

YOU CAN LIVE IN AN APARTMENT • DOROTHY DUNCAN

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Author's Copy

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by **DOROTHY DUNCAN**

Decorations by Douglas Hilliker

FARRAR & RINEHART, Inc.
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A Word Aside, First

This began as another how-to-do-it book, but almost from the first it became interwoven with the personal irrelevancies of Michael and me and how we learned to live in apartments with the least unpleasantness and the most fun. So, it has been allowed to stay.

During the last six years we have lived in a lot of so-called apartments in Halifax, Hollywood, Oxford, Chicago, Freiburg in Germany, London, Princeton, and Montreal. We choose to live in one building under the same roof with tens or hundreds of other individuals for approximately the same reasons that you do. Sometimes we think it has advantages; always we know we are allowed little choice in the matter.

People who try consciously to make a pattern of their living, it occurs to me, are either imitators or adventurers. You and Michael and I are of the second lot. Whatever our particular variation of four rooms and kitchenette may be, we find the occupation of learning how to live gracefully, and as completely as possible, a constant challenge. This seems to me important.

When a large section of the population of the

world takes to living in apartments, that fact is more important than the rise of dictatorships or the fall of markets. In fact, the reasons why we continue to live in apartments are the causes of world-shaking changes, but I promise not to go into that.

Instead, when the noise of our neighbor's radio comes blaring through the wall, it alleviates our annoyance to think that after all he is a social portent. And his taste in programs may improve in time.

D. D.

Montreal
April 1939

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I THE HUNTING SEASON

. . . *two exposures, with a view*

There is a suspicion of change in the air the morning you decide it is time to see about a new apartment. The process of moving your pillow and bean pot from one place to another is slightly more expensive than buying a new hat, but the impulse for both actions springs from the same source. While a few rugged men are stalking moose through the autumn woods of Maine and Quebec, millions of housewives, gratifying the same instinct, are climbing apartment stairs with

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stealthy or defiant motions, or being moved upward more scientifically in elevators.

Before you do anything else, even to scanning the want ads in the Sunday paper, buy yourself the new hat under which to sally forth to meet the world with freshened morale. No adventure should start without one. With this support you are ready to find the process of looking through other people's homes rather amusing. By the end of the first day the muscles in your legs may give evidence that climbing stairs and getting in and out of cars and elevators isn't your usual occupation, but neither heart-breaking nor leg-breaking fatigue can offset the spiritual lift obtained by occasional glances at yourself in other people's mirrors.

Agents There is an inevitable sense of adventure attached to the inspection of the piece of paper handed out by rental agents in response to your request for a listing of available apartments in different sections of the city. Any one of those addresses may prove to be the ideal place you've been looking for during the past how-many years.

You have specified that you want three or four rooms; five or six rooms; a twenty-room pent-

house. Somewhere down the list your mind says stop when the figure in the right-hand column is the amount you can afford to pay, but your eye travels on. There just might be something so much better for the money, it would be worth a sacrifice. Better go back to the price range that fits your contemplated expenditure and save the heels of your stockings as well as consequent disappointment. There are always better things to buy if you have more money, but why waste time and emotion sighing over them, when the same amount of energy could so well be spent in thinking of the best possible ways to use what you already have or can afford?

Advertisements I don't know the approximate percentage of apartments rented through advertisements or by agents. I have asked several real-estate men and their opinions differ with their localities. Mr. J. P. Roberts of Vancouver tells me that probably thirty-five percent of apartment space is rented through agents, and the balance through newspaper advertising and direct calls at the various buildings displaying "vacancy" signs. Most of the agents themselves use classified newspaper advertisements for general and specific rental advertising. Mr. D. A. Kimbark of the Chicago Real Estate Board says

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that most apartments in his city are obtained through renting men managing the properties.

If you have your own means of transportation, nothing in the manner of a possibility is to be overlooked, and classified advertising is as good reading as can be found elsewhere in the news-sheets. You may find it amusing to go out on your own to ring doorbells and arouse janitors from midday slumber, particularly if you know the city well and are familiar with the peculiarities of its various sections. On the other hand, if you don't have a car for your own use, it is equally pleasant to be taxied by a rental agent, who will mutter things under his breath to the janitors and charge his company for the gas and oil you've helped him use. Conversation sometimes lags on the ride between addresses, but he's doubtless as agreeable to the silence as you are.

Friends These helps will divide themselves into two groups: those who want you to find something near them and will give you good tips on the neighborhood, and those who advise you to stay out of the city and hunt in the suburbs because they are sick of the noise and dirt. The first are invaluable, and to the latter you can only appear stubborn, and determined to have your bright lights and museums and theaters and crowds, in spite of their good intentions.

Stranger in Town This refers to you, not to possible outside assistance. For all its nuisance, there are still many ways in which you are at a distinct advantage in looking for an apartment if you are strange to the city. You will not necessarily move during one of the two main renting seasons, and so you will not find yourself elbowing others in the same pursuit, nor being trampled by people equally eager to see how you live and whether they'd like to try your four rooms themselves for the coming year.

You will be free of leases and obligations and you will have the opportunity of looking at left-over apartments out of season. It is then that agents and owners are most eager to press upon you the concession of extra decorating or a couple of weeks rent-free. These are compensations for having to go through one apartment after another that other people have turned down. The whole process is like the old game of musical chairs.

The best way to get information about subway lines, elevated connections, bus routes and street-cars is from the information service of the lines themselves. Before you decide on a certain section of the city, it is better to ride the transportation you would have to use if you lived there.

Correspondence with agents before you arrive in a new city is likely to be unsatisfactory. They will usually suggest that you come to see them

when you reach town. However, you'd be foolish not to try every avenue of approach that promises help in what is at best an arduous job, and real-estate agents claim to be in business for that purpose. New York will give you the most frigid shoulder, but if you are moving there for the first time, even frigidity won't cool your spirits.

Terminology Nearly every large city has its own distinctive terms to describe certain types of dwellings. Before you will know what agents or newspaper advertisements in Denver mean by "buffet" apartments you will have to ask someone there. Cleveland and St. Louis use the term "efficiencies"; Boston and Chicago call certain types "kitchenettes"; Vancouver uses "suite" as synonymous with apartment. In some places, any accommodations in a house which has been converted into apartments are called "flats"; in Chicago, a flat was the earlier term used, and has come to mean the less pretentious or desirable place of habitation, most common in the areas where tenants supply their own heat.

In New York, nearly all small apartments are listed as two and a half rooms, three and a half rooms, and so on. This half-a-room may be a foyer-dining room, a dinette, a too-small kitchen, or an alcove. Four rooms in New York usually comprise two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. In

higher rentals, four-room apartments have two baths as a rule. It is essential to find out what the other fellow is talking about if the city and its customs are unfamiliar to you.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT?

Regardless of whether you are hunting in season or out of season, in a strange city or a familiar one, a clear conception of what you are looking for is absolutely necessary, unless you enjoy the sensation of running about in a squirrel cage and getting nowhere fast. If you are already living in or near the city through which you are searching, you can be more leisurely in the process, so that fatigue will not color your imagination. If you are settled temporarily in an uncomfortable, too-expensive hotel room, the hunt must be more intensive, with less time for contemplation between inspections. But in either case, your journeys in search of something different in the way of habitation will inevitably bring you back to the place from which you started, if you don't know clearly what you are looking for; and the only thing you will have retrieved from the activity begun by those hieroglyphs on the agent's list will be exercise.

So either in your head or on a piece of paper (unfortunately I'm the sort of person who isn't

sure what she thinks or knows until it is down on paper for reference during lapses of memory) make a list of those qualities in an apartment which you know you will need. You won't expect, but only hope, to find them all in one place at your price. But juggling them about, and trading one for another, comprises the modern game of deciding, "Where shall we live?"

What has become so important for Michael and me as to be a requisite will seem to you unnecessary. A few miles out of Princeton there is an old renovated cottage on the Van Cleve farm with an immense open fireplace, which we felt compensated amply for the distance we had to travel in the winters to the campus and to shops. Ever since we lived and loved it there, we have felt it imperative to have a hearth capable of burning great logs, around which we could center our life. But when we moved to Montreal we found few apartments equipped with open fireplaces. Instead we found one with a magnificent view of the Laurentians. The north-country sunsets are wholly ours from the windows of all but one of our four rooms. Next time we move we'll probably have to make another bargain, but we figure it's all in knowing what we want and giving serious consideration to the combinations that will give us the most comfort and pleasure throughout the year.

Check If you have lived in one city most of your life and are accustomed to its modes, it may be well to check the customs of this particular new city into which you are moving before you set your heart on certain conveniences. Because all the apartments in Chicago have them, you may rove around for days in New York looking for back porches; or turn down one building after another because you can't find one with the sort of incinerator to which you are accustomed.

In Montreal, as well as in many otherwise respectable buildings in New York, apartments have one outlet only and all deliveries are made at this front door. In some Montreal buildings deliveries are made by means of a dumb-waiter which you must go out into the common entrance hall to meet on its way up. I still feel more than a little slummy when I carry my bottles of milk and cream through the front of the apartment to the kitchen each morning, and am forced to greet agents and callers across a full garbage pail, if they are so unthinking as to come to my door before the janitor gets around to collect the garbage.

But such are some of the unpardonable customs of these cities, and adjustment must be made without too much grief. Aside from differences of this sort, however, there are major considerations applicable to any city.

Price First, of course. Of what avail is it to have only a vague notion of the price you can afford to pay, to look at all the apartments on the list from forty dollars to two hundred, and then when the only ones that remain clear in your memory are those in the two-hundred-dollar group, be forced to the conclusion that two hundred is too much to pay? Whereupon you begin at the lower figures and go through the whole list again. Whatever choice you make after that will fail to satisfy, because you can't help remembering how attractive the more expensive ones were.

A schoolmaster and his wife, which means Michael and me, are forced to be as philosophical about the size of their income as an Irish policeman. While not being paid to give vent to his emotions like the cop on the corner, the schoolmaster is at least similar to him in the necessity for assuming an attitude of omnipotence during the day, only to return at night to something mortally far below. After the first few years of apprenticeship, the teacher's salary will probably continue as long as he can remain content with it, but it carries no hope of big things to come in its envelope. So the old quarter-of-income axiom for rent hits us about right and we stick to that proportion of our salary rigidly, regardless of how our whims and fancies wander up Mount Royal and down again. We don't mortgage the future by

spending ahead of ourselves, because the day of striking pay dirt is unlikely ever to come to us.

It would look well on a page about here if there could be included a table of relative costs of apartments in large cities throughout the country. But any such list would also have to include relative salaries in order to give a sensible comparison, and that area of fluctuation you know as well as I. At the moment, I can rent the equivalent of a four-room, unfurnished apartment in New York for \$60 to \$200; in San Francisco from \$40 to \$100; in Denver from \$25 to \$90, with St. Louis and Cleveland about the same. Detroit is a bit higher than these last, Boston next and Chicago near the top again, only slightly under New York. Rents in all Canadian cities run lower than places of similar size and location in the States, and the scarcity of apartments varies from coast to coast.

If I must, of course, I can also rent four rooms in any of these cities for less than the lowest figure quoted. I can also find establishments that cost more than twice the top figures, at a conservative estimate. In any such compendium as this book, the needs of the few at the top and the larger group at the bottom of the social-organism pyramid always give way to the many in the middle. So it is with most of my figures and comments. The few at the top don't care, and the many at the bottom can't care.

Number That is, living together with the use of one mailbox. How many are you, and how many rooms do you require? In budgeting for the proportion of income that will go into rent, consider the possibility of having an extra room, at the expense of a fancy address. One of the major causes of frayed nerves and stultified minds in cities is derived from the necessity of too many human beings living too close together, within one home. It isn't humane to live in a place where any member of the family who wants to be alone and separate from other people cannot be accommodated.

A small room, meant perhaps to serve as a den, a sun porch or a maid's room, can be converted into a family sulk room where one person may retire to shut the door between himself and the noises of radio, telephone, baby cries, conversation, arguments or housework. It is, of course, far easier for two or three persons to find such space for exclusive use than it is for a family of six. But even with the larger group, a single room apart from the living room can be set aside for a retreat to alleviate much of the strain of living too close to other people.

Michael and I find we don't need a separate dining room nearly as much as a sulk room. You, on the other hand, might sulk if you didn't have the room for dining, to avoid the irksome neces-

sity of changing living room into dining room into living room at least twice a day. One might even do without a full-time maid in order to use the extra bedroom as a small library or study or playroom, and so ease the burden of a cramped central parlor which must otherwise be shared by everyone.

Location Is a smart address worth money to you, at the expense of larger rooms, more air, sunshine, and greater individuality? Why? If you know the answer, that's enough. If you don't, then forget names like Park Avenue and Lake Shore Drive and have yourself some fun, because it's pretty deadly having a label like one of those attached to you if there's no good reason for it.

Accessibility to work, without too great a loss of time and energy for those members of the family concerned, is a major consideration in choosing a location. But no less important is the question of accessibility to a school if there are young children to be considered. Quite as tiresome as three transfers each way for father is the necessity of depositing and calling for offspring four times every day for mother.

In New York, for instance, where school districts do not always coincide with so-called social boundaries, it is easy as anything to find a thoroughly desirable apartment, the inhabitants of

which must send their children to a school frequented almost entirely by children of another race or color. Granted that children who go to school with "nice" children are not always best equipped to meet the world and find happiness therein, one still prefers not to send a child unaccustomed to such surroundings into a strange and unpromising milieu.

The age of your children will be a factor to temper such judgments. If there are no parks or playgrounds within easy reach of the front door, then a street with light traffic must be found, if possible. One method of circumventing the street-as-playground hazard is the use of roofs, but if this is to be the territory in which your child can play and the building has no elevator, a top-floor apartment would be a wiser choice than a first-floor one.

Aside from these important considerations, gardens may be pleasant places in which to play, but much can be learned from the public park. Shops in a large city are everywhere and all-delivering. Friends, if they are worth keeping, will find their way to your door no matter where you move.

In other words, if we have grown beyond an adolescent state of mind, we can be unaffected by a good address and imposing neighbors. It is easier, of course, to come into a city fresh-born to it, for then one finds no residue of prejudices and

prides in certain place names. If you move to New York or London this is impossible; your reading has given you more notions to hang onto various sections than if you had always lived among them. It's no good saying Greenwich Village, Harlem or Murray Hill and expecting anyone to look inquiring. Each of them has an exact signification and you know without hesitation in which of the three you'd prefer to hang up your hat and prepare to receive callers.

The first time I looked for rooms in London, the names were all too familiar, without having sufficiently sharp edges to keep them from blending into confusion in my mind. Their pleasant sounds confounded my attempt to decide where to look first; should I try Regent's Park, Russell Square, Kensington High Street, Mayfair, Golder's Green or the Marble Arch? I finally narrowed my search to the Bayswater Road area because it was filled with ghosts of Forsytes and seemed slightly more familiar than the rest. In Lancaster Gate I found a respectable boardinghouse facing Hyde Park. It was so respectable it almost finished me. Michael was still at Oxford and I was alone.

Small tables barely wide enough to get one's knees under were ranged around the wall of the dining room, a foot apart. At breakfast and at dinner each table was occupied by a single, lone individual, sitting stiffly with back against the

wall, each looking blankly into the empty space of the middle of the room, no one required to speak to a neighbor because the tables were separated by that foot of space. And no one did speak. Gentle old ladies with bird's-nest hair came down in black lace, wavy-hemmed dinner dresses; single men with stiff collars and preoccupied expressions were always the first to leave the room. Except for the fact that every meal was preceded by the same soup—colored dun or brown or gray in rotation—I can't remember much else about the food. The grimness of reality was punctuated by the last course of gooseberry fool, and liberty. It was my own fault for having remembered *The Forsyte Saga* well, but not quite well enough.

But as I was saying, the day when you could be socially ostracized because you lived on the wrong side of the tracks is gone, and what you achieve through individuality and taste, against the standard background of a city apartment, is your own. Forget the fripperies of names and realize the benefits to human enjoyment in the modern mode of centering attention on personality and individual behavior, rather than on the size of your rooms and their ornamentation.

Noise If you can escape the sounds of the city you are more fortunate than clever. Open the windows of any apartment you are inspecting,

if it is vacant, or ask to open one if the tenant is present. From this you can judge the constant noise of the neighborhood, but it will tell you nothing of the couple next door who fall into swing-drunken brawls at four every Sunday morning, the acrid voice of the woman downstairs who opens her windows and yells for a recalcitrant son, the fact that the people upstairs don't wear rubber heels and arise at the crack of dawn, or when construction on a new super-highway will begin under the bedroom windows.

Comparative quiet is one of the good points of old apartment buildings, and particularly of old private houses turned into apartments. Sound-proofing seems to have been a consideration entirely disregarded in the days when apartment building was booming. Of recent years the most modern of apartments can be relied upon to be fairly free from neighbor-noises, but the large majority of one- to six-room apartments in any American city are disastrously inefficient in this respect.

Aside from the noise of your neighbors, your own peace of mind will be impaired if you know your children's every whimper will be heard through three floors and give cause for constant complaint. Or if half-grown daughter has a lovely voice and practices two hours every afternoon and you like to accompany her as often as you choose,

it would be well to study the known fact that the sound of a piano has a tendency to go down rather than up. Maybe it goes down the piano legs, but whatever the physical fact, you would do well to live close to the ground if musical practice is a part of your household routine. If it isn't, and someone else's efforts in that direction disturb you, perhaps the janitor of any building where you are seeking an apartment, supposing he is pleased by your general manner, will tell you if there is a piano in the apartment above the one you are considering.

A View Michael and I have acquired strong ideas about the desirability of having something to rest our eyes upon beyond four walls. We need stars in our eyes for night, and puffy clouds for day. If our own home doesn't afford a view of them we grow restless and dissatisfied. On the other hand, you may be one who doesn't mind the contemplation of a brick wall, punctured by windows, whenever your eyes seek escape from your own limited enclosure. If you don't, so much the better for you. But have you ever tried an apartment with a view? And keeping your windows clear of glass curtains, the better to enjoy it?

I can remember Mother telling me of her first winter in New York, when she was twenty-six.

Daddy had been appointed to the United States Sea Post Service, and during his first three years he made seventy-two round trips to Germany and England. Later he directed the Railway Mail Service in New York at the time Teddy Roosevelt was police commissioner in the city, but it was those first years when he was away three weeks out of every four that were the worst for her. She had never been more than a hundred miles from Denver for any length of time in her life, and never out of sight of the Rocky Mountains. For months after she first went east, every time she was out of the house she kept turning corners and walking another block to turn another corner, in the unfounded hope that at the end of some one of them she could see the smoky outline of purple mountains in the distance.

If you have been accustomed all your life to a view of the street, with its passing movement, its flow of humanity and hours of punctuated intensity of sound, you would probably feel lonely and shut off from life the first time you lived where you had no contact with it. To me, it doesn't seem to matter so much any more whether I am looking over chimney pots or radio antennas, so long as I can find beyond them open sky and a bit of horizon; something green, that changes with the seasons; a patch of river that freezes and thaws each December and March; a broken line of Lauren-

tian highland hills that change color in storm and fair weather, according to the direction of the wind.

So I strongly recommend a view. It's worth climbing the extra flight of stairs to own. Your definition of a good view may not be mine, but if it draws you to the window often during the day and night, it will be worth whatever you paid to get it.

And Sunshine As well as an outlook on which your eyes can rest, consider, too, the necessity for cross ventilation and sunshine. One of the primary needs of your body is being cheated when you force yourself to live in a cramped cage of an apartment with inadequate air-flow and the hygienic effects of sun, merely that you may have a doorman in brass buttons to usher you in when you bring home the groceries. Take a drab exterior if you must, in order to acquire larger rooms, well-connected for ventilation, and an inpouring of sun during the months when most of your hours are spent indoors. Avoid apartments with long corridors off which rooms branch from darkness; such caverns of gloom are as unhealthy for your spirit as for your body, because you can't deprive the one without affecting the other. Better one enormous room with high ceilings and windows on two sides, than a chopped-up

living room and dining room, separated by a fancy door or a hall. Besides, think how admiring your friends will be when they see what you have accomplished within, if the exterior approach is unpromising.

And if you find an apartment with access to a patch of garden, a terrace, a balcony, or a roof, think carefully about the sense of freedom and release any one of them can give you. More and more we learn the value of relaxation in a quiet, sunny spot; a few moments each day during many days throughout the year is worth more than two jam-packed weeks in the summer. Lucky is any man in the city with a bit of sky for his own use, a deck chair and a wandering breeze to play with, while he forgets the rush of the day at his back.

There was a first-floor apartment at which we looked when we first moved to Montreal that seemed to combine every feature we needed, except a prospect. The rooms were large, well-ventilated and sunny. But across the street in full view of the living room windows was a hoarding (billboard to you) painted in ferocious colors, proclaiming the outstanding qualities of Canada Bread. Michael was sorry to forego the quiet of the neighborhood, but explained to the landlord that we could never stick the monotony of looking at the sign across the way. It was obvious the man thought us peculiar. And then he seemed to see

what we meant, and his face brightened. "Oh, you don't have to worry. They change it at least once a month. You'll never get tired of that one."

Neighbors One of the distinct advantages of urban life is the freedom it gives from intimacy with your neighbors if they don't happen to interest you. There is no compulsion toward tempering your activities to conform to their opinions, so long as you observe the one rule of good behavior by annoying them as little as possible, within the bounds of breeding and the terms of your lease. Your social associations will derive from widely scattered areas throughout the city, among individuals with tastes and ideas and training similar to your own. If your neighbors hunger for social drama, it is served up to them daily in the tabloids and gossip columns. One of the reasons you left the small town was to lessen constraint in choice of companionship, not to turn an apartment building into a gossip center no wider than the one you left. As a rule, if you don't question whether the woman next door is mistress or maid, she will do the same by you.

Many landlords refuse to allow children in their buildings. If you have none and feel that the annoyance of a baby's crying beyond the plaster-thin wall of your bedroom would be intolerable, it might be well to inquire in advance for a build-

ing with such restrictions. The question works well both ways. Leases which mention no cats or dogs can be circumvented, or so I have heard. But just how is a question to which I haven't as yet found an answer. I presume the owners simply carry them in hidden under a coat, and keep said cat or dog indoors until they move.

Interior The function of a dwelling has changed considerably since the family unit has decreased in size. Not only do families containing three generations and several branches no longer live in one house, but the number of children in each unit is less. If you have no offspring, your housing requirements can be reduced to the simplest terms. But if you do have children, you have also a definite responsibility to them in the matter of providing as nearly separate rooms, away from your own, as you can afford, in order that they may grow up with a life of their own, contiguous, but not enclosed with your interests and activities.

On this subject Lewis Mumford has many excellent words to say. For instance: "Today, even the finest urban dwellings of the last century are, for the greater part, obsolete. They were conceived in terms of a limited and now outworn mode of living; few of them, even by drastic renovation, can encompass our modern demands. As

mere shelters they are sometimes sufficient; but as a frame for living, they are absurd. All our new needs—our desire to avoid unnecessary menial labor, our more conscientious and efficient child care, our recognition of play as an essential part of life from childhood onward, our acceptance of the need for quiet and privacy—all these create a demand for a different type of dwelling and a different communal form. In many ways, we have already crossed the threshold of a new age; but our housing remains behind, clinging to dreams that no longer exist and failing to take advantage of archaic tastes, attempting to meet conditions that no longer satisfy, making a parade of sickly conditions that do exist and promise far more by way of human reward. . . .”

But since we live in the now of new apartment blocks built on the outmoded style of a generation ago, our choice can direct us only toward the best of the bad, and we must use our ingenuity and imagination to counteract shortcomings and deficiencies as we find them. Whatever you do, never turn down an architecturally well-planned apartment because you haven't used sufficient thought to see beneath the ugly wallpaper of the incumbent, or don't like the lighting fixtures. Try to find a place that meets fundamental needs and

* *The Culture of Cities*: pp. 465-466, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc. See also quotation on pp. 39-40

forego utilities and ornament. Ignore as completely as you can other people's furnishings and taste in color, and see the rooms stripped to their essentials. If it is an empty apartment, remember that all rooms look smaller when they are unfurnished.

Minor, But to the Point When you have narrowed your search to three or two apartments among which you find it difficult to decide, begin a check of the lesser qualifications. Use a list for this purpose when you make a final inspection. It will include some of the following, and probably as many more:

1. How many windows are there in the new apartment, and will any of your curtains fit? An entire new set of curtains and draperies will make the procedure of moving more expensive than you first thought.

2. Is the hot water supply adequate? If the janitor or agent seem hesitant to be specific, ask to see the boilers. Even if you don't know any more after you have looked at them, such concern may enable you to exact a promise for inclusion in your lease. Notice carefully, too, whether or not the water is dark brown from rusty pipes.

3. What are the laundry facilities? If they are in the basement, what access will you have to

them? If wash tubs are part of the kitchen equipment, is there roof space for drying clothes?

4. Are the lighting fixtures eyesore-old and unsightly, and if so, can they be changed? Many landlords and janitors are quite willing to have center chandeliers removed, as well as wall fixtures. Be sure that in their place you will have ample outlets in the baseboards.

5. If there is an open fireplace, does it draw? You can judge from the amount of smoke stain on the exterior if no one will tell you.

6. Are the radiators noisy? Again, all you can do is ask.

7. What are the storeroom facilities in the basement?

8. What is the relation of the bedrooms to the bath? Can you pass from one to the other without being observed from the living room?

9. How many closets and what is their size? Few lacks can be more aggravating and conducive to bad tempers than no place to keep things.

10. Are there unbroken wall spaces and corners without doors sufficient to accommodate your furniture?

11. How much redecorating will be done for you, and will this include painting the woodwork and bookcases and finishing the floors? In large cities, no set amount of decorating is done for a new tenant, but it is usually equivalent to one month's rent on a year-or-more lease. Concessions in rent are occasionally given to tenants

who will take apartments that are not completely redecorated, but this practice varies according to cities and neighborhoods.

12. How many small costs will add to your overhead, such as tipping and window washing? How many people will serve you regularly in the building, and is tipping them all customary?

In conclusion, will these rooms serve you better than others you can afford, for the life you expect to live in them? A place to eat with satisfaction and content; a place to sleep undisturbed; a place for study and work and inspired thought; a place where your body may meet its requirements in a way to keep it healthy and useful; a place for social recreation and the entertaining of friends; a place in which to make love without interruptions, so that tiredness need not dog your work or your intimacies, and you may find always within your own home the capacity and the will to grow.

Subletting If the months of your year's work are so broken that you can escape the city in summer, you have a further advantage in choice of location, in that you need give little consideration to possible discomfort from heat and humidity. Michael and I like top-floor apartments in order to escape noise from the street be-

low and neighbors overhead, but they would be poor ones to live in when a midsummer sun begins to beat upon them day after day. If subletting fits your economic scheme, then consideration must be given to the accessibility of your apartment, because no one who rents a furnished apartment for a few months wants to be bothered with an out-of-the-way place.

There will always be two schools of thought on the subject of subletting for a short period of time. To some people, the income derived never seems to compensate for the inconvenience of packing away personal belongings, storing pet china and linen, and taking the risk of finding furniture scratched and rugs ruined when one returns to them. To others, insurance takes care of fire hazard, reliability of tenants is examined carefully, and luck stays with them in finding someone who will leave the house as spotless as they found it.

In some cities you will have little difficulty in finding tenants for a sublease; the difficulty will be rather in obtaining ones acceptable to you. When we go away to foreign parts each summer we find that our needs are satisfied better through answering other people's newspaper advertisements than inserting our own. Those who advertise are usually responsible and know exactly what they want and they don't waste our time looking through the place just from curiosity. Agents can

always help with this problem, but their fee cuts into your small profit and makes it even less worth-while to sublet, unless for an extended length of time.

LEASES

After days of hunting, when your feet have become too tender to mention, your nerves jangled by the very sight of a *For Rent* sign, and your mind weary with the weighing of advantages and impossibilities, a choice is made and the agent rushes a lease into your hands to sign. The line is taut now and you are too weak to struggle. One more jerk, and you'll be in.

