

GRADUATING THESIS.

EMMA E. SMITH.

SUBJECT

"EVOLUTION OF THE HOME."

"EVOLUTION OF THE HOME."

Outline.

I. Introduction.

1. Definition and Essentials of a Home.

II. Origin and Process of Building.

1. Classification and Earliest Habitations.

III. Oriental Houses.

1. Egyptians.
2. Hebrews.
  - a. Plan of Eastern House.
  - b. Woman's Work.
3. Chinese.
4. House Life.

IV. Greece and Rome.

V. Northern Europe and England.

VI. America.

1. Prehistoric Homes.
2. Colonial Homes.
3. Homes of To-day.

VII. Conclusion.

The home - that great center of the universe, that inspiration point of thought and hope, that most vital of all institutions, is the oldest of them all. It is the oldest in purpose, in design, in need and in structure. All others have changed in every essence beneath the ravaging hand of Time - institutions have been altered beyond recognition, religion has changed its creeds, forms of worship and method of work; but the home is the same today in all its essentials as it was when Abraham and Sarah kept house in a tent - one husband, one wife working together in the training of the children playing around their knees.

Every nation, no matter how weak and insignificant, how barbarous and uncivilized, has some form of expression to convey the thought of home - a dwelling place, an abiding place of affections, a place of rest, "that sacred refuge of our lives."

Among the essentials of a home - to make it a home in the true sense of the word - is first of all privacy. Nothing less than four walls and a roof can make a home, whether it be the frugal protection afforded by the plain walls of a tent, or the strength and comfort of the most beautifully decorated wall of a modern mansion. Whatever be its form and structure the home must afford privacy and seclusion. Love is another important essential to a home, for without this feature the four walls serve merely to mark the confines of an abiding place. No matter what the form or structure, the home must be a place of refuge and a school.

It has been truthfully called " God's budding <sup>place</sup> for plants, where the little children are trained <sup>in</sup> pots before they can stand the inclemency of the weather outside." The home is also a church - the old Greek word for home is " the shrine of the gods." Last but not least the home must be hospitable, it must be a missionary home, sharing with the world the ripened fruits of truth, purity and love nourished within its confines.

In order to understand the full significance of all phases of the subject it will <sup>be</sup> necessary to trace the process of evolution from the dim uncertainty of pre-historic time to the present age. According to Gwilt: " The original classes into which mankind was divided were, we may safely assume, those of hunters and shepherds, and of those occupied in agriculture; and the buildings for protection from the inclemency of the seasons, which each would require, must have been characterized by their several occupations. The hunter and fisher found all the accommodations they required in the clefts and caverns of rocks; and the indolence which these states of life induced, made them insensible or indifferent to greater comfort than such naturally formed habitations afforded. We are certain that thus lived such tribes; Jeremiah (59 : 16 ) speaking of the judgment upon Edom says, " O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the height of the hill!" To the shepherd - the habitant of the plains wandering from one spot to another, as pasture became inadequate to the support of his flocks - another species of dwelling was more appropriate, one which he could

remove with him in his wanderings - thus the tent the type of architecture of China, where people were, like all the Tartar races, shepherds or dwellers in tents. Where a portion of the race fixed its abode for the purpose of agriculture, a very different species of dwelling was necessary.

Solidity was required as well for personal comfort of the husbandman, as for preserving from one season to another, the fruits of the earth, upon which he and his family were to exist - hence the hut.

"The earliest habitations which were constructed after the dispersion of mankind from the plains of Senaar, were of course proportioned to the means, which the spot afforded, and to the nature of the climate to which they were adapted. Reeds, canes, the branches, bark, and leaves of trees, clay and similar materials would be first used. The first houses of the Egyptians and of the people of Palestine were of reeds and canes interwoven. At the present day the same <sup>materials</sup> serve to form the houses of the Peruvians."

