DEVELOPING A HOME: "HERE A LITTLE, THERE A LITTLE": BY ESTHER A. COSSE

HOME hunger has become so profound these last few years that the need of moderate or low priced houses or bungalows has become a matter of importance for a great many people. What discourages a couple of moderate or small means is to examine the plans of a bungalow and after deciding they like it very much find that the cost runs into the thousands, entirely beyond their ability to pay. For such people a variety of low priced bungalow designs would be a boon. Home builders should be encouraged. They add to the stability of the community, and the way to encourage them is to offer them plans which they can afford to use.

If I speak in the first person it is because I want to make my story seem all the more real. I want to make other home makers understand how a moderate priced bungalow can be built and I want to lay a special emphasis upon this important matter of low cost.

I had a portable house which I placed upon a lot some distance from the more traveled road because I wanted it merely for a summer home, and desired seclusion. Later it developed into a more permanent abiding place, though this was not intended at first. However, I am not displeased at the turn of events, only perhaps I would have planned a little differently in the beginning if the venture had promised to be a year round abiding place. Often little ventures develop in unexpected directions even as mine did. Still the end has been so much pleasanter than the beginning that I have only enthusiasm and I will undertake to express what it has meant to me. The portable house cost $300 erected. It had but two rooms, but I built a third, on the rear, that cost less than another $100. It is not possible to give exact figures of the cost, for much of the work was done by ourselves, and probably a good many would not count that at all.

At first the bungalow was amply large, for there were but two of us, and some of my happiest days were passed in this wee home. Later an old lady was added to the family and a little girl.

The following summer we added the broad dining porch shown in the photograph, which extends around two sides of the house. It is screened to save annoyance from insects. It could be enclosed with windows in the winter, and thus would serve as an admirable sun parlor. Perhaps we will do this next, though we have other plans for an extension and our money may go for that first. Perhaps it is only another curious phase
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of human nature, but I must admit that this growing house which somehow seems to expand at just the right time to meet our requirements is one of the most delightful phases of home making. Whatever joys belong to the home, sacrificing one thing to obtain another, is ours in this development of a house.

Back of the house is a little room built especially for our one bit of extravagance. We have an artesian well over 100 feet deep, and last season we put in a pump operated by a gasoline engine, so with the addition of a suitably located tank we were able to have a bathroom with hot and cold water and a laundry with set tubs. Our home was then quite equal to a city house in conveniences.

We now have a comfortable home and up to the present the cost has been but $950, nor has this been paid out all at once. Quite the contrary. The expenditure has been carried over several years, adding a little here and there as seemed necessary, and as our means warranted. The various items figure about like this:

- Foundation, including excavation: $120
- Masonry: $225
- Carpentry, including lumber: $450
- Hardware: $20
- Painting: $75
- Plumbing: $25

Total: $915

The masonry, including not only the laying of such stones as required for the foundation by the carting of the material and what is described as three coat plastering—in that is included the lathing. In some localities these figures would vary, in one running higher and in another lower. Probably where lumber was low, the total cost would be as low as $800. In a region where lumber was high it might exceed the $900, but what is here given is as near the actual cost aside from the pump and engine as it is possible to give.

The house as it stands is severely plain, but we have sought to overcome this objection, if it is one, by surrounding it with vines and all sorts of old-fashioned flowers. Further than that we have brought from the woods and fields a great variety of marvelously beautiful wild flowers, and have succeeded so well in not damaging them that they thrive as well as in their native haunts.

There are, of course, numerous ways to make home surroundings beautiful. We chose this one. We have planted trees about the grounds which later will furnish abundant and grateful shade and flowering shrubs yield their fragrant blossoms all the season.

This reminds me of one little personal touch which may interest. The large window in the south of the living room is a casement set with 5x7 glass, all old negatives washed clean after they had fitted the amateur photographer's longing to imprison some of the beauty he had found around him.