

HOW I WOULD RUN THE HOME IF I WERE A WOMAN

By EDWARD EARLE PURINTON

HOME is the half-way house between earth and heaven. As such it needs the practical and the ideal combined, more than any other human institution. The earth side of a home must be absolutely practical, and the heaven side must be absolutely ideal, if the home is to be a home.

There is as much need for science in the home as there is for science anywhere. The average home is a conglomeration of guess-work, patch-work, and overwork. The guess-work is the fault of the man, the overwork of the woman, the patch-work of both. A little science in advance would prevent most of the trouble.

As the one place where all human interests gather, center and radiate, the home should be given first consideration in a real efficiency program for a man, a city, or a nation. School efficiency, business efficiency, church efficiency, community efficiency, all depend to a large extent on home efficiency.

Many a good woman—good but stupid—thinks so much of her home as a house that she forgets to be anything but a house-keeper. But the house is merely a shell for the home.

If you cannot have your home a model house and a model institution at the same time—never mind about the model house. A little dust in the corner of your parlor is better than a layer of dust on your mind.

Furthermore, a dollar with your best thought and feeling in it can do as much to make your home attractive as ten dollars spent rashly, thoughtlessly, flippantly.

The Home as an Institution

THE efficient home, as a modern institution, covers ten cardinal points, namely—*health, economy, beauty, productivity, hospitality, education, devotion, ambition, co-operation, character.* These points are universal in application. They have nothing to do with the size, cost or location of your house. You do not need to have a house; you may live in a \$10-a-month flat, and still observe these ten cardinal points. We shall consider them briefly.

1. *Health.*—Half the disease in Canada would be prevented by the universal adoption of a home health system, including health instructions, health foods, baths, exercises, garments, habits of life and methods of work. Many physicians claim that epidemics such as typhoid, grippe, and scarlet fever would be impossible in a civilization where the home science of prevention of disease were understood and applied.

2. *Economy.*—Every home should have installed a modern scheme of cost-finding, cost-keeping and cost-reducing personal expenses on a scientific budget basis. Mother doubtless wastes a little, but father is apt to waste more, and the children are sure to waste most. Why reform mother exclusively?

3. *Beauty.*—Home discord is largely the result of discordant surroundings. The sensory nerves should be soothed in the home. They are more often irritated.

4. *Productivity.*—The home is fundamentally a social unit. The business of it, therefore, is to enable each member of the family to do more and better work in the community. For this purpose, physiological, psychological and industrial principles should be taught and embodied in the household. Are you improving the quantity and quality of your vocational output by at least ten per cent. every year? If not, something is wrong with your home.

5. *Hospitality.*—By this word I do not mean card parties, pink teas or pay-your-debts functions of any sort. I mean just a handclasp with some heart in it, an open home door. A test for your hospitality is that the fellow you invite never thinks what or how much you are going to give him to eat.

6. *Education.*—The despair of conscientious teachers is the lack of and indifference to sound educational methods in the home. Careless thought and speech, unbridled emotions, superficial judgments, artificial standards—these home defects can never be redeemed by any curriculum of high school or college.

7. *Devotion.*—This should be mutual, and reciprocal. Too often one member of the family—most often the mother, least often the son—expresses devotion for the entire group. The fires of destiny are kindled in the crucible of devotion. Back of the great man has always been some one's home prayer, faith, sacrifice.

8. *Ambition.*—The purpose in our habitation is our evolution. Accordingly, every home must be outgrown, every blood tie broken, every association of mere kinship finally put off and away, as the locust drops his skin. Can you forget that your brother is your brother, your son is your son, your wife is your wife, and want for each only the highest good of each, whether you reap joy or sorrow from it? Do you know what the great ambition of each member of your family really is, and are you helping him or her to achieve it?

9. *Co-operation.*—Every home should provide for a systematic study of co-operative method, as shown in the modern factory, mill or department store. The scientific grouping and control of individual tasks and relations in the family is almost unknown. Therefore, a burden of unnatural and unnecessary weight falls on some one member of the family—the most unselfish, and usually the least endowed with physical strength.

10. *Character.*—The great need of the home to-day is for a Spartan courage. With few exceptions, the backbones of our children

are mush. We deny them the supreme strength which grows only from doing the hardest thing. The very multiplicity of conveniences and luxuries robs this generation of self-resource and self-reliance. Clearly and strongly as I urge the use of labor-saving devices in the home, I would beg of you to forget them all unless at the same time you teach the boys and girls how to *work*—hard and long and well, and painfully if need be. Nothing can ever take the place of old-fashioned hardship in the home production of character.

