

# OUR HOME DEPARTMENT

ART, as applied to household decoration, means more than merely the arrangement and ornamentation of the house so that it shall be pleasing to the eye: primarily it means, or should mean, the providing for the needs of a given household in such a manner as shall first of all answer the requirements of physical comfort, and shall at one and the same time so meet them that the æsthetic side of our make-up shall also be satisfied.

This was the idea of the Greek workman, and we find among the relics of ancient Greece utensils of common household service that are marvels of grace and beauty. Developed to the highest point by the Greeks, this spirit is to some degree characteristic of all primitive peoples—for example, see the water-jugs of the ancient Egyptians, the baskets of the North American Indians, and the copper jugs and basins of the Russian peasants. It is only when life and living become complex that we are content to accept the products of inferior workmanship, and to put less and less of intelligent thought into the work we do ourselves. A sort of mental sluggishness, largely arising from pre-occupation with many affairs, is mainly responsible for the lack of beauty in our homes. We are not direct enough in meeting our needs, often because we do not stop to think it out and so arrive at an appreciation of just what those needs are. We do not know what to do with certain rooms, because we do not clearly realize what those rooms should do for us.

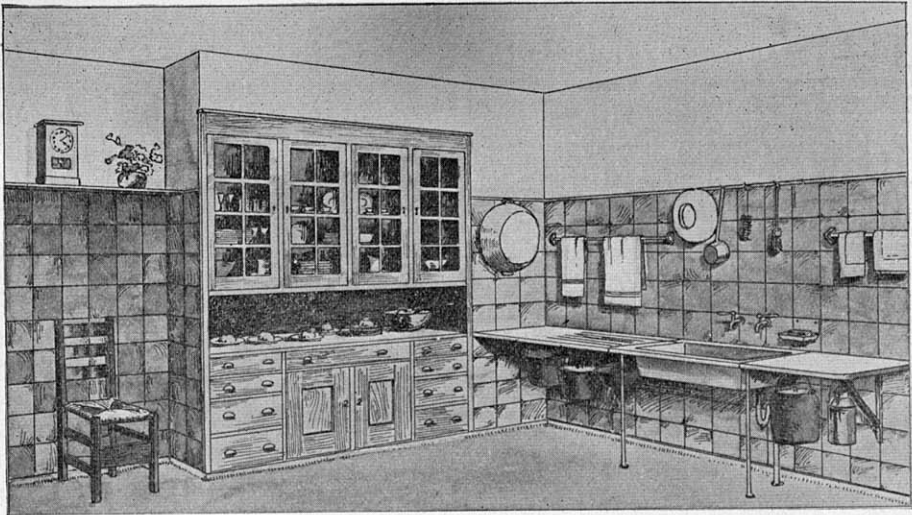
Each room in a house has its distinct function in the domestic economy. The chief difficulty most people find in building a house and in the minor details of furnishing is, that they have no clear idea of what the house is to do for them—no definite plan of the home as a place in which to spend a lifetime. The homes that satisfy,

and that mellow with age into the perfect environment of the people who live in them, are the result of careful thought of the house as a whole, and of the realization that some surroundings tend to elevate and some to demoralize, just as some colors tend to elevate and some to depress.

Before a room can attain its own distinctive individuality, it should be remembered that everything put into it must be there for some reason, and must serve a definite purpose in the life that is to be lived and the work that is to be done in that room. Take, for example, the kitchen; here is the room where the food for the household must be prepared, and where a large part of the work of the house must be done. It is the room where the housewife, or the servant-maid, must be for the greater part of her time day after day, and the very first requisites are that it should be large enough for comfort, well ventilated and full of sunshine, and that the equipment for the work that is to be done should be ample and of good quality, and, above all, intelligently selected. We all know the pleasure of working with good tools and in congenial surroundings; no more things than are necessary should be tolerated in the kitchen, and no less.