Legally defined, a lease is a contract whereby one person, called the landlord or lessor, permits another person, called the tenant or lessee, to occupy real property (land or buildings) owned or under the control of the landlord, the rights of the tenant being subordinate to the rights of the landlord.

Oral or Written A lease may be either oral or written, the latter being recommended because of greater certainty in the terms of the lease. Leases may be made for a day or for many years, but if it is to be for more than a year it should be written in order to avoid any question of the Statute of Frauds, which prevents

action being brought on any contract for the sale of real property when the contract embraces a period of more than a year.

Tenant's Rights When he occupies property under a lease, the tenant has the exclusive right of occupancy of the premises in question and may prohibit anyone, including the landlord, from entering the premises without the consent of the tenant, unless the lease specifically provides otherwise.

Is Your Lease Good? A written lease, to be in good form, should contain the following:

1. The name of the landlord and of the tenant.
2. A description of the property clear enough to enable accurate identification.
3. The period or length of time it is to cover.
4. Rent to be paid and the time or times for payment.
5. A statement that the landlord agrees to lease the described property to the tenant for the period mentioned, and that, in consideration thereof, the tenant agrees to pay the rent stated at the times appointed therein.

If a lease contains no more than the above it is a good lease. As a general rule, leases contain a great deal more, just in case you've never read

one. The provisions which may be, and often are inserted are so varied and numerous that only you and your landlord know them all.

How to Read a Lease Read and understand the terms of your lease before you sign it and see that it contains the *entire* agreement between you and the landlord. If repairs, decorating or anything else is to be done by the landlord before or during the term of the lease, be sure that a full statement describing them is written into the lease itself!

If the lease is not clear to you, and if you don't mind the expense, consult a competent attorney. In this way the majority of difficulties and disputes can be avoided for less than the cost of a suit. The attorney may not advise changes in the provisions of the lease, but he is in a position to explain clearly the consequences of the myriad provisions that frequently appear, and to advise changes in the context or wording that will clarify the meaning.

How to Get Out of One You may be able to think up more devious methods and try them out before a judge if your landlord wants to argue about it, but there are generally only the following legal ways of breaking a lease:

1. Termination, according to its terms.
2. Mutual agreement between the landlord and tenant.
3. A breach of one or more of the terms of the lease. If a breach is committed, the party not in default may, but need not, terminate the lease.
4. By showing that the execution of the lease was procured through fraud, and misrepresentation, or duress and intimidation sufficient to deprive the person from exercising his free will. Only the one upon whom any of the above have been perpetrated may terminate the lease.
5. By proof, on the part of the party wishing to terminate the lease, that he was insane at the time of executing it, and that he has not ratified it upon regaining his sanity. (Wonder why more people don't use that one!)

Some individuals use lawsuits as a means of entertainment and count them worth the cost. If you are so addicted, you might try to break your lease for a reason, or no reason, other than one of the above. If you have a good cause, you might even be judged right. My father complained one time to his landlord that the furnace in the basement of our house emitted gas and wasn't safe to use. The landlord replied that if he didn't like it he'd better leave it. It must have surprised him when my father proceeded to move us and then failed to send a check around on the first of the

month—because the landlord promptly sued him. A judge in an Illinois court ruled that the landlord had terminated the lease himself by telling his tenant to move. My father had fun out of that and the landlord paid the cost. The ones when my father paid are other stories.

Remember this too: if your landlord ejects you for nonconformance to any requirement in the lease and does not subsequently rent the property, after having made some effort to do so, you are still responsible for the rent to cover the duration of that lease. That's a pretty one.

You'd Be Surprised When you can't find a good detective story around the house some evening, hunt for your copy of the lease you signed when you moved, get under a good light, and have yourself an amazing hour. Not only will you be surprised to discover what you have promised, but how few of the clauses either you or the landlord bother to uphold. Inasmuch as the real-estate board of a city usually governs the provisions contained in leases used by its members, they take substantially the same form until they come to minor rules and regulations, all of which you have agreed to keep when you signed the lease without looking.

I have discovered stipulations forbidding the construction of partitions or alteration of the ar-

rangement of rooms; admonitions not to waste water, obstruct stairways or entries, or throw anything out the windows, including dirt; warnings not to allow such things to happen as might damage the reputation of the building, and strict orders not to interfere or tamper with the furnace or refrigeration apparatus. (How many irate men do you suppose go down to do something about getting more heat for themselves?)

In Montreal, no nails or screws may be driven into walls or woodwork if picture molding is provided; no music or singing lessons may be given; sufficient furniture must be kept in an apartment to secure the total rent for the duration of the lease, and this furniture may be commandeered by law if rent is not paid, nor may it be removed to evade this clause. Among the regulations contained in Chicago leases one finds that the tenant may put his name in the proper place provided in the mailbox only in the form approved by the landlord; animals, birds or reptiles are not allowed on the premises; no radio aerial or connection may be made outside the building without permission; and all laundry must be done in the basement, on scheduled days according to the floor on which one lives.

A lease in Vancouver stipulates that tenants shall not cut wood upon the floor of the premises; pianos or other musical instruments shall not be

played after eleven o'clock at night, or before nine o'clock in the morning; and no milk bottles, flower pots or other articles may be placed on sills outside windows. The question of whether or not you may have children often concerns your landlord quite as much as your husband, your budget, or your gynecologist.

More Legal Terms In California, and many parts of the West Coast, leases are oral and may be terminated at any time on thirty days' notice, by either landlord or tenant.

If a lease has been executed to cover a certain period of time, it is incumbent upon the tenant to move at the termination, unless a new lease has been drawn. If he does not move, the landlord, in many jurisdictions, may consider the lease renewed upon the same terms as the old one, or he may consider the tenant a trespasser and bring the appropriate action to put him out. In addition to ejecting him, the landlord often may recover double the rental value for the period the tenant holds possession of the premises beyond the lease.

For husbands and wives it is well to remember this: if only one signs a lease it does not necessarily mean that the other will not have to pay or be liable for the rent. In many jurisdictions there are what is known as the family expense acts. By

these, both the husband and wife are liable for rent, as well as other family expenses, regardless of which one signed the lease.

In New York City, for instance, if a husband dies his estate is responsible for the payment of rent during the remainder of the term of the lease. If he dies without leaving an estate, however, his wife is not responsible for payment except for the period of time following the death of her husband in which she actually occupies the apartment. Under these circumstances, it would probably be advisable for a widow to let the landlord know her intentions as soon as possible. While it is true that she is not legally a party to the lease and is considered to be staying on a monthly basis, if she does remain for any considerable period, say two months or more, a court might hold that she had tacitly assumed the obligation of the lease. This is a question which might be taken up before the lease is signed, as it is not specifically covered in the usual standard lease form.

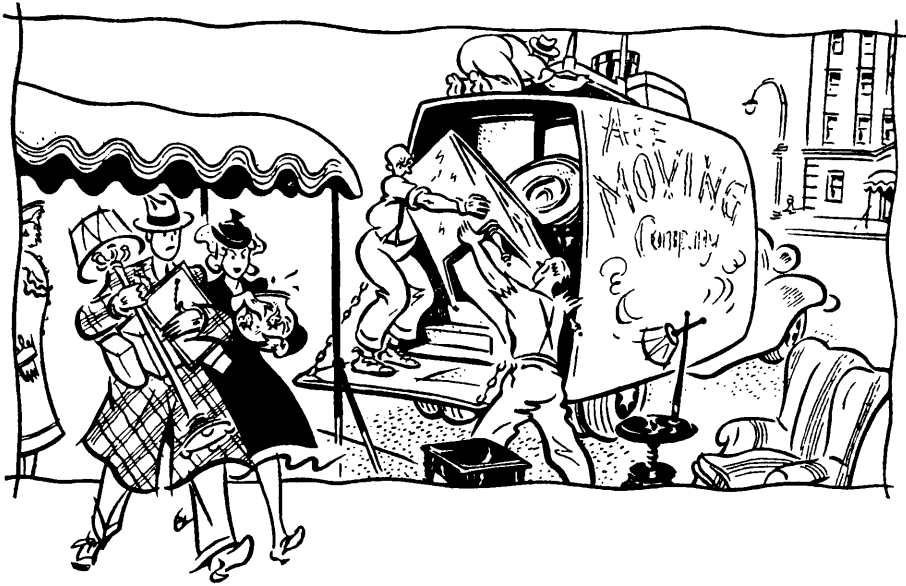
If you are a tenant and are behind in your rent, or the landlord claims you have breached the lease in some other respect, it does not, in most places, mean that you can be put out immediately and without notice. Generally, you must be given a definite length of time to cure or make good on your agreement. If you haven't made up the ar-

rears or moved by a specified date, then the landlord may start suit and ask the court to eject you. In Illinois, for instance, the courts have been reluctant to give effect to the usual provisions contained in leases in which the tenant waives all notice of any kind, and as a result landlords usually follow the above procedure.

Can You Sublet? Not, can you find tenants, but are you permitted by your lease to assign or permit occupation of your premises to someone else for a portion of the time covered by your own lease? In nearly every case you must receive the permission of your landlord. If your lease forbids it, and you don't receive permission, you can be sued from two directions, for both your landlord and the man to whom you sublet have claims against you. Might as well ask first.

Or if it all sounds too complicated, there is still the American substitute for the South Seas. Apartments of today's large cities are half-way between the old family house inherited through generations, and the trailer. You can pick up one of the latter on almost any vacant lot. But before you sell the furniture and grab your hat, can you listen to Lewis Mumford once more? His definition of a trailer reads: "One of those ludicrous examples of ideological miscegenation of which

the modern world is full: the neurotic offspring of romanticism and mechanism: the housing problem solved by reducing it to the provision of bare shelter and doing away with those communal relations which spring up only through close association and permanent settlement." Now go on and buy one.



II MOVING DAY

. . . from here to here

Instead of moving out of the city when we get fed up with any of its annoyances, we move around in it. Around and around, like the boy on the merry-go-round who is determined to catch the brass ring next time. One year we live north of the park and the next year we try the new development southwest and the third year we return to the north, only a couple of blocks from

where we were before. The rollicking soprano voice of the night-club entertainer who practices next door drives us away this time, only to face the discovery that we have moved next door to a Magyar gymnasium. The city is so full of a number of things. Around and around and the next ride begins the first of October.

So the status of being a city householder presupposes the transferring or transporting of household goods to another abode. One or two moves will teach any of us what not to do next time, but the lessons are costly. If human beings refuse to stay put, they probably need some predigested knowledge on the subject of moving their chattels and chains. At its best, moving day is a nightmare of confusion and fatigue, but perhaps the problem can be simplified by routine.

A LOCAL MOVE

Whom to Call? There are any number of local companies equipped to render capable service if you will place your order early enough to insure a reservation. In large cities, costs are based on an hourly rate, anywhere from \$2.50 an hour to \$7.50, depending upon the dictates of the local movers' association which generally sets the rate at whatever the traffic will bear. The size and type of van, and the number of men

on a single job affect the cost, but on the whole, prices vary little within a city.

In smaller towns, a flat price may be given for the entire job. The same may even be done in a large city, contrary to association rules, but in the event of damage to your goods, the small concern operating on flat prices and a necessarily small profit cannot afford to take care of claims, or give too much time to the careful handling of your property. For your own protection, it is well to stay with a firm who abides by the rules of the local movers' association.

How to Help At the time you receive estimates it will be necessary for you to decide whether or not you are going to allow the moving company to pack your personal belongings, as well as transport them for you. The expense may be doubled, but you will save yourself a wrenched back and broken dishes if you leave the entire job to experienced men. They will bring all the barrels and boxes necessary and leave only personal clothing to your unprofessional ministrations.

But if you know what you are about and want to save money, ask your grocer weeks in advance of the projected move for all the empty barrels and cartons he is pleased to send you. He may

send twice as many as you think you will need, his pleasure being great, but hang on to them all. Or an even more certain method is to ask your mover to estimate the number of barrels and boxes you will require, and then rent them from him. He will deliver them well in advance for you to pack at your leisure, and the cost will not be excessive. They will likewise be strong wooden boxes, much safer than grocery cartons. (If you are storing household goods and moving into a furnished apartment, you will of course want strong boxes.)

The following suggestions may help you to fill them:

1. China, glassware, lamps and other fragile objects should be carefully wrapped with excelsior or its modern substitute—shredded paper, and packed in strong barrels. Wrap lamp shades in tissue paper or clean linen and place in cartons or boxes.

2. Valuable pictures, oil paintings, marble or glass furniture tops should be padded, wrapped and then crated.

3. Rugs, if seamless, should be rolled on poles; otherwise, fold along seams and then roll.

4. Books should be packed in small, strong boxes. Finely bound or valuable books should be individually wrapped in paper before being placed in containers. And don't forget that whatever receptacle you are filling with books should

not be loaded too heavily, since grocers' cartons were constructed to carry only a certain maximum weight, and books of equal bulk are far heavier than cheese or cabbages. Nor should you be forgetting the fellow who will have to lift such packed boxes from the floor!

5. Linens, curtains, blankets and wearing apparel can be laid flat and smooth in a large carton or trunk, though bedding may be tied securely into a Chinaman's bundle, using a sheet knotted at crosswise corners.

6. Mattresses should be covered with sheets or mattress covers, but not rolled or tied. When bedsteads are taken apart, casters should be removed and tied securely to one part, or labelled, and their hiding place not forgotten.

7. Remove ornamental tops of mirrors from dressers, chiffoniers and vanity dressing tables. Place screws and casters in a drawer or compartment of the piece to which they belong. Remove shelves, if they are not stationary, from bookcases. Lock or tie doors of cabinets or bookcases securely.

8. Kitchen utensils should be placed in barrels. Brooms, mops, curtain rods and such like should be tied together to facilitate handling and prevent loss.

9. Dresser drawers may be filled with pillows, toilet articles, cushions or comforters, but do not pack them with books or heavy linen. Packing boxes are cheaper than fine furniture.

10. Remove all valuable articles, such as jewelry and legal documents, from drawers. Your mover cannot be held responsible for the loss of such items.

11. Mark each carton, box or barrel with the name of the room in which you wish the mover to place it in the new apartment, such as "front bedroom," "kitchen" and so on. This will save an unaccountable amount of labor when the unpacking process is begun.

12. If you are so fortunate as to be moving into an empty apartment and have a car at your disposal, transport such unhandy things as clothes hangers, Boston ferns, goldfish bowls and the old typewriter the night before the move. And be sure to leave them in a closet, out of the way of the movers' feet.

13. Anything which is to be stored should be sent to the warehouse well in advance of moving day, to avoid confusion and mistakes.

14. Light bulbs are your private property, so be sure to take yours with you. The previous tenant in your new apartment won't have been so thoughtful as to have left his, and a first night or weekend spent in darkness will do little to alleviate the already sufficiently uncomfortable situation.

15. Fire insurance rates change with the type of dwelling you occupy, so check on this with your insurance agent when you notify him of your move. The rate may go up or down consid-

erably if you are moving from a modern fire-proof building into a converted-house apartment or a two-family house.

16. And by no means last, don't forget to notify the telephone and public service companies well in advance of your change. The post office, too, should be given notice of a forwarding address. These amenities of living we all take for granted until their importance is suddenly increased enormously by their absence.

Side Remarks There is a Wheelerism having to do with moving, too juicy to be ignored. It concerns the antics of a moving company which made the very most of Mr. Elmer Wheeler's expensive advice. When the employees of this company enter a home to dismantle it (and you know what such men look like as well as I) they carry with them clean hand towels. Approaching the lady of the house, they ask for the lavatory in order that they may wash their hands before touching her furniture. If she has recovered by the time they emerge, cherubic as to palms, they next compliment her on the taste she has shown in her decoration, or needle-point or water colors. And before her astonishment has worn away, they are proceeding with impunity to their business of handling Viennese china and grandmother's sampler.

The Day Itself The first of May and the first of October bring ludicrous sights to city streets. Aren't we funny, scuttling back and forth with our possessions, gathering them into a few rooms, arranging them in pleasing patterns, using enormous amounts of energy in storing and sorting them, like so many squirrels when the nut crop is good, and then doing it all over again in another year or two? Doesn't the view strike you as more than funny when you walk along any residential street in a large city on the first day of May?

So many chairs are being carried out into the light of morning with their bottoms up; so many hundreds of beds have been knocked apart, only to be hurriedly set up before midnight, that their owners may crawl back between blankets creased by other slumbers. Grandfather clocks and pompous sofas are left on the sidewalk in undignified poses, to be walked around by annoyed pedestrians who sniff. We scuttle after our furniture when the last load has gone, and then hover about helplessly as it rounds the stairs and squeezes through new doors, shooing it into place. And the hairy-chested mortals who propel it care no more for our quavers than for the scratches they leave on the tops of our tables.

Even worse can be a nicely timed strike of the employees of moving companies, an occurrence to

be counted on every few years. No more furious frustration and confusion can irate human beings endure, than to be stranded in the midst of their chattels with no place to go. Little wonder we are becoming a race of Donald Ducks!

And all this caused by the ridiculous system of leases and rental seasons which sets aside two days alone in the whole three hundred and sixty-five for this game of going to Jerusalem. Before sunup the music starts and the trading begins; everybody out before noon, keep time and don't crowd. Toward dark the pace quickens and the last frantic hours of the day see laggards hurrying and pushing to get their stray sticks of wood out of vans and up the stairs before midnight. Exhausted movers, irritable owners, clogged traffic, minor casualties in damaged goods and loss of time are the totals for the day. And next year we'll do it all over again.

A Little Organization Is a Wonderful Thing If you are a family that can be divided for the achievement of co-operation, the entire process of moving can be aided if one part stays in the old apartment to see the moving men off and the other goes to the new place to receive them.

In New York, one is allowed until noon on the day leases expire to vacate an apartment, and the

stringency of this law necessitates acute supervision, since it means that there are usually two sets of movers tramping around each apartment at some one time during the day. You will do well to find out in advance whether or not someone is moving into your apartment the day you leave it, as well as out of the one you are entering. In any case, supervision at both ends will save trouble and retraced steps.

The one who stays behind will instruct the movers to take such things as bookcases on the first load, if it is more than a one-load job, so that boxes may be unpacked into shelves at the other end. Conservation of space is essential in this business of moving, and it is no mean game to figure out how the greatest amount of stuff can be unloaded out of boxes into proper shelves and drawers as quickly as possible. Mental derangement can often be avoided in this manner.

The one who stays behind will also go over the apartment carefully to see that nothing is left in cupboards or corners. And finally the telephone company must be notified at this end to switch all calls from that time forth to the new apartment.

The one who receives the movers in the new place will direct the placement of heavy furniture, and begin the unpacking process as soon as it will eliminate rather than cause confusion. Before the first load is in and the old tenants out, there will

also be callers in the persons of agents. Be very careful not to admit those who come without credentials, for open doors and open drawers are easy game for petty thieves who pose as electricians or carpenters and leave unceremoniously, taking with them the contents of purses and silver chests.

Something in the nature of window draperies should be hung at once, even if they must be impermanent. Nothing on earth makes a new abode seem more bleak and unpromising than bare windows and bare walls. Taking time out to hang curtains and a few pictures may be impractical, but the psychological effect on weakened morale is tremendous.

Furthermore, any attempt to prepare a meal in the midst of this chaos is likely to prepare the cook (whether it's you or a hired one) for an immediate rest cure. So add the cost of a few meals eaten in restaurants to the expense of moving and consider the money well-spent. Nor is the skipping of a meal here and there because of pressure of work a smart idea. Bare windows are nothing compared to an empty stomach when it comes to weakening morales and unsettling dispositions.

And finally, any members of the family who are more trouble than help should be sent firmly to the longest movie in town, or told to stay at the

office until five thirty. Next year it can be someone else's turn to be troublesome.

An Aside on Redecorating There must be ways of learning how to bear it if painting and paper hanging have to be done simultaneously with normal family pursuits, but I haven't discovered them yet. It seems to me almost easier to move out of one apartment and into another than to try to work with decorators stumbling about me, and to smell the paint and the plasticine, and to inhale that singularly arid odor of chipped plaster.

If the apartment is sufficiently large to allow its furniture and activities to be telescoped into one half while the other half is being redecorated, the situation can be met with some equanimity. But in a small apartment there is no solution. The best thing to do is to move the family into a hotel for the duration of the job. It is better never to have floors scraped at all, than to have them refinished while the family attempts to continue its routine. And unless the flavor of turpentine in butter and bacon pleases you, keep the refrigerator firmly shut as long as the odor of paint lingers anywhere in the house; otherwise you will be reduced to a liquid diet for more than a week.

If you are renewing a lease, plan to have the redecorating done while part or all of the family

is away on vacation. This seems to be the only alternative to the trouble and expense of moving in on your mother-in-law or staying at a hotel. Paper and paint can always be chosen in advance, and contractors are more than happy to get the job finished before the end of September.

LONG-DISTANCE MOVING

One fine evening the man of the house comes home and announces that the company has transferred him to Muncie and he'll have to report at his new office in three weeks. Or Aunt Harriet has left him a farm and he's sick of the city anyway, so call somebody and see about getting the stuff sent out. In his mind he's already there, calling on new customers or helping Daisy with her first-born calf, and that's all there is to it for him. The intervening three weeks are merely an irritation and a bore which he suspects his wife of fostering, due to her sorrow over leaving the bridge club.

Wife's mind, however, will have no room for grief until she is firmly deposited in Muncie. Rather does her head ring with such words as carload lots, hourly basis versus flat price, tariffs, Motor Carrier Act Part Two, twelve per cent difference in rates, freight versus motor van, storage costs, size of load determined by cubic feet,

weight measure, Interstate Commerce Commission, and estimates. Not until she and her furniture come face to face again in the new location can she bury the sound of these strange words, raise her head once more, and smile.

Estimates In preparation for the day when we, too, may be called to Muncie, let's inspect a couple of connotations in the hope of eradicating a few thuds from these troubled dreams. Mr. Frank L. McKee of the National Van Lines, Inc., of Chicago has been good enough to give me detailed information on this subject. Having spent all his life in the business of transporting the personal possessions of innumerable people back and forth across the country, he understands his subject thoroughly, in aspects both animate and inanimate. In fact, his knowledge and wide interest are inherited, for his father operated a coal, ice and transfer business in the days when America was young and lusty. Out of that developed a pony express service for theatrical scenery, baggage and theatrical properties of a vaudeville circuit. Many of our nation-wide motor van services have developed in the same fashion; but not all of them, like that of Mr. McKee's father, could boast of having transported the properties of a vaudeville skit called

“A Night in an English Music Hall,” featuring an unknown young man called Charles Chaplin.

Nowadays, long-distance moving concerns will send men to your home free of charge to estimate the cost of moving your household goods to Muncie or California or Toronto. And three estimates should be sufficient, for when these men come in response to your call, each will take from thirty to sixty minutes, depending upon the thoroughness of the work, length of sales talks, and the sociability of the individual estimator. Each man feels he is entitled to repeated visits in order to secure the order for his company. Even after you have made a decision and placed your order, the firm chosen will send a representative once more to check their original figures.

Estimates are based upon the number of cubic feet of space your furniture will occupy in a van or a freight car, multiplied by a certain rate per cubic foot per mile. There are no flat prices in long-distance moving today. The distance of the haul is known and the cubic footage is ascertained by guess for an estimate, and by actuality after loading, for your bill. One man may tell you in his estimate sheet that your four rooms contain 500 cubic feet of belongings; another will guess 600 and a third 650. Prices are quoted on this basis and you decide to employ the services of the company represented by the first man. But you

might as well have chosen on the basis of the curl in the hair of the second man or the pleasant voice of the third, for you will pay for the space your furniture occupies when it is loaded, regardless of the estimate made to secure your trade.

In August 1935, in case you care, the Motor Carrier Act became a law, authorizing the Interstate Commerce Commission to take jurisdiction over motor transportation, and you know what this body has done to standardize railway transportation. Motor transportation is now going through a similar period of transition. In due time all prices for long-distance moving by motor van will be the same for definite classes of household goods, according to the amount of furniture and the distance of the haul. But at present there is a divergence in tariff price, according to the company, and there is no good reason for anyone to pay \$190 for the same 500 cubic feet going the same distance if he can get the job done for \$170.

A conscientious estimator will examine every article in your apartment carefully and ask to see everything you intend to take with you. He will check the contents of clothes closets and shelves, basement storerooms, garage and porches. He will list the number of barrels he judges to be required for the accommodation of dishes and kitchenware, books, bedding and so on. Even if you do your own packing of these latter articles

in order to save money, he must judge how many boxes and barrels will be included in the load.

Freight or Motor Van? There is little question of the fact that the trend toward motor-van moving for long hauls is gaining strength every day. The ease of moving has been increased by having furniture loaded at your front door and unloaded in your new rooms without transfer or a division of responsibility for its safety. Up to a thousand miles, it is usually cheaper, too. But for distances of half a continent or more, freight is less expensive as a means of transporting household goods. With this latter method, however, there are many other considerations as well as the flat freight rate, so be sure that you receive a detailed estimate of all minor charges incidental to the move, such as packing and hauling to the depot, handling between stations, storage, and cartage at both ends, before you make a choice between the two methods of transportation.

White Meat The last section of this chapter might well be entitled: "why not give it all away and forget the whole thing?" You probably won't need a bed or fireside screen in Muncie anyway. And that brings up the ques-

tion of secondhand stores and bargain prices. Let E.B.W. tell it:

“The difficulty of getting rid of even one half of one’s possessions is considerable, even at removal prices. And after the standard items are disposed of—china, rugs, furniture, books—the surface is merely scratched: you open a closet door and there in the half-dark sit a catcher’s mitt and an old biology notebook.

“I recall a moment of peculiar desperation over a gold mirror which, in spite of all our attempts to shake it off, hung steadfastly on till within an hour or so of our scheduled departure. This mirror, which was a large but fairly unattractive one, rapidly came to be a sort of symbol of what I was trying to escape from, and its tenacity frightened me. I was quite prepared simply to abandon it (I knew a man once who, tiring of an automobile, walked away from it on the street and never saw it again), but my wife wouldn’t consent to abandon anything. It seems there are rules, even to the sort of catharsis to which we were committed: I could give the mirror away or sell it, but I was not privileged to leave it in the house, which (she said) had to be stripped clean.

“So I walked out the door hatless and in my shirtsleeves and went around the corner to a junk shop on Second Avenue—a place which displayed a thoroughly miserable assortment of

bruised and cast-off miscellany. The proprietor stood in the doorway.

'Do you want . . .' I began. But at that instant an L train joined us and I had to start again and shout.

'Do you want to buy a gold mirror?'

The man shook his head.

'It's gold!' I yelled. *'A beautiful thing!'*

Two kibitzers stopped, to attend the deal, and the L train went off down the block, chuckling.

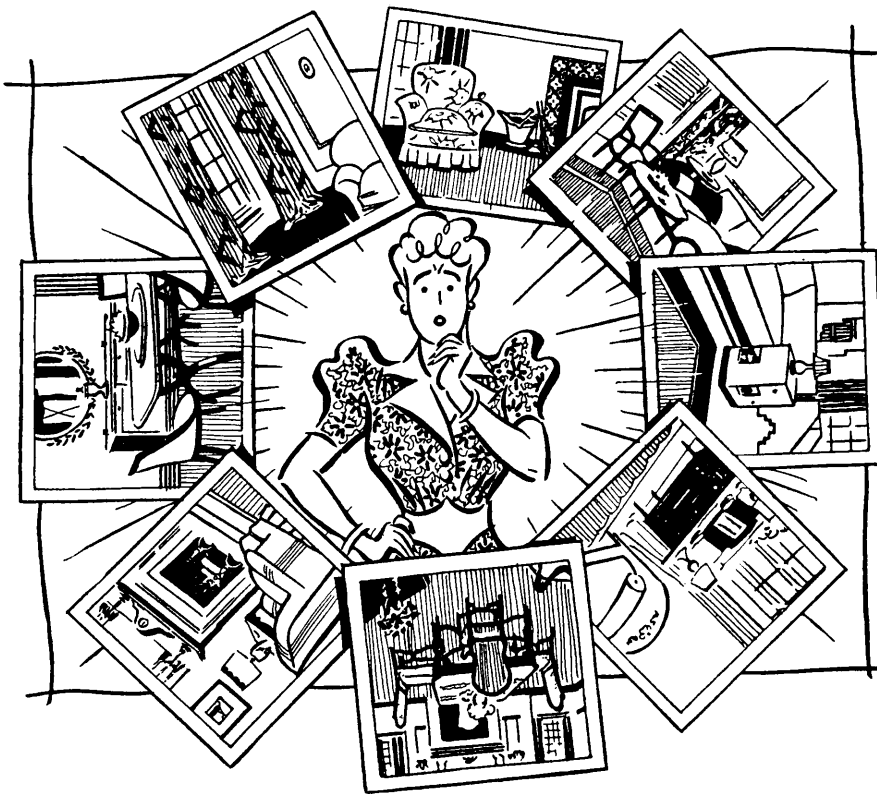
'Nuh,' said the proprietor coldly. 'Nuh.'

