Homemaking, Home Furnishing and Information Services

HOUSING AND FAMILY LIFE
FURNITURE BUDGETS AND DESIGN
HOME INFORMATION CENTERS

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FINAL REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

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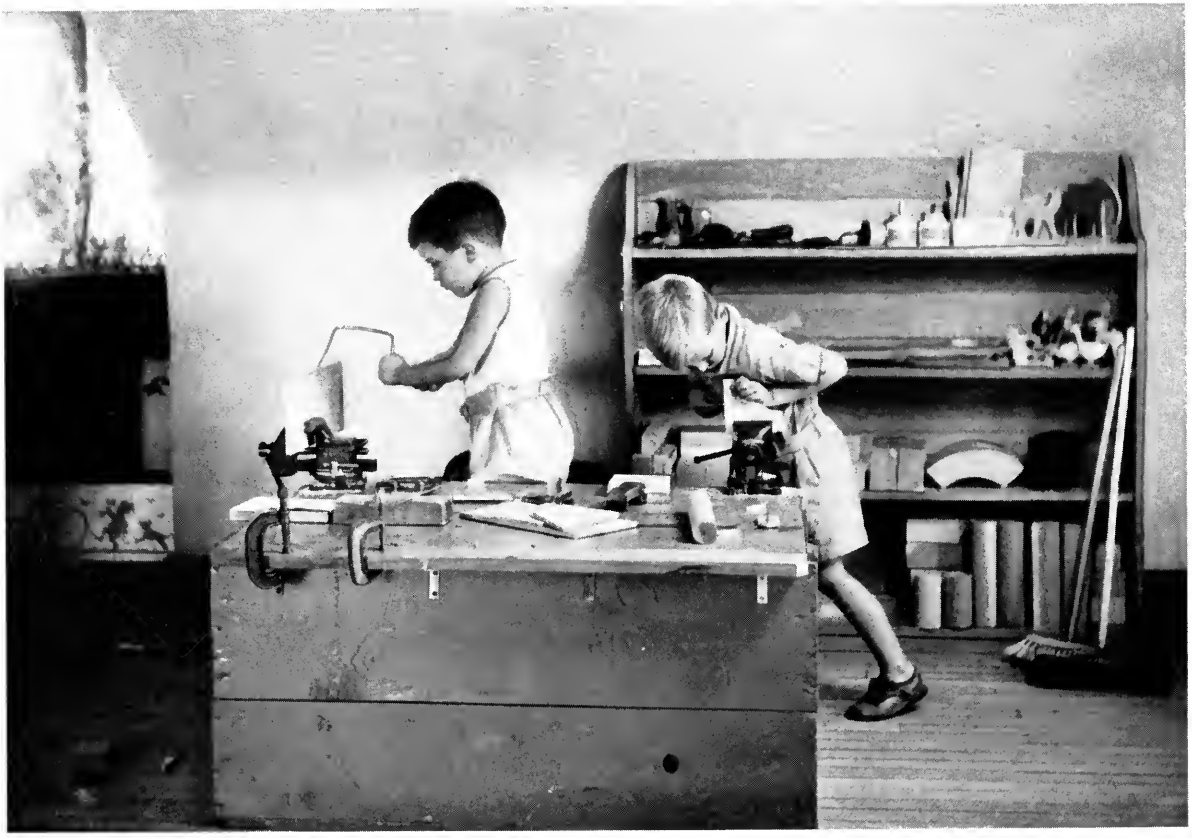

Courtesy of Trevor Teele, Ithaca, New York

In a home where children dwell.

Homemaking Home Furnishing and Information Services

Reports of the Committees on

HOMEMAKING—HOUSING AND FAMILY LIFE
MARTHA VAN RENSSELAER, *Chairman*

HOME FURNISHING AND DECORATION
RUTH LYLES SPARKS, *Chairman*

HOME INFORMATION SERVICES AND CENTERS
PEARL CHASE, *Chairman*

Edited by
JOHN M. GRIES and JAMES FORD

THE PRESIDENT'S CONFERENCE ON HOME BUILDING AND HOME OWNERSHIP
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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FOREWORD

Housing as we know it is the product of thousands of years of slow adaptation to the settled abodes made possible by tilling the soil. Through all those centuries of adjustment the changes brought about by experience molded the simplest forms of dwellings into homes with reasonable protection against the weather and sufficient to be centers for family life. The process was to a degree similar to that which led to the evolution of the beehive—the stimuli of unchanging conditions leading to a gradual perfection of adjustment. Certainly, the process was almost equally unconscious. Society did not sit down like a scientist to determine its needs in housing and then methodically supply them. Instead, numberless happy accidents occurring independently through the centuries piled up to form the common tradition of housing.

This unconsciousness and this natural evolution were well enough so long as conditions remained unchanged or changed slowly, so long as society continued under a predominantly agricultural economy. With the conditions changed, however, as civilization became more urban, the price paid for mistakes was a heavy one. The Black Death of the 14th Century illustrates the penalties man has paid for bringing together rurally developed houses to form a city. But it has been left to modern times to reveal the full danger of blindness on housing needs under changing conditions. The steam engine, the dynamo, the automobile, the subway, the skyscraper, the cinema, the radio, have one after another created new worlds for man. But through all these changes he has clung persistently to the housing developed for a pastoral civilization. He has made little conscious attempt to create new housing suitable to the new conditions. His adaptations have been makeshifts, largely the products of chance. No wonder that the home has lost some of its hold on its members.

The Committee on Homemaking shows that we cannot have good housing in any reasonable time so long as we leave its development to the processes of natural evolution. The adaptations of nature require generations; our modern environment may change several times in a single generation. Passive acceptance of homes as we find them must be replaced by consciously molding them to our needs. The scientific method must be brought to bear on housing and homemaking.

No other phase of the scientific adaptation of housing to modern conditions presents such difficulties as those involved in making a house contribute to the mental health of the family as a group made up of widely different individuals. The President's Conference shows that by planning cities so that home neighborhoods will have stability, quiet, spaciousness, safety, and beauty; by planning dwellings with adequate privacy—aural and visual—for each individual, and so that the housework will require a minimum of fatigue and strain; by making home financing cheap and secure; by reducing the cost of housing and eliminating jerry-building, much can be accomplished.

A fundamental practical step towards adapting the home to the mental needs of the individual is outlined in the report on Home Furnishing and Decoration in this volume. Order and good taste and beauty in the environment exert a powerful influence for harmony within the individual. Art is not a luxury but a part of all sound living. A work of art is an experience in the ideal. The home whose chairs and rugs and lamps and bureaus are constantly providing its inmates with such experiences will send better-adapted, better-disciplined men and women into society than the home of ugliness and discord. The esthetic shortcomings of the furniture and decoration seen in many American homes can be corrected. We appreciate the good work of men and women who in this volume show us how to achieve higher standards in the fitting and decoration of our homes.

There is much bad taste in furnishing, as there are mistakes in the location, design, construction and financing of homes, since the home owner and homemaker have nowhere to turn for authoritative, disinterested, and complete advice on their problems. Education in standards is fundamental to any program of housing reform but improvement will be slow. If every community had a home information center, a housing clinic, where each man and woman could get practical advice, rapid advance could be made.