No more home-like room can be imagined than the old New England kitchen, the special realm of the housewife and the living room of the whole family. Its spotless cleanliness and homely cheer are remembered as long as life lasts by those men and women who had the good fortune to associate such a room with their earliest recollections of home, and even a crude wood-cut in some old book, or a cursory description from memory, carries its irresistible appeal. No child ever lived that could resist the attraction of such a room, and a child has in all its purity the primitive instinct for living that ruled the simpler and more wholesome customs of

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KITCHEN, SHOWING SINK AND CUPBOARD.

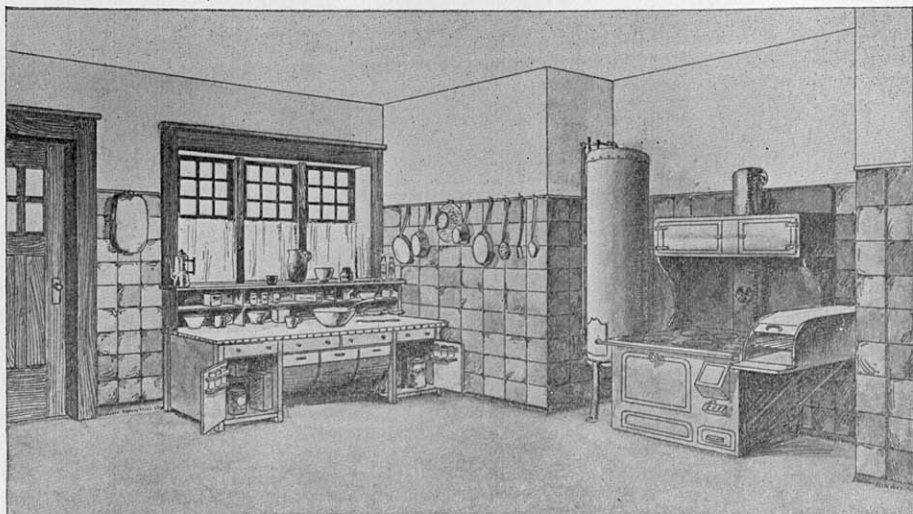
other days. In these times of more elaborate surroundings, the home life of the family is hidden behind a screen, and the tendency is to belittle that part of the household work by regarding it as a necessary evil. Even in the small house lived in by the family of very limited means, the tendency too often is to make the kitchen the dump heap of the whole household, a place in which to do what cooking and dish-washing must be done, and to get out of as soon as possible. In such a house there is invariably a small, cheap and often stuffy dining-room, as cramped and comfortless as the kitchen, and yet regarded as an absolute necessity in the household economy. Such an arrangement is the result of the sacrifice of the old-time comfort for a false idea of elegance, and its natural consequence is the loss of both.

In the farm-house and the cottage of the working-man, where the domestic machinery is comparatively simple, the cheerful, home-like kitchen—which is also the dining-room of the family and one of its pleasantest gathering-places—should be restored in all its old-time comfort and convenience. In planning the house, it should come in for the first thought in-

stead of the last, and its use as a dining-room as well as a kitchen should be carefully considered. In all the Craftsman Cottages for which we have published plans, this feature has received our most thoughtful attention, and in the kitchen of the country house, published in the May number, is shown the plan for a combined kitchen and dining-room on a larger scale. The hooded range is so devised that all odors of cooking are carried off, and the arrangement and ventilation are such that this is one of the best-aired and sunniest rooms imaginable, as well as the most convenient. One device that gives a charmingly cozy and hospitable effect to such a room is a low partition that divides the room in half without shutting off either side from the other, thus giving the effect of structural quaintness without sacrificing that of roominess.