According to Pliny the first houses of the Greeks were only of clay; for it was considerable time before that nation was acquainted with the process of hardening it into bricks. The Abyssinians still build with clay and reeds. Wood, however, offers such facilities of construction, that still as of old, where it abounds, its adoption prevails. At first the the natural order seems that which Vitruvius describes in the first chapter of his second book. "The first attempt" says our author, was the new erection of a few spars, united together with twigs and covered with mud. Others built

their walls of dried lumps of turf, connected these walls together by means of timbers laid across horizontally, and covered the erections with reeds and boughs for the purpose of sheltering themselves from the imclemency of the seasons. Finding, however, that flat coverings of this sort would not effectually shelter them in the winter season, they made roofs of two inclined planes, meeting each other in a ridge at the summit, the whole of which they covered with clay, and thus carried off the rain."

The construction of the early habitations of mankind required little skill and as little labor. A very restricted number of tools and machines were needed. The industry and perseverance of man, however, in the end overcame the difficulties of construction. For wood, which was one of the earliest materials, at length was substituted bricks, stone, marble and the like; and edifices of unparalled magnificence and solidity were constructed.

Egypt from time immemorial was accustomed to hollow out rocks for habitation. The cavern afforded obvious shelter, provided by nature, against the extremes of heat and cold; they consisted of tufa and a soft white stone which was readily enlarged and formed to meet their wants.

At an early period the Egyptians were skillful in working with stone, and later this art was carried to a perfection which has never been surpassed throughout the ages.

Though the public edifices were magnificent with sculpture and ornamentation, the private dwellings were more devoid of splendor.

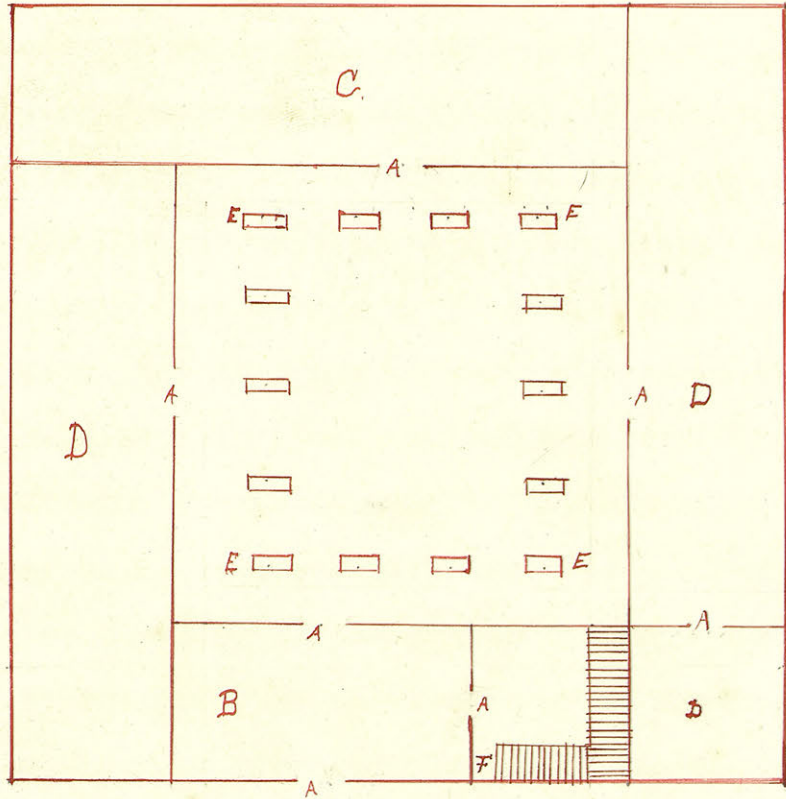
The regularly laid out streets of their towns <sup>were</sup> narrow but the mixture of low unsightly hovels with large magnificent houses was avoided. Small houses were usually connected, the regularly and uniformly planned rooms occupied three sides of a court-yard, separated from the street by a high wall. One court was often common to several houses. The larger dwellings were detached, having several entrances with large portals. On entering, the visitors were received in a room directly adjoining the open court. "The arrangement of the interior," according to Gwilt, "was the same on each side of the court; six or more chambers, whose doors faced each other opened on a corridor supported by columns on the right and left of the area, which was shaded by a double row of trees. A sitting room was placed at the upper end of one of these areas, opposite to the door leading to the great court; and over this and the chambers were the apartments of the upper story. On each side of the sitting-room was a door opening on the street. On the tops of the houses were terraces, serving as well for places of repose as exercise. The walls and ceilings were richly painted, and the latter were formed into compartments with appropriate borders. Some of their villas were on a very large scale, and were laid out with spacious gardens, watered by canals communicating with the Nile."