The set-up of such services throughout the country will depend on the skilful use and adaptation of existing agencies and organizations. It is in the survey of these agencies and the evaluation of their potentialities that the Committee on Home Information Centers in this volume has done a lasting service.

RAY LYMAN WILBUR.

July 25, 1932.

INTRODUCTION

Early in the history of mankind the house served primarily as a shelter from the elements and a refuge from enemies and other dangers. With the development of civilization we have realized increasingly that the purpose of the house is to make possible a home. The home is the center of domestic culture, of character-training and of family life and aspirations. Modern civilizations rely upon it for the training and development of future citizens—to protect them from needless dangers, to build health and physique, to cultivate attitudes, qualities and ideals upon which future progress must rest.

The Committee on Homemaking dealt with the home and the development of family life as the end product of a well-conceived housing program. The Chairman of the Committee, Miss Martha Van Rensselaer, came to her task after years of distinguished service in the field of home economics, and more recently as Assistant Director of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, with the conviction that the Committee on Homemaking had a more important task than that assigned to any other committee of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership. She was intensely concerned with bringing to students of home economics, of housing and of architecture and construction, an understanding of the practical details of daily living and of family life and of the ways in which the daily activities and needs were related on the one hand to the details of house planning and equipment, and to individual and social aspirations and ideals on the other. As the report of the Committee on Homemaking progressed she preferred to change its title to the Committee on Housing and Family Life.

Her untimely death, which occurred a few months after the sessions of the Conference, has robbed America of a pioneer in the field of home economics and of a universally acknowledged leader. It has deprived specialists in housing of the inspiration and directive activity of the person who most clearly perceived the underlying meaning and significance of home standards and objectives in their relation to homemaking, family life and individual development. This loss will be irreparable unless such leadership and vision can be discovered and cultivated within the

younger generation of home economists, so that the work which she had planned and begun so well may be carried on.

* * * * *

The design, construction and equipment of the home each definitely modify daily behavior as has been shown by the Committee on Homemaking. To increase individual and social welfare by way of daily family life, it is necessary to plan, build and equip houses in such a manner that physical, mental and moral growth will not in any way be thwarted. Such growth should, so far as possible, be encouraged by the presence of facilities for development such as provisions for privacy, study, and recreation, and for the inspiration that beautiful surroundings afford.

The Committee on Home Furnishing and Decoration has laid particular stress upon the importance and possibility of bringing beauty as well as convenience, comfort and appropriateness of furnishings within the reach of families of quite moderate means. Modest homes in cities or rural districts throughout America, and too often, also, the homes of the well-to-do, display little understanding of the principles and the art of interior decoration and reveal the unfortunate influence of the ugly fashions in furniture and furnishings which so generally have crowded the display rooms of our department stores and furniture houses during recent generations. The responsibility of manufacturers and distributors of furnishings for this condition has been made apparent by the committee, which offers excellent preliminary suggestions for the improvement of taste on the part of both producer and consumer. Some progressive leaders in the furniture industry have already recognized this need. With such cooperation as they may be able to render the problem will be met more rapidly.

Each of these three committees, like all the other committees of the Conference, has dealt to some extent with the problems of education but it has fallen to the Committee on Home Information Centers to make concrete suggestions as to the best ways of getting accurate and appropriate information in the hands of each householder or homemaker who may need it. This committee has dealt with a relatively new and vastly important service and has attempted to determine the better type of auspices for such service as well as the working methods which would be employed. Its studies, like those of the Committee on Home Furnishing and

Decoration, deserve immediate and sufficiently extensive trial so that next steps beyond these recommendations can be worked out by a method of trial and error.

All three reports are in fields in which few previous comprehensive studies have been attempted and they therefore, urge further research. The committees' recommendations deserve adoption and study by competent continuing groups, sufficiently underwritten to make possible experimentation and library and field studies of the types recommended by the committees themselves, to be followed by such further investigations as the findings may indicate.

Each reader of this volume will find in it suggestions of importance that doubtless have not come to his attention before. A result of the deliberations of these three committees has been an enlarged conception of the field and content of housing.

This book should be of interest not only to homemakers, but also to home economists, sociologists, architects, builders, subdividers, realtors, manufacturers and distributors of household furnishings and equipment, as well as to persons with an interest or background in the fields of civic and social work.

JOHN M. GRIES
JAMES FORD

August 17, 1932.

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PART I. HOMEMAKING—HOUSING AND FAMILY LIFE

CHAPTER I

THE EFFECT OF HOUSING ON FAMILY LIFE[1]

Introduction

A homemaker met a friend who congratulated her upon the purchase of a house by saying, "How splendid that you finally have bought a home." She replied, "Oh, we have always had a home, but now we have a house to put it in."

This housing of the home spirit is one of the most important functions of the modern dwelling. True, the house must do its share toward the physical well-being of the family members. It also must serve as a workshop for the productive activities of the household—the making of garments, the cooking of meals. But these two functions, once so important, are stepping into the background just as health protection has become more a community than a family affair, and as production has gone out of the house into the factory.

Never before, on the other hand, has the house had greater opportunities to play an active part in promoting happy family life and in furthering the growth of the different family members. We look to the house of today:

To provide a background of peace and security so that the members of the family may relax from the strain of modern life outside.

To provide for privacy—the refuge where one can be alone and indulge one's own desires in meditation, reading or following an avocation or hobby; for without such privacy there can be but

[1] This report was prepared by Miss Martha Van Rensselaer, *Committee Chairman.* It is the result of a study of 2,847 families in 40 different states. The questionnaire was promoted by the secretary of the committee, Miss Thelma Beatty. Tabulations were made and the report prepared by Miss Day Monroe and Miss Nancy Booker Morey of the Department of Economics of the Household, New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University. Acknowledgment is due Miss Mary Chamberlain of New York City for assistance in writing the report.

limited use of the leisure which is, or should be, the gift of this machine age.

To provide an environment where the members of the family may enjoy one another's companionship, where their affectional needs as human beings may be satisfied.

To provide opportunity for social contacts—a place where all members of the family, both parents and children, may entertain friends.

Thus, the demands upon the house of today are many and complex. It must provide for the group life of the family, for companionship and the doing of things together which are so important a part of home living. It also must provide opportunities for each member of the family to function as an individual within the group, to develop judgment and initiative, to exercise his "instinct of workmanship." There must be a fine balance between facilities for family participation in work and play and facilities for the individual to carry out his own plans and desires. Only thus will the house serve our present-day needs.

Even though a family may live in an expensive, beautifully furnished dwelling, it does not follow that its members will be happy. Some families, with all the resources that money can buy, never create a true home atmosphere. Others can achieve well-being and contentment under the most adverse circumstances. But the house is a potential source of aid, and for that reason we have carried out this study of its rôle in family life as seen by families themselves.

First-Hand Testimony

Do houses actually perform those functions that have been outlined, or are they falling short of what we may expect of them? Do families feel that their dwellings have a vital part in promoting their happiness and well-being, or that they stunt growth and tend to make life drab and difficult? If they fail, what are the reasons?

