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WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

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HOMES

Making Them Attractive and Some Valuable  
Hints on Nursing

BY

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## Making Our Homes Attractive

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In taking up this subject I have carefully considered the many homes of our New Brunswick Institute Members and I trust the following may be of some benefit to each member.

The New Brunswick Women's Institute pin says, "For Home And untry," and quite naturally the home comes first.

Some one has said:—

"The little resting spots of men  
hat creep along Time's wall,  
Like shadows in the noonday glare  
kindest after all;  
When wearied by the morn of toil,  
ned with ambition's flame,  
'Tis sweet to seek the humble spot  
/here someone breathes your name."

So, Institute members, make your home attractive and comfortable, and when the men return from their day's toil they may indeed be glad to "seek the humble spot where someone breathes their name."

Furnishings in the home ought to be a very important part of women's work, because the majority of women have to live nine-tenths of their time within the walls of their own homes, and one's surroundings have a great effect on the minds and feelings of those living constantly in the same atmosphere.

Just at this time of the year many are contemplating housecleaning. To some it is a drudgery; to others a pleasure. Some will be able to purchase new furniture, curtains, etc., and can almost re-furnish their homes this year, thus housecleaning will not seem so disagreeable, but if you have not the new furniture, can't you polish up the old, or perhaps re-arrange it in the different rooms, taking a chair from this room and putting a table in that room? When your housecleaning is over your home will have changed its "old time look" and things will appear differently to you as well as to others.

Phoebe Cary says:—

"Don't do right unwillingly  
And stop to plan and measure,  
'Tis working with the heart and soul  
That makes our duty pleasure."

It is our duty to look after our homes, therefore let us do it willingly and thus our work will in time become a pleasure.

In furnishing your home do not try to furnish it in a grand way, but let it be simple, yet giving one a feeling of comfort the minute the home is entered. If a woman is neat, naturally we expect to find her home that way, or vice versa, and remember whatever your wants are they express "you." If they express the best in you, you should endeavor with all your might to let them lead you, even when satisfying only your needs.

The question of individuality is superior to all others. There is no real decoration of the home without it. You, as a householder and a woman must know just what your home is to stand for, what of yourself you want to express in it and through it. If you are desirous of having a hospitable home, a home in which you want your friends to feel at ease and from which they go away refreshed, you must have your chairs comfortable; not with legs too short or too long, or with backs bent so that no one could sit in them with comfort. Right here I would like to ask you how you happened to buy such uncomfortable chairs? If they were bought because there was a sale and the chairs were selling cheaply, it would have indeed been better for you to have waited and perhaps bought fewer chairs but comfortable ones. And for that matter the most comfortable chairs are not always the most expensive.

The decoration of a home means nothing but a consideration of the requirements of a family or its guests, providing for them in the best and most happy manner possible.

Even if the lamp in your parlor is a very handsome one, it would be poor policy on your part if you left it in a very conspicuous place, when at the same time your visitors were always moving to and fro to escape its glare.

At this time of the year many of you are having rooms in your homes papered. This is a very important part of house decoration and really requires much thought and care. Always remember before buying wall-paper to bring home several samples and to live with them in your house for several days. Hang them up and study them from many points of view. Of course by this I mean to carefully study one sample at a time, and don't bring out a sample which you have for another room until you have fully decided upon the paper for the first room. As said before, hang the sample up and study it; turn away and forget it, then turn quickly and see how its color and design impress you,—whether pleasantly or with a shock; put two widths together and notice how the pattern repeats; try it back of your sofas and pictures; see it in daylight and at night. What may seem very delightful hanging in the store may prove very uncomfortable at home. If you carry out this plan, I am sure you will never be dissatisfied with your wall-paper.

Any room devoted to reading and study should never have the walls papered with blossoms or complicated, over-drawn designs. Books are in

themselves a decoration. The wall-paper, therefore, should be of a quiet design.

In living rooms and parlors, where pictures, brasses and pottery are prominent, a modest wall color is a necessity. In dining-rooms the question of a background for the objects on the walls need not be so carefully considered. A dining-room may be well appointed with nothing displayed in it but the glass and silver.

In bed-rooms light-flowered or striped papers, with colors suggesting brightness, repose and daintiness, are very important. In a room that is long and narrow, a large-figured or flowered paper only emphasizes the length. Treat it with vertical stripes of two tones softly merging into each other. A flowered or figured material over the windows at the end will shorten the room bringing the most distant point nearer to you.

Always bear in mind that the wood-work frames the wall covering and that its color must never be ignored. Red wood-work and paper combined would never do, as that would be too heavy, but red paper would do if the wood be white.