In the language of the Orient every <sup>tent</sup> may be regarded as a house, yet at an early day there was a distinction between the permanent dwelling house and the tent.

In Gen. 4:17, 20 reference is made to the city builded by Cain, and that Jabal was " the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle." The Hebrews did not become dwellers in cities until after the conquest of Canaan and they entered to take possession of the houses and cities of the Canaanites. The houses of the rural poor of Egypt as well as in most parts of Syria, Arabia and Persia were usually of mud or sun-burnt bricks. In some parts of Arabia and Palestine stone was used; also caves in the rocks were utilized, in Amos 5:11 " houses of hewn stone " are mentioned.

The houses of the lower class were usually of one story and one apartment with a small court for cattle attached. In some cases the house was erected on a raised platform with shelter for the cattle underneath. The roofs were commonly flat made of plaster and straw laid upon boughs. These served as sleeping apartments during the heated season. Small openings high up in the wall served as windows. The houses of the ancient Israelites differ very little from those inhabited by modern Oriental nations. The exterior has always been plain and unattractive - a front of dull gray wall relieved only by a door and a few, small, latticed, projecting windows. The ground plan is in the form of a parallelogram, with a large open court in the center - this court is one of the chief characteristics of an Eastern house. The following diagram will serve to illustrate the usual plan.





- A. Doors.
- B. Porch.
- C. Harem, or room for women.
- D. Other rooms, for family.
- E. Galleries, or covered walks between courts and rooms.
- F. Stairs to second story, or to roof.

The innermost part is the harem in which the women and children of the household live, entrance being excluded to all men except the master of the house. Varied and laborately wrought inscriptions were placed over the doors, the ceilings were usually of cedar and artistically covered; the few small windows were protected by heavy lattice work. There were no chimneys, nothing but a central roof opening, which served also to admit light as well as for the escape of smoke. The apartments were warmed by fire pans and there was no fire-place except in the kitchen. The furniture of the kitchen consisted only of a raised platform of brick with receptacles for fire, answering to boiling boiling places. There were no rooms especially designated as bed -rooms, but the inmates slept on divans in the ordinary apartments. The stairs to the upper apartments or roof were usually shaded by vines or creeping plants. In the inner court were wide spreading trees, often also a well or tank. About everything was noticed a mark of seclusion and privacy.

The roof is still one of the most important features of an Eastern house, the plan and arrangement being very much the same. They are mostly flat plastered with mortar, tar ashes and sand. Such a roof is useful for many purposes- for drying corn, hanging out linen, preparing figs and raisins; but probably serving best in affording a place of recreation and sleeping apartments for the family. The roofs <sup>were</sup> often made very comfortable and attractive by the aid of vines, shrubs and flowering plants; with awnings and screens to

protect from the sun and draughts; It is the favorite resort of the entire household,affording seclusion,freedom from the noise and dust of the street,and fresh air and cooling breeze.

The management of household affairs devolved,then as now, mainly upon the women. They brought water from the well,attended the flocks,prepared the meals,and occupied leisure hours in spinning and making clothes. In fact to the quick discerning eye of woman is due much of the progres of both modern and ancient times. She received her instruction "from the spiders,the nest builders,the storers of food,and the workers in clay such as the mud wasps and the termites, and her quick mind was ever on the alert for hints coming from these sources."-- O. F. Mason. In order to feed the flocks under her immediate care woman was forced to become an inventor. This phase of her usefulness is especially interesting. " The thousand and one manipulations formally practised by the women in the preparation of vegetable substances for human consumption were all anticipatory of methods now in operation on a much grander scale. They were the predecessors of harvesters,wagons and freight trains,granaries and elevators,mills and bakeries." For the protection of her granaries she tamed the fierce ugly wild-cat - so different from the gentle,docile descendent sleeping quietly by the fireside. When the advantage gained by grinding seeds presented itself to her mind,woman discovered two implements to aid her,one of which is now exalted to the service of the

apothecary, the other is utilized in a different form by the miller. Mortars are common enough in savagery, occurring both in wood with wood or stone pestles and in stone with stone pestles. The Arctic women ground nothing for food, but south of Mt. St. Elias mortars were commonly used for pulverizing dried fish.