To answer these questions, the committee went directly to families in different parts of the country. Consumers in the field of housing have been even more inarticulate than consumers in other fields except, perhaps, where high rents have pinched their pocketbooks. They have accepted dwellings built for them and settled in them, although they have often found such houses far

from satisfactory. Now for the first time, through a questionnaire answered by nearly 3,000 families living in forty states, the committee has been able to get first-hand information on those features of houses that families find helpful, and those inimical to their normal development.

It is hoped that the findings of the study may be useful in the following ways:

As a means of awakening families to a realization of the importance of the house in family living, and to the need for planning houses which will promote family development.

As an aid to house selection, by indicating features to be sought and features to be avoided.

As a stimulus for improving houses now occupied, through concerted family action, in order to change such features as are causing irritation and unhappiness.

Because of the limitation of time and money, it has been impossible to give the data collected that detailed treatment which such a study merits. Furthermore, the wide variety of answers, including opinions as well as facts, has made statistical tabulation so difficult and out of focus for some phases of the report that often bits of human testimony give a clearer and more convincing picture than an array of figures. However, from the 2,847 families answering this questionnaire it has been possible to show trends and to draw generalizations which, we hope, will contribute to our knowledge in this field.

General Picture of Families

Any discussion of housing in relation to family life must recognize the limitations and differences set by income, standards of living, climate, and rural and urban conditions. It must take account, too, of the varying needs of a family as it passes through successive stages of its existence. A given family may start with a small structure, ample for two. As babies come, more space will be needed. Certain housing features are essential when children are young; others are more important as the children grow older. When sons and daughters have married and gone, the final phase of family life may call for another type of house more convenient for the aged.

If, however, from the testimony of families in different localities and social settings—representing the young, the middle aged

and the old—certain relationships between the house and family life stand out clearly, certain satisfactions are emphasized, and certain lacks are recognized, we may feel that we have gathered evidence as to general truths. That the reactions of the families answering this questionnaire are typical of those of a large and varied group is evident from the facts concerning them—their composition, environment, and income.

Where they live. The 2,847 families in the forty different states included in the study were divided into a group of 1,048 who live on farms (rural) and 1,799 others, classed for convenience as urban, although 35 per cent live in towns of fewer than 2,500 inhabitants. The 65 per cent of the group living in cities of 2,500 population or more are distributed as follows: Twenty per cent in cities of 2,500 to 10,000; 22 per cent in cities of 10,000 to 100,000; 23 per cent in cities of 100,000 and over. None, however, is located in the large cities of New York and Chicago as these are included in the special study made by the group on Special Problems of City Living.[2]

Size of family.[3] Four in a family is the most frequent size found in both the farm and urban groups. About 15 per cent of the rural and 20 per cent of the urban families consist of three persons and about 20 per cent of each have five persons. The small family of two members, usually husband and wife, is represented by 10 per cent of the total, while the large family of six or more makes up about 33 per cent of the rural and 20 per cent of the urban.

As many as 83 per cent of the 2,847 families have children under 18 years of age. Only about 4 per cent have infants under one year.

Relatives, lodgers and servants. Some 18 per cent of all families have relatives living with them. Of the urban group, 7 per cent take in lodgers and 5 per cent of the rural families have such outsiders in the house. About 17 per cent of both groups employ servants. In the country these are usually hired men; in

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[2] Mrs. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, Chairman. See p. 56-94.

[3] No single persons, nor unrelated adults living together, were included in the report. Some questionnaires have been circulated among students in order to have an expression of opinion from young women of college age as to the dwellings of their families.

the towns and cities, women helpers. Only about 2.5 per cent have more than one servant.

Income. The replies from rural families were too indefinite to be tabulated, since the income is difficult to estimate. For the city group, however, it was possible to get both the income and some idea of the husband's financial status through knowledge of his occupation. The evidence indicates that neither group represents the very poorest or the richest classes of society. The families are, in general, from our great middle class.

Table 1. Distribution of income and occupation of husbands of urban families

Income range	Per cent of total
Less than $1,000	4
$1,000-$2,000	19
$2,000-$3,000	27
$3,000-$4,000	18
$4,000-$5,000	10
$5,000-$6,000	8
$6,000-$10,000	9
$10,000 and over	5
Total	100

Occupation classification	Per cent of total
Professional men	24
Low- and medium-salaried employees	23
Independent business men	17
Skilled wage-earners	11
Executives and officials	10
Unskilled and semi-skilled wage-earners	8
Farmers, ranchers, and the like	4
Men without occupation	3
Total	100

Home ownership. About 74 per cent of the families studied own their houses, while 26 per cent rent. The difference is not so marked between the rural and urban groups as one might expect, probably because the majority of the urban families live in small towns and cities. About 80 per cent of the rural families compared with about 70 per cent of the urban are home owners. Practically all of the farmhouses are the one-family type, and 86 per cent of urban houses are of that design.

Size of houses. The houses range from two-room bungalows to large structures with attic and cellar. A comparison of the size of rented with owned houses seems to indicate that when a man owns a place he demands, and is probably more able to maintain, a bigger establishment. Fewer than 5 rooms are more common among rural families—both renters and owners—than among urban families. In both groups, however, fewer than 5 rooms are found in the rented houses more than twice as frequently as in the owned houses.

The percentage of rented houses as large as 7 rooms or more is relatively low in both groups.

Table 2. Size of rural and urban houses and percentages owned and rented

Number of rooms	Percentage of total houses			
	Rural		Urban	
	Owned	*Rented*	*Owned*	*Rented*
Less than five	16	33	6	21
Five	16	18	18	26
Six	20	28	28	29
Seven	24	11	25	14
Eight or more	24	10	23	10
Total	100	100	100	100

Tenure. As might be expected, the family which rents seems to move more frequently than the family owning its house. The average tenure of the renters is 3.2 years as compared with 8.8 years among the owners. Practically four-fifths of the renters (79 per cent) had lived in the houses they now occupy for 4½ or fewer years. Only 29 per cent of the owners reported so short a tenure.

From this summary, it will be seen that the 2,847 families of the study cover so wide a variety of composition, income, occupation, location and housing arrangement that they may be said to represent a cross section of middle-class American life. Their tastes, their likes and dislikes are probably typical of those of a large proportion of the families of this country; and their reac-

tions to the houses they occupy are an illuminating side-light on whether or not houses in general are measuring up to those functions which are expected of any modern dwelling place.

The House as a Work Center

Despite the fact that much household labor has been taken out of the home, the ordinary housewife still cleans, cooks, scrubs, irons and does a dozen other jobs. As her place of employment, the house must offer such facilities as will enable her to work with a minimum expenditure of time and energy. The relation of the house as a work center to family life—the possibility that it may help to make or mar household harmony—has brought this subject within the province of the committee's investigation. However, the intensive study of facilities for performing household tasks, a survey of existing conditions, and recommendations for improvements have been the work of the Committees on Household Management and on Kitchens and Other Work Centers.[4] On no aspect of housing were the women more articulate than on the subject of work and equipment. Although many of the more intangible phases of the relationship between the house and family life were passed over by some women, or discussed rather haltingly by others, the homemakers expressed themselves freely and convincingly on this subject.