Where social relations and the demands of a more complex life make it impossible for the house-mistress to do her own work, and the kitchen is necessarily more separated from the rest of the household, it may easily be planned to meet the requirements of the case without losing any of its comfort, convenience, or suitability for the

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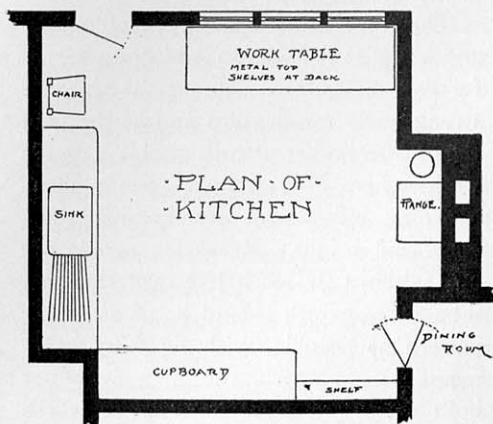


KITCHEN, SHOWING RANGE AND WORK TABLE.

work that is to be done in it. Modern science has made the task very easy by the provision of electric lights, open plumbing, laundry conveniences, hot and cold running water, and the luxuries of the properly-arranged modern kitchen would have been almost unbelievable a generation ago. Even if the kitchen is for the servant only, it should be a place in which she may take some personal pride. It is hardly going too far to say that the solution of the problem of a properly arranged kitchen would come near to being the solution also of the domestic problem. In spite of the boasted "modern conveniences," the average kitchen is too often but a depressing place, not too pleasant to work in, and certainly not a very elevating scene for the social life that is the right of the girl as well as of her mistress. A pleasant room, which she could take pride in keeping neat, and in which she could entertain her friends with no sense of discomfort or mortification, would remove much of the distressing difference that is maintained between the front and back of the house, and tend to promote a much more harmonious understanding and greater content on both sides. A "kitchen porch,"

such as is shown in the Craftsman house in this issue, would be a most valuable addition to such a kitchen.

The properly arranged kitchen should be as "open" as possible, to prevent the accumulation of dirt. Without the customary "glory holes" that sink and other closets often become, genuine cleanliness is much easier to preserve and the appearance of outside order is not at all lessened. There should be no place where soap and water may not be freely applied, and the arrangements may easily be made so that the work will be greatly facilitated. In no part of the house does the good old say-





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ing: "a place for everything and everything in its place" apply with more force than in the kitchen. Ample cupboard space for all china should be provided near the sink, to do away with unnecessary handling, and the same cupboard should contain drawers for table linen, cutlery and smaller utensils. Such a cupboard should be an actual structural feature of the kitchen. This arrangement would be found much more convenient than a pantry, which is nearly always cramped and dark, where things accumulate in spite of the efforts of even a careful housekeeper, and which is in most cases a catch-all rather than a service. The cupboard as shown in the illustration has a broad shelf, which provides a convenient place for serving.

For the floor of a kitchen nothing has yet been found so satisfactory as a prepared cement, now obtainable for just this purpose. It comes in a number of color effects and may be put on plain or with an attractive border effect. The same material may be used in tiled pattern for a high wainscot. Its merits are at once apparent, as it is cleanly, sanitary and very easily cared for. In laying the cement for the floor there should be a rounded curve where floor and wall meet instead of the customary rectangular joint, so that no lodgment may be found for dust or water.

The porcelain sink has open plumbing, and wings at the sides to hold drain boards for wet dishes, etc. Under the sink are strong hooks for the pots and kettles, and the pans and other utensils are hung on the wall, where they are in open sight—a strong inducement for keeping them clean and bright. Racks for towels are also within easy reach just over the sink. The range, which should be of as simple pattern as possible, with no fussy ornamentation to catch the dirt, is better built in. One great convenience is the

boiler, of which a feature should be the automatic water heater. By this device, the boiler not only furnishes the supply of hot water for the household, when connected with the range, but has also a separate gas attachment so that hot water may be obtained within a few minutes at any time, without starting the range fire—a great convenience in summer.

Most convenient of all is the work table, within easy reach of the range. The illustration shows the manifold advantages of closets, drawers and bins, where everything may be stored that ordinarily has to be brought from the pantry. A shelf above the table, and the window-sill above that, afford additional room. The surface of this table is covered with zinc, which may be wiped off and scoured until spotless and shining. Above the table is the broad window, which may be made attractive with fresh muslin curtains, inexpensive and easily laundered. The wall treatment above the wainscot is simply rough cast plaster, which will be found much more satisfactory than any paint or paper.

