

The Making and Keeping of a Home.

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Home has been defined as, "A centre mid't a busy and and weary world, for friendship, love and repose." But many there are to whom no such a retreat is opened. A man may own a beautiful residence, furnished in all modern elegance, yet be without a home. Home must be a place filled with love, peace and rest. And it must be presided over by one who has the artistic power to make it such. For those, who under all circumstances have the genius and tact necessary to make a true home, are to be considered the world's greatest artists.

The foundation upon which every home should be built, and the only one upon which it can ever stand, is love. Such a thing as a home without love is impossible. All business marriages and marriages of convenience can never be followed by the creation of a true home. In countries where this system of marriages is common there is, in the language, no word corresponding to our English word home. Life in all its relations excludes all ideas of home. Where marriage is a matter

of arrangement, not love, provision is made that the husband and wife may each go his or her way and see very little of the other. When children come, they are at once placed under the care of a nurse and as soon as old enough are hurried off to school, and never come to know there is such a thing as home. Sometimes, however, these unnatural marriages may result in the formation of a home. Perhaps love uninvited before marriage comes after, and with love comes a home.

The home also requires that there be liberty. The idea of a home is of a retreat where one can act out his own individual peculiarities as he cannot before the world. Here he can have his meals served at the time and in the style he pleases, he comes and goes when he likes, his books and pictures are arranged as to him seems best, and everything presents the expression of what to him makes life pleasant and desirable.

This liberty is the chief charm of home. The traveler as he turns in from the busy crowded world thinks, "Here I can do as I please." The same thought comes to the

business man, as he returns from his day's work, for here everybody understands him and is content that he should take his ease in his own way. This is true of the ideal home, such is not always the case in the real home. Many homes are too finely furnished for liberty. There can be no freedom in a home where everything is too fine to be freely handled. Life here becomes but a series of restrictions. So long as articles must be shrouded from use, or used in fear and anxiety, we had better be without them.

Another thing which deprives home of its liberties is the unceasing, watchful care which is made the first duty of that being, the neat housewife. To be a tidy housewife is certainly one of the most commendable qualities to be found in a woman. But when, in a home, it is placed before liberty and freedom, it ceases to be a virtue. A house where parlor carpets are too elegant to permit one sunbeam or even a ray of light to fall upon them, where doors and windows are kept barred, and rooms dark and dismal lest some stray fly might enter, and where everything presents such

order and dignity as to repel our touch or even our presence, — such a place can never be a home. A man wants a home where he can recline at ease in his arm chair, where everything is made cheerful by the presence of sunshine, birds and flowers, and where books and papers can be strewn about at his pleasure. Every room to him should present freedom and rest for, after the days weary toil, who needs or deserves it more? The loving husband, however, will suffer many discomforts thrust upon him by the unwise wife who thinks that neatness and order is the one great requisite in the creation of a home. But to children liberty is a necessity. Nothing for them than to shut them up in a room which is theirs because they are disorderly. The elegant parlor from which they are banished should instead be inviting to them. Its order and beauty should create in them a love for beauty and order. Children can never love their home if they cannot feel free and happy in every room. And there can be no disgrace in disorder occasioned by the

playthings which give to the little ones such joy and to a house a home-like air.

But enough as to what the home should be, let us now consider how it is made. As no one thing in our existence has a greater influence on us than the house we live in, the building of the home, that is, of the house itself is of first importance.

Everyone should own his home. One who does not can never feel that he really has a home. A home requires permanency, and this is impossible in the property of another.

Of course happy homes may exist in rented property, but there is always the feeling that you may soon be compelled to seek a home elsewhere, and have not the heart to beautify the grounds or the house unless you can think of it as always your home. Then let everyone who wishes to feel secure in his home, own it. This may be impossible to many young people, because of a lack of the necessary means, but with loving hearts and the hope and ambition of youth, working and striving together, each helping the other, the time will soon come when all obstacles will be removed.