The Home as a House

NOW for the home as a house. My friend, the architect, says there are five principal reasons why ninety-five per cent. of the home owners are dissatisfied with their own work. These reasons may be summarized thus: (a) Failure to plan all details ahead, or even to know what the necessary details are; (b) failure to secure in advance all the available

Study these booklets. If you have a sweetheart, study them together.

Draw a rough plan of your house, lawn and garden on a big sheet of bristol board or "art paper," allowing, say, half an inch on the drawing for each foot of ground. This preliminary sketch will have to be altered considerably, first by yourself to grow with your ideas, then by the architect to be made practical. But get the whole thing on paper as early as possible, and exact in every detail.

Choose your architect—don't hire one because he lives near you or a friend of yours knows him. Be sure (1) that he is a specialist in your kind of home—whether a bungalow, a Queen Anne cottage or a Colonial manse; (2) that he can refer you to a number of satisfied clients; (3) that he belongs to national associations of architects, with high professional standing; (4) that he will guarantee the final cost of your home not to exceed the initial appropriation. There are some fifty trades and

some Winter day, with a blizzard howling above and a snow-drift rising beneath, and no suave, summery land agent breathing soft nothings in your ear. The time to look at real estate is when the real estate man isn't looking.

Buy your land on instalments if necessary, paying the same as rent, after you negotiate with a building and loan company to advance money for the house. But pay cash for all the contents of the house. Furnish one room at a time, or buy one chair or picture—but pay cash. Comforts on credit are discomforts.

Place your house at least fifty feet back from the street if possible, for seclusion and symmetry, and at or near the centre of your plot, thus leaving space in front for flower beds, at sides for shrubbery, in rear for vegetable garden and perhaps fruit trees or berries.

Buy the Best

PRACTISE real economy by having the best where only the best will serve. Choose the best in grass seed, in flower and vegetable seeds, in building and roofing material, in house paint, in heating, lighting and ventilating systems, in plumbing and fireproofing, in wall finish and interior decoration, in bedroom, bathroom and kitchen furnishings, in hygienic factors throughout. Among building materials are wood, stone, tile, concrete, face brick, tapestry brick, tile-and-brick, tile-and-stucco, frame-and-stucco, patent compounds of different kinds. Among roofing materials are shingle, tin, slate, galvanized iron, tile, asphalt, and special chemical fabrics. Don't build without learning what your best material is for house and roof.

Study with extra care the problems of heat, light and ventilation. Most heating boilers burn only about sixty per cent. of their fuel; they become enthusiastic in hot weather and apathetic in cold. Get a good boiler, gentle, pliable and considerate of your purse, time and temper. The heating plant may be steam, hot water or hot air. Each claims advantages over the others. Whichever you order, be sure there is supplied at least thirty cubic feet of fresh air per minute for each occupant of every room. Some plants change the air completely every half hour. National heating companies will often study your house plan and make specific recommendations, without charge. As for illumination, a modern electric plant may now be installed for less than the price of a good piano. Or, acetylene may be used, or a self-generating gas now on the market.

Ponder long your color scheme. Before you paint your house, get a wide assortment of "color cards" from the leading paint companies, and make your house harmonious, or leave it unpainted.

Fix the size, location and arrangement of your rooms only after reading several books on home building, or consulting a domestic engineer. Otherwise, you are almost sure to neglect some vital part, learned only by experience. A wise procedure would be to visit one of the "practice cottages" in home economics now maintained by the more progressive schools, particularly agricultural colleges and universities.

Ask your friends and neighbors what mistakes and omissions were found in the construction of their homes, and avoid these. Among things commonly overlooked are: A cellar for storing fruits and vegetables, made of concrete, and thus rat-proof; a ten or twelve foot porch around two sides of the house—on the least exposed side an arrangement for outdoor sleeping; a laundry extension to the rear of the house, with space for modern machines and equipment; a flight of back stairs, for surreptitious use when "company" is in the parlor and you haven't your company clothes on; a numerous and generous array of closets—closets being to a woman's comfort what pockets are to a man's; a playroom and gymnasium, where all the family can be children together; a lavatory on each floor; a speaking tube or interphone system of communication between floors; a grouping and spacing of kitchen, pantry and dining room according to the principles of scientific management; a sound-proof, detached study or library; a conservatory and solarium, where potted plants and also human flowers may take sun baths for their health.