'I'm giving it away,' I teased.

'I'm nut taking it,' said the proprietor, who for all I know, may have been trying to simplify his own life.

A few minutes later, after a quick trip back to the house, I slipped the mirror guiltily in a doorway, a bastard child with not even a note asking the finder to treat it kindly. I took a last look at myself in it and I thought I looked tired." *

* "One Man's Meat": E. B. White—*Harper's Magazine*, October 1938



III FUNDAMENTALS OF DECORATION

. . . is that all there is to it?

The present widespread interest in the subject of interior decoration is the result, I feel sure, of the standardized form of city apartments. In the metropolis we are under no obligation to assume

a mode of decorative background that will give us a tag, like a uniform, in order that people may know easily and immediately the social group from which we have sprung. In this respect, perhaps more than in any other, the metropolis has emancipated us from the social bondage of the past. In addition, we are given a boundless choice in any furniture salesroom, and so find ourselves at liberty to surround ourselves with the trappings of a Louis Quinze suite, a Spanish castle or a Dutch kitchen, if we are ready to pay the price, and we can have them on whichever side of the tracks we choose to live.

But with liberty has come knowledge that it is of little value unless we know how to use it. How shall we come to a decision as to what we want? What is really appropriate for us? Is there a better criterion than haphazard taste? A chair is needed, a rug and some curtains. We see a chair that we like and buy it. We choose a rug and a set of curtains at bargain prices without regard to anything beyond their design, and take them home. And so with the rest of our belongings. Unless the buyer has an unconscious flair, as sure as that of a man who plays music by ear, the result is a hodge-podge and the room as a whole looks terrible.

Some aspects of the subject are purely national. For instance, Americans have a yearning for ma-

terial perfection. We want the whole of anything we reach for, replete with directions for use, not yet having learned the philosophy of Europeans in accepting defeat and substitutions with equanimity and patience. When we begin the study of something like interior decoration we don't stop with a discussion of ideas; we find means to express such ideas as we have in tangible forms that please us. And we keep moving these forms constantly in an attempt to grasp completeness, even though we sometimes mistake change for progress.

Victoria's indulgent styles were supplanted by the Morris chair and mission oak beloved of our parents. These were in turn discarded like religious precepts heard but not understood. Yet a criterion of some sort was needed to supplant them, and it happened to be found in the cult of individualism. Living in an age of trained scientists and mechanics, we have followed individualism implicitly and doggedly; a specialist in one field is quite willing to allow a specialist in another field, even if it be the furnishing of his own home, to tell him what to do. Thus the rise of interior decorators.

But perfection in anything related to human life and modes of living is impossible of attainment. Man was never meant to be a static animal, and if he isn't growing he is beginning to decay. We might better strive to keep our homes flexi-

ble, rather than perfect, in order that adjustment to constantly recurrent changes and moods may be easy.

Fashionable? What does that mean, except that one listens when someone else points a finger and says that the *right* kind of people never, never hang pictures from wires that form a triangle instead of parallel lines, or that it is smart to fill your bookcases with volumes whose bindings match the color scheme of the room? After we have listened carefully and followed instructions, these same finger-pointers will change their minds in half a decade and tell a different story. Are we going to throw away what we have and start again every few years because someone tells us to?

On the other hand, if we are to turn a deaf ear to the mockery of fashion in furniture, how shall we decide what is suited to our individual needs and tastes? How can we best co-ordinate personal desires with our income? How do other people achieve those thoroughly satisfying rooms which we always leave reluctantly, rooms that soothe us when we're tired or stimulate us when we're low? Can we afford rooms like them, and if so, how?

What Are Your Needs? No one can tell what will make you comfortable except yourself. Your home is where *you*

are going to live, you are paying for it and you are going to use it. Forget your friends when you begin to consider the furnishing and decorating of the rooms in which you must work and play. If people admire or reject the surface appearance without reference to the inner meaning, they proclaim only their own stupidity. Astute friends will rejoice when you have achieved a home that reflects your own personality.

So once again, how many are you? A lone male about to see his cherished bachelor suite materialize; three girls who have decided to take an apartment together; a large family including children and perhaps one elderly relative; or just two, like Michael and me? The tastes you share will be reflected in the living room, individual differences in more remote parts of the home. Do you entertain a few people at a time, or do you prefer to entertain large numbers formally? That means how many chairs must you provide so the whole apartment won't be disrupted every time friends come in. Does your husband work part of the time when he is at home, and what kind of work? Do you sew often in the evenings? Play cards? Talk? Read? Reach into your own understanding for the answers to such questions, and before you touch the subject of color or form or proportion, know definitely how you are go-

ing to make use of your rooms and what each of your usual activities requires.

What Are Your Tastes? Once you have a basis of common sense on which to build, personality can begin to express itself. Even families have a unified individuality. Do you live formally, each member to himself, or do you share each others' interests? Do friends come in to see you often, or do you spend most of your evenings out? Do you, as a rule, prefer the dramatic, the striking, the new and daring? Or do you feel more comfortable in quiet, homely, simple surroundings? Perhaps no two of you are alike. Then which ones spend more time in the common living rooms than the others? Divergent personalities need not impinge upon each other if a little care is taken. When you have inspected this approach to the problem you are ready for a few simple rules that will enable you to define boundaries and help you to acquire a more certain sense of harmony.

How Can You Tell? There are several fundamental divisions of what is known as beauty, but not one of them is measured by a didactic rule to say that this line or that color is good and the others are not. In choosing the contents of your own rooms and in

judging the homes of other people, remember the old one that tells us nothing is good or bad but our thinking makes it so. If they like it, then it is good for them, whether you admire it or not. Let other people alone, both in what they think and what they do, and in turn keep your own mind clear of other people's too-freely expressed opinions when you are trying to decide a question that concerns yourself alone. After all, you must live with it.

Most of us know when we like or do not like a room or a piece of furniture or a color; very few of us know why. If we discover what qualities the things we like have in common with each other, we can approach a determination as to why they contain interest and beauty. We can approximate the beautiful as it appeals to the average mind, since it is entirely a question of mental reaction. We can understand that a meaning must lie behind the mechanics of creation. But we cannot say with impunity that this is lovely because I like it, and this is not because I don't.

Criteria Of the hundreds of objects which we must view and then accept or discard as suitable in furnishing a home, we can ask three questions to help us in our decisions:

1. *Is it functional?* Does it serve well the purpose for which it was made? It may have been designed for no wider purpose than color interest and accent, but if so, does it do this better than anything else you could find to take its place?

2. *Is it in scale?* That means several things. Is it properly related to the other parts of your apartment? One enormous marble bust, no matter how fine in a museum, would hardly be suitable for ornament in a small, Georgian living room. Is it in scale as to material? Tweed topcoats are not worn over satin evening gowns, nor would you hang rich damask draperies in a playroom. Does it fit your way of life? For instance, if you exist in the city, waiting only for the intervals when you can don rough clothes and live in the woods, or near the ocean, or in a ski hut or wading a trout stream, the choice of satin-upholstered bergères in your foyer would be almost shocking, and probably uncomfortable for you to tolerate as well. All these things have to do with scale, as well as income.

3. *Does it have regard for those qualities which appeal to the eye?* In other words: line, form, color, balance and key? Interest and beauty lie in the organization of these elements in such a way as to avoid mental fatigue. Not only do we use these symbols in judging individual objects, but also in thinking of a room

or an apartment as a whole. It is in these qualities that the width of variety in personal taste can be expressed. Let's consider each one separately.

ELEMENTS OF BEAUTY

Line Before a plan of decoration for any room can be undertaken, you must first take into account the fixed architectural features, such as windows, doors, mantels and broken wall spaces. Practically every apartment in a city is in need of being made to appear larger than it is. If rooms can be made to look less cramped, then one feels less cramped in them.

1. If ceilings are low, they can be made to look higher either by using vertical-striped wallpaper, omitting any horizontal lines around the room (such as chair or plate rails), or by painting ceilings and walls both with the same plain color.

2. Walls that are overdecorated look much more crowded and less spacious than walls against which only a few pieces of furniture stand. Mantels that jut out make a room look smaller than those which are flush with the wall. If you can have bookshelves made to fill the spaces on either side of the fireplace, the same effect is achieved.

3. Windows appear taller when draperies and

glass curtains cover them and hang to the floor. They seem wider when draperies are hung at either side of the frame and the glass covered with a venetian blind. They appear shorter when covered only to the sill and a valance allowed to hang low over them. If your windows afford an attractive view, keep the panes clear of curtains, and this will make your room seem far more spacious than it really is.

4. Boundaries of masses have also to do with line, and these must be so arranged as to let the eye rest by traveling along them peacefully, without being diverted by angles and broken lines. Pictures hung in stair-steps make the eye, and the mind behind it, restless and confused. So do rugs and pieces of furniture placed at angles about the room, cutting off corners and keeping your eyes on the jump. It is a trait of the human eye to travel along lines to their end. That is why one hears that a man placed inside a globular room with no marks anywhere on the surface would soon go mad. All this is something to remember when you attempt to create a restful room.

5. A room looks larger when the walls are plain; when the ceilings and woodwork are the same color; when it is carpeted to the wall; when the furniture is small (but not out of scale with the size of yourselves); when mirrors are used freely; when patterns are kept away from the bold, and ornament is used sparingly.

Balance And symmetry and proportion, all related, are intangible qualities, difficult to describe. If you have ever watched someone balancing a scale, you know the feeling of satisfaction when the two sides become level. Whenever an arrangement of furniture gives you the same sense of satisfaction, you have achieved balance in your rooms.

Symmetry concerns itself with the distribution of objects on either side of an imaginary line. If you put a sofa in the center of a wall and flank it by small tables, with perhaps a lamp on each, that is a bisymmetrical arrangement. Such groups are reposeful if used once or twice in a room, but coldly formal if used exclusively. Asymmetrical balance is an achievement of equality in mass or interest by having two or more small pieces balance one large piece, such as a love seat on one side of the hearth, facing a chair with a coffee table beside it.

Proportion may be the relationship in size between human beings and their furniture, such as large persons trying to be comfortable in too-small chairs, or the relationship between individual pieces. If you place a very large lamp on a small, delicate table something should tell you that the proportion is wrong, to say nothing of the possibility of the lamp being overturned.

Patterns One of the basic needs of the human mind is contrast, or relief. A speaker knows this when he pauses every ten minutes or so and comes to a full stop before going on with the thread of his thought. Designers use this principle when they contrast plain and patterned surfaces in a room. Eyes seek relief from too much plain surface, and they grow intensely weary if too many patterns are shut up in one room together. Designers call rooms or patterns *active* or *busy* when they afford too little contrast; on the other hand, a room with no patterns at all would be duller than three o'clock to most of us.

So we try to achieve a balance between these choices: patterned wallpaper and plain draperies; plain wallpaper and draperies with figured upholstery or rug. Two entirely different kinds of patterns often offset each other, such as a floral and a stripe. If your room is small, you will want no more than one distinct pattern in it; if it is large and can stand two, you will want to combine a geometric design with one of the other two, floral or stripe. But all the interior-decorated rooms you may see to the contrary, let two patterns be your limit in any one apartment room.

COLOR

All use of color is an attempt at self-expression. If the objects with which an individual surrounds

himself seem lacking in beauty, vitality and sympathy, it is not always because the person himself is uninteresting. He is more likely to be inarticulate in his expression of beauty, lacking in skill of color arrangement, than one who prefers discord to harmony.

Color is by far the most vital factor in planning your rooms, and through its use your entire decorating scheme can stand or fall. "Color is a language, subtle, piquant, spicy, with rich undertones. It is a spring of inexhaustible variability." * It may interpret two different sets of ideas: one daring and dramatic, with unusual combinations, startling, gay, sophisticated, theatrical; the other gentle, continuous but never monotonous. Once we were afraid of being mastered by it; now we have a sense of intimacy with it, and use it consciously to produce definite emotional effects.

A painter has a feeling, a sort of sixth sense, for color. A musician, likewise, has the same feeling for tone, and science generally recognizes that tone and color are closely linked in our perceptions. It is no accident that Negroes who like hot music also choose to dress in purple, wine and scarlet. There is the well-known story, scientifically accepted, of a man blind from birth who received his sight in middle life. When he first

* *The Rhyming of Color*: John Marsman—*Arts & Decoration*, April 1938

saw it, he said that turkey red was like a loud blast on a trumpet. Nor do filling stations hang out their signs without first having learned the power of certain combinations of color to attract the human eye.

But it is in the nuances of color that most criteria on the subject break down. You don't want your home to look like a hotel lobby or beckon in the fashion of a neon sign; you do want it to cheer and refresh you. Yet it is as impossible to state categorically what combinations will produce these desirable effects upon you as it is to say why you prefer Wagner and Tschai-kovsky to Bach and Mozart. You are the only one who knows.

It is a crazy, fascinating subject, this one. There are far more human beings with a natural eye for color than you would presume from a glance at their houses and their clothes. Even attractively attired women will live in a house screaming with color inharmony, simply because a lot of sentimental trash has been allowed to accumulate to cause the jarring notes. After growing accustomed to having it around, no one takes the initiative in throwing it out or redecorating to accommodate it harmoniously.

If you have a rampant case of color blindness and know it, or are too timid to make decisions, don't try to trust yourself. Either let a more sen-

sitive member of the family make color choices, inasmuch as he is the one who will be offended and emotionally upset by wrong ones, or depend upon a good fabric, a single fine painting, a beautiful room you have encountered somewhere, and use one of them as a color guide. I shall talk more about this later in the chapter.

Elementary Color Code Before we become further involved in this subject it would be a good idea to define our terms. You'll run into them wherever you go, and it's just as well to know what the other fellow is talking about. Instead of using the old symbol of a circle to include the colors we see in a rainbow, I find it simplifies the whole matter to repeat the six basic colors in a child's paint box, and say them as we used to do in a couplet:

Red, orange, yellow,
Green, blue, purple.

Instead of trying to visualize the colors, merely remember the six words in that order. The rest follows easily from that.

Complementary colors are the pairs that stand, one above the other, such as red and green, orange and blue, yellow and purple. These are the dramatic combinations that cause excitement. They intensify each other and thus are loud and noisy.

Adjacent colors are the ones that follow each other, such as red and orange, yellow and green, blue and purple. Or three shades of blue from green-blue through blue to violet-blue, and so on. If you use them in their most intense state, such as pure red and orange, the effect is about what a trumpet gives when it takes away the melody in a swing band and carries it beyond harmony into frenzied inspiration. Just so much lifts you high and any more would set you crazy. For this reason, decorators handle such combinations warily.

The key of a color is the amount of light and dark it contains. *Tints* are those high tones of a color containing much light and *shades* are low in key, containing varying amounts of darkness. When both tints and shades of a single color are used in combination they form the most soothing room possible to achieve. It is through these shades and tones of colors, from off-white to nearly black, that such infinite variety is possible.

Emotional effects are the subject of much scientific study, and the more you know about them the greater will be your understanding of your own needs. *Warm colors* are the first line of the couplet: red, orange, yellow. And *cool colors* are the second line: green, blue, purple. The first three are stimulating, aggressive colors, and the second three recessive and tranquil. It is im-

portant to distinguish between these two groups, because a dark room must be decorated with warm colors to make it cheerful and not depressing, and a room filled with sunshine and heat must be decorated with cool colors to make it peaceful.

Large rooms in which much time is spent can't be decorated with brilliant, aggressive colors or they will make us restless. But very small rooms through which one passes, or in which one spends only a comparatively short time, such as a foyer or dining room, may use them and be made more interesting thereby. A room filled with reds, oranges and yellows may be gay and exciting when you first step into it, but if you stay there long enough, the emotions it creates will degenerate to irritation. On the other hand, a room composed chiefly of blues, greens and lavenders may be soothing, particularly on a warm day, but unless small spots of bright color can be found in it also, it will soon become depressing and lifeless.

It is in this manner that colors effect the occupants of rooms. A nervous, irritable woman may behave best in a room of soothing, recessive colors, while a morose, shy man may be made happy and at ease in a warm, aggressive sort of room. A fairly normal individual prefers a combination of both warm and cool colors as complements to

each other, large spaces of cool color and small objects of warm tones. If you say the couplet as an old nursery rhyme, you feel it is incomplete without the addition of the second line. So too, with a room.

Color schemes are the result of these principles of human reaction, and they can be explained simply, if a formula is desired for a working basis. Two kinds of color combinations have always been considered pleasing to the majority of us.

First, a *triad*, which is a group of those six colors in the couplet that fall together when you skip from red to yellow to blue, or from orange to green to purple. Any combination of these three colors is as filling as a fried chicken dinner and so they are used chiefly in attenuated tones and shades.

Second, an *analogy* is any group of mixed colors dominated by a single one, such as yellow-green, yellow and yellow-orange, as they lie adjacent in the couplet. At the moment this is a popular decoration idea, and particularly in city apartments is found both subtle and soothing.

Neutrals are gray and brown in any of their hundreds of shades, tints and mixtures. Gray is cool and brown is warm, and either of them used in conjunction with brilliant colors does a job of pacifying. Once upon a time these two were considered polite and respectable and it was

thought better taste not to stray far from them. This predilection has been carried over to Canada from England and as a basic idea of decoration it still persists. A major mistake has been made, however, in a failure to realize what the difference in climate does to such rooms.

The English countryside has its own special shade of light: soft yellow-green during the majority of months in the year. English country life centers in the garden, which may be seen from many of the living rooms, and is carried indoors in cut flowers. For all of this, brown is an excellent background. In town during the dismal few months of winter, English homes are filled with crackling fires and bright chintzes. Again, the warmth and gayety of these are best against more somber browns.

But in Canada the expatriate Englishman tries to reproduce the familiar background that he liked so much at home. He plans a tan wall, brown or beige upholstery, and monotone curtains because the chintz of England seems somehow out of place here even if he doesn't know why. And then hangs up dull wine red draperies whenever he wants to add color! A long winter of snow, late spring and early autumn, with gardens not an integral part of the house, result in a sense of lifelessness indoors that causes the Englishman to think with nostalgia of his childhood

home across the water. He prefers Canada for nearly every other reason under the sun, he loves the snow country and its skiing, but he has never once thought of adopting the rich, brilliant colors of the Swedes or Norwegians in a climate identical to theirs.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Suppose that you do know pretty well your preferences for certain colors, unrelated as they may be. There is a madonna blue that appeals wherever you happen to see it. Chartreuse green arrests your attention, but you can't think how to use it suitably. You like the peach and apricot tones, but you don't care for peony pink. Short of being a decorator yourself, who can talk of colors with the familiarity of a good cook explaining the ingredients of a cake, how can you plan a whole room or a series of rooms in your head? Even decorators have to make charts to become articulate. Are there any tangible menus or recipes one can use, to co-ordinate confused ideas into a result as satisfactory as the proper proportions of shortening, flour and milk in good biscuits?

Perhaps there are. Heretofore an air of mysticism in the attitude of decorators has beclouded the subject for the neophyte. And because the ingredients of a satisfactory room cost consider-

ably more than those necessary for a pan of biscuits, we have been too willing to turn the whole thing over to someone else, rather than run the risk of a failure we couldn't afford to give to the dog. Because there was money in it for the people who sell, fashion has been made a keynote in the purchasing of home furnishings—a ridiculous tag to hang onto anything that costs so much and should serve so long as a bed or a chesterfield. What has fashion to do with comfort, beauty and utility? Most of us decide one day to buy new furnishings, either to replace old ones or for the first time in our lives, and like everything else in the tempo of our day, we are unwilling to go slowly and study the subject for ourselves. It's so much easier to turn the job over to someone who can convince us he knows all there is and charges accordingly.

But you're losing so much fun if you let a stranger make your home for you! You wouldn't let someone else dress you. When you think of buying clothes you read magazines, shop around, study trends and styles on the market, consider your own personality and what befits you, and think of uses and requirements for the gowns under consideration. Why not do the same with your house? Take time with the decoration and furnishing—you're going to use your furniture much longer than your spring suit—don't buy

anything until you are sure you can find nothing better for your purposes, and use the same sources of inspiration you do for your clothes, with as much conscious discrimination.

Try, for instance, any one or all of these:

1. Monthly magazines, with their superb color plates and articles of great diversity.

2. Books in the library, if you want to pursue one phase of the subject.

3. Model rooms set up in department and furniture stores. They may also point out clearly what not to do, but they will necessarily increase your appreciation of the details necessary to complete a room.

4. Museums containing replica rooms of historical periods. Splendid collections can be found throughout the United States, representing with veracity such interiors as Georgian, Tudor, French baroque and rococo, early American, Dutch, modern Swedish and so on. One can even learn from such examples how furniture has developed through generations to suit changing needs.

5. Paintings, as charts for color schemes. Reproductions or prints of modern masters are not only sure in the quality of colors used, but likewise in the proportions of one color to another. Choosing the color scheme of a room to match a painting has been tried often with eminent success. Such a procedure would serve any one of

us, if first we like the painting in question without a doubt.

When you find a room in the home of a friend, in a model house, or in a photograph that causes a response of pleasure when you first see it, stay with it long enough to find out why. Can you see just why these curtains were used with that rug, and why the rug is that color instead of taupe or brown? How would the room look if the white lamp and bits of pottery were removed? Pretty flat, like the taste of unsalted vegetables? Where are the small, bright patches of color, and how large are they in proportion to the background tones? Where is the darkest color and where the lightest? Is the color scheme that of a triad, such as mauve, beige and green, or is it an analogy of chartreuse, green and aquamarine? How is the room illuminated—centrally, or from side lights and table lamps? Is the lighting used as a decorative feature, or only for utility? Does the whole room lift you like a song when you step into it, or does it soothe you like a friendly voice in a crowd?

Those are questions that no one but yourself can answer. Once you learn the habit of analyzing what appeals to you, discriminating between objects that you like but couldn't use, and those that would fit your way of life, such research will

become absorbing and bring you an enriched appreciation of lovely things.

Some rooms have unmistakable distinction and no one who enters them is unmoved by the expression of personality imposed upon a background of culture, understanding and sympathy. When you next find yourself in such a room, observe its ingredients, if you can keep from your face the expression of a dealer in secondhand furniture who got through the door by mistake. You won't be able to trace all of them, any more than you can pin down the component parts of a human personality. Nor would you want to copy it in its entirety, but you can enjoy the ideas it conveys, such as gayety or repose or formality, and then adapt its characteristics to your own needs. Difficult? Not once you try.



IV FURNITURE

. . . and stuff

Every time we move into a new apartment we run into the recurrent problem of what to do with the old furniture. Are we going to keep the foreground intact and change only the background, one set of apartment walls for another? Will it be better to shed the old stuff and start fresh with the world once more? Or are we ready to make a compromise like any other mortal and combine some of the old with a touch of the new?

Most of us find that after the initial venture into housekeeping, an opportunity never recurs to furnish our home completely anew from bare walls to bare walls. Every time we move, or a change in the size of the family occurs, the struggle between necessity and beautiful theories must be refereed. What good to know the difference between a lowboy and a cabriole leg if we can afford neither? Or why feel that something ought to be done to change the furniture that has been lived with a very long while and is still enjoyed as much as the day it was new?

A home is far more than the furniture it contains, to be sure, and yet every once in awhile we take occasion to look at our own chairs and tables and wonder if something could be done to brighten them or give them a new aspect without altering the essential familiar patterns that we have come to take for granted. Color and headboard styles are secondary to the formulation of a home that will offer us refuge from the intrusions of the world and not be in itself one more impulsion toward the modern desire for escape. More than anything else we want to make a habitation that will enable us to go out from it better able to express ourselves in business, in school, or in social affairs. And a home that is an expression of our tastes and beliefs is no inconsiderable fac-

tor in the contentment and fruitfulness of our lives. So . . . let us examine our surroundings and see what can be done about them.

PARTICULARS AND PIECES

Rejuvenation Some pieces will need no more than a wax rubdown when they are settled in the new apartment; others may require the repairing of such things as a broken spring or a chair rung. A few may have hearts of gold but frumpy exteriors; but even these can have their faces lifted. Try any one of the following methods:

First: removal of a shining varnished finish for the application of new stain, and then wax. All this should be done by a competent furniture craftsman. The new wax surface will give a maximum of usefulness, since it is less likely to show wear and can easily be retouched.

Second: if the piece is old and cumbersome but has good lines, such as a well-proportioned old bureau, separate it into two pieces. Take off the mirror, remove all hinges, and hang the mirror over the lower part which now becomes a versatile chest. Old walnut tables can be cut in two and each part used in different rooms, or together when you have need of an extended surface.

Third: furniture that is solid and sturdy but has no distinction in the quality of its wood, can be painted in attractive colors and used in one room, such as a child's room or workroom. Children prefer painted furniture, and the color can be changed when one coat becomes worn or dingy.

Fourth: upholstered furniture can always be re-covered, and for an informal room, slip covers remain perennially pleasing. Study the host of excellent and enticing patterns to be found in materials for such purposes on the market today. And since slip covers made with zippers can so easily be removed for laundering or cleaning, why not have as gay and cheerful a pattern as you've always secretly desired, and then tone the rest of the room as a background to it?

Fifth: and by no means last, have you seen enough of the bleached woods to appreciate their excellent qualities? They came in as a fancy and a fad, but their durability and effect of lightness destine them for a permanent place in city apartments. Backgrounds must be treated in a radical manner to suit them, but once you have seen the appeal of such a room, it will haunt your mind until you turn your old furniture over to a cabinetmaker and give an order for its bleaching. Pickled pine, blond maple and bleached oak are so-called for euphony; the process and finish are practically the same in each case.

A New York shop set up two rooms, identical in size, lighting and arrangement of furniture. In one, the walls were a traditional shade of beige, the furniture walnut, the rug taupe and the draperies and accessories of bright colors. In the second room, the wall was cocoa brown, the rug rose-rust, draperies lighter than the rug, but carrying the same warm tones of mixed rose and amber, with enormous white flowers and green leaves. All the furniture, proportioned exactly as the pieces in the first room, were of bleached oak and the lamps and accessories chalk white. No one who observed the two side by side could doubt that the second room seemed much brighter and lighter than the first.

MORE ABOUT COLOR

Wallpaper Versus Paint Whatever your apartment owner chooses to use on his walls you will have to take and like. If it happens to be wallpaper, you will be told to go to a certain shop and make your choice from those papers listed at a given price, and the cheap papers in this group are inevitably nightmares of vulgarity.

You can circumvent the parsimony of your landlord in this direction by a deal with the wallpaper man. He will be more than willing to let

you choose from more expensive papers if you will pay him the difference in cost, and your landlord will be more than willing to let you hang it on his walls and increase the attractiveness of his premises. Find colors and patterns that please you, because no furniture can be placed against an ugly background and be satisfying. If you are allowed a twenty-five cent roll and you find what you want in a sixty-cent paper, the difference you must pay is small in comparison to the difference it will make in your state of mind through the next few years of living with it.

If your rooms are finished with paint, then duplication of the color scheme in your mind can easily be achieved. Paint shows wear more quickly than a fairly good grade of paper, but the possible nuances of shade and tone are exciting to try. A beautiful, submerged mixture of a color is little more expensive than a clear tone. But painters have a way of being most unimaginative men and will show you sturdy, routine shades from which you are supposed to choose. If they discover that you know what you want and are not just being finicky, however, they will go to infinite pains to satisfy you.