The imitation of the tent is doubtless the true origin of the Chinese dwellings, thus giving them a singular construction. They were so arranged that they would stand even if the walls were destroyed, the roofs being set upon timber framing, similar to the tent structure, with a covering of canvas or walls of masonry. Timber was the chief material used, though brick was employed to some extent, stone and marble but little. The tchon - tse, or bamboo, growing to a great height in China, though hollow is capable of bearing great weights and has always been in universal use. The principal features in the scaffolding used in the erection of the buildings are security and simplicity combined with great skill in construction. Gaiety of effect is characteristic of the Chinese structures. This is noticed in the many colored roofs, variegated tints of the numerous porticoes, lavish use of varnish and in all species of decoration - all these combining to produce a pleasing but grotesque appearance.

In general the home life in these Oriental countries has never been established on a firm or broad foundation.

The women of China, India and Persia were forced to endure extreme hardship and drudgery. The wife existed only for the comfort and pleasure of her husband, and it was her duty to serve and obey him without question. A man was allowed to have as many wives as he was willing to support, and he held the privilege of life or death over all within his domain. The children had early instilled into their minds the virtues of strict obedience, politeness and reverence. In such a home life could be but a weary drag of existence from day to day. Servitude, drudgery and hardship kept women down to the level of beasts, and like beasts subject to the whims and caprices of their masters. In Egypt however woman occupied a much higher plane, though polygamy was common to all classes except the priests: She was the recognized mistress of the home, possessed some education, and largely directed the education of the children.

Seeley says that " The Jewish family was the purest of antiquity. In general monogamy was practised, and the wife was regarded as the companion and equal of the husband. Children being accepted as the gift of God, the father stood in the same relation to his children as Jehovah stood to man. We have here the highest and best type of family training to be found in history, a characteristic that still holds in Jewish families wherever they exist. There were no castes among the Hebrews, and the same kind of training was given to the children of the rich and poor, high and low alike. No other race of people has given such careful home training to

its children, from earliest time to the present. <sup>11</sup>

According to Pliny caves were the original dwelling places of the Greeks, from which they advanced to simple huts made of earth or clay. Writers have almost invariably treated the hut as the type from which the magnificent Columnar architecture of Greece is formed. The republican spirit of Greece tended to repress all appearance of luxury in their private dwellings. The people seem to <sup>have</sup> thrown all their power into the splendor and magnificence of their temples: And it was not until a late period that their houses received much attention. It is certain that they frequently consisted of more than one story; but beyond this all is conjecture. In the time of Demosthenes the private houses had begun to be increased in extent; and the description of them by Vitruvius who knew Athens well, proves that they were then erected on an extent implying vast luxury.

Very little is known of the home life of the Grecian woman. In Sparta she was held in high esteem and was noted for her chastity and nobility of character. Her praises and her reproofs were alike respected and all her opinions bore much more weight. She entered fully into the Spartan idea of military achievement, and gave her sons to her country without murmur, meanwhile often inspiring them to deeds of bravery and patriotism. The lofty and self-sacrificing patriotism of the Spartan mother is shown in the words upon sending her son to battle, -- "Return either with your shield or upon it!"

At an early age the boys were sent away from home to be trained by the state, consequently the home must have been built on a weak and unsubstantial foundation.

In Athens the women were held in less esteem, nor were they as worthy of respect. The husband exercised <sup>the same authority</sup> over his wife as over his children, nor was she his equal either in social position or intellectual attainment. " Her own chamber was the world of the Athenian woman; her maids were her companions; household duties and the preparation of clothing for the family were her employments." There was little in the home life that could appeal to the aesthetic, sympathetic and generous side of life.