Arrangement. It is obvious that the floor plan of a house is important. The division of space, the arrangement of rooms, and location of halls, doors and stairways may decrease or increase the amount of time and energy spent on household tasks, and, consequently, the housewife's good humor and family concord. Yet houses have been built and are being built without applying the knowledge that is available on these subjects.

Of 271 rural women who wrote concerning house arrangement, 164 (60 per cent) feel that the arrangement of their houses is bad in one or more ways. Some dislike the manner of closing off the living room, some the fact that the living room opens directly outdoors; others complain of the bungalow type of house with bedrooms in view of all the rest of the house, or opening off the dining room. An inconvenient entrance to the cellar is a frequent source of irritation.

[4] See *Household management and kitchens.* Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, vol. IX.

Likewise, half of the 616 urban wives who discussed this problem are dissatisfied with the layout of their houses. Forty-nine per cent express satisfaction. Complaints in general are the same as those of the rural women except that the cellar is not so often the *bête noire*.

Let us hear from a few of the women themselves as to just what features they find especially fatiguing and irritating as they work.

"The pantry is two steps above the level of the kitchen." "I must go up two steps to pass from the living room to the dining room."

These are typical complaints from women whose daily tasks must be done in houses built or remodeled so that rooms are on slightly different levels. No efficient factory would tolerate this waste of precious minutes on the part of its workers, to say nothing of the dangers of falling, especially in households where there are small children or old people. It would seem that there is need for a safety-first campaign in houses as well as in industry.

"There is no outside cellarway, and ashes from the furnace must be taken out through the kitchen," is a common grievance expressed in one way or another. Perhaps no man can ever fully realize the feelings of a woman who has scrubbed her kitchen floor, only to have it sprinkled with ashes an hour or less afterward; but any good housekeeper can see the possibilities of family tension in such a situation.

The oft-repeated statement, "I must go through the living room to go down cellar," brings a picture of useless steps, of increased difficulties in keeping that room clean, as well as of limitations upon the use of the living room as a place for entertaining guests. Why are houses built that way?

Kitchen strain. Narrowing the scene of house arrangement down to the kitchen, the committee found more women satisfied with this work center than with their houses in general. Although 62 per cent of the 329 urban women who discussed kitchen arrangement say they are satisfied and only 8 per cent register actual annoyance, 30 per cent want improvements, so that altogether more than a third feel that changes should be made to perfect their kitchens.

Likewise, 56 per cent of the rural women write that they are pleased with their kitchens as against 10 per cent who are dis-

pleased, and 34 per cent would welcome improvements. Such testimony also indicates the lines some of these improvements might take: "The kitchen is dark and disagreeable." "The floor is hard to clean; it just never looks nice." "In the summer the heat in the kitchen is almost unbearable because of poor ventilation." "I travel miles working in my kitchen."

Are those who are satisfied sufficiently critical of their kitchens as work centers? Are they sufficiently aware of possibilities of saving steps through efficiency methods to make their judgment adequate? Of this we cannot be certain. Another committee is concerned with the practical problem of kitchen planning, but the concrete evidence given above shows that many women are becoming conscious of how their time and tempers may be spared through more effective work space and tools.

Small kitchens have been advocated by efficiency experts who realize the possibilities of thus reducing steps; but testimony gathered from this study indicates that not all women would agree with the household engineers.

Of the 126 urban women who discussed size, 31 per cent favor small kitchens while 68 per cent want them large, or at least larger than those they have:

17 per cent like their small kitchens.
14 per cent want smaller kitchens than they have.
25 per cent like their large kitchens.
43 per cent want larger kitchens or are annoyed with their small ones.
1 per cent want a "better" kitchen.

Only 45 rural women discussed this point. Of these, 18 are in favor of small, 22 in favor of large, and 5 want "better" kitchens.

4 like their small ones.
14 want smaller kitchens than they have.
10 like their large ones.
12 want their kitchens larger.
5 want "better" kitchens.

Since a kitchen which seems "large" to the city woman with a small apartment may seem "small" to the rural housewife accustomed to the use of this one room for general family living, serving meals, and laundry work as well as for meal-getting, the statements mean little. However, they do serve to remind us

again that family needs vary, and that we must not assume that one kitchen pattern will fit all households. Perhaps many of these women do not realize the advantages of a small kitchen. Some who like large kitchens might prefer small ones if they had separate laundry rooms, or separate breakfast nooks. Also, size of family and amount of entertaining may influence a homemaker's attitude on this question.

Many rural women feel that the use of the farm kitchen for too many different purposes increases the strain of housework. They complain that "the kitchen is used for storage of tools," that "the men come directly to the kitchen from work and wash up at the sink," or that there is "no place for the men's work clothes and wraps but the kitchen." They yearn for a room equipped with running water where men can wash and perhaps change shoes or outer garments after work. In Southern California, where it never is very cold, it was suggested that a part of the back porch be converted into such a dressing room. This location would be less successful in a climate like that of New York State in winter. Some kitchens, however, are big enough so that partitioning off one end as a dressing room might be feasible. It is, in any event, a problem that calls for more foresight and forethought than it usually receives when farmhouses are being built.[5]

Laundry lacks. Another household activity that often crowds into the kitchen is that of laundering. More of the urban than of the rural women seemed to be conscious of the desirability of better laundry facilities. Perhaps this is because the small kitchens of the city are more upset when washing is added to daily tasks than are the large kitchens of farmhouses. Perhaps, too, with running water available, a separate laundry does not seem such an impossibility to the city woman as to her country sister. Whatever the reason, 70 per cent of the 177 urban women who discussed the subject want separate laundries, while only 30 per cent are satisfied.

Here is an important item in work routine—something that must be attended to every week in the majority of homes—and yet not adequately provided for. "Blue Monday" is indeed a disagreeable day for the whole family if the washing has to be done

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

in the kitchen with dishes stacked in the sink, and, perhaps, children in the way while the hurried housewife toils over her tub.[6]

Cupboard quandaries. "A place for everything and everything in its place" is no more than a fond dream to most of these 2,847 families. The majority of housekeepers, about 64 to 68 per cent, in both city and country, would instruct architects to build houses with more closets, cupboards, and "places to put things." The complaint most generally voiced is that there is no place for outside wraps and rubbers. Cupboards for dishes, places for cooking utensils, space for fruits and jellies, closets for brooms, mops and cleaning equipment are other storage needs listed by the women, which, if added, would make work easier, and thereby relieve fatigue and other sources of irritation. "No place for table linen." "No shelves in closet." "Children's junk never put away, but it's not their fault"—came loyally, from a harassed mother. Even the doll suffers: "No place for the doll's clothes or the doll buggy."

It seems incredible that there are dwellings, presumably well-planned, without closets in the bedrooms, but many women complained of this lack. Such closet space as there is may be inadequate. "The children get their clothes mixed in the closet and then there is a fuss," is a typical cry that shows how closet confusion can add to family tension. Closets without doors are unsatisfactory, according to several women.

