-making, and how many of the women leave this of their work to the men. Who should know better what suits the tastes and purse of the family than the woman; and the sooner she fits herself for these needs, the sooner our homes will become what they should be — reasonable and beautiful structures, whose outward beauty grows naturally and of necessity out of its uses.

Savage man dug a hole under the eaves of a rock, or threw together the materials for protection against wild animals and foul weather, into this 'shell' he put the spirit of love and co-operation and to him this was home. Modern man brings the

thoughts of all the ages to bear upon the wealth of Nature and produces a house of intricate construction but - until this spirit of 'Love ye one another' with all the responsibility and joy of thought and work for our fellow-man has entered it, - it is not a home. Through out the passing ages man's house-building has kept pace with his social conditions.

One writer has said, "Worse than all ill-fitting garments is a house unsuited to its household." Another said, "We cannot afford to make mistakes in building or marrying."

Bearing in mind the effect of the house - of the real home - upon the human body - on his health, his character, his mind - let us begin by laying down some general principles for the making of the healthful home. In the first place let us build conscientiously, realizing what a vital act it is to build a house, build from the foundations up, and from the inside out, that is consider the character and importance of the foundation before you estimate columns and coriices and arrange for the life and comfort of the people who are to live in that house before we outline the exterior beauty, for this will grow naturally out of its uses.

If the questions of 'where shall we live' and 'how shall we live' are definitely and intelligently

answered and these answers carried out, it will bring us very near the ideal living.

The real ideal home is built out from houses where it may be made to so harmonize with its natural surroundings that it appears to have 'grown up' out of its environments. In the city houses where we must build each for one's self, regardless of our neighbor's brown front or brick, we can at least demand an artistic separateness for our homes. The styles of architecture must vary very widely with the varying locations, surroundings, and demands.

One general rule may be laid down concerning architecture; The eternal fitness of things must be the motto of the designer.

Beauty of surroundings — a fair outlook as well as graceful outline — is more desirable and more important than a thoughtless image; if we always bear in mind that healthfulness and beauty are far more worth paying for than many other things we pay enormous sums for. If we spend some time and thought with but little money along this line the results will be amazing.

As for building material, Mr. E. C. Gardner, a widely known architect, suggests that a 'judicious admixture of brain and any material is decidedly advantageous.' We know the material varies with the style of architecture.

yet how much more stable and enduring is stone than lumber. The lighter materials give the appearance of 'moving' while stone bears the 'we have come to stay' air, as Professor J. D. Walters puts it.

Whatever the material and whatever the style of architecture, the home should be built in a beautiful, healthy, location, not in a damp 'swampy' place but in a well drained, well lighted lot, above the disease breeding places. In the country or small towns this is an easy matter, but in the city where we live so close together it requires much artificial force to bring about this healthy condition.

Those places in the house where the sun enters first and lingers longest are the places for the sleeping rooms. If possible have a bed-room for every member of the family, if this cannot be the case, then let the rooms be light and airy, spacious and well ventilated but warm.

The brightest of the bright rooms is the place for the nursery. The best room should be the baby's room where toys, noise, beauty, and brightness are equally prevalent.

It is true the public rooms as halls, parlors, and dining-rooms fill an important place in the family and general social life but their uses are subservient in many ways to such matters as food preparation and sleeping apartments.

We need sunlight and cheerfulness at mealtime, a sunlit breakfast is a genuine delight, but we

may sacrifice it if necessary from limited space or means without detriment to the peace and health of the household, if we supply that spirit of cheerfulness that will aid in digestion and every other function of body and mind. "Cheerfulness is the poor man's wealth, and the sick man's medicine," says one.

Set apart from the house and yet connected with it should be the kitchen, small enough for convenience and yet large enough for comfort in summer. A good ventilating system is greatly desired here to carry away the fumes and odors of cooking. For further insurance against kitchen odors, between the house and kitchen should be a passage with two openings opposite each other. We know cooking and cleaning must go on in the house, but it is a part of the housekeeper's art to hide the machinery and show only the charming results. A kitchen porch should be added where the cooking utensils may be aired and sunned, and where the butcher and grocer may deposit their wares and leave the kitchen floor clean.

The location of the house effects the supply of pure air, pure water, and sunlight, the character of the soil effects both the air and water, the drainage, plumbing, ventilation, construction, and condition of cellar, and methods of lighting and heating all effect the air vitally and some of them effect the water, consequently we must have a knowledge of

these methods and a clear conception of the purity of our water supply before we can secure our requisites. Life in a community is a complicated matter and surrounds us with numberless agencies of impurity. The first step towards securing a healthful home is the selection of a high, wholesome site. Pay for space and sunlight and in the end it proves a good investment—none can bring larger returns. Such a location may mean a commanding outlook for the eye, unpolluted air, and plenty of sunlight. The elevation will also afford drainage which is indispensable in the healthful home.