Show your painter the color you desire by giving him a sample of material or a picture or a slip of paper as a guide. Only . . . don't forget that an intense color in a swatch will seem twice as

vivid on four walls, for they reflect each other and do actually intensify the colors painted upon them.

Further, use the opportunity paint gives for being more original with your walls, and the pleasure you derive from the result will be worth whatever cost of effort and doubt. Try having the wall opposite your windows painted a slightly darker tone than the other three. Or paint two walls in an adjacent or analogous color to the other two, and then keep your accessories in close harmony. This latter treatment will give your room the appearance of being longer and narrower than it actually is.

In choosing either wallpaper or paint, remember that your walls must serve as background for your pictures. Florid wallpaper can do a remarkable job of confusing or submerging paintings by its boldness. On the other hand, decorators of modern rooms in which one or two walls are covered with patterned paper leave these surfaces free of further decoration, and place whatever pictures are used on the walls which are treated with plain colors.

Dark and Light Rooms that get a minimum of sun or no sun at all, rooms that have their light cut off by trees or the sides of neighboring buildings, must be treated with

warm colors, and with light shades of these. Heavy draperies or dark-toned rugs, both of which absorb light, may create an atmosphere so dark that artificial light will be needed on a dull day. On the other hand, rooms that receive sun most of the day and are used for rest or work can be toned down with blues and greens. And then remember to use bright accents in the latter room, to keep it from being depressing.

Rooms Treated as a Unit Rooms that can be plainly seen, one from the other, must be considered as a unit. They need not be decorated alike, but they must harmonize. The rose and gray of one room is enhanced by a view of a blue and orchid room beyond; on the other hand, a rose and gray room would scream hysterically at a calendula-orange room in plain sight.

Focus of Interest Even to the person who understands color harmony instinctively, I would suggest that a scheme for decoration be built around one object you particularly like. This is, of course, not my original idea, but it is a pre-eminently sound one. Take the Persian rug bought a long while ago for your living room, a length of crewelwork material to

be used for new draperies, or a bit of Chinese porcelain. Or borrow a scheme from a color-photograph, clipped from a magazine, of a thoroughly satisfying room.

If you follow this artifice in building an entire room from one object, you can't go wrong in your attempt to please yourself, providing you are extremely fond of the object to begin with. Choose something you have lived with long enough to know its wearing quality in all your moods. If it is a drapery fabric, bring home a length and keep it until you have had an opportunity of seeing it in all lights and through successive days. If you like it as much at the end of three or four days as you did when you first saw it, it will serve you well. And don't forget those pieces of furniture which you really don't like but must keep anyway, no matter how they are disguised. Center attention away from them by making other things in the room vastly more interesting, such as rug, draperies, lamps or flowers.

And finally, if your personal characteristics are marked, such as tawny hair or generous proportions or russet skin, make your rooms flatter you above everything else. See that they form a background against which you appear always at your best.

Us Again There were four rooms in the first apartment Michael and I rented after our return to this continent. We had acquired a few pieces of old furniture from our respective homes, and the usual assortment of wedding presents and oddments we had brought from abroad. All these had to be integrated in compact quarters.

One gift had been a large oil painting of Halifax harbor executed by Avery Shaw. Another was a water pitcher of that special rich indigo identified with Mexican glass. There were also, among other things, a rose table lamp and a copper kettle. It was the sight of these last two side by side as they were unpacked that caused me to formulate a rule which has become invaluable in devising decorating schemes. It was mentioned in the abstractions of the last chapter, but here is the way it works in our house, and you can decide for yourself if it seems equally important to you: *never allow in the same room objects that are purplish rose, wine or fuchsia pink in color, and objects that are rust, orange or a yellow-pink, such as peach.*

Your mind's eye doubtless distinguishes those two groups of red. It is my contention that if they are never allowed in proximity you will have no trouble with any other color combination you may devise. When I said that the two ends of

the color couplet could never be joined to make a circle, this was my reason.

After I made the great discovery I began to separate all our decorative objects into two groups, the rose-reds and the orange-reds, from palest pink and peach to dubonnet red and rust. Inasmuch as we liked the gifts that had been presented to us, we found we could use them all without offense to our sense of color harmony, only if we relegated to unconnecting rooms the objects on either side of the red fence. It has been a great convenience to have these two distinct sets of rooms in which to use small things such as ash trays or flower pots that would have been hideous placed in the wrong room, but were lovely in themselves. If you live in one room and find yourself presented with the same difficulty, separate your belongings and use one group at a time, changing accessories every six months or so.

Period Furniture It is only in America that the inhabitants, bereft of cold-storage tradition, have commandeered the freedom to reconstruct for themselves historical background in the form of housefurnishings to suit taste and personality. Whatever the spelling of our names, we are as free to live in a Dutch Colonial environment as the people next door. A man

from Dublin may feel that Swedish modern suits his needs and who is to say he shouldn't have it? Spanish Renaissance has been adopted by many a Pole; Louis Seize is prized by descendants of the English in Virginia. And why not? We live in America.

If you want to formulate reproductions of any period known to an interior decorator, there is a shop on every second block to help you. Volumes have been written on the subject and I have no intention of describing the characteristics of each trend. If you live in rooms decorated to catch the spirit of the Empire and you care enough to be accurate in every detail except electric light, why not be equally eager to understand the motives of the people who created that style? What men influenced the period? Does it represent decadence or reform, simplicity or extravagance? What qualities of taste and practicability have made it live, to be used again by us?

On the other hand, fashion in furniture periods that would tell us baroque is smart now, so throw away all your Directoire treasures and start on something else is ridiculous. If you have too much money and a great boredom, then try to escape by creating new moods upon new furnishings. Or if yours is a genuine love for lovely things, and you have acquired a fair sense of balance and consistency, mix your periods as you please, so

long as the whole meets your needs and gives you eminent satisfaction.

Antiques seem to me no more foolish a hobby for American women than collecting jokes or baggage labels. The craze for Americana has obviously arisen from a desire to provide for ourselves a traditional background, founded on taste rather than social caste. Period furniture of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is, on the whole, gracious and simple enough to suit modern tastes. The distinctly American pieces which developed in the years when the country was young were the work of sincere designers and craftsmen who understood enduring beauty.

Use the fine pieces which you have inherited or found because they are intrinsically beautiful and even inspiring, but not for the sake of imitation. With such furniture as a foundation, you can then find immeasurable pleasure in a constant search for bits of glass or pottery which will add the needed touch of imagination to your rooms. Or perhaps your rooms look forward instead of back and you feel more at peace surrounded by modern design, plain surfaces, muted colors and unquestioned utility. Such rooms can still expand and change imperceptibly in their accessories, as you keep in mind the fundamentals of harmony and the eloquence of growth.

INDIVIDUALIZING THE PROBLEM

But all these things are generalizations, you say; give us some good tested recipes that we can follow without too much thought and know the results will be approved. Tell us what colors are best for each room in our house, how many chairs to have in a dining room, what kind of mattresses to buy, and how much to tip the janitor.

How can I? Were your problem identical to another's, the interest to be derived from furnishing your home would give out in a hurry and all the domicile-beautiful magazines would perish in the juice of their own superlatives. You want someone to tell you that blonds should choose blue wallpaper and brunettes yellow? I won't do it.

Recipes? Expert cooks learn basic formulas first and then go on to add the individuality that makes inspired dishes. Lovable homes are hardly accidents, any more than a melting, flaky piecrust. To make Yorkshire pudding as a complement to roast beef and to stir up a satisfying room as a complement to the personalities of its inhabitants are equally worthy achievements. But a mistake in the second is slightly more expensive and lasting than too much milk in the former, so one must take a longer time to study the methods of combining ingredients. Don't be in such a hurry.

Begin furniture buying with necessities and leave accessories to fit the growing mood of the home as it develops naturally.

Males Only Every once in a while I renew acquaintance with a Torontonians I have watched with interest. He's an excellent youngster for all his fascist tendencies toward imposing discipline on others and an evident will for power. Of interest here is his reiterated intention to have for himself a bachelor apartment as soon as he can afford it. He has blond hair and a boyish grin and a quite-so English accent, coupled with admiration for American baseball, yachts and women. Every time he takes his pipe out of his mouth and says once more that by Jove he's going to have a place of his own next year, I wonder what his mind sees in that dream.

He'd probably find it difficult to tell me: a hearth because he's an Englishman; bookshelves because he's a scholar; certainly a comfortable chair or two; beer mugs, and a radio for listening to prize fights, operas and symphonies . . . Wagner and Stravinsky first choice in music, as though you didn't know. What colors will he want about him? He wouldn't have an idea. Pressed, he'd probably say brown, that seeming to be a good masculine choice. Yet every time he finds himself in a beautifully decorated room his defense

mechanisms cease to function and he calms down like a terrier who has vanquished an old shoe.

Nearly all men like to think their preference lies in an absence of color, and then they bedeck themselves with outlandish ties because it pleases them to own bright bits of gayety. And they wear said ties without self-consciousness because that's one part of their apparel they can't see.

Men are as quick to react emotionally to their surroundings as they are to a blue dress on a blond. Whether they are furnishing a one-room-and-kitchenette or a twelve-room penthouse, they present no problem peculiar to themselves. And their pleasure in something they like is worth a lot of effort to get it, so let's forget the old notion that anything is all right in the way of furniture for a man so long as it is big enough. More and more are we coming to realize that principles of decoration are not marked "Women Only".

Three Secretaries Two or more individuals living together in mutual respect, even if they are all female, can achieve a blending of tastes that will create a distinctive whole. One girl may have a flair for color not possessed by the others, and she will be aware that taking account of likes and avoiding dislikes in planning rooms will go far toward smoothing their life together. One person may have an emo-

tional loathing for purple that amounts nearly to physical repulsion. It is as important that she not be forced to live around such a color as that her food should be palatable.

It is equally important in any household of more than one inhabitant that each member should be able to close the door between herself and the others whenever she wants repose and quietness. But this needs little stress here, for girls contrive well enough to manage such matters. Among themselves, no more candid creatures run the earth.

Auntie Mabel and Little Babette In a small town these two would create no real problem at all, but their presence in a city apartment will inevitably cause a strain unless careful planning looks after them. It is probable that neither our child nor our widowed aunt lives with us from choice, so if they raise their voices more often than seems bearable in refutation of our decisions and plans, it would be well for us to remember that they would no doubt far rather be living in the old homestead or an Eskimo igloo than having to put up with us.

Auntie can hardly be expected to consider modern designs pleasing, but if she is provided with a room of her own she will probably not be

too harsh in her criticism of the rest of the house, particularly if we do not insult her doilies, antimacassars and photographs of former husbands.

As far as Babette's tastes are concerned, in her very young years they are either whims or a reflection of those with whom she lives. As she grows to adolescence, however, she has a right not only to a room of her own, but a room of sufficient size, attractiveness and sufficient furnishings to enable her to entertain without encroachment by the rest of the family. Failing such fundamental consideration, she is likely either to grow up feeling thwarted or use every occasion possible to get out of the house. In a small town, the neighbor's verandas, one's own garden or even the public parks provide a place for young conversations free from interruption. In a city such privacy is harder to come by.

It is difficult for many parents to understand how cramped young persons of school years can feel in the inescapable presence of their elders. Often children themselves are unaware of the causes of their dissatisfaction, even as they react to it. Yet educators in city schools complain constantly that homework suffers, and that the ability to learn how to concentrate is permanently impaired because so few children have an opportunity to escape from the radio. The solution is not the removal of radios, but the provision of a

separate room, even a small one if necessary, for the growing child, so long as it is attractive and gay and a place where she can work and entertain her friends. It is hardly more desirable that she should be forced to share our intimacies than that we should share hers.

AN ASSORTMENT OF NOTIONS

Thumbing through books and magazines in the libraries of Kennebunk, Evanston and Montreal, I have come across an assortment of irrelevant comments on the subject of furnishing an apartment that refused to be submerged in any of my handsome generalizations. Should any one of them happen to answer a question or solve a problem, help yourself.

1. Double-up your pieces of furniture whenever possible. Use a Simmons couch for a sofa as well as extra beds for guests. Bookshelves will house radios as well as magazines and newspapers and books, if you have them made a proper width. Cupboards that fasten on the back of doors are now on sale everywhere; they are invaluable for such articles as toys, cleaning utensils, bathroom accoutrements, or even for a bar. Nearly every door in your apartment could carry one and give you an unbelievable amount of extra space. Buy small tables with drawers, nests

of tables, and drop-leaf tables. Chests are invaluable for giving storage room, as well as table-top surface.

2. Mirrors can do many things besides show whether or not a hat is on straight. Use them lavishly and let them reflect light and whatever vistas you may have. They will double your sense of space and distance. They can be added to the sides of deep window panels, between rooms in doorways, on the backs of doors as panels, and on walls in place of pictures.

3. Dining-room tables with drop leaves to fold against the wall when not in use are fine. If yours won't be so accommodating, use it between meals to hold groups that particularly please you, such as terra-cotta figures, Waterford glass, Chinese pottery, flowers, vine-like euphorbia, or a tea set. If the dining room is in sight of the living room such treatment eliminates the sense of bareness and useless space beyond.

4. Imitation is not the same as reproduction. A reproduction of a fine piece of furniture or a painting is a copy or an image of it. Those of us who like but can't afford Chippendale chairs can be pleased by reproductions, since they could be differentiated from an original only by an expert. An imitation is a mimicking, a mocking, an aping of the real; it is a cheap, shoddy attempt to assume the outward appearance of something which it can resemble only externally.

5. Light where you need it is important.

Wherever you sit to read or work you must have a lamp within reach, and one with sufficient power to illumine but not glare. Lamps hung on the wall over a bed, end-table lamps, floor lamps and indirect illuminators are all necessary for different parts of the house. You will discover your requirements only as you live in new surroundings, but don't grow accustomed to bad lighting while you are trying to decide what you need.

6. Shelves high and low and everywhere, giving more places to put things, are requisite for every apartment. I don't know why someone doesn't nudge the elbows of architects and tell them so. You can't afford to call in a carpenter to build shelves in every available corner, but you can have bookshelves put in at little cost, and a wide Welsh dresser made for your dining alcove, and covers for the radiators. Old bookcases or new unpainted ones can be converted into shelves for toys in a nursery or linen in a corner of the bathroom, and used in your next apartment equally well.

7. Beds have taken new turns. Or their occupants have. It has suddenly become clever to make your own. If you are tired of the old four-posters, or regulation headboard and footboard, get a carpenter to make frames for the best box-springs and mattresses you can buy. These will fit into corners of your room, they can be pushed together and covered with one spread, they can

be placed at angles or used for lounges during the day. Instead of placing twin beds side by side in a small bedroom, these new bedsteads can be separated to stand against walls at either side of the room; or try them at right angles, the head of one against the side of the other. They can be covered more attractively, too, when there is no necessity for circumventing posts and footboards.

8. The foyer, commonly known as the hall, is that pocket of space which is either a furtive introduction from the common outside passageway to your living room, a formal entryway demanding skill and ingenuity to keep it from resembling a hotel lobby, or an undefined space into which most of your rooms radiate and through which you must proceed to get from any one of them to another. With surprising modesty, apartment owners do not claim the hall as a separate room in their listings, but throw it in gratis. You may put one over and use it as a room anyway, cluttering it with dining-room tables, bridge tables and chairs, or even desks; but your game will be interrupted by someone trying to get around you, breakfast will have an added guest in the early front-door salesman, or your papers will be swept away in a gust of air when the children come home from school. If you don't mind such slight interruptions, furnish your foyer in any way your imagination bids, but remember that whatever its size or lack

of it, a hall must give thoroughfare from one room to another.

9. Modern furniture, in the specific use of that term, is developing rapidly from novelty to extreme practicability. Experiments continue to be made in the use of new woods, and results are found in engaging designs. Not only is the Swedish or Finnish modern appropriate for a city apartment, it is likewise of great interest to see how such functional forms are being adapted to present day needs. Magazines which deal exclusively with the subject of home furnishing and decorating keep us informed of developments and how they can be adapted to meet our needs. The new unit furniture, for instance, allows almost endless variation and change within one small apartment, and has been a step of great consequence in furniture manufacture. Bookcases, tables, cupboards, chests, mirrors, desks, beds and so on can be obtained in units which may be combined to form larger pieces, or interchanged. And all of the blond woods, from pickled pine to bleached oak, are infinitely more serviceable than the stained surfaces to which we are accustomed. When these new woods first made their appearance on the market it was thought they should never be combined with more conventional pieces in one room. But that fancy, like so many of its kind, has evaporated.

10. Kitchens and closets and bathrooms have

become so specialized in equipment that every department store now has a closet shop, whole floors for kitchenware, and bathrooms complete with everything but plumbing. Sales resistance is a beautiful quality, given to few of us in America and taken away when not exercised. In these departments, perhaps more than anywhere else, do we need to call forth all that we possess. Quilted satin wall-lining, shining strips of mirror for shelf-edging, cellophane boxes and bags seem the ultimate to be desired. Admittedly they are beautiful, but they collect dust just the same.

And before the kitchenware clerk takes you by the arm, let me whisper in your ear. There are dozens of ways to double-up in kitchen utensils and save space where it is perhaps more precious than elsewhere in an apartment. Saucepans and frying pans and bowls are all made in standard sizes, and a lid that fits one will fit the others. If you like poached eggs, don't buy the entire outfit of pan, rack, cups and lid; the rack and cups will fit a standard-size frying pan, and the eggs cooked that way will be just as appetizing as though prepared in a special set of utensils good for nothing else. Water will boil as easily in a pan as in a kettle. But if you must have a tea kettle, saucepans will fit its top to make a double boiler. Buy essentials first and then add extras

as you need them. A waffle iron can occupy a lot of space if you expect to use it only about once a year.

THREE WORDS

Comfort, convenience and courtesy remain the qualities upon which all other principles of living might well be built. Without them an apartment is a repository for furniture, a place in which to eat, sleep and perform human functions, no more.

Comfort can be derived from small pieces of furniture as often as from large ones; small tables used freely about the room to hold ash trays, books, glasses and tea cups; the position and quality of lamps. Comfort derives too from the arrangement of furniture so that any piece may be used for whatever purpose it is intended, without upsetting a room to do so.

Convenience in an apartment satisfies the intellect and comforts the emotions. A convenient apartment provides free access through a room with more than one door, so that anyone passing through is not forced to make a circuitous route or bump against objects in the way. It provides ample storage space, not only for articles in constant use, but also for such things as toys and tennis rackets, in order that a man need not bark his shins on a tricycle or skates every time he reaches for his dinner jacket or a fresh towel.

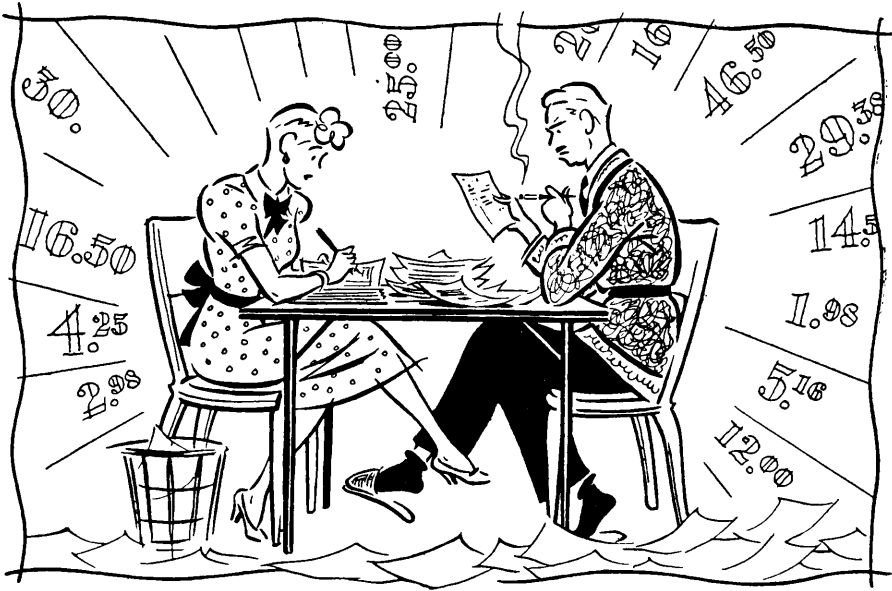
Convenience provides mirrors in necessary places, ample desks for those who study at home, and these separated from the activities of the rest of the house as completely as possible. Convenience should allow elasticity in the matter of change and improvement, so that habit will not cause you to overlook the fact that a closet door which swings the wrong way and is a nuisance can quite easily be removed and replaced with hangings.

Courtesy is as easily defined by you as by me. You've found it perhaps as often in the small, inexpensive home as in the apartment to which you were admitted by a butler. It has to do with consideration and loving-kindness and cheerfulness and peace, all spiritual qualities. It will be expressed by the emphasis given underlying values.

The room in which you entertain your friends may be a formal drawing room, a combined study and living room, a sunny porch or terrace. Whatever you have and enjoy, you will want them to share. If you love a crackling fire you will group your chairs around the hearth and make it easy for more than one person to delight in its comfort. Nor will this grouping be a semicircle to shut out the rest of the room. If you have an enchanting view from one side of your living room you will see that it is not spoiled by glass curtains or by turning the most comfortable chairs

away from it. If you are a scholar and line your walls with bookshelves, your chairs will be so placed that reaching toward those shelves will be easy. If a piano is the center of your pleasure, it will be so arranged as to allow others to join you there. In the room that must be used by all members of the family, courtesy will keep it tidy and uncluttered with personal belongings. Likewise, objects which are no longer interesting, such as opened letters, photographs of your second cousin's third boy as a child, yesterday's paper, a discarded tie or an empty candy box, lend nothing to the room's appearance.

To learn how to make a happier setting for yourself and express your personality more freely in it may prove to be quite as invigorating as winning a singles championship or dancing to your favorite band. And the effects are far more lasting.



V BUDGET FOR FUN

. . . hold your ears

Here is a most unpalatable problem. Ever since your first allowance of twenty-five cents a week, someone has been trying to take the fun of spending it away from you by telling you how to divide it and what not to do with it. The very word *budget* sounds smug and dutiful.

If those of us who live in apartments must make and try to keep budgets, we can at least rejoice

over the fact that we don't have to include such items as land taxes, water assessments and payments on the second mortgage of the old homestead. But the business of dividing up the family purse into such imposing-sounding groups as revenue, fixed expenditures, earned increment and percentage can be quite as doleful in the city as in the suburbs, orchids on other people's shoulders or not, and money disappears with just as little account of itself.

Yet someone in the house—city or suburb—has to be responsible for knowing where the money goes, unless Uncle Ned is willing to come through every time you run short, without asking embarrassing questions about where the last thousand went. If some sort of record for reference isn't kept, the money that comes in and goes out of a household takes on the habits of the sea. Dulce and kelp and a few dead fish are washed up when the tide floods, but when it ebbs every sand castle built by earnest children is obliterated.

Unless someone in the family makes a new budget every so often, even to break it after a few weeks, there's a continual sense of frustration and fretting because of bad management, and the blame gets tossed about from one member of the household to another until the next salary check appears. *Then* what good are your attractive

rooms and well-behaved servants, if you still feel you're cheating every time you go to a hockey game or lose three fifty at bridge?

It's a nasty problem, and if it doesn't get settled pretty soon you'll never be able to open a magazine without fear of finding another article pointing its finger and making superior sounds of balances fraternizing with marginal savings. Better to give up all reading than to have it constantly interrupted by reminders of why one ought to feel inferior, even if we still don't.

Budgets might well be thought of as devices to make more fun possible. Most of us don't like to have our pills sugar-coated and prefer not to have someone tell us that what we're doing isn't work at all, but a jolly game. So I don't pretend that keeping a budget is fun; I do maintain that it can relieve us of worry and apprehension. Will Cuppy calls them plans "for making both ends meet, or almost meet." But he complains that he doesn't know what to do when he is told to save for something he wants, because what he wants is more money and how can he budget that? *

Perhaps no one will deny that keeping a budget because one *ought* to is a dreary business, but using one as a means of eliminating a sense of guilt from the pursuit of small pleasures is no

* *I'm Not the Budget Type*: Will Cuppy—Scribner's, December 1937

hardship at all. A budget never gave one of us more money, but it can certainly give us greater freedom in spending what we have.

HERE'S HOW

Probably Difficult The first step is the worst, but if you know it won't have to continue indefinitely it can be endured, even by you and me. It consists merely of keeping a dime-store notebook handy and noting therein, during one month only, every cent spent by every member of the household to be considered in the new budget plan. It can't be dead accurate, but if you are conscientious, it can be an excellent approximation. And the month had better be a fairly normal one.

Not So Bad At the end of the aforementioned month get settled one rainy night with some big sheets of paper and a couple of sharp pencils and make a new kind of evening's entertainment. This is where you show up all the budgeteers you've ever thumbed noses at in the past.

You are going to start with columns of figures, just as they do, but instead of using imposing words for labels, make headings of your own. There will be only three simple divisions: how much money you can count on as regular income,

how much of it must be spent regularly, and what there is left to play with.

In the first list, which maybe you will call *Resources*, you will enumerate the yearly income on which you can reasonably count, such as salary and bond interest, and get a total. (This doesn't apply to such benighted individuals as artists and writers, who can't count on anything for certain but the whims of the public. They must get along from the work of their hands to their hungry mouths, month by month, and if they appear carefree and bohemian to the rest of the world it's because what's the use of looking any other way.)

Next, take the tabulations contained in the notebook and divide the items according to subjects, such as food, transportation, amusement, clothes and so on, until you have an approximate amount spent during the month for each kind of thing, as well as a sum for miscellaneous. Put these figures on a separate sheet of paper.

Then go back to your first list of *Resources* and make a second heading next to it called something like *Necessities*. Under it list such fixed expenditures as rent, insurance, club dues, allowance for grandfather, and payments on the car. Make an approximation for clothing, food and income taxes on the basis of that one-month's calculations, and add to *Necessities*. The total of all this, subtracted from the first column of *Re-*

sources should give you a balance, unless you are constantly living ahead of yourself. In this case you will have to cut down on club dues, clothing and allowances until a surplus can be maintained.

This balance, or surplus, makes a third column, entitled *Rewards*. It is the spending of this amount each month that makes the only sensible reason for keeping a budget at all. (Or the putting of it in the bank, if you're that type.)

Definitely Good Jerome Beatty, from whom I have derived the idea of Necessities and Rewards, calculates that your second column of necessary expenditures will average about 70 per cent of your total income unless you are close to being hungry every month, in which case it is insulting to mention budgets at all. That leaves approximately 30 per cent for rewards. This would be no better than anyone else's budget if it weren't for the last part. As Mr. Beatty points out, the pleasurable feature of keeping a budget comes each month in the allotment of the remainder left beyond payment for necessities, a reward for going easy on this or that, payable at the end of a determined time.*

Months serve as simple divisions of time because most of us live by salary checks. Schoolmas-

* *Budgets for the Bewildered*: Jerome Beatty—The American Magazine, March 1935

ters usually use holiday periods as calendar markers. There are still other kinds of heartbeats for a family's life, but the point is to have a periodic time for checking up and passing out the fun.

Some of the reward money will go into funds, such as college for the children, pension, new car, summer vacation. Some of it will go toward balancing an overdrawn necessity. At the beginning of this system, it may have to go toward paying back bills. Maybe there is a big reward in the future, such as that trip to the North Cape if war has been held off another year. Or you can buy tickets for a play or a concert with the knowledge that they have been earned and no one is being deprived in order that you may have them.

Better than anything else, think of the difference in your reaction when a windfall arrives at your front door in the form of an unexpected check from Aunt Mehitabel, or you sell an old gold brooch, or the man of the house wins a jack pot from his favorite slot machine. Before you began this new system, such surprises would have had to be used for the mundane purpose of paying off the cranky dressmaker who earned her wages six months ago, or maybe buying new glasses needed for months. Now they can be the exciting events they were intended to be: a fillip to daily routine by the injection of a spree for stimulation. They belong with rewards.

