A CALIFORNIA COTTAGE EMBODYING SOME EXCELLENT FEATURES: BY CHARLES ALMA BYERS

In trying to determine what endows a house with that subtle quality known as "charm," we arrive at the conclusion that it is the happily balanced blending of two attributes—"dignity" and "graciousness." If we speak of a house as being "dignified," we mean that it is simple in construction, substantial, free from cheapening fretwork and ornament. Dignity carried too far might result in a severity that would be repellent instead of attractive, so the winning quality of kindliness or graciousness must be in evidence. This can always be brought about by the use of vines: either the creepers that will hold close to the architectural lines of the house, or the more riotous vines that throw out independent sprays, thus breaking the square corners of the window line with a softening curve. The sharp angle of a porch or a roof that seems to be harsh or abrupt, when mellowed by the pendant tendrils or blossoms of a vine, appears full of grace.

A house covered with vines that loses a line here and emphasizes another one there has the fascination of an ably handled sketch. A sketch, instead of robbing a thing of important detail, enriches it by adding the all-important, creative quality of imagination.

In the photographs shown of this California house, these two qualities are happily blended, and well illustrate the beauty that can be obtained by simple lines, sketched in, as it were, by the kindly blossoming vines.

Although it is comparatively plain in outward structural lines, this California cottage possesses far more than the usual charm. Much of its general attractiveness may be due to the fact that it is embowered in a profusion of roses and other vines, but even without such embellishment it would be an effective and comfortable little home. It has the appearance of being substantially constructed, as it is, and the color scheme is such as to form an excellent background for the flowers and vines. The interior is, if anything, even more attractive than the exterior. Unusually good taste is exhibited in the furnishings and decorations, and there are numerous built-in features of artistic design and workmanship that combine to create an inviting and homelike appearance.

In some respects this house suggests the California bungalow, but the resemblance is far too slight to justify its being so classified. The roof lines are reasonably regular, and the pitch of the roof is much more pronounced than that which characterizes the genuine bungalow. Unlike those of the bungalow, the finishing timbers are dressed and painted, instead of stained, and the outside chimney is constructed of evenly laid ordinary brick. The windows are mostly of the casement variety, with well-designed
window-boxes beneath, and it is to their style and arrangement that the exterior of the house owes much of its claim to attractiveness. The siding is of shingles, stained a rich dark brown tone, and the trim is done in a light cream color.

The low ceilings and the several built-in features of the interior likewise suggest the modern bungalow, though somewhat more slightly. The house is a story and a half high. On the lower floor there are a living room, den, dining room, kitchen and servant's room, while on the second floor are two bedrooms and a bathroom. From the front porch a door leads into the den and another into the living room. The den constitutes a cozy retreat, being one of the most appreciated rooms in the house. Its walls on two sides are lined with built-in bookcases to a height of about five feet, and on one of the remaining sides of the room there is a full-length window seat. The woodwork is of Oregon pine, like that of nearly all the other rooms, finished to resemble weathered oak, and the plastered portions of the walls are tinted a light chocolate color.

The living room is roomy and at the same time homelike. A fireplace, constructed of artificial brick, occupies one end of it, with a double casement window and window seat on either side. A broad arch connects the living room and dining room, and at each side of the arch in the living room there is a built-in bookcase. The ceiling is beamed, and four individually suspended globes solve the lighting question in a delightful and unusual way. The woodwork is finished to resemble fumed oak, and the walls and ceiling spaces are tinted two shades of buff.

The dining room, one of the most attractively
furnished rooms in the house, possesses an excellent buffet, and across one entire end is an inviting window seat. From this seat a delightful view of the garden is obtainable through a series of four windows. The ceiling, as in the living room, is beamed, and the walls are also tinted buff, but the woodwork is treated to imitate Flemish oak. The floors of the dining room, living room and den are of hardwood.

The kitchen is of the so-called cabinet kind, and is a most convenient place in which to work. Its numerous cabinets, drawers and cupboards assure a

“place for everything,” and surely any housewife would take pride in keeping it in order. The woodwork is heavily enameled, and the floor is covered with linoleum.

This house, both inside and out, is an excellent illustration of what is possible in the creation of an attractive cottage home. The profusion of flowers, the well-kept grounds and the simplicity of the structural lines of the house combine to create an outside appearance that is all anyone of moderate means could desire, and the interior arrangement of built-in features, the color schemes, the furnishings and decorations have resulted in producing truly inviting rooms. The flat expanse of lawn fringed with flowers which increase in profusion near the house, gives a most attractive impression. It is as if the flowers of their own choice clustered and centered around the home. They seem to have gathered together for the purpose of encircling it with fragrance and protecting it with the power of beauty. The house is located in Pasadena, California, and was built at a cost of about $2,800, which is an astonishingly low price, when its comfort, convenience, size and substantial beauty are considered.