Be Modern

PLAN to make your home thoroughly modern; in this respect do not take any house of a neighbor for a pattern, since new methods and utilities unknown even a few months ago are now available. Some of the typical modern improvements are these: patent wall linings, fire-resisting, sound-deadening and moisture-proof; liquid wall finish, artistic, washable and durable, to take the place of wall-paper; color-fast, reversible, moth-proof rugs, made to harmonize with color scheme of room; china and porcelain bathroom fixtures; new material, heat, acid and rust proof, for kitchen cabinets, ranges and refrigerators; non-rusting, non-corroding, wrought iron sanitary piping; weather-proof screening for windows and doors; hygienic ventilators, keeping out drafts, dust and storms; combination cellar window and coal-chute, to protect house and lawn from both coalman and burglar; milk bottle and package receiver, weather-proof and burglar-proof; underground garbage receiver, always closed, fly and cat proof; house revolving fan, run by alcohol; smokeless oil heater, for speedy warmth on Winter mornings; lawn mower that stays

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EFFICIENT HOME TEST

FOR SELF-APPLICATION BY ANY MAN OR WOMAN DESIRING TO IMPROVE HOME CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

DIRECTIONS.—Where answer is Yes, write numeral 5 in blank space opposite. Where answer is No, leave space blank. Where answer is partially affirmative, write numeral between 1 and 5 expressing degree of assurance. Add column of numerals for total grade. This test is not complete, merely indicative.

1. Could you sell your property to-day for at least 20 per cent. more than it cost?
2. Is your outdoor and indoor color scheme artistic, restful, individual?
3. Are your pictures, tapestries and other ornaments very few but very good?
4. Have you electric light and automatic ventilation for every room?
5. Have you a home gymnasium and playroom?
6. Has everybody in the family given the sleeping-porch a fair trial?
7. Have you plenty of flowers, a prize lawn, and a profitable garden?
8. Does the whole family enjoy together at least one evening a week?
9. Do you entertain the rich and the poor equally well, and equally often?
10. Is the right home regimen helping you to do more and better work each year?
11. Does each member follow the budget system of personal finances?
12. Do you take at least two home science magazines, have you read at least two home science books?
13. Have you joined a civic or domestic improvement association?
14. Do you consider moral backbone the finest home product, and are you making it?
15. Can you finish your work in a regular eight-hour day?
16. Is all your routine work planned ahead?
17. Are the meals prepared according to the rules of modern food science?
18. Have you made a special study of conserving your energies?
19. Is the kitchen fully supplied and equipped with labor-saving devices?
20. Are your relations with all tradespeople satisfactory?

Total equals your approximate grade in household efficiency.

information; (c) failure to employ the best architect, builder and other helpers; (d) failure to sign a comprehensive, minute, iron-clad contract; (e) failure to keep the entire job under personal supervision. The aim of this article is to mark out lines of thought for the prevention of these mistakes.

The first suggestion is to begin home planning early in life. Every young man or woman over eighteen should be regularly saving for a home. If you can save only \$10 a year, this much will buy books and periodicals that should prevent a waste of hundreds, or even thousands of dollars, when you build later. Whatever your age, if you have not a home of your own, resolve now to have one—then start your plan. Real estate, properly chosen, bought and managed, is the universally good investment.

Build for yourself. Don't buy a second-hand house; it won't fit you any better than a second-hand suit of clothes. Your individual home tastes, needs and preferences must be learned before you build—not after. When they are clear to you, no house on earth but the house you make will satisfy you.

Be your own designer. The business of the architect you hire is to embody your ideas. If you haven't any, his work will fail, no matter how good an architect he is.

Devote a year to learning home science. Take a course if possible, in advance of building. Purchase a small library of new and trustworthy books. Answer advertisements in popular and technical magazines; you can obtain a large assortment of booklets on all phases of home building, furnishing, and decorating, merely by asking for these publications from various manufacturers, who will mail them without charge or on receipt of postage.

professions involved in the making of a home, from start to finish. These are mostly uncorrelated; hence delays, mistakes, and numerous "extras" in the bill are very likely, unless a blanket contract fully protects you against loss.

Buying the Land

CONSIDER many things before you buy your land. Regard this purchase as an investment, apart from household features. Weigh its value by the possibility of resale at a good price—what you paid, or more. Ask a number of good business men their opinion of 125 feet front and 150 to 200 feet in depth; a front less than seventy-five feet, in a populous section, crowds one too close to his neighbors, while a front longer than 125 feet means too much lawn mowing and general upkeep. Location should be high and dry, with house on highest part—a damp cellar quickly breeds disease. Air and light must be plentiful on all sides; before you build study plans of the air-light health cottages now so popular in Europe. Neighborhood should be quiet, no street car within five or six blocks, and no garage, theatre or other place of pandemonium near-by. Stores, schools and churches should be in reach of comfortable travel, with the place of work of each member of the family kept in view, as to daily loss of time in transit.

Always buy, however, just ahead of the crowd, where new transportation lines are sure to come, but have not yet come. The same rule holds in the country, where the "good roads" movement will increase the value of land. Have your title guaranteed by a title guarantee company or a firm of responsible lawyers. Before signing the contract, go and visit the property