In Rome the love for architectural display was indulged to the fullest extent. During the reign of Nero domestic architecture reached the highest degree of splendor and magnificence. Huge columns of finely decorated marble, sculpturing, grand and imposing arches, and exquisitely chiselled statues were used in wonderful profusion. Every private house of any pretension was so planed <sup>n</sup> that there was a portion assigned to the reception of strangers and other portions for the private use of the family; among the latter were the picture galleries, bathes, library, sleeping apartments and others. Here we see more real home life than in any of the preceeding nations, with the exception possibly of the Jews. Woman was more respected and had greater privileges than she had previously enjoyed, and she became noted for her virtues, fidelity to her husband, love for her children, and queenly guardianship of the sacred precincts of the home. The husband was the head of the home but he did not interfere with

the work of the wife and mother in the management of the household and the training of the children. " His duty lay in public life, her's lay within the home, and well did she meet her responsibilities until the time of her debasement with all the other elements of Roman society. "

Perhaps the highest test of civilization is found in the respect shown to its women, and the degree of this respect marks the position of the home in the social scale.

Measured by this test the nations of the Orient have made but little progress, as the position of woman with these is much the same today as it was centuries ago. As the civili-

zation grows, there is a strong improvement in the condition of woman, coupled with a corresponding growth and elevation of the home. The coming of Christ marked a new era in this respect as well as others. Under His teachings " marriage became a divine right and husband and wife are equal " and woman is no longer the servant nor the creature of man.

The most exacting and ideal home life that the world has ever known, is that given by the " Great Teacher of the Art of Living. " His regard for woman and her relation to the home were such that - " He counted a look coupled with irreverent thought of her as a vice. " When He was once called upon to judge between two types of womanhood - one " cumbered with much serving, " the other sitting quietly at His feet and learning His philosophy of life - His highest commendation was given to the learner.

Turning now from the culture and refinement of the Greeks and Romans we turn to a still primitive people, the



Germans. Their homes consisted of rude huts of coarse heavy straw on a timber frame work. In habits of life, manners and customs they resembled the more advanced North American Indian. Their regard for woman and their standard of morals were high. Their food was simple, consisting chiefly of wild fruits, fresh venison or coagulated milk. The domestic affairs of every household, whether that of lord or slave, were performed by the one wife and children.

All evidence goes to show that in Northern Europe the earliest form of dwelling, fit to bear the name of house, was round. Round huts are still found in Africa and such huts seem to have been common to many different races at an early stage of development.

The early Irish, Gaulish and German houses have no chimney; the fire being made in the center of the house, the smoke made its exit through the doors or a hole in the roof.

" In England charcoal burners, whose occupation is ancient, build round huts to this day. They are composed of a number of thin poles laid together in the form of a cone." Such houses were made wind - and - water tight by a plastering of mud-clay. Then came the rectangular house, evolved from the temporary tent or booth of the shepherds. Two wooden " forks " or " crutches " were placed at convenient distances apart, and a ridge extended from the apex of one fork to the apex of the other. The frame work was then covered with any material that could be obtained and was of service. To such a booth or tent additions were made by attaching " out-shots " at the sides.

" The typical dwelling house contained a hall and bower and a buttery or store-room. The hall was the men's apartment, but, as it contained the fire, the food was cooked there. the men slept in the hall, and the bower was the women's apartment." Color-wash was frequently used both on the inner and outer walls, and wall painting was common, as was also white-washing and mural paintings.

The house of the European citizen of the twelfth century, consisted of three one - roomed stories. The room on the ground floor was the general dining room of the family; the first story was much elevated for the sake of security, this room was occupied by the master of the house and his wife; the the second story probably served for the children and servants. Above this in most houses was a small platform evidently intended as a watch-tower. The house was in general flanked with an angular tower, usually square, a symptom of war and a means of defense. Every feature of the building bore the appearance of war.