The excuse of waiting for the landlord to provide cupboards and closets is not always valid, since 78 per cent of the rural and 64 per cent of the urban families who are dissatisfied with storage space own their houses. Nor can the urban families blame apartment limitations, since 86 per cent of the dissatisfied are living in one-family houses. Ready money to spend may have a little to do with the matter; but the reason why defects in storage space have not been remedied is probably because families fail to realize that such small changes can result in enormous relief for the homemaker, or that such improvements often can be made with relatively little expense. Boards may be bought already cut for making cupboards. Complete cupboards may be ordered from mail-order houses at little cost. Local stores often carry very cheap natural wood shelves and cupboards that only need to be

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 210-22.

painted. Second-hand ones may be purchased also and freshened up with a coat of paint. Many a family will buy a new rug when the old one is not yet worn out but delay spending a little money on storage space because the need is less conspicuous.

Perhaps the making or installing of cupboards as well as other repair work, which is discussed later, would be simpler if there were more houses equipped with some convenient place for keeping tools. Many women mentioned the need for a handy box. If one must hunt fifteen minutes for a hammer, and another quarter of an hour for a screwdriver, it is not surprising that minor additions and repairs remain unmade.

Wanted—energy-saving equipment. Evidently the women of these families fully realize the possibilities of using modern equipment and labor-saving devices for lightening toil and increasing leisure. Forty per cent referred to the relationships between equipment and their work. Of this group, 76 per cent of the urban women and 63 per cent of the rural find satisfaction in such labor-saving devices as electric irons, sewing machines, vacuum cleaners or other housework helpers. The remainder expressed a desire for better or additional equipment to make work easier. This is what they have to say in their own words:

"Modern conveniences provide time for recreation and personal improvement."

"Give time for more leisure."

"Electric helpers make the physical aspects of homemaking less burdensome to the housekeeper and less annoying to other members of family."

"If you have some of the new contrivances you get less fatigued. I sincerely believe that when members of the family are over-tired friction takes place."

It is not always a case of desiring equipment not heretofore owned, for often replacements are wanted. Forty-two per cent of the rural and 38 per cent of the urban women discussing cook stoves want new ones. Why? Because "they smoke" or "the oven isn't good for baking." Better refrigerators are equally desired by urban women. Almost one-half of the group discussing them want new ones—generally specifying an electric make. Relatively fewer rural women mentioned refrigerators. If no ice man passes your door, and if you do not have electricity, you may not ask for a refrigerator, no matter how conscious you are of what it might mean in solving your food problems.

The women apparently see far more clearly the advantages to be gained in lightening housework by purchasing equipment, than the advantages derived from rearrangement of work centers, or the addition of such minor equipment as shelves and cupboards. Perhaps this is due to the advertising campaigns of equipment manufacturers and dealers. The question may well be raised as to whether or not we are becoming too accustomed to purchasing as a means of satisfying needs, and not sufficiently awake to the possibilities of family craftsmanship and ingenuity in planning.

Bathrooms. The problem of bathrooms has to do primarily with family hygiene and health. Their absence adds greatly to the strain of the housewife's work, especially if there are young children in the family for whom baths must be prepared. Where large families live in houses with but one bathroom, the morning scramble for its use by hurried school children and a busy father often leads to grumbling and grievances.

Progress in urban housing is perhaps most apparent in the matter of bathrooms. Only 13 per cent of 1,709 urban families reported no bathrooms, while 71 per cent have one, and 16 per cent have two or more. In marked contrast were the farm families: Of the 993 which answered the question concerning bathrooms, 66 per cent have none; 31 per cent, one; and 3 per cent, two or more.

Not all the rural families without bathrooms mentioned a desire for them. This may be due to the fact that a bathroom may be dependent upon the running water and sewerage devices, or the lack of them. Since 65 per cent of 1,048 rural families have outdoor toilets, it can be assumed that they have no sewerage system. This lack makes installation of a bathroom difficult and expensive. The question was not asked, directly, as to whether or not families have running water in their houses; however, of 392 rural families who mentioned running water, only one-third have it. These consider it a tremendous help. The other two-thirds want it.

Once families *do* have bathrooms, the cry is for more. Of a group of 637 urban families which discussed bathroom satisfactions and dissatisfactions, 285, or 45 per cent, want a second bathroom. Their reasons are to avoid family misunderstandings. "All must have baths and often it causes trouble as to which one will be first, or because one uses all the hot water." "Too many for

bathroom early in the mornings," are some snapshots of homes with big families and only one bathtub.

Where there is running water, and a city sewerage system, it would seem that a second bathroom oftentimes might be a better investment than many of the things families buy. Personal cleanliness, and frequent baths, rank high in the American standard of living. Expense may be a factor, to be sure, but what about two less-elaborate bathrooms instead of one with costly fixtures? What about looking into the idea of a bathroom in two parts, so that a shower can be run by one person while the tub is being used by another?

A downstairs lavatory was a frequent suggestion by women with small children, and also by rural women wanting some place other than the kitchen sink where the men might wash. Bowls with running water for individual bedrooms also were proposed to relieve congestion in the one bathroom.

Sewing room and desk space. Dressmaking is still an important household activity, especially in the country where cash incomes are small and stores may carry a limited stock of ready-to-wear clothing. Mending is the traditional endless task of wives and mothers, yet many houses do not seem to be planned with any recognition of this fact. "There is no place for the sewing machine" is the housewife's lament. It is not decorative in the living room; there may be no room for it in the kitchen; it cannot be used if it is in an unheated bedroom. It should be near a good light and so placed that the woman can turn to it quickly when she has a few minutes to sew. The workbasket, too, should be conveniently placed for those times when the housewife can drop into an easy chair and take advantage of her time. Is the answer a "sewing room" which so many women desire, or could there be a sewing alcove? The same solution will not fit all families, but some thought on the subject is needed.

Another job that many homemakers must face after their day's work is finished is the "business of managing family finances." Yet many women complain of the lack of a desk—that piece of furniture usually considered fundamental for the man in business. The wife who helps with the farm by keeping the records and the homemaker who is active in community organizations have even greater need for adequate desk space and equipment. Few, however, are so fortunate as to have such equipment. Furthermore,

the majority of inexpensive desks designed for women seem built for use only in writing notes, not for making records, writing checks, and keeping records easily available. If a woman must keep her bills in a tin can on the pantry shelf, and her checkbook in the living-room table drawer with pencils, rulers, string, and a collection of old school papers, it is small wonder that she does not know how the family income is being spent.

The House as a Haven of Rest

The improvement of work centers probably is the most effective oil for smoothing ruffled daily routine and troubled tempers. Certain other sources of irritation, however, "get under the skin" not only of the housewife but of the whole family, and lead to bickering and discontent. Sometimes they are big, sometimes little things about the house; but, in either case, they are like a swarm of angry mosquitoes that pester the household into turmoil and destroy restfulness and peace.

Repairs to be done. The need for repairs was listed as a common cause of annoyance. There were complaints of leaky chimneys, screens with holes which let in flies, doors which do not close well or stay latched, of holes in the roof, window shades which will not roll, windows which rattle in the wind, squeaking floors, or screen doors swinging the wrong way. These are items easily fixed, but when put off from day to day they grow increasingly bothersome.