A cellar is both desirable and undesirable from a sanitary standpoint. If there is to be no cellar, the foundation should have several openings arranged for ventilating the space under the house, for if there is dampness and moisture under the house it will become a disease breeding place. Often the surface layer is sand and naturally drained but there may be a substratum of clay that holds the moisture this will produce disease germs, such soil requires artificial drainage, which may be secured by means of tile pipes below the sandy surface.

Mrs. Barton Smith said: "Cellars are to many house-keepers an undiscovered country, and its presence and conditions are not considered until dirt and dampness begin to breed disease." Mrs. H. M. Plunkett says 'a three minute visit daily to the cellar would be a grand beginning

for a woman who resolves to do her whole duty; It has been proven beyond discussion that the fairest and cleanest house may become foully poisoned if set over dirt and dampness and impurities. It is far better unless the walls are whitewashed, and the cellar light and airy, to have no cellar. When we remember that the cellar is the place for furnace and sewer pipes, we know how necessary are ventilation and plenty of light. Every inch of piping should be exposed to light so the first appearance of disease breeding matter might be detected and removed. The sewerage should be deposited as far from the house as possible.

The housewife should use care that her plumbing is correct and feel safe only when it has reached the standard of Mr. W. P. Gerhard who says: "with pipes of proper material, properly trapped, properly joined, properly laid and properly and sufficiently often flushed with water and air; the object of the system of house-draining seems to be attained; that is the instant removal from the house of all liquid and semi liquid waste matter, and the perfect oxidation and dilution of the air contained in the pipes." Even then the housekeeper's ordinary care must be constant.

The sanitary care of a country house is much different where there is no plumbing; here the water supply usually comes from a well or cistern and the house waste is disposed of in various ways —

sometimes irregular and unsanitary. The greatest danger comes from the possible contamination of the water supply by improper disposal of waste. Quick removal of all sewage and garbage, and careful distribution of it over the earth at a safe distance from the house and from the water supply is the proper disposal of it.

In the country, as everywhere, the keynote of warning must be guard the water supply. Keep the ground around its source clean, dry, and sunny and keep the opening so covered that rats, or leaves, or frogs cannot get into it.

Dr. B. W. Richardson said, nearly twenty years ago: "I am forced by experience to the conclusion that the whole future progress of the sanitary movement rests, for permanent and executive support on the women of the country. The men of the house come and go, know little of the ins and outs of anything domestic; are guided by what they are told and are practically of no assistance whatever. The women are presumably conversant with every nook of the house from basement to roof, and on their knowledge, wisdom, and skill, the physician rests his hopes. How important then, how vital, that they should learn as a part of their earliest duties — the choicest sanitary codes.

The gospel of good health cannot be preached too often, and we may safely let our sermons overlap. As we learn that locating buildings and furnishing a house

as well as feeding and clothing the family, all involve methods of sanitation. Perfect home sanitation means pure air, pure water, plenty of sunlight, wholesome food, sane clothing and soundbodies for the house hold. To the uninitiated perfect sanitation obtained by securing such blessings is a simple requisite, but when we come to know what each includes it is quite another thing.

Guided by the principles of beauty and selection the house keeper becomes discriminating and may give free range to originality in furnishing her home. Let her remember that beauty is harmony with nature and usefulness — to no furnishing nor decoration is beautiful that does not express in form and finish the use for which it exists. There is genuine inspiration in the thought of Mrs. Florence Morse, 'the very best conditions for securing an artistic interior are the combination of the cultivated taste, good judgement, ingenuity, and a shallow purse.' The location of the house, to a great extent determines the selection of the furnishings, yet always simplicity is a large element in home beauty.

Decoration is not something 'tacked on' after the house is finished and the furniture placed, but it is interwoven with the finishing and furnishing which goes beyond the bare necessities, and even in these primary needs, there may be a trace of beauty and decoration in their mere usefulness.

Beauty in the hall speaks a welcome and warms the hearts of visitors, simplicity meets the needs of the household, therefore the furnishings of any hall should be the beautiful, simple, and useful articles, such that suggests rest and presents a pleasing link between the outside nature and the home into which it leads.

The parlor must not be the old fashioned, dark, 'stuffy', unused, 'best-room'; but light cheery and airy. Furnish it so that it useful to the family as well as to visitors, by this I do not mean it is to be in constant use, but that it is not for visitors only. Let the furniture be light, the walls decorated in pretty bright colors, the curtains of soft washable material, everything that might be easily cleaned and kept free from dust, — give it the air of rest and repose.

