

Country Homes

Bertha A. Duncan, Emery, Ont. Those who have reached years of maturity, and recall conditions as they existed in the pioneer days of our country, can scarcely believe it possible for such changes to take place in country homes in so short a time. The early settlers were content with a log house of small dimensions, but few of their grandchildren would be satisfied to bring a bride into such a humble abode to-day. Not many would care to hew out a home for themselves as our grandfathers did in the early days, but people are willing to begin just where their parents leave off after long years of struggling, and seldom do they realize what such struggles cost.

Probably one reason why so many left their country homes for city life was about the time machinery was first used. Up to that time a great many men were required to harvest the crops, but the invention of the farm machinery, the number required was lessened, consequently the unemployed must seek employment elsewhere, and the most likely place would be in the city where the implements were being manufactured. Another reason might be, that city life appeared to them more attractive than country life. This may have been true in early days, but is it true to-day? Is it not an improvement of rural environment which is tempting many to return to country homes?

Travelling through the country one finds a great many changes in the past few years. Telephone lines, electric phones, rural mail delivery, etc.—these are the improvements which make the city extend into the country, and make our rural homes the more desirable.

In selecting a rural home we have a great variety of materials to choose from. In the prairie country, on the other hand, there is a great deal of monotony, but in this beautiful Ontario, with all its beautiful hills, valleys, rivers and trees to add to the charm of our home, it would be difficult to find two places exactly alike.

SELECTING THE SITE.

One of the first points in selecting a home would be to consider the aims of the individual members of the family. All the family may wish to live in the country; yet some may like to be near enough to town or city that they may go to business and yet enjoy the privileges of a country home. Therefore, it would be well to select a place convenient to town or village, not larger than can be cared for by the family without incurring greater expense than it will yield. The situation of the home is very important. There are instances of homes built on that part of the land which is not much used for cultivation, probably near a swamp. We want good surroundings for homes, and as beautiful as possible, a site high enough to afford good drainage, but not necessarily the unprotected hill top. All situations have their advantages and disadvantages, and should be thoroughly considered before giving a final decision in the selection of a site for a home.

The general appearance of a house expresses the individuality of the owner, and to walk through each apartment only corroborates one's views. From the outside one can judge whether he is neat, orderly, or artistic, or whether he cares nothing for the elements of neatness and beauty. His parlor indicates whether he cares most for show or comfort, his library reveals the character of his mind, and the furnishings of the dining room and his viands, one can judge whether he loves the pleasures of sense more than a strong body. It is not necessary to see the man, to have a fairly clear idea of him.

WHAT HIS HOME SHOULD BE.

A country home should not be a city house transferred to rural surround-

ings. In the city the houses are crowded together and are usually long and narrow. Such a house standing alone in the country, unprotected by trees, would give one the impression that a good strong back might blow it down by a few trees is more desirable for the country. It should be of as good construction as possible to be convenient. Many of the country homes which were built years ago are not very convenient, and one must take a great many unnecessary steps in doing the work of the household. A little more money spent on alterations to improve those household conditions would be a wise investment. There is no reason why the housewife should not have conveniences to save her strength and time, as well as the farmer have all the labor saving machinery on the farm to lessen his labor. Not always are the husbands at fault; the wife toils from early morn till late at night, simply because she is content to go on in the same way year after year, trying to do with what she has rather than incur a little expense for labor saving devices.

WIVES—PLAN YOUR OWN HOMES.

In building a new home it is well for the housewife to be consulted about the plan, for who should know better than the woman who will live in it and do the work what will be most convenient for her? A careful study should be made of the plan before any work is begun in the construction of the house. It is much easier and costs less to make alterations in the plan, before it is made into a house, than after. Sanitation and ventilation should be carefully considered before building operations are begun. To enjoy good health we require a good system of ventilation in sunshine and good nutritious food well cooked.

Too often the parlor is given more thought than the kitchen. Elaborate furnishings and anything that will make a room to be found there; while out in the kitchen, where the housewife has to spend most of her time in looking after the needs of the family, there is nothing to lighten labor, and everything to make her

cross and irritable. Why should this be? The time is coming, yes, it is at hand, when women are waking up to realize that labor-saving devices are as necessary for women as for men, and are insisting upon having them in their kitchens.

In many farm homes we find large kitchens which are used as kitchen and dining room combined. The small kitchen conveniently arranged is preferable for lessening labor. Having it separate from the dining room is desirable. Why not have a partition put up to make two rooms of the large kitchen. It will not require as much labor to do the work, and the meals will be more appreciated in the cool dining room, free from odors of cooking, than in a hot kitchen.

ROOMS IN THE HOUSE.

The number of rooms in a house depends on the size of the family to occupy it. It shows poor judgment to have so many rooms that some of them are never furnished. And a worse fault is to furnish them so elaborately that the members of the family are afraid to use them. What is more unpleasant than to go into a parlor to wait for a friend, and find everything so stiff that one is afraid to pick up a book to read while waiting, for fear it might not be replaced at exactly the same angle? Why not have everything for use and not so grand that one cannot enjoy them?

Above all simplicity should predominate. The less carved furniture and fancy ornamentation in the home, the more easily it can be kept clean and sanitary. In purchasing it is well to keep this point in view, as it will require less of the housewife's time and strength to keep it in perfect condition, and give her more time to spend in reading and recreation. It is possible, too, to have simplicity in all the home decorations. One does not need to go into expensive materials to have pleasing effects. Some of the less costly materials give just as good satisfaction. Because one's neighbors have expensive articles in their homes is no reason why every one should have them, providing they cannot afford them. It shows wisdom to live within one's means. Nor should the color scheme be for-

gotten. Harmony of color is very important, and has great influence on refinement in the home. Each must use her best judgment as to what is the best color for each particular room, what are most appropriate furnishings and to not forget some good pictures.

(Concluded next week)

The Upward Look

When Fear is Impossible

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.—1 John 4, 18.

Much of the misery in the world is caused by fear. Fear of sickness and of want, of ridicule, of failure in one form or another, of death. And yet; it is not God's will that us clearly, His holy word, that just in proportion as we love Him fear will drop away from us. "Thou who keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is

Feeding Farm Hands.

Every farmer's wife knows what tremendous appetites farm hands usually have; but while they eat well they work well, too.

Here's a good suggestion about feeding farm hands. Give them plenty of Quaker Oats. A big dish of Quaker Oats porridge with sugar and cream or milk is the greatest breakfast in the world for a man who needs vigor and strength for a long day's work. The man that eats Quaker Oats plentifully and often is the man who does good work without excessive fatigue. There is a sustaining quality in Quaker Oats not found in other foods, and for economy it is at the head of the list. A whole family can breakfast for a week on the worth of Quaker Oats.

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