Approximately one woman out of seven wants her house redecorated, or the floors refinished. While such refinishing and redecorating might make work easier, most of the vexation is because of the esthetic aspects. Women often think that their houses look "run down" and that they do not provide a cheerful atmosphere for family life. Some are too embarrassed to invite guests to their "down-at-the-heel" houses, and therefore limit their social contacts and activities.

Certain of the repairs that are needed so badly inside and outside might be done by members of the family at a low cost, if the income does not permit the hiring of help. The painting of floors, for instance, is not an insurmountable job for an amateur. Time, like money, is usually at a premium among these families, but here again family cooperation might be brought into play. If children, as well as adults, could do a bit, it might not only get the work

accomplished but might bring home to each member of the family a sense of responsibility for the house, besides forging a link in family comradeship. Too often families simply sit down and wail, "It can't be done," without trying to devise ways and means of how it can be done. Sometimes, also, the different members of the family do not cooperate because such ventures do not seem equally important to all concerned. They fail to realize the importance of such conditions except perhaps to but one or two of their number.

However, the fact must not be overlooked that there are families at the other extreme—"house-proud" families who spend out of proportion in the upkeep of their dwellings, who feel that they must have the latest and smartest in furnishings and equipment, who hesitate to entertain friends unless the house and its furnishings are just as good or even better than those of their friends. It must be as much of a strain to "keep up with the Joneses" in one's style of living as it is to suffer from shabby surroundings.

A place to relax. A contented mind, free from worry, is undoubtedly the first essential for repose; but, although the mind may be willing, the tired body may be balked in its efforts to find a little respite from the day's activities. Houses may, and according to testimony, often do fail to provide opportunities for rest. This is due largely to lack of space, to the need for an extra living room, or a separate bedroom to which a woman may retire for a nap or quiet during the day. In some cases, furnishings are needed—a day-bed or couch in the living room which may be used for rest in spare moments while dinner is cooking or the mother waits for the children to come to lunch.

A porch, preferably screened, is another "castle in Spain" for some of these tired housewives. On hot summer evenings it may furnish opportunity for rest which cannot be had indoors. The fact that so many women want such porches leads to the belief that builders and architects should include them in more houses. Of 476 urban women who had a word to say on porches, 17 per cent find the porch a source of pleasure, 46 per cent want one and others want their porches screened. Among 202 rural women, over half are pleased with their porches; others report that screening the porches would make them more serviceable.

Although the house may have plenty of rooms, many of these

are of no use for daytime naps during the winter because they are unheated. A good heating system would be most advantageous to many families. By making rooms usable, the heating system may contribute opportunities for relaxation, privacy, hospitality, and family companionship.

Many women reported this relationship between space and heat. "Our house has only one room we can use in winter, but there are seven rooms to keep clean," expresses a situation unsatisfactory to many housewives. Of 208 rural women who spoke of the heating system as a satisfaction or dissatisfaction, 80 per cent want "better heat," 46 per cent specifically desiring furnaces. Of the 318 urban women discussing the subject, practically two-thirds want improvements. It cannot be assumed that this represents the total number of families dissatisfied with heating arrangements. It must be remembered that the questionnaire was circulated in the summer time when furnaces are not a matter of great concern. Of course, in localities where the climate is mild during the greater part of the year, stoves may be adequate for warmth. Also, in small houses, a furnace may not be necessary. However, where the weather is cold and houses sizable, the lack of a furnace has its effect on rest and recreation.

A place to read. A book, a comfortable chair, a good light, leisure and quiet—this is Utopia for many after the day's work is done. Reading is one of the most-used paths to relaxation. Our houses, however, must provide for this pleasant activity. Since evening is the only reading time for many, the enjoyment of this pastime depends largely upon that fundamental house equipment—the lighting system.

The majority of women who discussed the adequacy of their dwellings for reading and studying are dissatisfied with the lights. Although about 94 per cent of the urban families have electricity, one-fourth of them want more floor plugs, more lights, or lights specially designed and placed for reading. It seems reasonably certain that these desired improvements could have been provided with little added expense had the lighting been carefully planned when the dwelling was built.

Of the rural women, fewer than half (45 per cent) have electricity, including those having private systems. Six per cent have gas; 6 per cent did not designate the kind of lighting; and 43 per cent depend upon the old-fashioned oil lamp, prone to a smok-

ing and flickering flame, with its small circle of radiance. Forty per cent of these country folk want electricity, principally for lighting purposes, but also for lightening work by equipment that depends on electric current. Thus, one woman put down "electricity" as the change in her house that would most contribute to "relaxation," to "recreation," to "entertaining," to "work," to "study," and to "convenience." Of the things about the house most annoying to her she listed "using sad irons—no electric appliances;" most irritating to the husband, "no electric power and therefore no water supply;" most annoying to the children, "no chance to use electric train." When it came to the question, "What things about the house make for disagreement or misunderstanding," this woman's husband wrote in:

"My wife won't keep lamps filled," and the wife added,

"My husband fusses when he has to do it himself." Her final words on the questionnaire were: "We wish we had electricity as we said before. P. S. We *will* have!"

How far an electric light bulb would throw its beams in that one little home and how far the development and cheapening of electric power will affect the work and the leisure of rural women are glimpsed from this one woman's testimony. If all might have her spirit and determination, it would quicken our progress toward better-functioning houses.

Houses for Privacy

Complete rest and relaxation are not possible in a crowded house. More space in which to *be* alone and to *do* things is the universal desire. In farmhouses, as we have seen, space is often cramped not only by a lack of rooms but by the lack of heat or electricity. In cities high rents have driven families into smaller and smaller quarters until it is almost impossible for the members to get away from each other.

Privacy is a need of every human being. And one of the important functions of the modern house is to furnish privacy which cannot be had elsewhere in our crowded, bustling life. This much-desired privacy may mean being alone, having opportunity to think and to plan, undisturbed by that sense of being with others. It may mean quiet, escape from family talk and the radio; or it may mean a place for carrying out one's pet projects without the comments and advice of the family.

Noise. Even where there is space, heat, and light, noises from another part of the house may take away the sense of privacy, the ability to pursue one's own activities, or to rest. A jazz band concert from the radio in the living room may make it impossible to concentrate on household accounts, even though the business manager of the household is in her own room. The need for control of sound is evident.

Too much living in the living room. The 2,847 families with whom this study deals usually appraised their space accommodations in terms of the living room and sleeping quarters. Whereas a large living room is apt to call forth favor, many answers prove that family discord may result if there is no other place for a group of persons of different ages and interests to spend their leisure.

"The crowded living room annoys us all."
"Our small house prevents husband from pursuing hobbies."
"Too close companionship when we are all in one room."
"More room would avoid clashes."
"There is no place for the children to play in the evening without bothering their father who wants quiet."

These comments and dozens like them are the reasons which led 85 per cent of the 1,038 women who discussed the question to express their longing for another room for family living purposes—as a "den" or a library.