Savings This plan, of course, involves no censure in the form of a list labelled *Savings* which one never fills and then feels sort of mean about. Money is good for buying something and not much else. You may buy a bond or an insurance policy, which in turn are good for buying something later on, such as a more comfortable old age. They aren't always called savings, but that is distinctly what they are. You may even have a separate savings-bank account, but unless you are conscious of its power to give you something you want, it won't get increased very fast. Savings, then, is a reward too, but a deferred one. If a certain percentage can be decided upon and put aside regularly, such foresight will pay off in future years when rewards may be needed more than they are at present.

But each member of the family must be allowed to share in compiling the budget and keeping it, in order that he may also share in the rewards, else he has no incentive for helping to increase the amount to be divided. And the reward aside from a small percentage had better be something more tangible than moral virtue and expectation.

Percentages Some of us may want to know how our lists check with the often published ones from banks and people who pretend to be better than we are about all this. Mr. Beatty,

as quoted by *Reader's Digest* from the aforementioned article, observes that "the old percentages—25 for rent or ownership and upkeep of home, 25 for food, and 15 for clothing—are all wrong. They represent a fair average for all families, including the poorest laborer, but they're no good for individuals these days. If you are going to save any substantial sum you should not spend more than 60 per cent for housing, food and clothing. And housing isn't just rent; it's the cost of the entire operation of the home. Good starting percentages are 30 for housing, 16 for food, and 14 for clothing, breaking down the clothing percentage to 4 for the husband, 6 for the wife, and 4 for the children. As the income goes up, these percentages go down."

Merely One Way After all this explanation, you may still feel that budgeting is nonsense and a waste of time and where does it get you anyway. Perhaps it is, but it is a subject that needs a pencil and a piece of paper in the hands of the reader before it makes much sense. Michael hates rows of figures on paper and I like them when I can make them behave. He has no time during the day to get to the bank and I seem to have as much as it takes. Inasmuch as I was always a spendthrift with my own money before we were married and now have learned

respect for the future, perhaps giving me the accounts to handle was more shrewdness than accident.

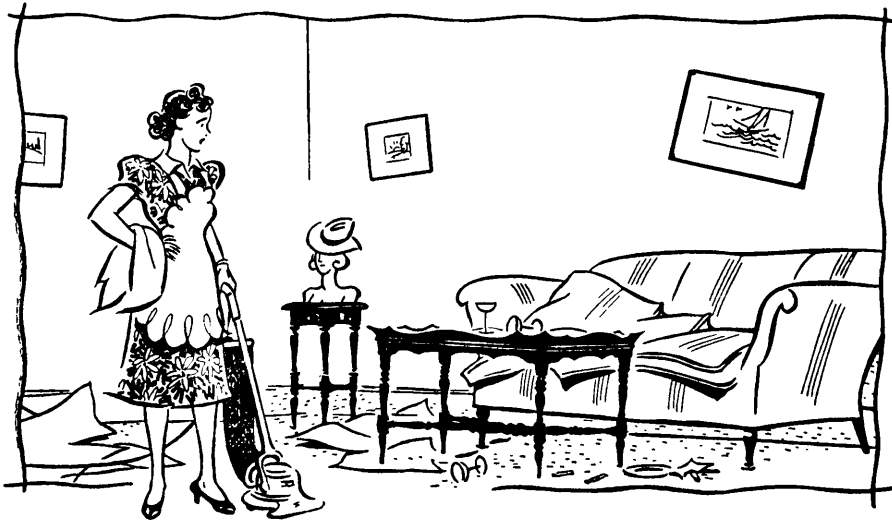
To save inquiry over why two dollars was spent for a pair of earrings or a new pipe, each of us has an identical, smallish allowance for pocket money, and where it goes is nobody's business. Michael buys cigarettes and a lot of things I don't know about with his. I get manicures and maybe a pinafore for my niece and it's good not to have to explain why. I buy gas and oil for the car because I use it most, but in turn he pays for movies and hockey games when he feels he can afford it, quite as he once did before I had a hand in his pocket. I think he still likes to confer them as a favor, too, with no impertinent beforehand suggestion from me as to why can't we.

These allowances cut down the amounts in our *Reward* column each month, but whatever we can save to put into it, we do. And then when we decide how to spend the surplus it is always for something we can share: new books, new records, and forever a fund for the next vacation, to carry over the lag in a ten-months-only salary.

The reason I pay for food in cash when I charge nearly everything else is because I've found it is the only way I can keep a close check on how much is going out and how fast, during any one month. I always divide the month's food allow-

ance into fourths and keep in my purse one week's sum at a time. I don't fool anyone but myself that way, but it works for me. Sometimes I borrow from next week to make this one come out even, and then again I have enough left over to make it possible to ask in a friend or two. More often than not we eat hamburger at the end of the month, but I'm never surprised by a grocery bill larger than I thought it would be, nor forced to pay it with money intended for a new dress.

The final word on budgets is really this: the problem they present is as much psychological as mathematical, and if we realize this we will be well on the way to a satisfactory solution of the whole matter.



VI ORGANIZED HOUSEWORK

. . . pinning them back so they'll stay

Of all jobs waiting to be done in the world, housework seems to be the least relished by the masculine half of humankind. Cooking, men are willing to admit, may have its points, but the rest of the duties waiting to be done in a house . . . *no!* So we keep our counsel and know that for all the dreariness of housework it has also its undeniable advantages, presenting a constant challenge to our ingenuity to make the two sides of the scale balance.

On the debit side must be written the making of beds, sweeping, laundering, marketing, cleaning, and hunting dirt, all as stultifying to mental activity as any factory job in the world. If you are putting nuts on bolts as they pass along a belt hour after hour, you learn at last to do it automatically. But housework is a succession of petty jobs, none of which calls for concentrated thought after the routine has once been established. The housewife learns to skip from one to another, hopping from telephone to doorbell to stove all through the day, yet none of this can become automatic enough to allow her mind freedom during a sufficient period of time for real contemplation. There is always something calling for attention over her shoulder: the laundry to be sorted and tabulated, a notice for the milkman asking him to leave cream tomorrow, a call to the gas company reminding them to send a man to see about that leaky burner, silver to be cleaned before teatime tomorrow, the butcher to be reminded that the chops weren't as good as they should have been, winter clothes in need of moth-proofing, the telephone to be answered and a solicitor denied, and always dinner to be planned and prepared once again.

On the credit side, and a generous sum it is to balance the scale, is the comparative freedom from

an imposed time schedule which the housewife enjoys. The working girl who must also be her own housekeeper, and the mother with young babies and little help, find themselves with less elasticity in the matter of time, but they have wider interests to compensate for the monotony of cleaning up after human beings. Most women whose chief job in life is the keeping of a home know how well off they are in this respect. Whenever they happen to want to leave the place looking like a rat's nest and go take a walk or visit the zoo or buy a dress or see a movie or have a tooth pulled, they can do so without waiting for a too-short lunch hour. And if this freedom is used consciously to eradicate the tendency toward stultification that the daily routine of a home imposes, emancipated office workers need never be envied.

EFFICIENCY TRANSLATED INTO HOUSEWORK

Any girl who has worked in a business office long enough to learn unquestioned methods of organization realizes when she comes to run a home of her own that there is ample room for a transplanting of office efficiency into this new job. She may know nothing about the making of beds so as to prevent the covers from pulling out at the foot, or where to place milk in the refrigerator,

but she can understand that she is now engaged in the largest industry in the country, being one of the millions of women who handle an overwhelming percentage of the money in circulation, and to the job before her she can apply the same methods for obtaining efficient management that she learned in office work.

One job of housework retains an appalling similarity to another job of housework; so from the manner in which a trained office worker might go about learning to keep a house, we can all learn some of the ways in which its most irksome aspects may be lightened.

References In the first place, there are recognized sources for the information we need. In an office there is a definite set of references containing such information as one needs on occasion, but can't keep in memory. For any phase of housework there are a dozen books in any public library of help to the neophyte as well as to the woman who has always done her work the way her mother did it. For a constant source of stimulation and stereotyped hints of help, there are a dozen or so magazines on the newsstands every month, filled with a discussion of subjects related to the care of the house and activities within it. The United States Department of Agriculture will send publications on home economics

to anyone for the asking, and the subjects into which their inspectors inquire cover a wide range.

Experiment Housekeeping should be a constant series of tests of new wares offered and new methods suggested, all designed to lessen the burden of work and enlarge hours of freedom. Experimentation as exact as any employed in a science laboratory is possible. Order and skill in place of impotence and inertia can easily be achieved through the use of system and vigilance to keep the housework running smoothly. However does she do it, say the housewives who muddle along from day to day, retracing steps and getting nowhere in the fashion they have employed for years. It couldn't possibly be assumed that the young housewife is more alert to new methods and manners than they, so the only conclusion reached is that it looks good, but who knows what lies hidden behind the sofa? And the way she elicits admiration from her own husband for her aptitude in managing a new job! Yet her only secret is remembering that existence is simplified by a well-run household, and freedom for active and pleasurable pursuits stems from the satisfaction earned by a foundational job well done. Housekeeping to Martha may have been an end in itself, but it was Mary who heard when she was called.

CLEANING

Does anyone know a more depressing sight, familiar to all womankind, than the scene left behind after husband has kissed wife good-by and departed to some place else to work? Husband can be fairly certain of finding the whole thing replaced to a semblance of order when he turns the key in the lock at the end of the day, but the poor business girl who must face the same mess on which she turned her back ten hours before is brave indeed to take it without flinching. A bachelor in his den usually prefers to return to the bed he has left, like a cat, but to a woman a disordered house is a challenge, whether she faces it night or morning.

At first the work of a new household, left entirely to the judgment of the mistress in charge, is chaos and confusion. So much the more interesting to evolve order from it. After a week or so, experimenting first this way and then that, time-saving and step-saving methods will evolve. There will be daily routines, weekly routines, and seasonal ones. To divide the work into such categories helps as a beginning. If certain jobs are relegated to definite days of the week, the procedure is not binding, but releasing. For this saves any amount of mental effort otherwise involved in trying to decide each day what must be done,

what has been forgotten, and what was overlooked last week but requires urgent attention now, when you hadn't counted on spending so much time on the house today.

Daily First, before a bed is made or a telephone call put through, arrange a supply of note pads and pencils, like those kept on an office desk. And be generous with jottings of ideas and lists and memoranda. Such a procedure will free your mind as nothing else can do. At first, a list of duties for reference will establish routine until such notes are superfluous, but to try to remember everything as it crosses fleetingly through your mind would be absurd. If you could recall such insignificantia your mind would be good for little else.

The daily routine of a small apartment should take less than an hour, if uninterrupted by excursions from room to room for things forgotten, the sewing of a button ripped off, calling that woman you wanted to ask about her dentist, or finishing last week's *Time*. Ash trays from each room in the house are taken to the kitchen; magazines and papers disposed of in racks; window shades straightened, and remnants of the previous evening's activities removed; beds made, tops of dressing-table and chests cleared, clothes put in hamper or hung in their places; bathroom cleaned

of clothes and articles that don't belong there, and towels hung up or renewed.

Then the kitchen: food is cleared from the table and put into receptacles for the refrigerator or thrown away; china is rinsed and stacked, and silver is immersed in a container of warm water; glasses are washed first, then silverware and china, lastly pots and pans; then a thorough cleaning of the sink and garbage container, stove wiped off, all surfaces left spotlessly clean, floor swept, and everything put in its proper place. Finally, while your hands are in rubber gloves or still moist from the dishwasher, wipe out the basin and tub in the bathroom with brushes for that purpose, which are kept out of sight when not in use. Dust the living room, bedroom and dining room; vacuum or sweep and mop any floors particularly in need of attention and the daily duties are done.

Adapt this procedure to whatever hour in the day suits you best and amplify it by odd jobs and other interests in which you can immerse your mind when the fusty part is out of the way.

Weekly Jobs that must be done once a week can be regulated so they fall all on one day, or divided to supplement the morning routine. These you will work to your own pattern, but some of them will include: changing the beds (top sheet on the bottom, bottom sheet in the

hamper); thorough vacuuming, including upholstery and draperies and floors; polishing the silver, unless you have found gadgets to prevent its tarnishing; mending and darning and refurbishing; sorting and listing the laundry, with a duplicate list for yourself to save argument and time; planning menus for a week ahead; baking cakes, cookies or special menus that take more time than quick meals from leftovers; and the washing and ironing of such clothing as you don't want to send to the laundry.

Monthly Once-a-month jobs are fewer, such as bookkeeping, sending out checks in payment of bills, and the dusting of books and polishing of woodwork or furniture in need of attention. Seasonal activities are usually dictated by the weather, unless you live in a climate where the change is imperceptible and you suffer from a procrastination known only to housewives of southern latitudes. But don't forget that yours is not a static job. There are hundreds of hints for easier and more efficient ways of doing things in every evening paper and in every woman's magazine. You may pass up nine hints that you don't need and find one that tells you to scrape your fingernails over a cake of soap until they are filled before beginning dirty work that is likely to stain them.

Odd Jobs No matter how much order can be imposed upon the routine work necessary in a house, it is the odd jobs, inserting themselves imperiously at unexpected moments, that take up precious time and wear dispositions ragged. The first time such ones present themselves, it may be necessary to do a bit of research to discover the easiest methods of dealing with the situation, what implements are necessary and how long it may take. But after awhile the number of unexpected angles to the whole of keeping a house reaches its limit. If a card index or a notebook is kept in such order that it can easily be used for reference, repetition of these odd jobs should take less time and thought.

The polishing of brass, pewter and copper, for instance, presents a problem different from the cleaning of silver. Nearly every stain man can contrive to get onto the assortment of articles in his possession requires a separate kind of treatment. The pages of newspapers are filled with remedies, there are many books on the subject in libraries, and the market is glutted with products aimed to help. Make notes of these for future use, available at the moment of need. I find from last night's paper that a good way to remove alcohol rings from furniture is a damp cloth dipped in cigarette ashes and applied in a circular motion to

the offending stain. Guess how that was discovered! I'll jot it down for future use.

Laundering has been made a simple enough matter with modern irons, starch mixtures, powdered soaps and instructions for washing attached to all varieties of new articles of clothing. Space for drying without draping stockings and step-ins over the mantle is the chief problem in an apartment, though laundering under any conditions is no afternoon's entertainment. Learning how to do any such chore involves no more than asking questions and reading a book. Whom shall we ask? Friends, perhaps, or the salesman who is supposed to be familiar with the product he sells. We have to trust someone. Read what? The librarian in the nearest branch of the public library is always ready to be helpful; it's amazing what she knows and how easily she can lead one to the answers. A piece of paper and a pencil for jotting down notes, and that one will never have to be asked again.

Moth prevention This is something to know about, too. Michael and I went gayly off to Russia two summers ago, thinking ourselves persons to be commended for our neatness when we stored all the blankets and ski suits and wool dressing gowns in one closet and shut the door behind us. They were all clean too,

because my mother had always told me that moths have no taste for clean fabrics. She didn't know about Montreal moths. On our return in September we opened the closet and found said blankets and things literally crawling with larvae. We dragged them all up to the roof and sunshine almost before we had our hats off, and the subsequent slaughter made us feel like crosses between a big-game hunter and the school nurse, as we tracked the worms on their nefarious business of eating our Hudson's Bay wool. Last summer we weren't so dumb. Michael sprayed everything—even to the insides of trouser cuffs as per instructions on the bottle—with a solution advertised to make anything unpalatable to a mothworm. And it worked. Come September, not a moth was to be found anywhere, all through the house.

Babies, the Lambs Routine must of necessity be fairly exact when there is a young baby to be considered, and if its mother has no help, then housework will have to be secondary to the schedule of bottles and bathing and naps. Steps and time can be saved if formulas are fixed while the dishes are being washed each morning. And while hands are still wet from the kitchen, give Junior his daily dip. Get him dressed and settled to sleep or sun, and then return to the odd jobs that can be eliminated while

attention can be turned from his demands. As soon as he and/or his sister starts to kindergarten, another schedule can be evolved, one that gets all noisy work out of the way in the morning, and jobs that can be accomplished better without childish interruptions. Afternoons can then be more or less free for mending, writing and reading while the younger generation is asleep, or for walks, excursions and play when they awaken.

The Career Woman When the office girl must also be her own housekeeper, the problem becomes one of doing as little as possible at home without loss of comfort or self-respect. An ideal arrangement is to have a part-time servant who can be trusted to come in for an hour or two each morning or afternoon to wash dishes, make beds, dust the house and perhaps prepare vegetables for the evening meal. Often the janitor's wife will be of help in this manner, as she is usually willing enough to earn extra money of her own, and she will perform her duties in your apartment at her own leisure, without cost of transportation or trouble in bad weather. Nothing on earth is more depressing than returning to a rumpled home at the end of a tiring day, so if this assistance cannot be afforded, the woman who works in an office will probably find that she prefers to get up half an

hour earlier than otherwise, in order to make her bed and at least clear up the kitchen by putting food away and rinsing and stacking the dishes. A charwoman who comes in once or twice a week to give the rooms a thorough cleaning will eliminate the rest of the problem. And weekends can be shared with odd jobs, if necessary.

MARKETING

What to buy and where to get it are problems not confined to those who live in apartments, but marketing is at once more difficult in the city because of the merchandising and advertising to which we are subjected, and easier because we have a wider choice and opportunity for selectivity. While the buyer stands with money in hand trying to decide where he can place it to receive the greatest value, countless articles and books are being written to help him and wars are being waged over his helpless head.

Gilbert Seldes observes that so far, law in the United States has focused favor on industry and producing interests in order to build a nation, but in the last generation the center of attention has been shifting from producer to the consuming individual, for the protection of the latter against the practices of the former. However, the greatest potential benefactors from this new point of view,

the middle class, are least willing to help themselves. It is they who object to legislation intended to curb dishonest practices of the owners of property as much the ones concerned, due to the sentimental American belief that some day they will be property owners themselves.*

Food When it comes to buying food from day to day, the margin of value lost through mistakes is small and we can afford to experiment and learn for ourselves. But the variety of foods offered for sale in a city is so wide at all seasons of the year that even this field of purchasing needs study as thorough as though textbooks had been written on it.

When you move to a new locality, try all the different shops in the neighborhood and keep a record for a week or two on prices and quality. Perhaps one shop will have better meats than another, and the bakery and delicatessen departments of still others excel in that line. Once you have decided where you can please yourself best, stay with the same butcher and baker and grocer, and each in turn will teach you more about buying vegetables and meats and delicacies than you could learn from all the books printed on the subject.

* *Your Money and Your Life*: Gilbert Seldes—Whittlesey House, 1938

Your greengrocer, when he realizes that you trust him, will answer every question you can ask regarding ways to tell good from bad. You will know better than to pester him with questions late on a Saturday afternoon when the store is crowded with tired shoppers, but one or two questions a day, relative to the fruits or vegetables you are buying, will soon give you a notebook filled with invaluable information, if you can remember it until you get home each day. Do you know the smell of ripe pineapples and melons; that citrus fruits should be heavy, firm and tender because you are buying the weight of juice and not the relative lightness of thick skins; that meats, poultry and fish should not smell if they are fresh, nor fish eyes be sunk in? Do you realize that large cobs of corn are not as good as small ones and that their husks should be green and moist; beans that won't bend without breaking are best and pea pods should pop open and be firm and solid? Do you know that tomatoes, bananas and melons when bought too green should not be placed in the sun, but wrapped in paper and placed in a cool place to keep them from rotting until they are ripe? Did anyone ever tell you that the older cheese is the more it smells and the more crumbly it becomes, and the older it is the more choice? Do you know a tender steak from a tough one just by looking at it, and how to test a fowl for its age?

And in canned goods, do you know that the best quality is marked "extra fancy" and that the descending order runs "fancy," "fine," "standard" and "sub-standard"?

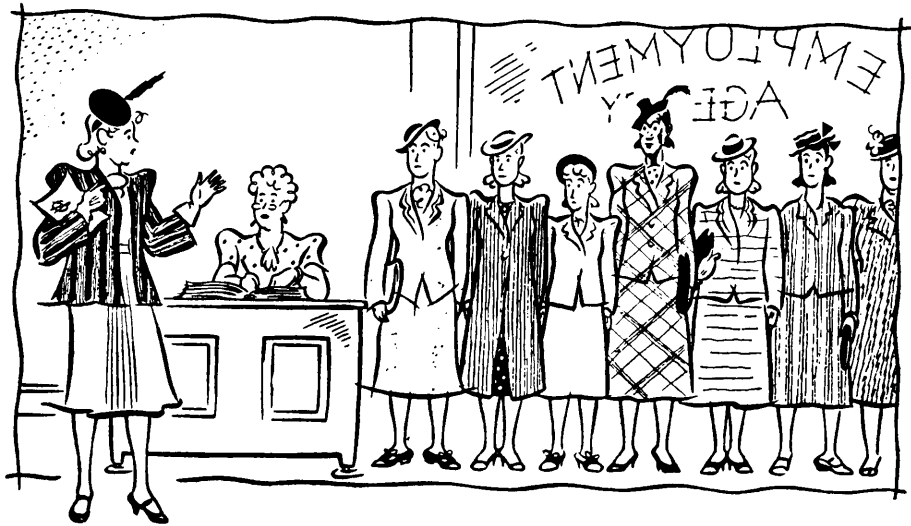
All these important bits of knowledge your salesman will impart to you when he observes your faithfulness to his shop. He will respect you for understanding that there is a difference in all foods and he assumes that you will inspect what you are paying for, just as he does when he buys from the producer or middleman for you. On the days when you are in a hurry and must order by telephone, the service will always be best in a shop where you are known.

Utilities In the realm of merchandise that costs more than food and must last the buyer a considerable length of time, experiment is impossible and the consumer is at sea in a world where he and the producer are at war over who is going to get the better of which. How can one individual decide what is best for him out of the multitude of offerings in the markets, all advertised as perfect? He can judge only through sight, touch and price, none of which tell him whether or not his article is best according to his individual requirements. His final choice is usually governed by trust in the store where he buys, in the name of the manufacturer or the brand.

Decide For Yourself There has been available to consumers for many years a publication, not sold on newsstands but known to householders throughout the continent, which attempts to evaluate from the standpoint of performance of promised task, harmfulness to the user and variation in price, as many as possible of the commodities advertised for sale to the American public. This organization, supported so far as is known entirely by public subscription, is fearless in its condemnation of those articles found to be spurious after protracted laboratory tests simulating the conditions under which these same articles would be used in the home. During the last few years this organization has become the subject of bitter attacks in every source which propaganda can manipulate, and the attackers are, quite naturally, those concerns whose products have been reported as injurious or guilty of robbing the public.

This war being waged over our heads only mildly interests us, the consumers, and we take the side of the latest article we have read on the subject. Yet it is we who must decide the outcome by refusing to buy products that are not labelled honestly. If we would turn a dull ear to erroneous and blatant advertising which would attempt to lead us by the eyes, we could effect a reform possible to obtain in no other way.

Don't blame the merchant who takes your dollars and gives you no more than a cent's worth of value, wrapped in cellophane. If you like cellophane and pretty colors that much you'll have to pay for it, even though you tear it off and throw it away as soon as you get home. When we have tried a little self-education in the matter of learning how to get our money's worth and stop following every whistle, it will no longer be profitable for anyone to treat us like children or fools. And the merchant who can't make money on us changes his tactics . . . or goes into the manufacturing of a new kind of sucker bait.



VII THE SERVANT PROBLEM SETTLED

. . . to somebody's satisfaction

During the last several years while the businessmen of the country have been either cursing or praising the administration at Washington, their wives have been casting around for a couple of worries of their own to lay at the feet of the government, just to show they are keeping up with the temper of the times and understand what's going on.

There is a wide assortment of worries, but our

vote goes to the problem of the domestic servant. There are probably more maids in the United States than there are members of the C. I. O. and there are certainly more people who employ them than there are employers of workers in the heavy industries. It grows more and more difficult to find a good maid, and it is no doubt equally hard to get a good mistress, yet our socially minded government doesn't seem to realize the gravity of this major crisis. The reason for this may be, of course, that the two parties most concerned, namely mistress and maid, represent the two most inarticulate groups, politically speaking, in the nation.

I don't mean, of course, that individual housewives are inarticulate, any more than their servants. But neither of the natural working orders to which they belong has yet found the means of uniting for common betterment, except about the bridge table or the kitchen sink. Of course Mr. Heywood Broun takes up one side of the subject with eloquent concern.* But while it may be a source of pride to the editors of *The New Republic* that their work is not discussed over bridge tables, it must also pain them to remember that it is not discussed in kitchens, either.

However, the government has finally come

* *Houseworkers of the World, Unite!:* Heywood Broun—New Republic, July 6, 1938

around to the establishment of training centers for servants. Little has yet been done to publicize this work, and until more is known of it, maids and mistresses all over the country, and probably throughout the rest of the world as well, continue to muddle through, commiserating with their kind over the difficulties of their lot, and only Heywood Broun to help them.

It was the testimony of J. P. Morgan before the Senate Munitions Committee in February 1936 that occasioned a survey by *Fortune* to discover the percentages of families in the United States who employed servants. Mr. Morgan, you may remember, in answer to a request for a definition of his terms, made the ambiguous statement that the leisure class was in his opinion confined to families having one or more servants. Questioned further he went on to make what *Fortune* terms "the completely cockeyed estimate" that there were 30,000,000 families in the United States who employ at least one servant. There are at present just about that number of families in the whole country.*

So *Fortune* in its usual manner asked of the country at large: "Do you employ a servant in your household?" A condensation of their tabulated findings results in these figures: 10.4 per cent of the population of the United States enjoys the

* *Fortune*: October 1937

services of full-time help; 13.6 per cent has part-time service; 3.3 per cent get along with a relative to help with the housework; 72.7 per cent have no servants at all. Wages are highest in the north-east and lowest in the south; wages are also highest in cities over a million. For the country at large, \$40 to \$50 a month is the average. Says this same article: "Mistresses complain of independence, high wages, shiftlessness, lack of interest, irregularity, carelessness, and so on. . . . Servants complain of long hours, short tempers, low wages, caste distinctions, uncomfortable quarters and lack of understanding." *

Contingent with this information somebody went a bit further and made the discovery that the old "hired girl" and "hired man" were disappearing from American life; in fact, that they had gone. So the United States Department of Agriculture made a survey and came to the conclusion that labor-saving machines have displaced the hired girl in the typical American home. In reaching its conclusions the Bureau of Home Economics studied "household help" tables of 8,434 white non-relief families in 140 typical villages in all sections of the country. Said Dr. Louise Stanley, who supervised the survey, "The importance of 'our hired girl' has decreased as services of commercial bakeries and laundries have increased, as

* *Fortune*: March 1938—"The Servant Problem"

canneries and garment factories have grown, and as labor-saving devices have come into the home." She added, "Then too, many a homemaker would rather spend for a car and widen her social contacts than to spend for a maid if this means only leisure to sit on the front porch and watch the neighbors ride by."

This seems worth attention because one of the first considerations in a solution of the servant problem in apartments is adjustment to the modes and manners of a city which differ from the small towns left behind. Can you forget the old hired girl or negro mammy who ran the whole house from her kitchen domain, spoiled the children, was endlessly loyal to her family, and whose moods and whims settled over the entire household like a cloud while they lasted? Can you forget the spartan ideas of your New England mother who cooked three generous meals a day, kept her house spotless, made clothes and mended everything in need of repair, did her own laundry work, nursed children and everyone else in the neighborhood who fell ill, decorated her house with simplicity and taste and kept her jaw set in so rigid a line that her progeny resembles her still?

If you can forget these and in their place accept new ideas of service to conform to new ways of living, you will find your part in the drama of

life in the big town. It is no wiser to require the unquestioning service of a southern mammy from a city servant girl, than it is to spend all the hours of your day within the confines of a small apartment, trying to meet the high standard set by your New England training. There are better ways to do it.

