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The Heart of the Home

By Frances Jones

EVER since you first hung your stockings before the glowing fire and went up to bed excitedly confident that Santa Claus would come down the chimney before morning, bringing a doll and a red sled, the fireplace has been a symbol of comfort and happiness. Some of us have grown up from Santa Claus, but the good cheer, hospitality and ro-

mance have become as much a part of the fireplace as the bricks or the tiles themselves.

The fire is a necessary part of the fireplace, too. Perhaps you have known fireplaces that were the despair of their owners. They would like so much to have a cheerful fire, but somehow (perhaps John didn't understand fireplaces very well) the smoke would always come pouring out into the room, throwing everyone into spasms of coughing.

The smoke in the room was the result of an improperly constructed chimney. Perhaps the fireplace opening had not been made deep enough, or a flue had not been made large enough. In any case, be certain when you are building that you have a reliable architect and a good mason, men who understand their business, and then trust the actual construction of the chimney to them.

You will, however, have to decide what type of fireplace you want. There are a great many types, and you might be tempted to choose an extreme style in order to get "something different." But in choosing, the most important thing to remember is that your fireplace is to be a part of your room and you will probably have to live with it for some time. So select, carefully, a type which is simple, attractive and in harmony with the general plan and type of architecture of the whole house.

If you were building a log cabin in the mountains, you would probably want a rugged, strong fireplace built with the native boulders.

For the simple colonial house, you would choose a plain white mantel with classic mouldings and a single row of brick or tiles around the opening.

In a bungalow, you might want an entire brick fireplace with a very narrow mantel shelf or perhaps none at all.

Each type is suited to its own style of house, and each would be equally inappropriate if used in one of the other types of houses.

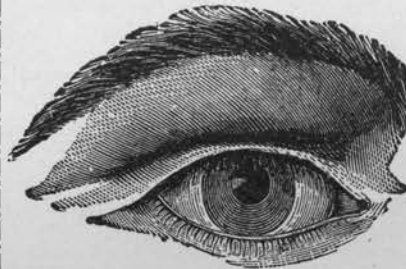
For the most part, you will choose good fireplaces of a style suited to your need, but some of us seem to lose our virtues of simplicity and suitability, and, no doubt, influenced to some extent by the example of our grandmothers, we find the mantel piece a fine shelf for the display of bric-a-brac and the pictures of the whole family since John was a baby.

Confusion and pettiness have no right to a place at the household shrine. The essential principles of simplicity, harmony and color must be considered in mantel decoration.

Just how many articles may be used on the mantel shelf without losing simplicity, it is difficult to say. But it is safe to choose one object as the center of interest, using two other similar objects such as candle sticks or vases to balance the whole.

A family portrait, large enough to adequately fill the space above the mantel piece, will lend a great deal of dignity to a room. Tall, sturdy silver candle sticks with heavy prisms might be very nicely used, one on each side of the picture.

It is more likely that you will want something less dignified and more informal than a mere portrait. Perhaps you



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have a fine old clock that belonged to your grandparents. It will be about three feet high, with carved pillars and feet, or it may be shaped like an old church steeple. The lower half of the door has ships or birds or flowers painted on the glass. It is just the thing for the center of your mantel. Then you will use a pair of oldfashioned brass or silver candle sticks placed one on each side of the clock.

A piece of tapestry as a center panel with slender vases on opposite ends of the mantel is another possibility.

A well shaped mirror may be hung above the mantel with a bowl of fresh flowers, a favorite piece of statuary or a decorative vase placed on the mantel shelf and reflected in the mirror.

An ideal over-mantel decoration is a decorative painting having an appeal of beauty to everyone and of an especial appeal to those who live with it. Some people love the mountains and some, the sea. Some have a special interest in flower arrangement, and still others prefer landscapes. With a large framed landscape as the center of interest, pots of trailing English ivy may be used at the ends of the mantel shelf.

There are no rigid rules to follow. You can only strive to keep every detail of shape, subject and color in harmony with the rest of your room. This is not only the principle of mantel decoration, but also of the whole fireplace grouping.

You will want andirons for your wood fire; an old English grate for your coal fire. Tongs, shovel and hearth brush may be hung in a wrought iron rack. You will need a screen; perhaps only a small decorative one to be placed to one side when not in use. You will want a deep, soft hearth rug, maybe. A footstool might be pulled up to the fire on one side. An easy chair may be drawn up toward the fire. Shelves for books may be built in on one side and a cabinet for the radio on the other side. A floor lamp may be drawn up to the chair to give light for reading.

The problem is to choose which few of these comfort details you want. Simplicity, comfort and good cheer are your aims, and you will know what best suits your own needs and tastes.

But let us imagine that we are arranging our ideal cozy nook around the fireplace. We will for convenience assume that we have a radio. The place in the illustration which shows a window seat might easily be adapted to be used for a built in radio. We will light the wood fire in our fireplace and draw up a big easy chair and a low footstool. The floor lamp casts a rosy glow on the radio dials, which are turned for us to hear a basketball game at Ames, or dance music from W H O at Des Moines, or even, perhaps, a concert from W J Z, New York.

The comfort and cheerfulness of the fire bring the rest of the family: sister with her book, mother with her darning, and Dad with his paper. Brother "runs" the radio, you see.

The wind may blow cold outside, but the family finds comfort, good cheer and fun around the glowing fire. Yes, truly the hearth of the home is the heart of the home.

Esther Rebok, H. Ec. '16, is teaching in Fairfax high school, Hollywood. Her address is 3938 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif.

MISS MAUDE CAMPBELL

Miss Maude Campbell, H. Ec. '16, who holds the position of assistant textile and clothing specialist in the Federal Bureau of Home Economics at Washington, D. C., is another Ames graduate who is achieving success along home economic lines.

The six years following her graduation she spent in Iowa, her native state, the first three doing high school and grade school teaching of home economics in the schools at Cresco and Waterloo. During the war, she assisted in the organic and quantitative chemistry laboratories at Iowa State College. At the close of the war, she accepted a position in the high school at Medford, Oregon, where she remained for only part of the year, leaving to become a teacher in textiles and clothing in the high school and night school at San Bernardino, Calif. She remained there for three years.

The school year of 1924-25 she spent at Iowa State College studying for her master's degree. She majored in textiles and clothing and minored in education and applied art, receiving her degree in June, 1925. In Sept. 1925, she was appointed to the position which she now holds.

Since her graduation from Iowa State, three of her summers have been spent at Columbia University, Chicago University and Iowa State College. Seven summers have been spent in traveling. She regards the summer of 1924 which she spent in the Hawaiian Islands as the most interesting of all her vacations.

Mildred Searles, H. Ec. '21, is a teacher of high school Home Economics at Oelwein, Iowa. Her address is 133 First Ave., East Oelwein. She is planning to attend summer school at Iowa State this summer.

The work of Myrne L. Hendry, H. Ec. '24, who is teaching Home Economics at Pringhar, Ia., includes serving hot lunches to about 60 students each day.

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