A few women proffered suggestions on how to meet the dilemma of the overused living room. One, for instance, described how her dining room had been converted into a second living room by adding doors which would close it off from the rest of the house. This might call for a modification in the type of furnishings commonly used in dining rooms, but in many cases it could be accomplished with relatively little expense. Several spoke of extending their lighting and heating facilities to make other rooms available. This might mean a large expenditure of money, if possible at all, but the benefits accruing in family contentment doubtless would be worth more than many less-durable commodities bought at equal cost.

"A room of one's own." Undoubtedly, "a room of one's own" is the best solution of this problem of privacy. A separate bedroom for each member of the family not only provides quarters for undisturbed sleep, but may be a playroom for the child, a

place for relaxation for the tired homemaker, a sewing room, or a place where the young daughter may exchange schoolgirl confidences with her chum.

However, this study indicates that few persons are so fortunate as to have a bedroom alone. The 1,515 urban families whose houses are described have 1,021 bedrooms occupied by only one person. That means that for every three families there are only two persons with rooms of their own. There are 1,221 bedrooms occupied by two persons or about five persons in every three families in double rooms. There are 293 bedrooms occupied by three or more persons or about one such crowded bedroom to every five families.

In 865 farmhouses there are 519 single bedrooms or .6 such single rooms per family—much the same situation as in the urban group. There are 668 bedrooms occupied by two, or .8 such bedrooms per family. There are 310 bedrooms occupied by three or more persons, or there is about one such crowded room to every three families. It would seem, therefore, that crowded bedrooms are more prevalent in the rural than in the urban group. In some families a sleeping porch solved satisfactorily the problem of congested sleeping quarters. But as we have seen, a sleeping porch is a wished-for addition rather than a reality for many.

Houses for Family Friendship

In a home that radiates cheerfulness and friendliness no normal human being wants to draw into his shell all of the time. Hence the house must furnish space and equipment for drawing the family together as well as for the privacy of individuals.

The family gathering place. In olden days the family gathered in the evening in the kitchen—"the shrine of our civilization," as Christopher Morley calls it. Now, and we might add, to the profit of our civilization, most families have "come out of the kitchen" into the living room.

The advantages of a large living room, as a place for the family to have a good time together, are generally recognized. About two-thirds of the women referring to living rooms mentioned their ample size as a factor in promoting family companionship. Those families finding pleasure in a large living room are not limited to the higher-income groups, for living space is appreciated by families of the lower-income groups as well. Those without a large

living room consider one highly desirable. Comfortable chairs, a fireplace, bright and attractive furnishings, music, are some of the items which were listed as helping to make this room a happy place for the entire family.

By music is generally meant the radio. This instrument is becoming more and more a part of our household equipment and, according to the evidence, ranks high among the things which the members of the family enjoy together. Almost two-thirds of the families made reference to the radio, which seems to have equal popularity in rural and urban circles. Of a group of 572 rural families which discussed the radio, 83 per cent find it a source of satisfaction for the family and in entertaining guests. The other 17 per cent want radios, or better radios than they have. Of a group of 1,073 urban families, 92 per cent take delight in the radio. The other 8 per cent want radios or better radios.

Many of these same families, however, referred to the radio as producing family discord in almost the same breath as they described its value in stimulating family content. This is largely because dwellings are not built for the radio age any more than cities are planned for the motor age. "We want to play the radio at night, but it keeps our small children awake." "The radio disturbs the children when they want to study." "The children play the radio when my husband wants to read." These are common complaints.

As the use of radios for education and recreation increases, the need for the den, library, or convertible dining room as a second living center is accentuated. The widely prevalent type of living room opening into the hall by means of a broad archway without doors, evidently will need to be replaced by one which can be closed off so that sound will not rise to the second floor to disturb the members of the family trying to sleep or rest. Perhaps there should be more attention given to various means of absorbing sound in rooms containing radios.

Meeting at mealtime. Meals are an activity in which the entire family share; but too often they must be eaten in a cluttered kitchen or snatched in haste by busy men and hurrying school children. Fewer women referred to their dining rooms than to their living rooms as promoting family companionship. If one meal, at least, could be served at leisure and in tidy surroundings,

it would be a continuous and potent means of bringing the family closer together. In planning houses, especially on the farm, a "dinette" or dining alcove might well be given more consideration.

The values of both living room and dining room in the home are constantly changing as children grow up. For instance, a dining room which is heated, lighted, and can be shut off, offers a refuge to the schoolgirl who cannot study in the living room where her little brothers and sisters are playing. When the girl gets older, again the dining room, by making small changes in furnishings, may be the place where she can entertain her guests. The living room, too, may register higher in family estimation when children are grown and all are interested in reading or radio than when they are young and want to play tag while the father wants quiet.

Using the out-of-doors. If the house falls short of its function of giving the members of the family a chance to enjoy one another's society, perhaps the yard may compensate. Families with a pleasant yard intimate that such an asset adds greatly to the pride and pleasure they take in their homes, as well as to the convenience of caring for children and doing certain household tasks.

Table 3. Attitude of families in rural and urban centers toward home surroundings and home grounds

Families discussing this feature	Population groups				
	Rural	Small towns (under 2,500)	2,500 to 10,000	10,000 to 100,000	100,000 and over
Per cent of all families	23	29	37	40	43
Per cent satisfied	81	85	80	78	74
Per cent dissatisfied	19	15	20	22	26

Occasionally, on the other hand, the yard is a special eyesore. From urban sections come such complaints as "neighbors too close," "our lot is too narrow—it leaves no space between houses," "having no trees around is depressing." Among the town dwellers, dissatisfaction with the yard seemed to grow with the size of town. Perhaps this is due to the smaller yards in

the larger cities where land values are high; perhaps, too, if the locality is not in a residential zone, a neighborhood may become undesirable in a large town more quickly than in a small one. The rural families find fault not with space but with the boundary of space. "Hogs in yard" or "chickens in yard" may create a desire for a fence or wall.

While a few families complain of small lots and lawns torn up by live stock, more than three-quarters of both the urban and rural women who mentioned surroundings listed a "nice yard" as a means of recreation for members of the family. Lawns and gardens are sometimes spoken of specifically, as well as proximity to picnic grounds, the beach or woods. This suggests that in the country particularly much more might be done with arbors, summerhouses, or even a pleasant bit of lawn space.

The importance of the function of the house in strengthening family ties and making possible happy camaraderie within and around its doors is summed up in the words of the woman who wrote: "Too little recreation and amusement at home drives members of the family to find it outside."

The House and Hospitality

Down the path, out of the house, along with some of the work of our grandmothers, has gone most of the play in which young and old formerly took part. With this exodus has gone, too frequently, the feeling of home as the center of sociability and good fellowship. Although the course of civilization has affected city dwellers most acutely, it has touched country folk, too. The old, homemade merrymaking is not so free or frequent in the present struggle to make a living.

If the house is to function as it should in encouraging friendships, in broadening the social horizon of the family, and in making its members feel themselves a part of the community, there must be an effort to bring back some of its old-fashioned hospitality.

The house may aid by its provisions for the entertainment of guests in many of the same ways in which it contributes to family sociability. Space, rooms for privacy, attractive furnishings, adequate heating and lighting, the radio—are all helps to hospitality.