### REPLIES AND DISCUSSION

**T**HE CRAFTSMAN has a growing company of good friends in the far West, and the following letter, coming from Portland, Oregon, will show a few of the household problems, upon which we have been able to throw some light:

"Letters in THE CRAFTSMAN Home Department, which magazine we look forward to each month, have encouraged me to write asking your advice about our new and first home.

"The elevation was suggested by one of your houses in the May number, and our idea now is to have the lower floor clapboarded and painted cream color, the upper story and attic shingled and stained

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a soft brown, to be trimmed with cream. How do you think the effect would be? We had thought some of shingling it all, but feared it would be too much monotonous, and have heard that the stained shingles in time grow darker with age until they too have to be painted. Can you inform us as to this?

"The large living room across the front of the house, facing south, with French windows (swinging) on east, west and south, and a large fireplace, we had thought to have finished in rich golden brown woodwork, dull finish, with paneling on the walls from floors to frieze, which we want to be low and wide. What would you suggest for a frieze design and where could we obtain something that would harmonize well with the woodwork, and also with the tint of the rough plaster, which I will leave to you.

"The dining room will have woodwork to match your furniture, which we have decided on. The walls of this room, which is 15 x 16, has swinging French windows on the west, and a French door leading to a veranda on the north, we had planned to be solid panels a few feet from the floor, say to the sills of the windows. These walls will also have a deep space for a frieze. What is your suggestion for the walls and frieze that will harmonize with our golden-brown living room, looking through a wide doorway?

"Is Sanitas, that you advertise, satisfactory for the kitchen?

"Now as to curtains. I should like a washable material which can be bought by the yard, which has a border design at the bottom (say in a conventional flower) the body of the curtain to be cream color or ecru. Have you any such material and how much is it? What we wish is to have a simple, artistic and cheery home, at the smallest expense, for at the present time this is necessary; so when you advise

me on materials and any suggestions you will bear this in mind.

Our lower floors are to be finished in hardwood, but we had thought some of waxing the soft Oregon fir in the bedrooms, using rag rugs. Do you know with what success the soft-wood floors are filled in and waxed?

"Thank you so much for your needlework book. It gives many suggestions as well as information as to where one can buy just such things that cannot be found in the shops and are also exclusive in design.

"Your own ideas concerning the exterior color arrangement are excellent. With the cream colored base, the shingles above a soft brown with cream trim, we believe that a very soft moss green would be very rich and effective for the roof color. Any wood that is exposed to the weather grows darker with time, so in selecting your tint it is well to take this into consideration. We most decidedly recommend stain in preference to paint; especially in the case of shingles, which should never be painted under any consideration.

"The arrangement of your living room is particularly pleasing to us, and if properly handled will be a very delightful feature of your house. It would be our choice, as well as yours, to have the woodwork a rich brown; rather gray than gold; and you could then have the wainscot either solid wood or in a paneled effect, using the woodwork as a sort of frame, and in the panels a soft shade of brown canvas.

"We published in the July issue of *THE CRAFTSMAN*, 1905, a treatment of a living room which would seem to us an ideal one for the room you describe. We should tint the broad frieze line just above the wainscot in a very soft old gold, almost an ivory, and instead of using a regular frieze pattern, we would suggest that at

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intervals some little flower *motif* stenciled in; rich browns and greens would form an interesting feature. The ceiling tone then should be left of the gray plaster, rough cast and untinted.

"The dining room will be most effective if carried out in a soft tone of green, verging towards the brown woody tones.

"In both the living room and dining room it will be well to bring the ceiling down to form a narrow frieze line, the depth of which should be uniform in the two rooms. A cream tone for the ceiling in the dining room will be more satisfactory than the gray.