Will Someone Referee? Now that the subject is open everybody is having a word to say, and unless a towel gets thrown in soon, housewives are going to take the count. *Fortune* gave the results of a careful analysis of the 17,000 questionnaires returned to them in the aforementioned survey. The significant conclusion was revealed that five-sixths of their readers work their servants more than eight hours a day and one-sixth work them more than twelve hours. All the fillers-in of the questionnaire asserted, as though it were sufficient compensation, that their servants were well taken care of. Yet domestic employment agencies repeatedly point out that the decline in applicants for jobs and the most frequent reasons given for leaving a position both add up to long hours.

Heywood Broun says in the article already mentioned: "The servant problem is bigger than the question of tact and kindness on the part of individuals. . . . It could not be solved even if the

head of the house succeeded in being a hero to his valet. . . . Domestic service is a labor problem just as the making of steel or the reporting of news." And he makes a further cogent point: "It is generally psychologically true that all persons who take hard raps themselves are unsympathetic to lightening the burdens of others." This holds for industrial bosses who have worked their way up and housewives who put in long, arduous days themselves.

If the old hired girl has gone into the factory to work it is not entirely because mechanized aids have taken her place in the kitchen. Industry offers her greater freedom, independence and shorter hours in return for less interesting work. That should be indictment enough against the employers in question to silence bridge-table conversation when the subject of servant trouble comes up between every rubber.

House & Garden steps forward and offers more comments on the same subject. "Taking that most important point of long hours, there are many possibilities for adjustment. The first necessity rests squarely on the shoulders of the housewife as an employer. It is here that she must begin her co-operation by scheduling the household routine to fit in with shorter hours. This is always the part of the employer and it is always difficult whether

it is in the factory or home. Because housework must of necessity start before breakfast and end after dinner, the time adjustment can usually be made most practically by scheduling time off in the afternoon. To be effective this must really be time off and not time on call for the telephone, doorbell or children. There are also possibilities for cutting down long hours by not requiring service at breakfast or lunch. For the special occasions which will arrive in any schedule, overtime work should certainly be balanced by equal time off or extra pay. Time-and-a-half pay for overtime work is an accepted practice in industry.” *

The article continues to say that a wholesome respect on the part of the housewife, evident in her manner of giving orders, for the work which is being done, enables her to co-operate honestly with her employees to their mutual benefit. And finally, “To maintain her well-planned schedule the wise employer will provide the best equipment, work space and living accommodations that she can afford. This is a simple fundamental of efficient management. She will also do well to accept the other recognized responsibilities of good employers—vacations with pay and insurance of the employee against sickness and accident.”

* *The Hired Girl*: From House & Garden magazine. Copyright, 1938, The Condé Nast Publications, Inc.

Between the federal training centers established throughout the nation and a succession of such articles appearing in women's magazines, training of both mistress and maid may eventually be achieved. Before Florence Nightingale removed the stigma from nursing by establishing schools, nurses were the poorest paid and least respected of women. Up to now, America has used immigrants for servants, mistreated them and regarded them as menials, instead of developing a class of household employees with pride in their profession. In Scandinavian countries, cooks and maids are no less respected than stenographers and clerks. The problem can be solved here as well, with education on both sides and the housewife conscious of the leadership she must assume.

Practical Suggestions The Y. W. C. A.'s National Committee on Household Employment has drawn up a voluntary agreement to be entered into by both servant and employer as their solution for the problem. They believe its terms will give the housewife a clear idea of her duties and responsibilities; it should also give the servant as definite a declaration of the work expected of her as she could receive from a factory manager.

Actual working hours: should not exceed 60 a week.

Time on call: not working, but available for answering telephone or doorbell. Two hours on call equal to one hour working time.

Time off: two half days or one whole day a week.

Vacations: one week with pay after a year's service.

Overtime: compensated by extra pay or extra time off.

Living conditions: adequate food; private bedroom, to be shared by other employee if necessary; access to bathroom; adequate heat and ventilation.

Interview for a Maid An orderly and gracious household never happened by chance, nor is it the creation of the domestic employee in your kitchen. She helps, to be sure, but she takes her orders and her clues from her mistress, from the first moment you meet in an interview. A clear and well-thought-out beginning is a sound basis for future understanding, upon which long and devoted service depends.

An intelligent and comprehensive procedure for interviewing a prospective servant has been outlined by Martha McC. Wyman.* By adapting it to your own needs and preparing two copies of the list you make, both you and the individual

* *Maid to Order:* Martha McC. Wyman—Better Homes & Gardens, July 1937

who accepts the position will have a record of what you expect. Any suspicion of the hunt will thereby be eliminated from your daily routine: you the hunter for mistakes and overlooked dirt, she the hunted, constantly afraid of having committed an error or of having forgotten something you told her hurriedly on the confusing day when she talked to you first.

Your list will doubtless contain some or all of the following questions:

1. Name, address, telephone.
2. Age, health.
3. Wages: an agency will tell you what is customary in your locality.
4. Uniforms: to be furnished by you, if full-time maid.
5. Time off: explain clearly, including vacations.
6. Can she cook and what are her specialties?
7. When she cleans, is she quick, careful and thorough in her own estimation? How much laundry will she be expected to do?
8. Hours of duty each day. Required rest period of two hours in afternoon, or equivalent.
9. Daily work routine.
10. Special and different jobs for each day in the week.
11. Emergency duties: children, entertaining, etc.
12. Personal requirements: keeping her room

and herself tidy; limit to telephone calls; smoking; callers.

13. Giving notice: state whether you require one or two weeks. This to be binding to both.

14. City references: two or three.

15. Impressions: to be filled in after she leaves, for your own reminder, such as grammar, alertness, personality, appearance.

It is scarcely fair to let her commit herself until you are ready to do so yourself. You will first want to check her references, asking the same questions you have asked her. This you will do quickly, by telephone if possible, in order to give your decision the following day. An obvious nomad who cannot by temperament stay in one place long can be recognized by the frequency with which she has changed positions in the past.

If you deal with an employment agency, tell them your requirements in order to save time in eliminating unsuitables. If you insert a want ad in the paper, include essential points for the same reason. And during each interview, use your copy of these requirements. When you find an applicant who seems suitable, give her time to consider your conditions by showing her over the apartment, explaining the working implements she will have. Then ask her if she wants the position on the terms you have specified, but suggest that she take a day to think it over.

Part-Time Maid In the modern city, with its quick transportation, the servant girl would usually prefer to live at home than with you, given a choice. She can then regard her work in your house as a separate part of her life, paid for by the amount of time which she gives to it, something she can forget when the day is ended and she goes off to pleasures of her own in the evening. You will have to pay her more, hour by hour for the work she does, than if she were always with you, underfoot and inescapable. But the saving to your nerves and the comfort of sometimes being alone you will find to be ample compensation.

You will have to organize the work of a part-time maid carefully, plan ahead of time what you want her to do each day, for she won't be there at your call from six in the morning until eleven at night, dangling on your whims of the moment. You can expect and exact competence and efficiency in your employee if you show her your own competence as an employer; the attendant mutual respect will preserve the relationship and keep your servant longer in your service than you could expect if she became surfeited with too much of you by living in.

Suppose, for the sake of an example, that you like a leisurely morning, free from demands and schedules. Breakfast is a simple enough proced-

ure for any healthy, semi-intelligent individual to master. So you arrange to have Sadie come in about noon to prepare your lunch, wash the breakfast dishes, clean up the house, prepare and serve dinner and wash the dishes. That leaves you quite free every afternoon, confident of returning from whatever pursuit you have undertaken to a cheerful, welcoming house and a dinner ready by the clock. If you like a latish dinner, have Sadie come an hour later, so she can finish her work well within the eight-hour-day limit.

Or maybe you hate above everything else to get up and prepare breakfast. Then arrange to have Sadie arrive in time to start the morning for you, do her cleaning before noon, even manage the marketing, and stay through until the middle of the afternoon, with the vegetables prepared and dinner well begun. When you have a special party and want her for serving, time-and-a-half for overtime is only fair enough.

Getting her to come early in the morning, leave for the middle of the day, and return for the evening meal is a possibility, but you will find her more reluctant to undertake such a schedule in preference to the other two. Wouldn't *you*? However, if you are as considerate an employer as you should be and she is intelligent enough for your purposes, she will recognize the obvious advan-

tages of serving you, and another servant problem is dissolved before your sparkling eyes.

Dinners Out This is a variation of the part-time solution, in which you feel that Sadie's help during the early part of the day is more valuable to you than at dinnertime. To dine out every night is not only expensive but monotonous, unless you have the passion of an adventurer and sufficient control of your hunger to enable you to seek and find the odd, intriguing places that abound in every city of metropolitan dimensions. Dinners out on occasion will obtain the high recommendation of every housewife, good cook or bad. And if the female half of the household happens to be a career woman herself, she is no more pleased at the necessity of thinking up and then cooking a dinner at the end of a day's work than would be her partner. So eat out as often as the budget will allow, and your understanding of the characteristics and temperament of other nations will grow astoundingly as you partake of their food and observe their manners of serving and eating it.

Cleaning Only The drudgery of the most uninteresting aspect of housework can be taken care of satisfactorily by having what the English call a charwoman come in once or

twice a week, or even for an hour a day. Women who do such work tend to be physically strong; most of them have families to support. If you regard your charwoman as a human being and pay her a decent wage, the arrangement can be profitable for you both.

After she has learned your requirements, you can arrange to absent yourself while she is at work and her interference with your freedom in a small apartment will be reduced to a minimum. Her faithfulness will be no less because of the character of her work. She will be grateful for whatever clothes you can manage to pass on to her if your manner of bestowal is a kindly one, and the possibility of her becoming a friendly and loyal servant is worth the little effort it will take to bring this about.

Janitor A factor never to be overlooked in the well-being of an urban dweller is the janitor or superintendent or whatever he calls himself. You may not meet him face to face from one week to the next, but if he omits his daily duties once, you know it immediately. Day after day he disposes of your garbage and rubbish; he cleans the common stairways; he is on hand at once if your toilet ceases to function or your kitchen drain overflows. Blow a fuse, break a window, get your mailbox key stuck or drop a flower-

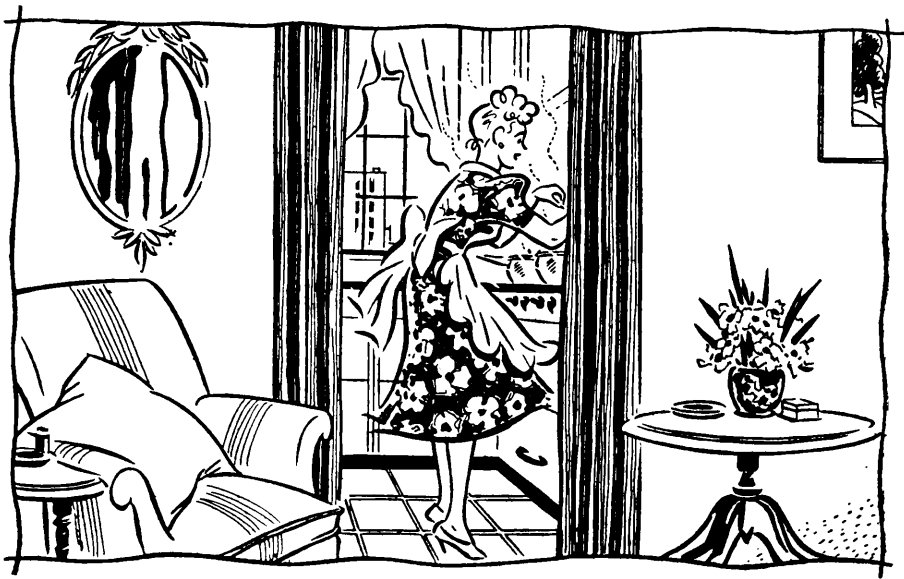
pot down the fire escape and your janitor or his boy will retrieve you and set you straight again.

Without being obtrusive, your janitor knows your characteristics and your habits nearly as well as you know them yourself. He harbors no illusions about the human race, but he has infinite respect for a considerate tenant. If I paint a picture which you fail to recognize, because you have found in your building only an individual who answers to the name and performs as few of his duties as he can safely manage, then I'd guess something went wrong between you when you first moved in.

For he can prove to be the best or the worst friend you have. Few individuals hear more complaints, usually feminine in gender, or get blamed for more mishaps beyond their control. If you had to empty the garbage from thirty families every day but Sunday you might be less inclined to look kindly upon the human race than he does. His sense of smell is probably as keen as yours and his body as eager to be fed. If your smile and tone of voice, when you chance to meet, places him in your estimation somewhat higher than the refuse he must clear away, you'll have no trouble from him no matter what you ask.

A janitor needs to be cultivated like a reporter, as often to obviate disaster as to obtain approval for the service you ask. The nature of his task

causes him to think for himself; no robot could possibly keep his job. Michael says that the tone of an Oxford college is as dependent on its porter as on its provost, and adds that if your apartment janitor takes a dislike to you it is a good idea to remove the cause of his prejudice or move elsewhere. The connection turns upon the fact that janitor is merely the Latin name for porter.



VIII APARTMENT COOKERY

. . . the modern way is through his eyes

During the last several years there has developed a noticeable tendency on the part of the man of the house to disengage himself from the evening paper and the chair in the corner for the purpose of taking a hand in the job of the moment. Instead of waiting to emerge until everything is ready and dinner called as of old, he mixes his favorite mayonnaise and broils the steak as he likes it. Having discovered the one job of creative

interest in the housewife's routine, he has promptly muscled in on it.

Now I am not intent on discouraging all this interest in a matter that would seem to be quite as important to men as to the sex which has heretofore been privileged to feed the race, hotels not counted. Invocations to the man in the kitchen are found on every hand in advertisements and articles, all trying desperately to maintain an air of unselfconsciousness while they pose famous chefs for models and explain carefully that cooking has always been a man's job, so please make way for him beside the stove.

Nor are the ladies slow to move over. They have learned quickly how to center attention on the chef's speciality, getting the rest of the meal onto the table themselves as though by surprise, and cleaning up the mess afterwards without comment. The slightest setback to masculine pride might cause a scurry back to the evening paper, and the pleasure of sharing a common interest would disappear as quickly as it came. So more fun to the man-about-town and the husband, who are teaching us to build a meal around one well-considered dish, how to be more original in our combinations of food, and how to cut corners and save unnecessary labor in apartment kitchens! Maybe we can swap experiences and plan more quickly prepared meals together.

Sources of Inspiration The routine of cooking can be learned with a little practice, but it is the injection of imagination and research that makes it a pleasurable job. New ideas, methods and experiments are in constant circulation, like bawdy stories; as we keep our minds open for them, to accept or reject their adaptability to our kitchen, routine is broken and cooking is retrieved from boredom.

Any kitchen well-equipped for work should include at least three types of source material: an encyclopedic cookbook for reference in any emergency, a menu planner of some sort, and a card catalogue or indexed notebook capable of constant expansion. Too many cookbooks cluttering up the place are more of a nuisance than none at all.

For standard reference there can be little argument. Fanny Farmer's tome has never been equaled as an aid to American kitchens.* It remains as authoritative as Webster's or the Britannica, and its latest edition is on the list of musts, beside Shakespeare and the Bible, for that sojourn on a desert island. To use it alone would be difficult, particularly for those who are eager to learn methods of preparing meals quickly. But it is invaluable when you are sent a basket of

* *Boston Cooking School Cook Book: Fanny Merritt Farmer*—Little, Brown & Co. Rev. Ed. 1937

apples from the farm or a pheasant from the boss and can't think how to use them all, or begin its preparation.

As for help in planning menus, the most difficult part of any cook's existence, there are many books on the market. I have a favorite and you have too, but I'm not yet ready to trade. Mine is the *Alice Bradley Menu-Cook-Book*, compiled by the principal of Miss Farmer's School of Cookery. It is published in four volumes, each covering a three-month period, divided into weeks and days of the week, and when open the menu and recipes for one day fill two facing pages. Its covers are washable and it is loose-leaf; nothing has been overlooked to make it simple to use. Marketing lists are included, easily divisible for two, and there are special holiday menus when occasions arise. There is also a comprehensive index in each volume; seasonable foods are taken account of, new uses for nearly all foods are given, and economy is guarded carefully.

Simple and health-giving materials make up these menus, but the originality and finish of an artist are learned as one follows the easy rules laid down. While few of us ever follow a menu chart strictly, this one seems to me to be the easiest to change to suit personal taste. And tricky, difficult dishes are seldom found, for it is a series

planned with the needs of those who live in a city in mind. A bow, Miss Bradley!

Lastly, even a cook with a modicum of imagination keeps tucked into drawers or behind plates those slips of paper with recipes acquired from friends or radio-advisers or magazines. A box for cards or a notebook simplifies this business of adding to the cook's repertoire. Make your own index headings to suit your needs, such as luncheon dishes, buffet suppers, cocktails, and so on. Keep one section of the file for recipes that have not yet been tried, and the permanent records for those worth using again.

Recipes elevated to advertising by companies selling food products are always worth a trial. They are bound to be good or they wouldn't be used to advertise a food product. Some of my favorite dishes have been adapted from mouth-water-making ads. And recipes acquired from friends are gifts not soon forgotten, so don't hedge and say it's a secret when someone pays you the compliment of asking how you do it. Collecting recipes is as good a hobby as stamps or old glass, particularly if you travel. With a little experience you will soon learn from a glance at a recipe when it is too complicated for you to manage, and when skill and not ingredients is responsible for the success of a dish. You will oftentimes be amazed by what it takes, so simple can the best food

preparation be, and each speciality added to your collection serves as a memento of your travels and your friends.

Vitamins The number of words wasted on trying to explain the importance of this approach to menu planning would fill a library, and add up to no more than A, B, C and D. I have studied dozens of tracts on the subject and conned long lists of what foods belong to which alphabetical vitamin index. The conclusion to which all of them point is that mankind should maintain a balanced diet. If he spends too much of his time indoors in a city, his body has need of a greater proportion of those foods which will compensate for such unhealthy living conditions.

All of us know that food is eaten for the purpose of giving us energy, building and renewing body tissues, and regulating processes. The first is obtained principally by fats and carbohydrates (starches and sweets), the second by proteins (milk, cheese, meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dried legumes and some cereals), and the third by minerals (fruits and vegetables). Which, as you see, takes in everything comprising the bulk of our diet.

A study of food constituents in relation to nutritive value can be simplified if the emphasis is shifted from which foods, to how they are pre-

pared. A balanced diet gives a normal man all the vitamins he needs to maintain health, *if* it is properly prepared to preserve the vitamin content known to be present. This shift in emphasis has caused tests to be made of cooking methods, resulting in two main recommendations now generally adopted. First, vessels in which vegetables can be cooked with a minimum of water, resulting in steaming rather than boiling, are to be desired and can be obtained in any kitchenware store. Second, a constant temperature should be maintained inside the refrigerator of 45 degrees, which is easy to do in a city apartment equipped with mechanical refrigeration.

Aside from availing yourself of these two improvements in food preparation and preservation, there is no cause for concern or alarm. But a balanced diet, remember, means a proper proportion of each group of foods, not a preponderance of starches because one likes them best, and after all starches are on the list!

Per Person—Per Day Those foods which should be included in every individual's meals each day, used in one form or another, can be listed simply as follows:

Milkone pint
Eggsone
Cerealsone serving

- Vegetablestwo cooked or canned
 one raw
 one potato
- Meatone serving (this may be fish,
 poultry, cheese or dried leg-
 umes)
- Fruitone-half pint fresh citrus fruit
 juice (tomato juice may be
 substituted)
 one serving other fruit (dried,
 canned, fresh or cooked)
- Fatsif desired in addition to above
 (such as butter, gravy or meat
 fat)
- Sweetsonly in addition to above (sugar
 or candy)
- Watertwo quarts daily (some of this is
 taken in beverages, soups, and
 vegetables with high water
 content)

Menus City dwellers are fortunate in being able to find a great variety of food stuffs on the market throughout the year, though prices vary with the seasons. Making use of a menu cook-book obliterates the worry of what to have for dinner and assures you of not overlooking seasonal foods when they are cheapest. It also takes account of the above table of vitamins. But if you want to make your own menus, it is a simple enough matter if you can set aside an hour or so

for the job once a week. You will use your own index of favorite recipes, as well as cookbooks, and if you have at hand a list under each heading, such as all the various kinds of vegetables you like, or meats or fruits or cereals or ways of preparing eggs, it is a simple matter to run down each list, pick from it a meat, one raw vegetable, one vegetable to cook, one fruit and so on. You can achieve greater variety in this manner than if you try to pull ideas from your brain at a moment when you aren't hungry and nothing seems interesting in the realm of foods anyway.

Double Duties For the office worker who cooks her own dinners, menu planning once a week is imperative if she is to free herself from the confused state of mind resulting from multiple responsibilities and too little free time. An hour can be spent every Sunday, or one evening a week, in giving judicious thought to a schedule of meals which can be written down and forgotten until needed. This effort will definitely minimize the actual labor of preparing food each night.

Experience will teach what can and cannot be accomplished quickly. There need be no lack of variety in meats, for instance, since city shops can supply delicious cuts of all kinds; chops and steaks can be rotated with many other cuts and kinds of

meat, and need be served no oftener than once in a week or two. Cookbooks are on the market now which take account of the needs of this cook in the city, or help both in the preparation and planning of quick meals for one or two.

Another trick easily learned is that of cooking double portions of vegetables or casserole dishes and keeping the unused amounts in covered containers in the refrigerator. These need not be used on two successive nights, but can be taken account of for future meals during the week. Stews can be put on the stove to cook one night while the dishes are being washed, and be ready to reheat for the next night's dinner. All such devices are of inestimable help to the worker, since they free her from the necessity of thinking about home duties during office hours, and direct her flagging energies when she returns each evening hungry and tired. It is far easier to give a little extra time to the cooking of the next day's meal after a dinner is over than it is to spend that same amount of time between leaving the office and sitting down to the table.

Leftovers It is in the clever use of excess food, which no kitchen is without in varying quantities at different times, that one of the chief delights of cooking can be found. Men cooks don't know this yet. Anyone can scrape the plates

and platters and throw all leftover mashed potatoes and carrots and fish into the newfangled garbage consumer and start next day with a fresh market list and open purse. Manufacturers long ago learned to use all the pig but his squeal, all the scrap for some salable product, and only the lazy housewife (continentals excepted) continues to waste money and food because she can't be bothered finding ways of preparing it again to make it appetizing.

A roast, for instance, which families of two or three consider too expensive because of its size and the tiresomeness of trying to eat it all, can be prepared in a different manner for six days, and at no time seem to the palate or the eye to be the same meat. Cook it on Saturday or Sunday when time is no consideration, and then serve it next day for cold cuts, following with a shepherd's pie, soufflé or casserole, hash and finally soup. It probably won't last that long, but you can skip any of the intermediate steps that don't appeal.

Vegetables can always be prepared and cooked in double portions and kept fresh and flavorsome in a covered container. Serve mashed potatoes a second time by making small cakes and pan-frying them, or use them for the shepherd's pie. Boiled potatoes can be German fried the second night or covered with white sauce and cheese and baked. Almost any other vegetable can be reheated and

served with white sauce, or mixed in casseroles, soups or salads.

All water drained from cooked vegetables should be kept in a jar in the refrigerator and added to canned soups or sauces. Not only is the flavor of the soup or sauce vastly improved, but you are preserving for yourself vitamins and health instead of pouring them down the drain.

Nothing at all but rinds and seeds need actually be thrown away in any kitchen where some cooking is being done nearly every day. The trick is not to keep leftovers too long. Your combinations will elicit excitement and incredulity from guests when they find flavors intangible and satisfying. Such methods are doubtless the secret of French cooking. At any rate, they can be the secret of your own success and the source of pride in the low cost of food in your house, to say nothing of the endless challenge presented to your ingenuity in evolving something both new and admirable.

Broad Hints Few cooks can forbear to tell about their discoveries of short cuts and savings. Something new to you will have been known to your neighbor for years. The following are merely a few that seem worth consideration for apartment kitchens:

1. Never buy foods because they are cheap, in preference to a better quality on the market

at the same time. They aren't worth their price. Buy less of the quality foods if you are economizing, or wait until they are in season. Use substitutes, such as dried peas and beans for meat and eggs. But don't buy half-spoiled fish because you can't afford the best.

2. Excellent cooked food can be obtained in any large city. Shop around, inspect grocery shelves and delicatessens until you have widened considerably the variety of your quickly prepared menus. *The New Yorker* carries a column every few weeks called "Markets and Menus" in which are listed happy finds in this field, all of them worth trying if the shops are not too far from your area of habitation. Other cities are not dissimilar. Frozen fruits and vegetables are worth consideration, too. They are not particularly expensive, and in some cases their flavor is better than canned food, and they save considerable time in preparation.

3. Keep glass jars of various sizes to use as containers for leftovers in your refrigerator. Oiled-silk covers are excellent if the original tops to the jars have been destroyed.

4. Save paper bags and newspapers in a convenient, hidden place for use in wrapping garbage, preparing vegetables and cleaning.

5. Asbestos pads for the top of the stove will allow the contents of pots to boil or simmer without burning.

6. Bacon fat, drained into a jar, can be used

for frying potatoes and eggs. (I once knew a bride who poured such grease into a milk bottle. I never figured out how she was able to use it again, short of melting it, nor how she managed that, and I didn't like to ask for fear of hurting her feelings.)

7. Keep your cooking utensils separate, such as pots, lids, pans, knives, forks and bowls. Automatic reaching for something you want and finding it without trouble saves time and dispositional wear.

8. Unless you have objectionable neighbors in need of being reported, you will never see roaches or ants in your kitchen if it is kept clean. Garbage containers should be tightly covered and all surfaces on tables or stoves wiped thoroughly after each meal. Crumbs or bits of food should never be left around, nor spilled sugar allowed to remain in cracks or on the floor.

9. Use one pot for boiling eggs, beets and potatoes, all of which discolor aluminum. Better yet, don't use aluminum if you can afford processed glass or steel.

10. Pots in which food has been cooked should be filled with water as soon as they are emptied. Cold water is best for pans in which eggs or milk have been cooked, since it will keep these substances from congealing further and adhering to the pan. When you get around to washing them after dinner or in the morning the process will subsequently be much easier.

11. To remove the odor of fish from hands or utensils, add a handful of salt to water and wash. To remove odor from rooms, simmer for an hour or so a panful of water to which a couple of tablespoonfuls of vinegar have been added.

12. Remember that texture of foods is important in their appetizing quality. The Chinese know this well. Vary your textures in one meal, combining a soft food with a crisp one, a crunchy texture with a solid, and then be aware of them as you chew. This adds a pleasure to eating you probably hadn't known before.

13. To keep cookies or cake fresh, add a piece of bread to the jar or box, or an orange rind or piece of apple.

14. Keep a file of menus served to frequent guests, in order not to duplicate too often. (For years I knew when I accepted a certain dinner invitation precisely what I should be served. The menu never varied, even to condiments or the shape of the rolls. Excellent food, but it lacked the flavor of expectancy and change that makes dining away from home a treat.)

15. Lemon juice will remove food stains from finger tips.

16. When freezing ice creams, mousses or sherbets, turn the cold control on your refrigerator to the lowest temperature possible for two or three hours. Then turn it back where you normally keep it and the mixture will be set, smooth and well-mixed, ready when you need it.