Now in choosing the location for this home, let it be the happiest, sunniest and cheeriest possible, for such must be the atmosphere to develop pure manhood and true womanhood. Do not make your house too large, the smaller the house the cosier and happier it can be made. The money that would furnish a small cottage pleasantly and conveniently would give only scant desolateness in a larger mansion. Let the house be so arranged as to give abundant air and sunlight, always having a roomy place for flowers, even a conservatory is a luxury now within the means of most people. A tastefully arranged house and comfortably furnished, enters largely into the well-being of the family. Upon the taste displayed in furnishing rooms depends the air of comfort they will wear and the sensation of pleasure given to those inhabiting them. In furnishing use and beauty must stand united. The beauty of decoration does not consist in the costliness of the materials used, but in the taste displayed in design and arrangement. A house furnished with three hundred dollars may be in many ways

more pleasing and beautiful than one furnished with six hundred. One of the first things needed to make a room beautiful is sunshine. It fills the house with a reflected radiance of light and shade which gives to pictures books and ornaments an added beauty.

Curtains should be so arranged that the light may produce the best effect, falling upon the pictures and statuary instead of upon the floor and lower parts of the room, as is so often the case when heavy curtains are used. Next to sunshine the chief charm of a room is harmony of color. Wall-paper furniture and carpets should present tints that easily harmonize. This is something very often neglected and the more often in so-called elegantly furnished parlors. Here the costly furniture, handsome curtains, elegant carpets and paintings are chosen for the beauty of the things themselves with no thought of the harmonious blending of each with the other and of the whole together. On the other hand, with only cheap material and poor furniture, proper skill in arrangement and choice of colors may give an harmonious effect and perhaps even present an appearance

of elegance. Another thing which gives an agreeable air to a room is the presence of books. Nothing else gives a room such a pleasant home-like air, such an appearance of comfort and repose. It fills one with a desire to take off his things and stay for a quiet rest. So, in furnishing look ever to simplicity and harmony, remembering that comfort is more than luxury and use the chief end of furnishing.

But having a home rooted in the solid foundation of love and liberty, a house built amid surroundings of purity and peace, and furnished with a view to comfort and use, - what of the keeping of this home. Here everything depends upon the wife and mother, - she is the homekeeper.

And it is here so many women fail, for though many know how to keep a house, few know how to keep a home. There can of course be no happy home unless the house is kept attractive and pleasant. But with some housekeeping is a religion. The splendid parlors are opened only on occasion of company, all the best silver and china are locked up to be called forth for the same

purpose, while the family eats with cracked China and worn silver and the meals are served in some back basement room, lest the perfect order of the dining-room be disturbed. The children and furniture are ever at war, until finally the former are banished to the attic nursery, where amid broken chairs, faded pictures and worn carpets they can destroy at their pleasure, while the furniture rests in peace below. This is housekeeping. Can we ever combine with it housekeeping? No! the home requires that even the elegant parlors shall be opened to all. Open wide the doors and windows, let the blessed sunshine enter, fill it with flowers, make it a cheerful, living place, - a place where the children may bring their games, yet own their playthings, make it to them so attractive, so pleasant, so full of happiness that Satan can offer no superior enticements. Then choose for the dining-room the sunniest cheeriest room in the house, adorn the table with the daintest China and the brightest silver, - in every way treat your family as well as your would company.

The social-life of the home must also be looked to. The greatest danger in home-life springs from familiarity. Here the proprieties of life are not observed, careless language and attire are often common. It is in the home however that social-life is to be learned, polite men and women go out only from homes where politeness reigns.

A woman careless in dress in the presence of husband or brothers cannot fail to show this carelessness abroad.

It is a selfish feeling which confines our whole life to our homes, for we owe a duty to our friends and to society. If you have a happy home you should share it with others, particularly with those less fortunate. It should be a place where friends flock, bringing with them the life of the world. Contact with polite social-life is essential to the proper development of children; their growth depends upon their associations. Children accustomed to social-life acquire its graces without any knowledge of so doing.

But the crowning element in making and keeping a happy home

is that it be pervaded by a religious spirit, - it must be a Christian home.

It should be so religiously cheerful, so full of love and hope, so sanctified and hallowed, that we are made to think of heaven as a higher type of the same thing.

And, lastly, it is to the homes we look for our nation's welfare, - its progress or downfall. Whatever the homes of today are, so will the men and women of the future be, and what they become determines the future of our nation. For as some one has said, "Nations rise or fall as the character of our homes presided over by women, rises or falls."

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