"For the kitchen we can recommend Sanitas most highly. This comes in a great variety of colors and is particularly attractive in the delft blues and white.

"Regarding curtains we are sorry to say that we have nothing that quite corresponds to your suggestion, but are sending you under separate cover a number of patterns which we have selected as having especial reference to your color scheme.

"In the living room soft challis with the rose pattern in old yellow would be particularly pleasing, and in the dining room the figured linen with the ivory background and pattern in coral pink, green and a touch of old blue, will give just the touch of brightness that is needed.

"For portieres between these rooms, simple hangings of Craftsman canvas in one of the wood browns or greens would be excellent, and it would be a pretty idea to have the design on these repeat the little stenciled *motif* on your living room wall.

"Noting your question concerning the finish of Oregon fir, we might advise you that this will be very satisfactory if stained and waxed as you suggest. We shall be glad to send you in the course of a few days some samples of our Craftsman finishes on Oregon fir, which will most certainly be of interest to you in this connection.

FROM another subscriber comes the following:

"We want the walls of the living room, den and dining room covered with Craftsman canvas. The dining room will be furnished in mahogany, with built-in sideboard after a Craftsman design and furnished with Craftsman mahogany furniture. The fireplace will be set up in Grueby tiles of deep blue. Canton china in cabinets, and for wall decoration—what color of canvas would you advise for the walls?

"The den and living room will be furnished with Craftsman furniture in oak and leather. The den has couch and chairs in dark English oak, with red leather cushions. What should be the color of walls and color and finish of woodwork? Living room furniture is of light fumed oak, and cushions in a neutral green leather, or a tone between green and tan. Fireplace done in nine-inch square yellow English tile, unglazed. What shall I use for the walls, and should I try to match the furniture finish in the woodwork or have something darker for contrast?

"Our specifications call for sheathed walls, onto which we propose tacking the canvas. Is this a good way to apply it to the walls, or is it better to have plaster walls and glue the canvas to it? Does it come sized for plaster walls? I have adopted the sideboard as illustrated in the August, 1904, number of THE CRAFTSMAN and now I am beginning to have misgivings about it being suitable for mahogany. I am afraid it is too late now to change anything but the arrangement of drawers and cupboards and the trimmings. Do you think it will be suitable as it stands? Will you kindly suggest color and material for sill-length curtains for these three rooms (all of them face the south), the windows of which have the upper third of leaded, and the lower two-



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thirds of plate glass? What would be most effective portieres for the door between the hall and living room?"

Answer:

"For the dining room we think you would find the treatment suggested in the living room of the July number of *THE CRAFTSMAN* a very pretty solution of your problem. Instead of the solid wood panels or wainscot, we should use the Canton blue wall canvas in the panels, having the portion between the wainscot and the frieze line tinted an old gold in rough coated plaster, and the ceiling and frieze in untinted gray rough coated plaster. This scheme will be beautiful with your mahogany furniture, your blue tiles and Canton china. The little stenciled *motif* at intervals, as suggested in the illustration referred to, would be an attractive feature, introducing deep greens and a deep old pink, this being repeated again in the window draperies for which we suggest our figured linen with the ivory background.

"For the wall covering in the den, a snuff-brown canvas would be our choice and at the window soft draperies of challis with the conventional pattern, perhaps a rose *motif* in deep red, repeating the color of the upholstery. We think the finish of the woodwork should be a deeper, richer and redder brown than the upholstery.

"For your light fumed oak furniture in the living room, an olive-green would be our choice in the wall tone, as we have suggested in the sample, having just enough yellow to bring it in relation with the tiles. In this room we would have the interior trim somewhat darker than the furniture.

"Noting your question concerning the walls, you will understand, of course, that unless the house is for summer residence only, the walls should in any case be plastered. The canvas should not be glued to it, but should be tacked to narrow strips of wood and tacked close to the baseboard. The breadths of canvas should first be

joined by a machine-stitched seam, pressed nicely so that the join, from the right side, is hardly visible. The line of tacks may be covered with a tiny strip of the same canvas glued in place or any little inconspicuous furniture braid.