When both the walls and wood-work of a room are of one tone,—a green for instance,—the ceiling should be slightly tinted with green, but merely enough of it used to carry the tone away from the white. If, on the other hand, the walls are green and the wood-work is white, then the ceiling should be white. Height is diminished by bringing the ceiling color down to the picture moulding. The ceiling can then be finished with a wash or covered with a paper. In some rooms a flowered paper is used in this way, the color of the paper below repeating that of some detail in the ceiling paper. This treatment is best suited to bed-rooms, bath-rooms and parlors.

What I am going to say now is really not included in home decorations, but it relates to the home and so many are guilty of such things, it would be well to speak of it. I know a Mr. and Mrs. X who were boarding in a country place with their two children. Although the home was very desirable in many ways, yet it had one great drawback. The mistress of that home invariably closed every door as she went from room to room, and the other members of the home had to do the same. Mrs. X often found it necessary to go to the kitchen and every time she went she had to open and close four doors. We all know it is necessary to keep the kitchen door leading into the dining-room closed, as we don't want the many odors from cooking to go through the house, but is it necessary to keep all other doors closed? When our friends call to see us is it not unpleasant to usher them into cold, musty parlors, where the glorious sun very seldom gets a peep behind the blinds? Throw open your doors, and up with the blinds, and your home will not only seem much more pleasant to your guests and the household members, but it will help wonderfully to "brighten"

one's disposition. A home well ventilated, well aired, and with plenty of light, has a marvellous effect upon its inmates.

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## Home Nursing

This is indeed a very important part of home life, and all women in the home should have a general knowledge of nursing, especially women in country homes, where it is at times quite difficult to get a doctor. Then again if a woman knows the simple rules and remedies to be used in the care of the sick it is not always necessary to call in a doctor. Of course at times it is quite essential and if the case be a serious one, the doctor needs the services of a trained nurse. Herein lies the advantage of the mother, wife or daughter, having knowledge of home nursing and it is not only more pleasant for the patient to have the loving and watchful care of the mother, etc., but it saves considerable expense in the home. I know a mother who nursed her son when he had typhoid fever and the son said after he had recovered, it was because he had his mother's loving care over him and not the care of a strange nurse, that made his recovery a quick one. This mother I am referring to was fortunate enough to have other help in her home, otherwise she could not have nursed her boy, as housework and nursing would have been too much for her.

When a member of your family is ill, give to him or her the most attractive room in the house. Such a room would include cleanliness, fresh air and plenty of sunshine. It has a wonderful effect upon the patient. The plainer the room, the better, and the less furniture the better, as much furniture in a room is only in the way and must be constantly moved by different ones coming into and going out of the room, and this very often has a depressing effect on the patient and might make him think he is very ill. A model sick room then would contain a single bedstead, (iron is best) a mattress, (firm, hair mattress is the best), with a thin covering of some kind under the lower sheet, a carpetless floor, and the only furniture in the room beside the bed to be a bureau, washstand, small table by the bedside and two or three comfortable chairs. Do not have rocking-chairs, as constant motion is sometimes very irritating to a nervous patient. It would be nice to have a sofa or lounging chair in the room for the patient during convalescence. Bright pictures on the wall, sometimes if the patient suffers keenly, helps to detract his attention from his suffering and flowers have the same effect.

Just a little hint right here about flowers in a sick chamber. Be careful not to have flowers in the room which have a heavy, sickening odor. This does not help your patient one bit. Plants should be watered daily and the water in which cut flowers are placed should be changed each morning.

Be sure to remove the flowers from the room at night. It not only keeps them fresher but it leaves the air of the room purer during the night.

Three sheets are required for a sick bed. The under sheet must be drawn very smoothly and well tucked in. If the patient is very restless it is well to pin the under sheet at the four corners with safety pins. When it is necessary to use a rubber sheet, which is about three-quarters of a yard wide, place it over the under sheet, pin it at the corners and cover with the draw sheet. The draw sheet is a small sheet folded to the width of the rubber and tucked firmly over it on both sides of the bed. It is of great advantage to have a draw sheet as it may be changed as often as required without disturbing the patient, and it helps to keep the under sheet clean for a much longer time. In putting on the upper sheet leave a good margin turned over at the top to cover the blanket. It adds more to the comfort of your patient to place over the blanket another sheet or a dimity counterpane instead of a heavy white spread. Remember heavy spreads have no real warmth in them and if your patient is very ill the spreads do more harm than good, as your patient is not strong enough to stand the heavy weight.

Many pillows help the patient wonderfully, especially if it is a long illness. A pillow tucked here and there makes the monotony of lying in bed so long much easier and it gives rest and often avoids bed-sores. In cases of fever a hair pillow, though harder, is much cooler than a feather one.

I have described a sick room and what the bed requires, but a very important part of the sick room is the position of the bed. Never allow the bed to face a window; this is very hard on the eyes. The bed should stand a little out from the wall on all sides. Why? So that the air may circulate around it. In real warm weather it is a good plan to place the bed in the centre of the room, but be sure the patient's head is protected from draughts.