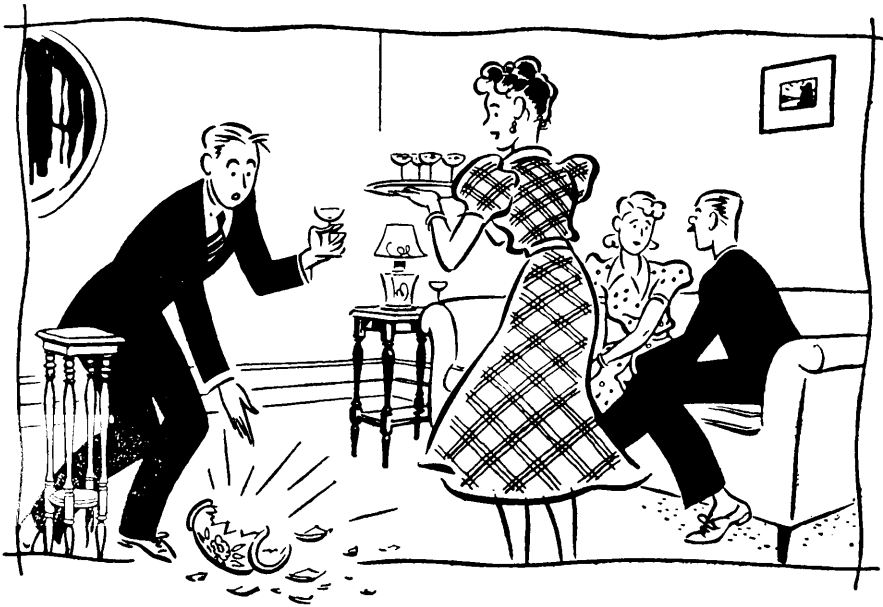
17. Keep your shelves filled with packaged breads and biscuits, as well as cans of fruits for desserts, and cheeses. If baking and roasting is done over weekends and pantry shelves are well-stocked, mid-week meals are a cinch to prepare. Also, unexpected guests are a delight instead of a nightmare.

18. Instead of using serving dishes at the table, manage one-plate meals with all food served in the kitchen. This will save time and dishes to wash. Steps can be saved at the end of a tired day by using a large tray for setting the table and clearing away.

19. Small tablecloths or colorful mats, instead of all-over damask cloths, are less expensive to launder and quicker to use. And candles on dinner tables instead of overhead lights are more restful.

20. The secret of unharried meal preparation is planning in such a way that everything will be cooked and ready to serve at the same time. Either on paper until you remember, or in your head, decide which part of the meal will require longest cooking, and start that first. Then begin preparation of whatever will take the next longest time, and so on until you are putting the mayonnaise on the salad, taking the biscuits from the oven and finally dishing up the meat and vegetables, nothing having caused a delay to the ruination of the rest.

And once the meal is on the table, relax and enjoy the fruits of your labors. It is better than the finest of restaurant dinners, because you have conceived and executed it yourself. One of the great pleasures of the world is eating, and the most subtle of artists a good cook.



IX GRACEFUL ENTERTAINMENT

. . . it's your turn now

Some of us can do with far less of the company of our fellows than others, but even the shyest introvert reaches out for companionship and understanding when he has had enough of himself. So individuals come together for the purpose of relaxation or stimulation, and if there are more than two gathered together at one time, the meeting is usually called a party. One other kind of

gathering is also called a party, but this one is, in essence, a sort of ritual, like going to church, and like all rituals, its form changes with the times. Always, however, those who attend it are expected to enjoy the excitement produced by any concerted attempt to escape from the inhibitions of daily life.

In the old days when no proper woman went to prize fights or night clubs, this second kind of entertainment was more common than it is now. Large parties in one's home were the chief means of bringing the world to one's door and eligible men to one's daughters' feet. Nowadays we go out to meet the world in the places where it congregates publicly, and bring into our home, as a rule, only the more intimate associates. As a result, rules of etiquette are no longer as rigid as they once were, and courtesy and consideration remain the only two ingredients of graceful entertainment that require fulfillment.

Friend or Foe Those of us who live in a city for any length of time discover that we can enlarge or decrease our circle of friends almost at will, and that these individuals may all like us but not care particularly for each other. One group may ski together during the winter, another play bridge, and a third prefer quiet evenings of conversation. It is wise, there-

fore, to remember that the success of our hospitality rests as much on the mixture of guests as on the food or entertainment offered them. Friends we like to see across a bridge table may loathe an evening in which they must think up conversation to satisfy a business acquaintance who prefers to talk politics, but in the closely set rooms of an apartment they are unable to escape each other. And contented guests are a stimulation even the least gregarious of us need at times.

Time and Place A tradition of feeding those who come to our home has held over from the time of the stranger within the gates who wandered long distances between habitations and was always hungry when he got there. The tradition has been translated into modern custom because people are naturally generous and like to share the pleasure of food with friends. The evening meal has been most popular for this purpose because relaxation is possible at its close.

But it is a pity that entertainment has too easily come to be synonymous with eating. A hostess believes that she will be remembered by her guests for the amount of food she gives them, and that her reputation is dependent upon surprising them with something new and abundant every time they enter her home. During the last few

years, however, luncheons, teas and dinners have been less popular than breakfasts, midnight snacks, and the ubiquitous cocktail party as a means of entertainment.

If you have fun, your guests are sure to. Nothing is more flattering to someone within your home than to be allowed to share your life as you live it. Therefore, decide which time of day you are at your best, and your only concern will be to get your guests to leave.

Dinners for large numbers are sometimes looked upon as a convenient method of repaying debts. If you have been in the habit of giving one or two a year, try a different system. Divide your friends into homogeneous groups and invite no more than four or six individuals at a time. The expense may be slightly more but the strain will be less.

Luncheons tend to be confined either to one sex or the other. Females whom the rest of the family don't like and find it difficult to talk to are more easily entertained in the middle of the day. Masculine luncheons usually go on business expense accounts under the heading of promotion, cigars included.

Teas in America are similarly divided. Men will attend them on sufferance if their profession allows freedom at that time of day and the affairs are large enough and sufficiently unruly to elimi-

nate fear of being conspicuous. A man will invent a variety of excuses to save himself the embarrassment of being found with a teacup in his hand in the dead of afternoon unless he can count at least a dozen other males as uncomfortable as himself, all within calling distance.

Breakfasts are another story. They become a form of entertainment usually during weekends, and those of a national-holiday character. But opinion regarding their desirability is divided. Any man can appreciate a cause for festivity at this hour of the day, particularly if he is in the country. But for the hostess whose best smile seldom appears until after coffee and a piece of dry toast, hospitality at a late hour of the morning is not calculated to fill a need in her life.

Midnight snacks belong to good-natured people. They may be anticipated by keeping a pantry filled with the makings, but their occasion usually arises from the moment. Any way you view such gatherings, unless you happen to be a neighbor trying to sleep, they are successful, because those who participate expect to take whatever comes as it is found.

Dessert-bridge parties offer a common-sense solution for the problems of the city hostess. The custom of ending an evening of bridge with added hours dedicated to eating rich food when everyone is tired and ready for bed has needed revision.

So a brilliant strategist thought of introducing food at the beginning of the evening, as a last course to dinners already eaten by the guests in their own homes. Not only can the dessert be arranged before anyone arrives, but subsequently the mess can be cleared away and forgotten by the hostess while she relaxes and enjoys bidding a small slam.

Cocktail parties are the boon of those who want to entertain too many people at once, and the bane of neighbors or a docile family watching dinner grow cold while they wait for the party to break up. It is the most impersonal kind of informal entertaining possible in a city, and the easier such a party appears on the surface the more careful has been its preparation. This is an American institution once looked upon as barbarous by other peoples, who thought they had settled the problems of gracious entertaining several generations ago. It has now become a custom in metropolitan centers around the world.

HOW TO ENTERTAIN WITHOUT HELP

Any woman who wants to give a party and can't afford to hire a maid for the occasion can turn herself into all the servants she needs and produce a memorable meal. But unless she is clever enough to manage her variety of jobs so

skillfully that her guests remember her only as a charming hostess, she will have failed in the fundamentals of social success. Nothing causes a guest greater disquietude than to catch only occasional glimpses of a slightly disheveled hostess as she pops in and out to serve. Sounds of work in the kitchen while the meal is in progress are no substitute for the presence of the natural head of the table whose duty is to lead conversation.

No one needs visible evidence that a woman is working hard to enable him to enjoy the fruits of her labor. Instead of admiring her he is rather ashamed of himself for causing so much distress, and shame was never a concomitant to ripening friendship. If she plans ahead of time to share her home, and only incidentally a meal, the result will be an exchange of mental as well as physical refreshment, and the gracious gesture of hospitality will be doubly appreciated.

Buffet Supper When the hostess is without help, a supper which can be prepared ahead of time and then served by the members of the party themselves is best calculated to permit her to act the part of hostess rather than servant. And once the routine is learned, the preparation is not difficult.

1. Serve dishes for which you have proper equipment. If you find you enjoy giving buffet

suppers, gradually increase the utensils needed, stick to this method of dispensing hospitality, and you will become known for doing it superlatively.

2. Plan a meal that can be prepared hours ahead of time, even the day before. This will leave you free to dress for your own dinner with composure. Plan dishes that will stand delays, ones that can be deserted, forgotten, and finally removed from the stove to serving table while the last of the cocktails are going down with husband's latest story. Such management requires plenty of work the preceding day, but the usual rush-before-the-guests-arrive will be eliminated. Fireproof dishes, big and beautiful, are fine for such meals because they can be left in the oven an hour or so after the heat has been turned off, and still present the food steaming hot when their lids are removed.

3. A first course served in the living room is a help, too. Simple canapes and hors d'oeuvres can be prepared several hours ahead of time and left for the host to carry in with the sherry or cocktails.

4. Serve coffee in the living room after dinner, too. This will permit a graceful exit from the dining room, where the charred remains can be closed off by a door or a screen. Set out a demi-tasse service on a large tray in the afternoon and leave it ready for the addition of the coffeepot just before it is carried into the living

room and deposited on a low table. Cocktail glasses left behind when the guests trailed in to dinner can be quickly placed on a tray and removed from view.

5. A gracious hostess will not wear an air of distraction while she waits for the last cup to be emptied, and then gather them in to save breakage and go to the kitchen, there to begin cleaning up the mess. Sounds of scraped plates and jangled silverware are always a signal for one of the bored members of the group to rise and follow her, which leaves the other guests to bear the stigma of laziness.

Dinners for Four As has already been suggested, the mixing of guests is a problem best solved before they arrive. A rabid liberal and a conservative, once they get in a fight, can harry any hostess. From habit her husband will jump in on one side and start hurling insults at the other. But if there are a sufficient number of wives present a good fight never goes far. For female opinions are predominantly personal and the men will unite. That's how entertainment sinks to the level of a couple more drinks around and a game of monotony—sorry, monopoly.

On the other hand, a single bright light in a crowd of dim-wits makes a squirmy evening for everyone concerned. Unless you are thoughtful

enough to provide at least one other person for the bright mind to converse with you might as well not have had the party in the first place. It's pretty futile to work hard preparing a distinctive meal that no one enjoys, due to the sound of inferiority complexes clashing. You may be smart to have so many kinds of friends, but you're smarter still if you don't try to mix them. Seems to me I said that before.

A succession of small, informal dinners will obviate all such trouble, and they will also enable you to try out conversation once again as suitable entertainment for grown people.

As with a buffet supper, plan the meal well in advance and prepare everything as early as possible. Serve the main course from the kitchen and let your guests take turns filling water glasses and passing the rolls if they make a move in that direction. Whatever else you do, make no attempt at formality and stilted manners, even if you have to spill something to ease the tension.

If you entertain the same persons often throughout the year, better keep notes each time on what you feed them in order not to duplicate your pet meals. On the other hand, if you divide your friends into small groups and it takes many such dinners to go through the list, find one meal that you can manage easily and repeat it each

time. The ease of preparing it will increase until you can turn it off without a care.

Somebody says in print that accessories are the secret of a distinctive meal. The foundation may be as simple as Sunday dinner on the farm, but a clever centerpiece, aided by a dash of tarragon, will make your guests remember you forever. Be as cunning as a diplomat, they whisper, and include items known to be particularly liked by your friends, even if these are only homemade bread and the juice of pickled peaches. You may have to keep another notebook, of course, filled with scraps of their remembered conversation jotted down as soon as you reach home or get them out the door. And if they talked about the bouillabaisse of old N'orleans just to make an impression and you dish it up to them the next time they come, it will serve you both right if they don't recognize the stuff, or loathe it even if they do.

Clowning aside for the moment, perhaps the following will help in planning and preparing a supper that will enable you to be as carefree as your guests when they arrive. Make up your menus in this way:

1. Choose one or two hot dishes from the following:

- casserole of meat and vegetables
- tuna fish and noodles
- creole chicken

- patties of oyster, shrimp, crab, mushrooms
or sweetbreads
- baked beans
- lobster or clam Newburg
- meat loaf
- broiled chicken
- baked and sliced ham
- 2. Have as well one or more of these:
 - fresh fruit salad
 - generous bowl of cottage cheese
 - stuffed tomatoes
 - potato chips
 - cole slaw
 - plate of mixed relishes
- 3. For bread, and plenty of it, try:
 - crusty rolls
 - French bread cut in thick, diagonal slices
 - icebox tea rolls
 - Milwaukee rye
- 4. Desserts should be served in one piece,
such as:
 - blitz torte
 - butterscotch pineapple pudding
 - cake
 - toffee pie with lemon filling
 - banana pudding

And always simplify rather than complicate the manner of your entertaining. If you have any out-of-door space, such as a small terrace, bay windows, a roof free of antennas, or a back porch,

invite a few guests at a time and let them enjoy the view, even if it includes the neighbor's wash. The clothes on the line will be different from the ones they see every day, and you can give them new horizons even as they bring fresh points of view to you. The food you serve will be incidental, as it should be, and not the sole excuse you can offer for inviting people into your home.

Late Suppers There is something of a distinction between this kind of entertaining and a snack. There are two kinds of midnight suppers in the city. The first must be hearty enough to sustain those who have been following hard exercise, such as ice skating in Rockefeller Center, walking in the park or skiing (don't say "Where?"—roof tops maybe). These suppers require a hot dish, like oyster stew or scrambled eggs and bacon, served with crusty bread or the makings of salty canapés. The second kind, following the theater or concert or a dull evening at somebody else's house, may be more simple, comprised mainly of a hot drink and something to nibble. With hot chocolate serve sweet biscuits or small cakes, not too heavily frosted. Beer calls for cheese and crackers; coffee permits the accompaniment of almost anything to be found in the house, and toddy or mulled

wine requires only a plate of hot buttered toast or English muffins.

If your guests are as kindly as their host they will recall their beds, save a few stories for next time, and leave before dawn without waking the neighbors.

HOW TO ENTERTAIN WITH HELP

Dinners When you have a maid in for the party, don't expect her to be a mind reader. Your kitchen is as unfamiliar to her as someone's office would be to you. In the short space of time you will have in which to instruct her, verbal orders would come too fast for her to retain them all in her head. So write out your instructions ahead of time and she will have them for reference when you are occupied with guests. You can save this list for your next party, too, having considered changes that could well be made. Note your requirements as to neatness of uniform, how you wish your door answered (and you might give her a demonstration here), what dishes, linen and silver you want used, how and when the food is to be served, and what condition of cleanliness you expect to find in the kitchen when she is finished. If you leave nothing to chance, you can forget the mechanism behind the scenes and feel like one of your own guests.

If yours is a full-time maid, see that she serves the family correctly at every meal and you won't have to worry about sudden idiosyncrasies or the chance of her joining the conversation when guests are present. Be specific about whatever extras or additions you want, and give her the sort of praise you would like yourself if you had tried to be particularly helpful and pleasing.

With adequate service and observation you can make your dinners as formal as suits your fancy, even to duplicating a hotel dining room. But the taste of attempting elaborate entertainment in a city apartment, unless your home is large enough to house a staff of servants, is open to question. There is a distinction between entertaining many people at one time, and very formal entertainment. The first may take any of the forms already discussed, on a large scale. The second requires meticulous observance of rules of etiquette and perfect service, as well as ample room for both guests and servants to move about without appearing silly in their formality. If you wish to entertain in an elaborate manner, and your servant is incapable of handling the added work entailed, either hire someone from a bureau who is trained for such occasions and needs little prompting, or engage a private room in a hotel or club. In one of the latter, the background is

suitable, and the staff well-trained. Also, the host and hostess will be able to devote themselves to their guests, unconcerned with the question of whether liqueurs should be served with the coffee or afterwards.

Stag Parties The formula is pretty standard: good liquor, plenty of snacks, and no women around. The part of the wife in preparing for this sort of entertainment, if she has no help, is easier by far than the work entailed in cleaning up after it. With help, her chief duty is to direct the work. No matter how much is prepared, there won't be enough, but make about a dozen sandwiches or canapés or whatever the menu demands, for each invited guest. The host usually knows what he wants, and his wife's only concern is to see that enough of what he wants is on hand. For her own peace of mind she will supply coasters to cover the base of cocktail or highball glasses, and furnish enough ash trays to service the smoking room of a liner, in the vain hope that they will be used.

Before the guests arrive she will absent herself, for their fun will be somewhat impaired if she is on hand to remind them by her presence of what they are expected not to do in the way of wrecking furniture or flowerpots. If there are

servants, they will be prepared for emergencies. If there are no servants, the host is on his own, the outside world forgotten and the sweet clink of poker chips in his ears.

Children in the House How far children should be included in adult groups is a question continually under discussion. It is not within the scope of this book to decide the matter, nor go into the question of differing customs. Expediency in a household without servants has caused the children to be included in adult forms of entertainment when wisdom would have ordered otherwise. Children *ought* to be bored by gatherings of their elders. If they are not, it is probably because they have either been given or have demanded the center of attention.

Friends who want particularly to see the children in a family can be told at what hours this can best be done. Or the sons and daughters can be allowed to enter a party for a few minutes only in order to greet the guests, and then retire to their own part of the house. It is as tiring for children to have to remain at a dinner table after they have finished eating as it is for guests to have to listen to parental admonitions.

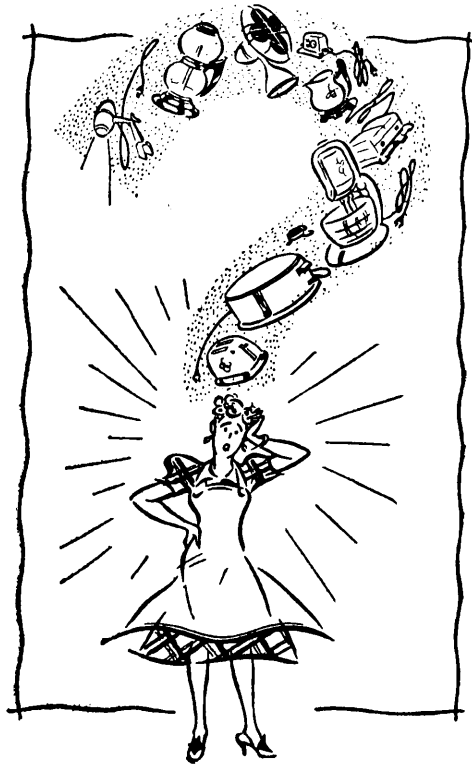
Children's parties are amusing only to children who have not acquired a taste for adult entertainment.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Once upon a time there were certain days of every week when the lady of the house must be dressed and ready to receive callers by three o'clock. As painful as these at-home days must have been, her grandchildren suffer equally in their own fashion. The doses may be less concentrated, but the irritation is quite as bad, for every city woman is confronted with the pressing problem of how to cut short a telephone bore and free herself from endless interruption. To hang up would have much the same effect as grandmother's slamming the door in a caller's face. Something a shade more subtle must be found. Perhaps someone could invent a signal that would indicate to the caller that you're busy and can't be bothered just now, so please hang up and call again.

As for unseen solicitors— if men had to stay home all day and answer every time the telephone rang they'd think up a solution for this nuisance pretty quick. My own remedy is an intensive study of voice-placement in an effort to pinch hit for the maid I can't afford. "Madame says to hell with your chin reducers on sale tomorrow." And yet I've had to stop whatever it was I was doing in order to say that.

Don't answer the imperative summons of the bell? But, it just might be . . . well, could *you?*



X GADGETRY

. . . death to din and dither

Whenever a visiting dignitary is met at quarantine by half-awake reporters he answers politely that he is eager to go to the top of Radio City, see a baseball game, meet a movie actress or eat fried chicken—depending on what he has been

reading at home. Several weeks later and as many years older, when he embarks for the return journey, he still answers politely and with equal bewilderment that American women are the best-dressed in the world, American men seem a little distracted, and the distances between places are wonderfully great. He has seen what he expected to see before he came over and he understands it through dark glasses.

Only when he reaches home again does he remember what struck him more forcibly than any other aspect of the United States: its gadgetry. I am still waiting for one of these visitors to describe accurately his impressions of those innumerable manifestations of American ingenuity that force themselves upon his attention and confuse his habitual way of doing things while he is on this side of the water.

He is usually so relieved when he gets home and is no longer confronted with unfamiliar devices which speed up his activities when he has no desire for hurry, that he keeps the impressions to himself. There is always the fear that a fellow countryman might take it into his head to introduce one of the darned things over there, and the old tooth brush is quite good enough, without being told by advertisements that nothing but an electric one will suffice to maintain his health and keep him alive.

But he needn't have feared. It is only American women who are certain buyers of any new gadget that goes on the market. With the lowest sales resistance of any group in the entire world, they form a ready market for a flourishing trade.

Our foreign visitor finds himself comforted by the familiar when he returns in his own country, with its noises in a higher key, its sky that seems so much lower than an American sky, yet he remembers wistfully the ease with which so many things were managed over here. Within a short time the gadgets are a confused memory because he didn't know how to work more than half of them anyway, but the impression remains of our country that it is a place where everyone is imbued with a perpetual sense of emergency, and everything somehow gets done.

Some gadgets are so idiotic they are an insult to the scientific principles underlying them. And yet, so says Michael, the electric refrigerator and the air conditioner and the new razors are honestly in the tradition of Prometheus, who gave mankind fire and was perhaps the first scientist. There are still many unpleasant, unameliorated aspects about the business of living in a city, but if someone hasn't yet thought of a remedy, there will be one on the market tomorrow. Not all gadgets are worth the time it takes to look at them, yet inspection is both amusing and profit-

able; you may suddenly become aware of a need for the first time when you encounter its fulfillment.

Take some of the more general city nuisances which everyone of us must encounter, such as noise, lack of fresh air, darkness and dirt. The worth of the articles included in the following lists, intended as checkmates, vary according to individual needs and your means to buy. In each group, those which are too expensive to be considered as gadgets by many of us, but are unquestionably serviceable, are marked with an asterisk and an approximate price given if known.

Be sure to consider current in buying electrical gadgets. Some work only on alternating current and some come for both currents, but direct-current models are usually more expensive.

QUIET

1. Ear-stoppers, to be used while you sleep, if noise from the street disturbs you.
2. Rubber mats, for drainboard and sink bottom, and rubber baskets, scrapers and drainers, to save clatter in the kitchen.
3. Noiseless garbage can, insulated with rubber.
4. "Telechimes," installed on doorbells to prevent harsh clanging. They give a musical note, differentiated for various doors.
5. Electric fan, guaranteed to be noiseless.

6. Radio equipment that will enable one person only in the room to hear the program. Not earphones, and detachable.

*7. "Air-Pilot," an electric contrivance which can be installed in a bedroom window to give perfect ventilation, no drafts, filtered air, and will shut out all noises of garbage collectors, other people's radios, or street cries. (\$75.00)

FRESH AIR

1. "Jay-ways" keep doors from slamming and allow any degree of ventilation. Easy to adjust under edge of door.

2. Sprayer, filled with scents to purify air in house. Often it's the neighbor's onions.

3. Humidifiers, shaped like small bowls, heated electrically to produce moisture in a room. (Far more effective than pans for radiators, but no better than a boiling kettle.)

4. "Sanovan" is a liquid which can be added to a pan of water and left to simmer on back of stove to remove odors. Vinegar will do the same thing.

5. Ultraviolet-ray lamps, hand models and floor stands, produce fake sunshine in place of that which you should have but don't often get.

*6. Air conditioners to keep hot rooms cool. Expensive but wonderful if you can afford them.

*7. "Arid-Fuser" attacks heat from the humidity angle. This is a contrivance small enough to hide behind a chair, can be carried from

room to room, since it requires only an electric outlet to plug it in. Room air, heavy with humidity, is sucked through calcium chloride blocks and returned fresh and dry for future use by a horizontal fan. (\$119.50)

LIGHT

1. Lamp to hang on side of closet wall. Turns off automatically when door is closed.

2. "Spot Ray" light which focuses all its beams (on one book, for instance), allowing rest of room to remain in darkness. For the one who wants to read in bed after roommate has gone to sleep.

3. Tubular lights with chromium reflectors, to attach to closet doors or in wall corners.

4. Desk lamp with Polaroid glass over the bulb, to cut down glare from papers on which you may be working at night.

5. Venetian blinds, no longer gadgets perhaps, to allow passage of light and air without sunshine glare.

CLEANLINESS

1. Cellulose sponges, for cleaning and washing woodwork and walls. Square, various sizes, inexpensive.

2. Rubber clothesbrush, far superior to old-fashioned whisk. Washable, porous latex rubber, excellent for removing lint, hair and dust from the most intractable materials.

3. Rubber mops of porous latex, dusters to go under any piece of furniture, and wool brushes to clean the slats of venetian blinds.

*4. Electric sweepers of all kinds, of which the best is probably the Electro-Lux. Its gadget-aspect lies in the attachments, one of which will even remove dandruff, in case you care.

In my own mind I make arbitrary divisions for all gadgets, none of the three necessarily excluding the others. I call them time-savers, space-savers and disposition-savers. When I come across something new in Macy's basement and it fits one of these classifications, I buy it, after proceeding through the further mental gymnastics of trying to decide whether it will in the end pay out. I lose on a certain percentage, of course, but probably no one who persistently feels the urge to try new things hits the mark all the time. The only way to know their worth is to try them. The wider one's experience, the larger odds must be placed on judgment and the fewer monuments to wasted money will be found lying about the house.

The price range of the gadgets any of us will buy during a month or a year depends on income, but try not to be fooled into believing that the costliest is always the best. I could forego every other shop in the world if you'd leave me the

Woolworth's in the middle of the block. It is even all right with me if the blond countess takes her inheritance out of the country, so long as she leaves the source of it here. A good share of the gadgets in use all over this continent must come from those gold-and-red-front stores, haunts to delight the imagination of women in small villages and large towns. In Canada they are known as "Fifteen" stores.

All mechanical contrivances, from electric clocks to cute penguins that produce a cigarette in their mouths when a button on their tail is pressed, can be classified as gadgets. But for the purposes of this book, such trick devices as the penguins have been ruled out. The country is full of people who would feel their lives barren if they were deprived of such variations on a jack-in-the-box. But so would the nursery be barren without toys. No one really finds it easier to take a cigarette from the mouth of a tin bird than from a box.

Time-Savers Below are listed some of the most recent contributions to the saving of time, but I claim no omniscience in the matter of whether or not they would save time for you. This group is vulnerable to the question of efficiency, suspicion being aroused in many cases that more time is actually consumed in their use. Judi-

cious inquiry will doubtless be of assistance in making a choice, as well as the usual game of trial and error.

MORNING

1. Rubber mats for the bottom of bathtubs. If you slip and fall you can do more than lose time.

2. A valet rack which will hold all his clothes in one neat arrangement for a single dressing. Don't ask how much time it will take to put the clean shirt and socks there in the first place.

3. A fruit press that takes a whole orange, lemon or grapefruit and delivers seedless, pulpless juice, in case you can't afford the time to cut them in two yourself.

NOON

1. Kitchen utensils—tempting, profitable and multitudinous.

a. can openers, jar openers, knife sharpeners.

b. food preparers, such as bean-slicer, pea-sheller, graters, fancy knives and funny spoons.

*c. vegetable and fruit presses, for extracting juice and pulp quickly and efficiently. New electric models will do everything but pick the fruit from the trees.

d. meat grills and slicers.

- e. cake and bread mixers, recommended without qualification.
- f. coffee grinder, if you are fussy about aroma.
- g. toaster with automatic timing, every slice the same.
- *h. roasters in which an entire meal can be cooked, and no watching required. Not a fireless-cooker.

(But don't overlook the necessity for conserving space in an apartment kitchen. Most of these time-savers take up too much room to be economical, if they can be used for only one thing, such as a bacon grill. Therefore, choose perhaps one good toaster, your favorite kind of coffee-maker, an electric mixer that will also grind and slice meats and vegetables and squeeze juices, and all the small hand-implements that you can get into the drawer space available.)

2. Portable switches for marking time, that can be set for any period up to five hours, and will automatically turn off radios, bed-lamps, lights, or time long-distance calls and the Sunday roast.

