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Furnishings and Decorations of a Children's Room.

by

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The developments and improvements which mark the advance of knowledge in all lines also mark the advance along the art of child development both physically and mentally.

The more advanced the age becomes the more carefully are the children reared and the more completely are they surrounded from the first by influences which will bring out the best in them and foster a spirit of love for the good and beautiful.

It has been said; "The child's view of what he is set to learn and the necessity and advantage of learning anything is tinged, on the appearance of the room in which he studies."

It is from this knowledge that the plans for the modern nursery have grown and the room filled with worn out, old fashioned furniture discarded from the other parts of the house which was formerly called nursery has been replaced by a room filled with the best of everything so the child may have the best of literature and art.

No nursery can be ideal in all respects but a great effort should be made to make the children's kingdom a place of beauty, comfort and refinement.

One person says that if there is but one sunny room in the house that room should be used as the nursery.

In the houses of today there are many sunny rooms from which to choose, but the one most preferable is the large sunny southeast room on the second floor, where from the large windows on the south and east may be seen the green grass, large shady trees, some pretty beds of flowers, and perhaps a bubbling fountain. Every inch of the landscape will become dear to the children. They will soon tell you which flower blooms the earliest and where the robin has built its nest. So nature will teach them many things.

Within - the room is large and airy. It measures 13 X 15 feet, which is the average size for the nursery and also the best size. Smaller - the children will not have room for all the playthings which they would like to put on the floor; larger - there is a needless amount of space. It is connected with the rest of the house by the door opening into the hall. This puts the children by themselves where they will not disturb the rest of the family nor be disturbed by them.

At the windows are white shades and dainty white curtains with a tiny vine of forget-me-nots stencilled across the bottom and up the center.

With the window drapings so arranged the children are saved the injury sometimes received from the poisonous coloring used on window shades, and the white sash curtains, which may be washed whenever soiled, add a fluffiness and daintiness to the room which any person admires.

On the floor are several removable rugs. One large one under the table - a smaller one before the fire place and one of the same size in the opening of the alcove. These are dark in color, having deep shades of brown, red, orange, etc.

On the north side of the room is a long, low bookcase made of dark wood. Through the glass doors the children may see their prettily bound books which mean so much more to them than the meaningless toys so often given them.

Above the book case is a picture of Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair" in a plain black frame.

In the center of the room - the main article of furniture is a large, solid table of mission wood.

This table is low enough for the children to sit at with

ease and large enough for four or five children to sit about to draw or cut. The drawers at the side hold the books and material.

The little straight chairs are the mission style also. They are substantial, always look well and are easily kept clean. A low rocker of the same style is there for convenience and comfort. All the furniture is low so everything necessary will be in reach of the children. It is about two-thirds the size of the regular furniture. The table is about two feet high and the little chairs correspond in height.

In an alcove adjoining the room is a small iron bed, used for afternoon naps or convalescent patients who wish to watch the other children at play.

Under the windows on the east side is a box or series of boxes which answer two purposes. First, as a window seat - second, as a box for the playthings when cleaning up time has come.

Last but not least is a large open fireplace. In summer on the warm days it is filled with green branches and flowers. On cooler days it has a wood fire and the children delight to trace the figures in the flames that play about the wood. This fireplace has another important use. It is one of the best means used for ventilating the room. The room is heated by hot water so it is very important that the proper ventilation be made. With the windows on the east and on the south and the fireplace this is easily accomplished and the air may be kept fresh and pure.

On the east of the room is a glass door which opens onto a large roomy upper porch. This extends over the whole east side of the house and is about 8 feet wide. This is an outside room

for the children and much time is spent on it. The roof is broad enough to protect the floor from both sunshine and rain, so in almost all kinds of weather the children may spend at least a part of the day in the air.

On the porch are window seats, chairs, tables and rugs quite like those in the nursery proper although more fitted for the constant outdoor use. At one end of the porch is a large deep box filled with dirt used as a private garden or flower bed for the children in which to develop their talents along the line of landscape gardening.

The walls within are smooth and tinted. For several reasons it is best to have the walls a skyblue with white ceilings. The southeastern room needs a cool color to counteract the brightness of the light. The children need something soft and light to keep them from being irritated by strong colors.

On the walls are pictures which will appeal to the children. They need not be cheap pictures for the best artists have painted pictures that children will enjoy.

Lanseer's Dog - Pharoah's Horses - Hoffman's Head of Christ - The Sistine Madonna - Child Harold - and Baby Stuart are some of the pictures which children will learn to love.

In arranging the pictures it is important to bear in mind that a vacant space is often a restful space, so it is well to keep the walls from being crowded.

A panel may be made on the wall from which the pictures may be slipped. In this way pictures may be changed as the lesson or season changes.

In choosing the toys for the nursery one of the most difficult tasks has been reached. Many friends delight in giving

the children mechanical toys which are both useless and hideous. Wise parents will choose toys that have a purpose and will interest as well as amuse.

Blocks of all kinds are found to be the most attractive toys for children. A box of blocks will be to them everything from a train of cars to a city laid out by the most skillful architect.

Of course dolls with their right to carriages, houses, trunks, beds, etc., are indispensable when a little girl is queen over the nursery kingdom. A boy claims his horses, drums, bells, etc.

In buying toys remember the best training a child can have is to be taught to care for their things properly, therefore, give them something worth caring for.

In all things keep in mind that a child is but a growing Old Person and the influences spread about it will determine the ideas of that old person.

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