SWIMMING POOLS THAT "SNARE THE SUN":
BY HENRIETTA P. KEITH

The House Excellent of the present implies more than good architecture, more than convenient floor plans and harmony in decoration, more even than choice of the site and suiting the dwelling thereto, essential as all these things are. There has arisen a wonderfully high standard of excellence for the modern home. All the ordinary comforts and beauties must be included with many extraordinary ones; at least we’d have considered them extraordinary a few years ago. They are become usual and a matter of course now. "Snareers of the sun" are we, in our unhesitating appropriation of every good and beautiful thing for the home of our dreams.

It arises before us, a fair vision, and we boldly put it into material form. So it comes about that the swimming pool—until recently considered as a feature of some millionaire home or a public utility—is now quite frequently included in plans for a modest home.

There are kinds and degrees of swimming pools, just as there are of houses. While California is preëminently the land for outdoor swimming pools, and we illustrate several charming examples, it by no means has a monopoly of these pleasant places. The outdoor pool first shown is a feature of a lovely Minneapolis garden—a garden living room in truth, carpeted with the velvet green turf, sheltered overhead by a vine-wreathed pergola of gray cement pillars which encloses it on two sides while the garden wall protects it in the rear; equipped with a dressing room and a shower bath, and furnished with garden seats. Flowers are set about, and hanging baskets of ferns swing between the vines of the pergola rafters. The paving around the pool is of large red tile, which with the richly blended hues of the tapestry brick wall, form a color background of great beauty for the silvery pool and its brave green setting.

The owner of this lovely garden has been fortunate in finding an architect with sympathetic ideas, and together they have achieved a feature not only beautiful in itself, but artistically related to the dwelling and unified with it. The pool itself is a large one—sixteen by twenty-eight feet and eight and a half feet deep. It is lined with colored tile, making a lovely lure of tone with the cool, green water where "emerald shadows shot through with sunlight" fall from the vines overhead.

The loveliness of the garden swimming pool is undoubted; but its beauty and usefulness is brought low all too soon in most climates by winter frosts. Some outdoor pools have indeed been enclosed with glass like a hothouse or conservatory, with a space around the pool

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AN OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL in California of gray concrete: The border is veiled by vines and gold and brown creeping mosses: Jars of deep green pottery filled with flowers crown the pillars of the enclosing brick wall.

With palms, peppers and eucalyptus at the outer edge to this pool there is always a bit of shade to bring coolness when the sun becomes too warm.

A SWIMMING POOL in an Eastern house built of tapestry brick half hidden in shrubbery: The floor of pool is lined with bright turquoise blue tile.

White marble columns support the pergola of reddish brown wood: With large ferns planted in heavy jars and with vines streaming down from the pergola this pool will be a fairylike place indeed.
A SWIMMING POOL OF CONCRETE in the center of a California patio.
AN OCTAGONAL INDOOR SWIMMING POOL in the house of a Minneapolis architect, covered with a glass dome.
fitted up with wicker couches for sun baths. But this is a costly expedient and deprives the pool of all its outdoor character. If an all-the-year pool is desired, include it in the plan of the house.

Seldom have beauty and utility been combined in a more interesting manner than in the indoor swimming pool here illustrated in the home of a Minneapolis architect. Being his own client, he could give free rein to his fancy. An octagonal, pavilion-like room was built into an angle of the house, planned to receive it, but on a lower level than the main floor. A short stairway connects the pool room with the great living room, and one of the charms of the house is the lovely vista through the open door, while the senses are lulled by the drowsy tinkle of the spray falling into the dimpling pool. Even Mahomet in Paradise, taking his afternoon nap near the fountain of Salsabil, with a cloud for a pillow, rolled under his head by a devoted houri, had scarce a lovelier place or a softer lullaby. Its prototype indeed may well have been one of the courts of the ancient rulers, with its pool and fountain in the center and a narrow, cushioned seat or divan running around the walls richly set with windows of stained glass.

The pool room is twenty-four by twenty-eight feet and the pool itself about twelve feet in diameter and six feet deep in the center, sloping down from the rim, where it is about four feet deep. It is in fact a huge cement bowl, resting on cement footings with an air space between of two and a half or three inches. This air space is an important provision, because the ground at that depth is cold in summer and the cement basin would be of the same temperature as the ground if connected with it. In winter, the ground being warmer than the upper air, this objection would not obtain.