The first and only furniture of our bed rooms should be the necessities of the occupants; light movable furniture, such that with the sunlight received from at least two windows, gives the room a light airy grace. Here should be as perfect a form of ventilation as is found in any part of the house. If you must have carpets and floor coverings in other parts of the house, leave these floors bare with only small rugs where the feet touch the floor most often. The walls should be of material easily washed and disinfected or cheaply and easily renewed after disease has been in the room.

The white iron bedsteads are the prettiest and most hygienic of beds to be used. Use bed clothes of light washable material with light mattresses, that are often sunned and aired.

And in the family meeting rooms this light airy appearance is just as desirable and necessary. In library, music room, or sitting room cheerfulness, rest, repose, and usefulness must be the dominating aspect of the furnishings. No upholstered furniture nor fragile bric-a-brac has a place in this room, but such articles as will withstand the wear and tear of the household and admit of frequent and thorough cleaning. This is the place for couches, divans, 'rockers', pillows, and every thing that goes to make every corner cosy.

In the dining room there is less need of repose in appearance than in any other part of the house. It should be as light, airy, and cheerful as possible. The admittance of plenty of sunlight blended harmoniously with color and furniture and reflected from the mirrors and china about the walls gives the beautifully useful effect desired — it brightens the spirit, warms the heart, and sharpens the appetite.

The floor may painted or oiled with a large rug on it; this is the only room where any pretence of a carpet should be allowed, the other floors should be painted or oiled and protected by the use of small rugs

where most used.

In the kitchen the engine room of the household cleanliness and usefulness should be the only guide to its furnishings. Here more than any where may we lay down some general rules:- protect the floor by a covering of linoleum or if it is hard wood it may be painted or oiled; avoid closed drawers and closets; and remember that under the sink becomes damp and moist if the space there is kept dark and closed, also remember there is no room for a garbage pail; arrange for the removing of smokes from the cooking either by ventilation or by having a hood over the range, or better have both. The walls and ceiling must be hard and smooth, either painted or white washed with a material easily renewed.

Since the kitchen is the laboratory in which the foundations of so many lives are laid it should be presided over by an intelligent and scientific artist—a fully developed woman.

Scientists teach us that health depends largely upon food, and what food principles are required for the healthful development of our bodies. To learn the fundamental rules of this investigation would require not a great deal of time and study on the part of the average woman of today. Every house keeper should be aroused as to the need of proper food for the household, for

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe has said: "The person who decides what shall be the food and drink of a family, and the modes of its preparation, decide to a greater or less extent what shall be the health of that family." In childhood, the proper diet will lay a firm foundation for longevity.

The proper digestion of a food depends upon the proper preparation of a food ~~as~~ much as upon the need of the body for that food, but the best of food will not be digested when it is not needed.

The rules governing the preparation and partaking of food by those who enjoy health, pure air, and exercise are not the same as for those diseased and shut up in the house; nor are the requirements for children the same as those for grown persons.

Every homemaker should learn a few principles of Domestic Science such as, the requirements of the human system; which are heat producing foods; which the muscle-making, and which the brain-and-nerve-building foods; the correct preparation of the several food principles; the careful preparation and serving of food to the sick; all these and other things, - as the training of young minds, giving the home a cheerful appearance, - and in every way showing the beautiful effects but hiding the machinery that produces them. Harriet Beecher Stowe and Catherine A. Beecher once wrote a book whose fly^{leaf} bore these words: "To The Women of America In Whose Hand Rests The Real Distinies Of The

Republic, as moulded By The Early Training and Preserved
Amid The Maturer Influences Of The Home, This Volume Is
Dedicated." In this volume she wrote:—"That there is a
great social and moral power in her keeping, which is
now seeking expression by organization, is manifest."

What is the end designed by the family? What is
the effect of bright, healthful, and cheerful surroundings?
What is the influence of the occupants of this 'healthful home'?
Mrs. Stowe says:—"The distinctive feature of the family is self-
sacrificing labor of the stronger and wiser members to
raise the weaker and more ignorant ones to equal advant-
ages." With bright, healthful surroundings, plenty of exercise,
and wholesome food our bodies and minds will respond
in a healthy condition. A British physician once said:—
"I believe insufficient ventilation to be more fatal
than all others put together." Then in the healthful home
opportunity for ventilation is furnished and this and
many other fatalities are avoided. "Fortune is made by
taking opportunities, character by making them;" then it
is possible for the home-maker to be character-former of
her household, to a greater or less extent, by producing
surroundings, healthful food, morally, mentally, and physically
healthful readings, and a general atmosphere of healthful-
ness around the home.

The study of Home Architecture, Home Science,
and Domestic Science by women, as a science

will certainly bring about homes, where 'welcome and rest are written on the outward aspect, and comfort and charm and truth reign within,' and a general mentally, morally, physically, and spiritually, healthful atmosphere will pervade.

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