"The only sideboard shown in the August, 1904, *CRAFTSMAN* is the buffet illustrated on page 500, and we presume this is the one referred to. This should make a very handsome piece in mahogany with trimmings of old brass.

"For portieres between hall and living room we should use the same green canvas as that used on the walls of the living room. These could be made very effective by the addition of an applied *motif*, introducing the colors as used in the stencil on the walls.

**S**OME suggestions from the following letter and our reply may be of general interest:

"Thank you for the courteous response to my request for samples. As we are just breaking ground for our new home, I may have been a trifle premature, yet the future color scheme has to be taken into account.

"I have decided upon a covering for the walls which would seem to me a delight to the eye. It is one of the rich browns. The samples appeal to me on account of their rich coloring and strength. They may be beyond my reach, as university people are obliged to deal with an artistic sense quite out of proportion to their incomes. But such materials will last for years and the wall places are not large. I like one of the brownish green canvases for portieres and I shall desire to have one of these beautiful designs which I find in your book, embroidered in your shops. I have no skill whatever with embroidery. I am going away for the summer and will delay ordering anything until the first of September. Later I will send you a blue

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print of our ground plan. Would you kindly put it away with the samples enclosed so that in writing for anything in future it will not be necessary to go over this ground again? You will know the colors to be dealt with. I should like your advice as to the coloring of plaster between the beams. Dr. Bonbright does not like plaster left under the trowel. So the plan speaks for smooth finish, though it could be altered if you think it much better. What color should it be? I should be grateful for any advice.

"The fireplace is also disturbing. I do not quite like pressed brick. It has 'too fine' a look and lacks vigor. I also do not like a combination of brick and tiles. Would pavement brick be too rough? Still another thing; I have two large thick Scotch rugs of most impossible colors, but excellent material. Would it be wise to have these dyed green? I could then order a few rugs from your shops which would be made to harmonize. The ordinary Eastern rug does not appeal to me. Those represented in your book do.

"I realize that a small house can easily be spoiled by imprudence. Surrounded as I am by people of wealth I desire that my own things shall stand for thought and intelligence.

"The electric lights I have had all placed low—side-lights—except over dining table. I shall desire to take up the question of very simple fixtures and shades with you later on."

Replying we wrote as follows:

"We think with you that the rich golden russet will make a beautiful and satisfactory wall covering. In connection with this, russet and green portieres will be charming, and when it comes time for you to order these, we will be glad to make you a special color scheme introducing some of these russet tones in the embroidery and applique.

"Following out your suggestion we

shall be glad to put your blue print carefully away with the samples, so that when occasion requires we may refer to it at any time.

"Concerning the coloring of the plaster, we should very much prefer it left untinted between the beams, but if you do not find this acceptable, the gray cast may be entirely removed by mixing a little yellow with the plaster when applied, so that the offset will be a cream color instead of a gray. We prefer the rough finish to the smooth, but this, of course, is merely a matter of preference.

"Instead of pressed brick for your fireplace, we would suggest a pavement brick and that the main fireplace be arch brick, which are those somewhat uneven in shape and very rich in color effects as a result of too strong heat in firing. These may be purchased for a song in any brickyard, as they are usually discarded for the usual building purposes. As their name implies they are those baked nearest the arch of the kiln.

"The problem of Scotch rugs is not so easily solved, but there is no reason why they should not be successfully dyed. It would, however, not be safe to entrust them to the ordinary dyer without carefully instructing them that the dye used must have no depth of color whatever, but should be the faintest tint imaginable, of a soft green or yellow or whatever the color selected. If you used too intense a color the pattern of the rugs would be entirely obliterated and the effect very dull and unsightly, while the other method will simply give a uniform hue to the rug as a whole and bring the colors more into harmony with each other, with the predominating color of your room. It is these little points after all that make or mar the finished effect, and too careful attention cannot be paid them at the outset."