In this instance the water is kept at the temperature of the room in winter by the coil of pipes passing through it from the heating plant of the house. No extra heat is used, for the water radiates all the heat supplied to it into the atmosphere of the house, with the additional advantage of the humidity from the water in the pool. A metal gate—a canal gate in miniature—in the bottom of the pool is raised to empty it. This connects with the sewer through the basement pipes. There is of course an outlet for overflow, when the streams are playing from the mouths of the four green frogs squatting on the edge of the pool.

In addition to the casement windows extending completely round three sides of the room, it is lighted by a skylight, which has electric lights at each intersection. The ceiling dome, which curves down from this skylight, has a very unusual and charming fresco decora-
tion of lattice and vines done in oil so as not to be injured by the dampness. Real vines growing from concealed pots are cunningly trained to meet the painted ones, so that it is hard to tell the real from the simulated. Bay trees in tubs and potted ferns stand about on the white cement tile paving around the pool and add to the charm. Here have been merry swimming parties, the gayly colored suits of the swimmers reminding one of "those robes, gold-tawny, not hiding the shapes of the naked feet unsandaled;" they darted about like goldfish in a bowl. Garden and house, no longer separate entities, are now closely linked in a pleasant intimacy. A beautiful eastern home has just achieved a swimming pool built of the tapestry brick of the house with a deep-eaved, Spanish tile roof, but so hidden in shrubbery that it does not seem to have a separate existence. The interior is supported by gray and white marble columns, and is walled around with white enamel tile. The cornice and the ceiling beams are of reddish brown wood, with green plaster between the beams. The floor of the pool is tiled with bright turquoise blue tile.

The classic beauty of the California patio with swimming pool in center needs no comment. It is hardly loveliness unadorned, but its own perfection is its greatest charm. A beautifully proportioned arcade surrounds it, and upon this all the living rooms open. Slender cypresses and the delicate lace-like vines overlie the gray concrete pillars like the Moorish fretwork of the Saracens. In the fragrant shadows of the cypresses, marble seats are placed at intervals around the marble pool with its amber-brown water reflecting the red-brown Spanish tile above. Almost one thinks of the wood-browned pools of Paradise, so pure are its depths.

The last illustration shows garden pools with the wonderful California setting and the romantic treatment possible in that favored land. The gray of the concrete is veiled by vines and the gold and brown of creeping lichens, while jars of deep-green pottery filled with flowers crown the pillars of the enclosing brick wall.

To attempt such features in small grounds would be absurd, but garden loveliness is not at all the prerogative of the rich. There are many picturesque corners "all among the reeds and rushes" cunningly set in small gardens whose charm is as great as the more artificial and costly compositions.

As to cost, it is impossible to make hard and fast specifications. Each pool is its own problem. Dimensions vary with circumstances, and depth also varies. For a pool say fifteen by twenty feet and eight feet deep, the cost would average ten cents a cubic foot if made of concrete. If lined with finished tile, the cost would be doubled. The
tile is ideal, both for beauty and for use, but costly. An outdoor pool such as the last shown would cost about two thousand dollars.

On the other hand, a modest little wading pool, where children’s feet may splash joyously in the water, may be built for one hundred dollars. It can be of a size suited to small grounds, and the excavation is a mere bagatelle, for nine inches in the center and four inches at the outer rim is quite deep enough. The pool would be of concrete, with the floor slightly rough so the little feet will not slip. It may be fed by a small pipe placed a foot underground and entering the concrete by an elbow, which connects with the house supply. There would of course be an outlet connecting with the sewer, and the water can be completely changed in a short time by flushing the pool with the garden hose. Such a simple pool is within the reach of almost anyone. From such a pool to the costly plaything of the millionaire’s garden, with its marble sides and tile linings, its vine-wreathed pergolas and flower-filled urns, is a far cry. But there are many intermediate stopping places. Certain fundamental points are essential in all. There must be sufficiently large openings for supply and escape. There must be waterproof construction. Provisions must be made for filtering or sterilizing the water. One way of keeping water sterile at small expense is to use calcium hypochlorite at regular intervals in very small doses. A simple method is to fill cheesecloth bags with the powder, one quarter pound to 25,000 gallons of water, and drag the bags through the water till the powder is dissolved. Provision should be made for warming the water. Outdoor pools exposed to strong sunlight, as in California, are comfortable without other heat, but this would not be the case in northern climates much of the time. For indoor pools the water should be the temperature of the room and there should be good ventilation. Bad air and too low a temperature will destroy all the pleasure and benefit of the pool.