" The true modern European city house four or five stories high, with its many windows and steep roof is the creature of the Middle Ages, and of the Populous Walled Cities of that stormy time. The admission of light at the roof was difficult in a rainy climate; accordingly the central court became a mere yard, not used except as a yard, the windows of the rooms opening upon it were glazed and shuttered just like those in the street walls. The exterior of these houses were architectural efforts of a kind wholly unknown in antiquity."

The manor - house usually had its apartments grouped around a quadrangular area, and consisted of the hall and bower, frequently a chapel, and such other rooms as kitchen, brewhouse, washhouse, stable, etc., The castle, with its characteristic watch tower, was the stronghold of a particular district.

In the latter part of the Tudor period many stately houses and grand city mansions were built. These were highly ornamented with carved woodwork and bay windows. Little attention was paid to cleanliness, but at the table a great variety of dishes were served on silver plate. Fingers were still used in place of forks. Tea and coffee were unknown, beer being the usual drink at breakfast and supper.

The history of home - making in America, being concentrated in a few hundred years, shows a marked progress over other countries, where it extends over thousands of years. The effect of climate and surroundings upon the primitive houses is shown in the ice hut of the north, the stone and earth mounds of the Mississippi Valley, the long houses of the Iroquois, the thatched houses of the California Indians, the conical hut and the wigwam of the south and west.

The history of house building and home - making exhibits progress in the face of difficulties. The obstacles have been those of climate, material, want of skilled labor, the lack of capital, and the natural limitations of man's power, but the motive which has given success has always been the love of home.

The prehistoric homes in America were unique and symmetrical, and it was these features that made the old Colonial houses of later date so attractive. There is something fascinating about the house keeping of the New England dame. Her candle dipping, soap making and spinning wheel were objects of interest to all the family, as they are at the present day. The long broad hall in the Colonial house served not only as passage way, but as living room, dwelling room, sitting room - in it the family sat and ate their meals, in it they lived. " About the glowing fireplace centered all the homeliness and comfort that could be found in a New England house. The very aspect of the domestic health was picturesque, and must have had a beneficent influence.

In earlier days the great lug - pole stretched from ledge to ledge, or lug to lug, high up the yawning chimney, and held a motley collection of pot-hooks and trammels of gib - crokes, twi - crokes and hakes, which in turn suspended at various heights over the fire, pots and kettles and other cooking utensils. In the hearth corners were displayed skillets and trivets, peels and slices, and on either side were chimney-seats and settles. Above - on the clavel piece - were festooned strings of dried apples, pumpkins and peppers. The andirons added to the fireplace their homely charm." ---

--- Alice Morse Earle. ---

Today man builds his home against his neighbors, walls on either side, the electric button at his door is the open sesame to all who wish to enter. Fuel and water are obtained from common sources, by combination instead of capture. Gas and electricity have superseded the flaming torch and

flickering candle. The comfort or distress of his house - hold is connected with that of the entire community, so intricably interwoven are the elements of his home with those of the thousands of homes around him.

" The wife of today learns to cook and produce such combinations of foods as were never dreamed of by her ancestors. She is confronted at all times by spectres of disease and death which glide in through the avenues of modern conveniences. The human body has become more sensitive with its better housing, more careful clothing, more varied diet, more highly cultivated mentality; and she must carefully study its composition, its weaknesses, its recuperative power and learn to meet by diet, by recreation, by intelligent care the waste of tissue which the stress of modern life inevitably and unceasingly brings. She who manages wisely and well her little household in a city flat today, has need of more science, more philosophy, more wisdom, more grace, more true queenliness, than ever shown in the lordliest castle of old England or on the storied Rhine." -- Mary Clark Barnes.--

Let the Nation live and the home be corrupted, and the Nation will sink into decay and death from which there can be no resurrection; but if the home life in America be of such a nature that corruption, immorality and greed do not enter, the Nation will continue to grow and be fed by the home. The educated woman longs for a career, for an opportunity to be of influence in the world; but just now the broadest, most

fruitful field open to her is the elevation of the home into  
its proper place in American life.

Manhattan, Kansas.

June \_\_\_\_\_ 1903.

~~Ed. Sawyer~~