*3. Two-way phone systems for large apartments. You can talk to the maid or chauffeur or listen to the nursery, dictate to the secretary while she stays in another room, or transmit radio programs from the other end of the house.

NIGHT

1. Kindlers to light your log fire in a hurry, if you are so fortunate as to live with an open fireplace.
2. Logs which are chemically treated and need no kindling. Will ignite at once and burn for an hour.
3. Keycase with flashlight attached, if you have trouble finding the keyhole. This is one the Europeans would shrug shoulders about.
4. Eye shades to keep light from waking the sleeper.

The first gadget must have been invented when the ape man wanted to build a fire. Matches were gadgets when they made their first appearance, and the flint was thought good enough by those who didn't hold with newfangled notions and ways. Each time some different contrivance appeared to change the habits of mankind it must always have been considered a fad, until it was either absorbed into the routine of living and considered a necessity, or abandoned because it caused more trouble in the long run than whatever it was meant to displace.

It is only during the last century that the number and variety of these mechanical expedients has increased out of proportion to their absorption into habits of living. Every day new fads

sweep the country and ingenious implements are bought, tried, accepted as permanent fixtures, or discarded. Sorrow in this country would derive from a lack of new gadgets to buy, rather than from loss of money on those proved to be useless. The French still prefer to carry their bread unwrapped through the streets, and the English buy their meat from uncovered counters facing the sidewalk. But no slump in the production of cellophane is threatened; America likes glitter and the sound of crumpled paper.

Space-Savers A list of those innovations for saving space in a crowded city apartment would evoke the least controversy. Unquestionably they are the best sellers, and considered from any point of view, the most important in forming a framework for comfort.

LIVING ROOM

1. Table top to fit over a card table, large enough to provide dining room for six or eight people. It is warp-proof and will fold for storing.
2. Wine cellar with shelves and honeycomb racks.
3. Trays that become tables by a slight pressure on a couple of hidden levers, causing legs to unfold like magic.
4. One-legged table that rests on chair arms

and can be used for writing, sewing, solitaire or dining. Adjustable height and slope.

5. Deskette containing shelf for typewriter, drawers for stationery, two file drawers and three storage compartments guarded by a combination lock. All steel and very compact.

6. Metal radiator tops that can be used as shelves.

*7. Upholstered chairs that will unfold into full length beds, twin size, for use in one-room apartments, or as extra accommodation for guests.

CLOSETS

1. Rods, adjusted without fasteners to any walls.

2. New types of foolproof hangers for everything, including trousers, evening dresses, satin dresses, children's clothes, suits, slippers, muffs, skirts, belts, coats and just dresses.

3. Tie holders of several kinds, all meant to conserve space and make selection easy.

4. Hat holders, attached to wall.

5. Clamps for skirts and trousers, that swing out from wall.

6. Boxes with transparent fronts for hats, suits and shoes.

7. Chests of innumerable models, large and small, to fit into closets and corners.

8. Dress bags of cellophane, for keeping clothes clean but not hidden.

BATHROOM

1. Racks of various kinds that can be added to one fixture, for more towel room.
2. Cabinet installed on back of door, providing shelves, hooks, clips and racks. It closes against back of door.
3. Extra shelf, obtained by installing chrome rail on top of toilet, giving space for bottles and jars.

KITCHEN

1. Square canisters of all sizes that will fit close together and take up far less room than round ones. Also square bread boxes.
2. Fold-away rack for drying dishes.
3. Clips to hold mops, brooms and hammers fast against the wall of a closet.
4. Rack of rubber for storing plates of all sizes.
5. Stool that will open into a stepladder.
6. Rack for saucepan lids, to hang against wall.
7. Vegetable storage cabinets.
8. Square scrub pail and tray that fits into it. The shape allows pail to fit into a corner and thus take up as little room as possible. Tray holds cleaning utensils.
9. Folding market basket. Sturdy and far from unsightly when opened.

It matters not whether it be wife or maid who does the kitchen work; her job can be lightened immeasurably by judicious choice from among

the hundreds of such gadgets as the above, costing from ten cents to several dollars. Don't forget it's the potato-peeler you picked up one day for a quarter that you would part with last.

Disposition-Savers The final list includes what I choose to call the disposition-savers. To be sure, what saves my disposition may not have any effect upon yours, but anything that carries the probability of being a snarl-saver is worth a glance.

MASCULINE

1. Shower-head to attach to wall over bathtub.
2. Stoppers and caps for opened bottles, to keep the sparkle for another night.
3. Silver balls, filled with water and then frozen, to be used in place of ice for long drinks. They will cool, but not dilute. Pitchers with inner containers for ice-cubes meet the same requirement.
4. Extension cord long enough to reach from room to room. Reels up when not in use.
5. Pillows that will stay plump, constructed in layers to prevent sagging or bunching.
6. Newspaper rack for the breakfast table.
7. Check protector: perforates your checks, prevents danger of having them raised.

8. Phone index with automatic arrangement which opens to desired page of name and number.

FEMININE

1. Slicer that will cut bread any thickness desired.

2. Saucers of rubber to protect surfaces from flower pots.

3. Safety electric fan with rubber blades.

4. Coasters or covers for cocktail or highball glasses, to protect the piano or the Chippendale table.

5. Note pad attached to wall with pencil stuck through the roll of paper, paper to be torn off as used.

6. Berets for refrigerator bowls, and zipper oilskin bags, to keep food fresh and sweet.

7. Rubber mats for weary feet in the kitchen, to place before stove and table.

8. Plant shelf, attached flush with sunny window sill, will give added room for plants and flowers.

Our parents think we're pampered because we can't manage with as little as they did and still be happy. We could if we had no choice. Our children will think we lived in a cumbersome and awkward world, and we'll recall how much more simple were our requirements than theirs.

Or will we? It doesn't matter. Our chief pleasure in the gadgets we use today is still derived from our memories of how it was before we acquired them.



XI HOLIDAYS AND CHANGE OF SEASONS

... this is where we came in

One day on his way to work the city man discovers that his winter overcoat hangs heavily on his shoulders. It must be spring. Another week and the cover of *The New Yorker* kids the foot-

ball crowds. Sometimes a Disney cartoon is timed to a holiday: the folks back home will be fattening a turkey. Rockefeller Center blooms between morning and noon on Good Friday with azaleas and blue hyacinths: the Easter parade is about to be photographed for Sunday supplements once again.

If the city robs us of quickening emotion caused by a smell of fresh thawing earth, of a familiar world suddenly buried in bluewhite snow, of the stillness of a replete August afternoon, it attempts to compensate us with new rhythms. Some of them are of our own making, not equally potent for rest and refreshment, but better than monotony.

All of us need anticipation to relieve satiety; most of us find it in familiar holidays that give us a break in the down-beat of our days as satisfying as Goodman's clarinet when it carries off the melody for a song of its own. Anthropologists know that holidays never die. Man must need them—just as swing music needs counterpoint and the broken beat—or he wouldn't have kept them so long. A change of religious faith or a reform in the calendar may change their names or shift their dates this way or that, but disguised as their characters may become, they live on from generation to generation just the same.

I know a family that parcels them out among

its members, and at least until the children are caught by adolescence, this method serves the purpose of eliciting excited plans and co-operation in the manufacture of fun. February presidential birthdays belong to young son, who is responsible for thinking up table decorations or planning a party for his friends in celebration. And each year a pilgrimage is made to a place he very much wants to see, like Ellis Island or the Sub-Treasury. Easter is mother's. She surprises the others by giving them something in lieu of a sense of spring difficult to track down in a city. Fourth of July belongs to father. At first he could think of nothing better for the family than driving them seventy miles an hour over U. S. One, in order to turn around halfway to nowhere and retrace the route, only to become part of the inevitable traffic jam at the gates of the city. Now they plant miniature gardens on the terrace or play croquet on the roof, and feel sorry for people who still think it's a pleasure to watch the rear end of another car all day and breath exhaust fumes and the leavings of bad piston rings. Halloween belongs to big sister, and Thanksgiving to grandmother. Christmas, of course, belongs to the whole of this family. Conferences are held beforehand, equally shared and filled with decisions on how variety shall be added each year to round out the traditions which must remain un-

changed until they are passed on to new children as they come to make another generation.

Now Is the Time The playground of any school will tell an observer more about subtle seasonal changes than a thermometer tacked to the outside of a window. Children know instinctively when the time has come to trade a baseball for a pigskin. No one tells them to put the bat away, but dozens of little boys all announce when they reach home for lunch one day that the old football needs a new bladder, please. That afternoon, autumn has come to the schoolyard. Months later, perhaps in early April, an afternoon will come when the old familiar sound of roller skates heralds the return of the children from school at three thirty. Not one or two, but dozens of boys and girls that day have known it is time to change. They may live miles from a park, they may never see anything greener than supper's spinach, but they know when it is time to change to marbles or shinny or baseball or jacks.

Their fathers use business for a barometer, as it changes from season to season. Summer is known by the slackness of turnover, winter for its shorter periods of speed-up and decline. But women who spend the greater part of their days in a city apartment must create their own changes

to enliven the sameness of routine. Aside from knitting woolen mittens or buying new sun suits, something more tangible inside the home is needed to herald rotation of the sun. The old adage of the man who used one of his last two coppers to buy a white hyacinth to feed his soul would hardly have stayed alive through the years, in all of its many variations, if it hadn't held a meaning for us.

SPRING

Jacks and marbles in the playground, fog over the river, one warmish afternoon followed by eight days of rain, newspaper advertisements blaring the benefits of condensed sunshine in the form of capsules, and *Vogue* telling us what to wear on a Mediterranean cruise. Still too raw outdoors for lighter clothes, but the winter ones look tired and worn. A new flowered crepe dress helps the body, but what of rooms darkened by cloudy weather?

Have you yellow table linens, anywhere in the house? A new primrose breakfast cloth of coarse linen will be worth its weight in color. Use it for any meal of the day and try combinations of bright tones with it, designed to intrigue the interest of your family. Set your table one evening with a small bowl at its center, filled with butter yellow daffodils surrounded by violets. Try pop-

overs for a Sunday breakfast with grape jelly, and eggs prepared in a new way, perhaps baked in tomatoes and sprinkled with cheese. More work? Of course it is, but you'll remember for days the resultant smiles on the faces around the table.

There is plenty of room for creative imagination in housework. It is as good a thing to find ways of feeding spirit and soul as to provide sustenance for body, and rest for tired minds. Transitional periods between the extremes of winter and summer are always hardest to endure, and the best means of sublimating their wearing qualities can be determined by trial and error.

Flower vendors make the streets to bloom, come sunny days, and to bring this gayety indoors is no trick at all. Large and expensive bouquets aren't necessary; use some of your newly acquired color sense to make the choice of flowers and their combinations a fascinating business. Try no more than two kinds together, such as Japanese iris and yellow freesia. Combine a stiff flower and a droopy one, a big one and a little one, a dark one and a light one. Put low bowls of flowers on coffee tables, and tall spikes against a plain background. Try one talisman rosebud in a flat turquoise bowl half-filled with water on the breakfast table. Or three bronze-red tulips in a Rookwood vase, slim and deep enough to give them the support they need.

There is a lot to be learned about the care and arrangement of cut flowers and no better time could be given to a beginning than a rainy spring afternoon in the city. Take a short trip to the library, do a bit of searching through magazine files, and on your way home make a detour by way of a florist or a street corner where grimy-handed but smiling men and women offer you beauty for a few cents. Have you noticed how those who work with flowers are almost always happy?

SUMMER

Plenty of people in recent years have written on what to do about summer in the city. At its very best it's bad, but not half so bad as the same city and the same kind of summers were twenty years ago. Energies are low and causes for irritation lie at every elbow. Dispositions wear thin and that half of the human race which thinks it runs the world still goes about wearing eleven or twelve pounds of clothes rather than be laughed at for starting something new. Business goes on as usual and weekends in the country are expensive and scarce. Let's make the best of it in the city and not suffer any more than we must. Why silent and soggy endurance in the face of unpleasantness when a change can be effected with a little thought?

Slip covers, for instance, are not what they used to be. Summer shrouds for furniture, baggy and uninviting as cotton nightgowns, have disappeared. Slip covers are now tailored or flounced, floral or striped, zippered or snapped, and they are as important a part of the decorative scheme as draperies. They are becoming a permanent furniture cover, for they can be made in lighter, more frivolous materials than regular upholstery, due to the ease with which they can be removed for cleaning. So they give color and brightness to a room as nothing else will do.

Pre-shrinking assures us that after washing or cleaning, the slip cover will go back on the chair fitting as well as it did when it was first made, nor will it be faded and sad as wilted flowers. New kinds of dye, new methods of dyeing, have practically eliminated the hazard of losing color either from washing or the sun. Even blue (that is, short of leaving it in the full blast of the sun for twelve hours a day) is now sunfast and washable. And glazed chintz has been treated by a process so that a trip through the tub returns it as glazed and lovely as when it was new.

Floors that have been covered all winter with a dark-toned deep-piled carpet or rug, call out for relief. Heavy, warm tones necessary for winter comfort can be as oppressive as the air itself in midsummer. Rugs that are light and gay in color,

firmly woven and definitely washable, can now be obtained in all sizes, to cover your floor completely or only in patches. Using them to replace the winter carpets will double the durability of them both.

Windows need a change of treatment not only for their effect on your state of mind, but likewise for the freer admittance of any reluctant breeze that may be hiding around the corner. Venetian blinds at windows facing the sun can't be bettered for practical value. Over them you need nothing but side draperies, pushed far apart, or perhaps a glazed chintz to repeat the motif of your slip covers. Even lawn dress material in crisp printed patterns will serve for summer draperies, and mosquito net and fish net are the darlings of the smart.

For windows that must be entirely covered, even in summer, there are new fine laces and diaphanous nets, sheer ninons, pale-tinted organ-dies and batistes, any one of which will allow a free passage of air and may be tied back easily at night if loops of ribbon are kept on a hook screwed into the window trim. We feel cooler when sheer, dainty curtains at the windows are being lifted and let drop and then blown out again, warm as the currents of air may be. If you are using mosquito netting, dye it to harmonize with your color scheme or leave it in its natural state,

but be generous and let it hang in multiple folds to the floor, for it won't deprive you of ventilation or light.

A change of diet to take account of summer heat has been so well-thumped into our heads by now that cooks automatically think of seasons in planning menus. But even salads and cold meats are more appetizing if they can be eaten out of doors. If you have no two-by-four balcony or roof top on which to set a bridge table or a couple of wicker chairs, move your dining table next to the windows and use only three sides of it, even though it must be elongated to give sufficient room. You might prefer eating on a balcony in the Tyrol, cooking by a mountain stream, or picnicking on the shore of the sea, but since the city is where you must stay for at least part of the summer, then bring the outdoors to your table and it will surprise you how much pleasure can be derived from new views. You can even console yourself with the knowledge that in Mittel-Europa you'd very likely be forced to watch uncomprehending youths go through military drills in the street below; in the mountains you'd be eaten by blackflies or midges; and at the sea there would surely be sand in the bun along with a frankfurter.

So let's use peasant linens in bright colors at home, drink from tall blue and green glasses, use

festive flower-printed pottery, and plan to go to the park for the concert when dinner is ended, closing our minds carefully to all thoughts beyond those concerned with today.

A bedroom needs a special pick-me-up to make it seem cool and fresh enough for rest on hot nights. Peasant prints with organdy flounces at the sides make crisp bedspreads. Or try a plain spread of colored chintz, solid or floral, and over it another of flounced curtain net or mosquito netting. Try shifting the pictures around, too, or removing some of the heavy ones. Replace them with flower prints, if you like them, or leave the walls nearly bare. Even if you work all day and use your bedroom only for a place to sleep and dress, changes like these are not on the silly side, but will definitely make your home more restful to you.

Another heat foil can be accomplished by dividing your pieces of pottery, ash trays, vases and other ornaments so that a certain number are relegated to the cupboard for part of the year. Keep the white bits, the pale and cool-colored ones for summer. It will seem a new place when crystal candlesticks replace the silver ones, a shell pink bowl takes the place of the copper tray, smoke white Danish glass is used instead of the pottery vase, and fruit and salads rest on clear plates. You'll enjoy each of the objects put away

during the summer so much the more when you bring them out again.

AUTUMN

Flowers to be found in the markets carry the bronze and gold tones of chrysanthemums. The lethargy of summer is ended and activity must find new uses for itself. Closets seem uncommonly full of things that get in the way and don't belong there. The children have already begun to talk about please can we have this or that for school. Squash and pumpkin and sausage appear again in cookbook menus. New plays open and one-man concerts are listed for weeks ahead. It seems good to look forward to another winter of work and new ideas. Strange, how the human family grows best in the cold months, resting and drowsing through the summer when other growing things are at full bloom. Cotton dresses, seersucker suits, swimming trunks and tennis rackets are in the way and unwanted. Chaos waits for organization to dissolve it, and autumn is the time for order once again.

Closets Children and husbands having been eliminated from the scene, how about setting aside the first likely day to try a procedure something like the following:

Empty the clothes closets one by one, having first delegated a different room or parts of a room to each group of belongings, such as summer, winter, and all-the-time wear.

Clean the closets thoroughly, and while they are empty, decide upon new shelves and racks in each one to increase the amount of space available. The janitor or a carpenter will be able to carry out your ideas, if you know before you call them in what you want. They will also tell you what is possible, regardless of what you want.

Paint the insides of your closets in bright, light colors to harmonize with the rooms from which they will open. This will cost little and repay you tenfold. The old curse of sticking your head into an unpleasant, dark cell can easily be eliminated.

Equipment for your clothes closet, such as garment bags, shoe racks, transparent boxes, hat stands, lingerie cases and special hangers are all available in a great variety of colors. The closet shop of any department store is prepared to make you ashamed of your hideaway holes and rush you into buying a complete outfit for each one, all over dots and stripes and pliofilm.

Storage space in almost any apartment being at a premium, try to manage in such a way that summer equipment can take the place of winter sports apparel in rotation. Try to clean all clothing before it is packed away at the end of its sea-

son of use, for nothing is more discomfiting than to pull a suit or a pair of shoes from the back of a closet and find them still carrying stains of wear and memories of past events. Suitcases and traveling bags can be used for storage receptacles, and handy ones at that, if you don't travel more than once or twice a year.

If one closet can be used exclusively for such things as these suitcases, moth-proof bags of clothing, skis, tennis rackets, skates, boots, fishing tackle, golf clubs, sleds and tricycles, they may be rotated from front to back of the closet as the seasons change. Summer curtains and slip covers, rugs, glassware, linen and china can all be packed away in labeled boxes for easy identification when it is time to change, and kept out of the orbit of daily activities.

In Lieu of Flowers When all the cleaning and storing has been done for another winter, and the old familiar, warming colors of the velours and damasks and satins reappear, there is still an emptiness where summer flowers and growing things have been. With only a small effort, your sunny windows and even darkish corners can be brightened immeasurably all through the winter with small-leaved house plants.

In the first place, shelves to attach to window

frames and window sills are made with ingenuity. One has slotted vertical supports that allow adjustment of glass shelves at any distance across your window and they won't interfere with window shades or side draperies. Another has brackets for supporting a single plant shelf, and some can be installed with no screws, nails or hooks. Any one of them will give room for growing all the vines and house plants needed to brighten the dullness of winter days.

If your apartment is incurably hot and dry, there are still many succulents and vines that will thrive in such an atmosphere. I have grown philodendron, various ivies, and sansevieria in the darkest corners and kept them for years, though they don't advance much in size until they are put in the sun. Against white woodwork or light walls they give a sense of quiescent freshness. Their leaves must be washed periodically to obliterate the dusty appearance of an old strawflower bouquet and give them an opportunity to breath through their pores. And they require no watering between weekly soakings.

Try succulents if you like them, such as aloes, agave, cactus, euphorbia, sedum and the fig marigold. Among vines, don't overlook the ivies. Even the old wandering jew can be grown in water, and its presence is an addition to the winter garden. Philodendron is equally accommodating.

For sunny windows, if you can keep them at a constant temperature never above 68 degrees, there is an amazing variety of flowering plants available. Each needs its own particular kind of care, but none of it is difficult. Several articles by Helen Van Pelt Wilson which give help in this direction are noted at the end of this book. Besides geraniums, begonias and azaleas, such flowers as poinsettia, crab cactus, marica, amaryllis and gardenia are worth trying. Paper white narcissus we all know, but few of us are aware that heavenly blue morning glories will bloom in eight weeks from seed if we are so courteous as to give them string or wire on which to climb. A quality of pleasure not easy to duplicate can be derived from the sight of delicate blooms growing from small pots on a window sill high above the street.

WINTER

The English essayist, G. K. Chesterton, once wrote: "A queer fancy seems to be current that a fire exists only to warm people. It exists also to lighten their darkness, to raise their spirits, to toast their muffins, to air their rooms, to cook their chestnuts, to tell stories to their children, to make checkered shadows on their walls, to boil their hurried kettles, and to be the red heart of a man's house and hearth. . . ."

If you are so fortunate as to have a fireplace, your winter evenings will probably contain not only warmth but coherence, for a family naturally gathers before a dancing fire. Move your furniture to form new groupings and new patterns, so that the open hearth can be the natural center of interest for everyone in the room. With or without a fire, raw winds outside are counteracted by warmth and contentment within. This is the season of the year when the inner nourishment man requires can best be provided. New books come into the home, music is made and shared, more entertaining is done and friendships ripen.

Christmas If this holiday were confined to one day in every year, twenty-four hours from sunup to sunup, perhaps the megalopolitan cynics would have their way and we could banish it from our consciousness. But it is actually a season covering nearly a two-months' span. So many of us who remember adolescent Christmas eves and childhood Christmas mornings, with their shared excitement and the sense of large-family oneness, have felt that our compressed city apartments allowed no room for real festivity. If we couldn't have a real balsam like the old ones, we decided to have none at all and forget the whole thing. Why hang stockings when children

must be told that St. Nicholas comes down the fire escape? They may not distrust the alteration, but we do. Why bother with a special dinner when one day is no different from another? Cellophane instead of tinsel, radio in place of waits; who will see the candle set high in a penthouse window?

But the punch-bowl and carols and holly wreaths have always been evolving, since long before recorded history. Mankind finds it necessary to erect symbols for an expression of his ideas, but change the symbols as we may, the ideas they represent remain the same. So why not create symbols for ourselves, in terms and in dimensions that have meaning in a city apartment? Their message will be no less comforting and their inspiration no less tangible. The creative effort expended on suiting these new forms to old hopes and beliefs will more likely stay with us through the year because they have been made our own. We need the Yuletide very much if we live in a city; moreover, it is useless to try to shut it out.

Whether we trim our miniature balsam with blue and silver, tinsel or cellophane, electric lights or candles, we are still following the custom of erecting a symbol of fertility and fruitfulness. Gifts are expressions of gratitude and homage, far removed as they may be from frankincense and myrrh. Once upon a time the contents of a

steaming punch bowl were offered to anyone who called at the door; its counterpart today, filled with a favorite eggnog, carries on the gracious custom. We can't have a yule log as long as the ones in English stories, but we can add pine cones and lightwood and resin chips to the small logs we do burn. Windows and mantels will take a variety of festoons of ivy, laurel, mistletoe and holly; or unsymmetrical decorations, such as small trees made of cellophane straws, branches of pine and ropes of fir and cones can easily be managed.

So long as Christmas retains its fragrance of balsam and evergreens, new and unfamiliar forms can somehow be assimilated. Cellophane snow-drift and small figurines are to be found in shops, and the latter can be treasured from year to year in the same manner that old-fashioned tree ornaments were stored after Twelfth Night, to wait in the dark for another Christmas Eve.

Outside, the surfaces of the city glisten with rain. Lighted shop windows make rectangles along the walls of the streets, and individuals hurry along as though they had been wound up and didn't know how to stop. Traffic lights throw a splash of crimson, then emerald, on wet pavements. Tired feet slosh through the patch of brightness.

Within thousands of apartments, individuals have returned singly or in groups to the homes

they have made. The rich and multitudinous offerings of the city have been gathered into each one, either in experience or in the form of factual pieces of the whole. Symbols of each season are adjusted to this apartment way of life, and no one feels ridiculous before them. From an airplane, the cities throughout the land must look like clusters of lights, strung from one wire even as those on a Christmas tree—sometimes gay, always gaudy—symbols of fruitfulness, too, though perhaps overripe from having hung too long. But one single light, our own apartment, belongs to us, and is the outline of the whole of our world.

A Last Word

Sometimes people say thank you, and sometimes they mean it. But gratitude is salutary, so before it turns back into selfishness, let me acknowledge my sincere appreciation for the help that has so readily been given me in the preparation of this book. First, to John Franklin Arnold, associated with the Chicago law firm of Campbell, Clithero and Fischer, for his assistance on the section having to do with leases. Aside from acknowledgments incorporated in the text, I must also thank H. A. Roberts, Ltd., of Vancouver; the Chicago Real Estate Board; Isador Lubin, Commissioner of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Department of Labor; and Day Monroe, Chief of the Economics Division of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The firms of Hammacher Schlemmer and Lewis & Conger of New York were also of assistance.

Had this volume carried a dedication it should have been inscribed to those individuals who will count themselves friends to the end of the book. There are always a few people whom one can't annoy seriously. They make endless good fun of us, and without them the succession of days and

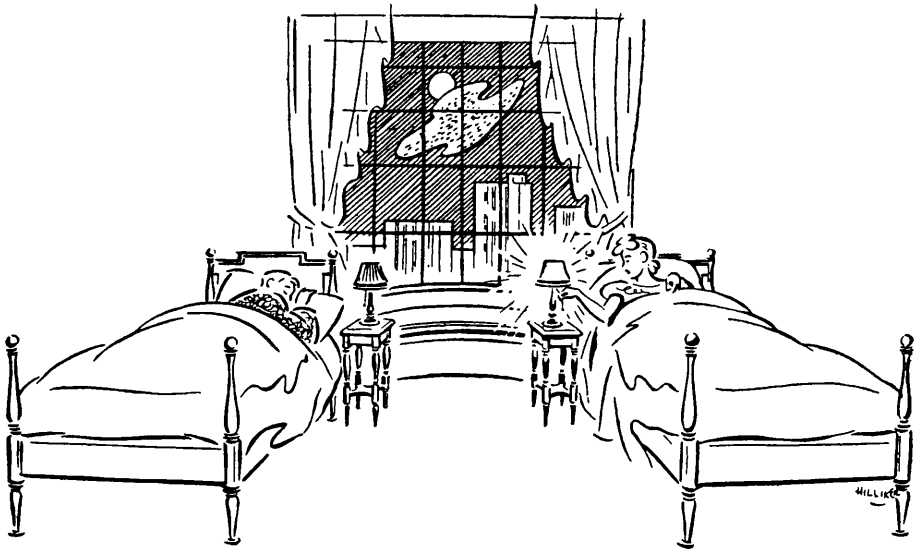
nights within city walls would be nearly intolerable.

It has been said that a city is a place where one intends to see friends soon, but practically never does. If a man has one real companion in a metropolis he is fortunate. It takes long, quiet hours of conversation for a friendship to ripen, and somehow those hours which we constantly promise ourselves to find next week or next month never come. Beneath the occasional surliness of these chapters there has run a processional plea that we find and use that lost time, somehow.

Cracks wide enough to whistle through have been left in the structure of the subject intended to be covered by this volume. A comparison of the advantages of urban over suburban manners of living was not designed, yet a judgment would seem to have been made. Actually, few of us have a choice in the matter. But if the effects of a city on the integration of personality can be understood, necessity will rub less harshly, perhaps, and the dignity of the individual can still be maintained.

Comparisons between countries, too, and the habits of their peoples, can be as bitter as steeped tea. Many more found their way into the original draft of this book than could be allowed to stay. Palpable differences would require the digression of further explanation as to causes lying behind

them, if they were not to build up more intolerance. I have lived in too many parts of the world not to have learned that people who live in apartments or their equivalents, quite like ourselves, are human beings intent on goodness, regardless of the national banner by which they are led.



THE END

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