It is very essential to have an even temperature in the sick room. In ordinary cases a temperature of 70 degrees F. is the best. This would not do, however, in cases of scarlet or typhoid fever. For such cases the room should not be warmer than 65 degrees F.

Are you aware, hot air always rises, and cold air descends, so if there is only one window in the sick room open it at the top instead of at the bottom, so that the air will not blow in directly on a level with the bed. The impure air will escape through the top of the window, and the fresh air will gradually find its way down through the room. If the sick room contains two windows facing each other, both of them may be left open two or three inches at the top, thus causing a continuous current of air, but high enough above the head of the bed to prevent a draught. Some windows in houses open only from the bottom, therefore a good idea is to open such a window about three or four inches, placing a piece of cardboard or thin strip of wood six or eight inches wide, over but a little away

from the opening, then the air will not blow directly into the room, but will enter gradually in an upward direction.

There is much I could write concerning the bed, but space does not permit and it is necessary that I be as brief as possible. It would be well for all the Institutes to have in their libraries literature concerning "Caring for the Sick," etc., so that each member may be able to read the same and thus acquire much knowledge regarding the sick chamber.

Following are some very important rules for a nurse to remember:—

1. Do not allow a visitor to enter the sick chamber straight from the open air on a cold or wet day. See that the visitor's clothes are not damp and have become warmed.
2. The normal temperature of the body is 98.4 degrees F., the normal pulse 72 beats to the minute, and the respiration 18 breathes to the minute.
3. Before using a clinical thermometer shake it carefully (holding the bulb end downwards) until the mercury falls below the mark 97 degrees, then insert the bulb in your patient's mouth, make your patient close the lips firmly so that no air will enter, and leave it there for a full three minutes.
4. Before using a thermometer it is always necessary to wash the bulb in cold water, and after you have finished dip it in a little alcohol, to guard against any chance of infection.
5. The pulse is counted by placing the first and second finger of one hand lightly on the inside of your patient's wrist. Time the beat by a watch, counting either by the half minute and doubling the result, or else counting the full minute.
6. All medicine bottles should be most distinctly labelled and kept carefully locked away out of the reach of children.
7. Never give a medicine of any kind, no matter how well you know the bottle, without first taking it to the light and reading the name very carefully.
8. Medicines should be measured very carefully, as with some drugs, even a drop more or less will make a great difference.
9. Grippe is an infectious disease and therefore you must keep your patient apart as much as possible from the other members of the family.
10. Symptoms of grippe are,—severe headache, fever, heavy cold in the head, and a very tired, depressed feeling, with aches in every bone in the body.
11. Symptoms of bronchitis are chill, fever, oppressed feeling in chest, irritation in the bronchial tubes, which cause fits of coughing, aching limbs and head, and a restless, nervous condition of the whole body.
12. When treating a bronchitis case never allow the temperature of the room to fall below 68 degrees.

13. Symptoms of pleurisy are,—sharp pain in the side, which is felt with every breath, chills followed by fever, and a frequent dry cough.

14. Symptoms of pneumonia are,—chills, high fever with headache, and pain in the chest after coughing. Breathing is rapid and the pulse gradually rises, accompanied by intense nervousness and restlessness.

15. When treating a pneumonia patient keep the head low, and do not allow your patient to get out of bed until ordered by the doctor, for fear of heart failure.

16. In typhoid fever the first symptoms are a severe continued headache and backache, a tired listless feeling, sometimes nose bleed, and a rise in temperature every evening a little higher than the day before, although it may be normal in the mornings.

17. Diphtheria starts with a chill, fever and sore throat. The tonsils are very much swollen, and there is great difficulty in swallowing, and a very offensive breath.

18. While treating a patient the nurse must put everything else aside. She ought to feel herself personally responsible for the care of the patient and the sick room.

19. A nurse should wear a plain cotton dress, especially when treating infectious diseases, as the dresses need to be boiled and disinfected constantly.

20. It is important for nurses to wear some kind of a cap or kerchief to prevent germs settling in the hair.

21. It is very poor policy on the part of a nurse to wear a starched dress or petticoat, as the rustling often irritates the patient.

22. One very important rule a home nurse should remember is never to eat anything in the sick room, as the air will be full of germs which are very fond of hiding themselves in food.

23. You should never touch a wound, without first scrubbing your hands with soap and water, especially the nails, as they form a great hiding place for germs.

24. When giving medicine put it into a small dainty glass, perfectly clean, with a glass of ice-water and a piece of orange or lemon on a little tray covered with a snowy napkin, and thus by making the dose look attractive you will lighten very much the disagreeable task of taking it.

25. No food of any kind should stand in the sick room, as it absorbs the microbes sooner than anything else.