"We cannot have callers in the evening," said one woman, "because they disturb the children when they want to study." Her living room is of the type which cannot be closed off from the re-

mainder of the house. Such a living room opening into the hall is better adapted for large formal parties than are some other living-room arrangements. Now, when informal entertaining is practiced far more, control of noise may be more important than spaciousness. While there are always some "friends of the family" whose coming is welcomed by both parents and children, the house should permit the entertainment of guests by certain members without annoying others. A living room which can be shut off is more prevalent in the older type rural house than in the urban houses. There is small wonder that so many women want "another room" so that they can "have company."

The "company" complex. However, judging from returns of some of the questionnaires, much can be done in educating women to a better understanding of the true essentials of hospitality. Many have an exaggerated idea of the importance of "company," particularly in regard to equipment and furnishings. They wrote that they cannot entertain because their houses are not "nice enough," they need new curtains, new dishes, more chairs, or they feel that guests must not see the house until it is repapered and repainted.

Perhaps "not enough chairs" is a valid excuse for not asking friends in; but the others seem less convincing. To be sure, as one woman expressed it: "If a family is ashamed of its living quarters it may have a feeling of inferiority in its social group." However, in calling attention to the shortcomings of houses we must beware of encouraging any false shame among homemakers. Instead, one should attempt to stir in them a pride in what they have and an ambition to make the best out of their possessions.

The House Where Children Dwell

If it is important that the house fulfil certain functions for adults, its relation to children growing up within its walls is fundamental. For the house is the environment in which the child spends the greater part of his formative years.

The probable effect of unsatisfactory or substandard environment on the health of children has been reported in the infant mortality studies of the United States Children's Bureau. The statistics gathered by the National Tuberculosis Association show an increase in tuberculosis in certain congested sections. The ef-

fects of bad housing on conduct have been studied by Dr. Clifford Shaw of Chicago, showing that delinquency areas are areas in which housing is at a low state of dilapidation.[7]

While the effects of good housing on a child's mental and emotional life cannot be measured in statistics, we may expect it to exert a powerful influence on mental stability, emotional maturity, and the whole development of personality.

Aim of the study as regards children.[8] In the study of these families an effort has been made to give special attention to the child in the home and to collect data to show whether or not he is finding his particular house adequate:

1. As a health center. (This has not been considered in detail and only so far as it is connected with a child's emotional reactions, since it lies within the province of other committees.)
2. As a play center.
3. As a work center for juvenile "work-play" efforts and for school activities.
4. As a social center for companionship.
   a. With family.
   b. With friends.

The house in its relation to health in terms of satisfaction. Dissatisfaction was frequently expressed with the sleeping facilities for children. Almost one-third of the rural families having children have one or more bedrooms occupied by three or more persons. This overcrowding is not quite as prevalent in urban families, as only 16 per cent have bedrooms used by three or more members. Although the information does not indicate who the shareholders of these rooms are, it may be assumed that the majority are infants or young children. Such annoyances as different times of retiring, the difficulty in getting to sleep with people about, are not only physically but emotionally tiring. The relation between health and crowded sleeping quarters has been demonstrated, but no adequate study has yet been made to show the relation between sleeping arrangements and behavior problems.

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[7] See *Housing and the community; home repair and remodeling.* Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, vol. VIII.
Shaw, C. R., *et al. Delinquency areas.* Chicago. University of Chicago Press. 1929.

[8] In the preliminary study, only 1,325 records of families with children were studied.

Bedrooms open onto the hall more often in the urban houses than in the rural. Whereas a bedroom off the parents' room might be quite desirable for a young child, it might be less so for an older child. A bedroom off a living room or other room where the "grown-ups" are doing exciting things may be a very bad arrangement for children who naturally want to participate or at least look on. On the other hand, "a bedroom on the first floor which saves many steps" is listed as a great help by a mother of a very young baby.

In spite of the fact that urban families have fewer bedrooms occupied by three persons and more bedrooms opening off halls, poor sleeping quarters were mentioned more often as a source of annoyance for the urban child than for the rural. Perhaps this is because the bedrooms of the urban houses are smaller. The children of rural families, however, suffer more often from "cold" bedrooms. Although a cold bedroom might not be objectionable as a sleeping place, the use of the room for other activities is limited. If a child is to learn to dress himself, he must have a warm place where he can take time for this complicated and bewildering task.

Lack of bathrooms as well as of bedrooms is a cause of vexation in homes with children. Sixty-five per cent of the rural houses have outdoor toilets and no bathrooms. The fact that children do not want to go out into the cold may lead not only to irregular habits but to constant nagging by the mother and, consequently, even more opposition to care on the part of the child.

The importance of play centers. Modern psychology has emphasized the significance of play in child life. It is more than a physical exercise; it is the expression of his ego. If his play activity is thwarted, it may stunt his talents as a worker as well as subvert his energy into undesirable channels. Thus, there is a vital necessity for dwellings which provide for space for the child's free play.

Outdoor play space. Outdoor play space which is safe, adequate and easily watched over by the mother is a great satisfaction to those mothers who have such surroundings for their children. "An ideal place where it is enclosed, sunny, shady and roomy, with sand and animal pets," a "quiet street and garden," "convenient windows to see playground" are some of the things

listed as providing the greatest aid in the care and supervision of children.

One would expect the farm home with its grounds to provide more opportunity for play than does the city home and grounds. Since, however, most of the 836 urban families with children in this study live in small cities or towns, the extent to which play is circumscribed by housing is not marked.

As to *kinds* of play, those types requiring large spaces such as hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, skiing, are naturally much more prevalent among the farm than among the urban children. Twenty-three per cent of the farm families and only 8 per cent of the urban enjoy these types of recreation. Music, reading, clubs, and the less-active forms of recreation are more popular in the city than in the country, particularly in cities over 100,000 where 50 per cent of the mothers reported such activities for their children. Play with pets was mentioned twice as frequently in the country as in cities. The urban children are frequently annoyed at having no place for pets.

Table 4. Methods used by children of urban and rural families to entertain themselves and friends

Type of recreation	Percentage of total number of families reporting*			
	Rural	Urban	Communities	
			Under 2,500 population	100,000 population and over
Sports and games requiring large space	23	8	9	7
Sports and games possible on average town lot	51	56	57	56
Construction	16	19	14	20
Vehicular toys	13	19	19	18
Other toys	40	45	50	40
Dramatic play	14	17	17	15
Apparatus, etc.	12	15	15	17
Reading, music, clubs and special interests	33	41	37	50
Pets	11	5	5	2
Miscellaneous	14	14	12	16

* Percentages obviously do not total 100, as several different types of recreation often were reported by a single family.

The type of play seems to be determined somewhat by income. A special study of families in the urban group for whom income data were available showed that the children in families with incomes of $6,000 or more annually, enjoy sports requiring wide space, such as riding, twice as frequently as do those in families of incomes under $4,000, but still less often than children of rural families. Likewise, play with pets becomes more usual as incomes grow larger, although it is never high in this urban group. Recreation through music, clubs, and special hobbies changes little with income; the location or size of town seems to be the greater factor in this case.

Sports and games requiring a lawn or vacant lot increase with income, probably because these often require equipment of some kind, as, for instance, croquet, baseball, football, skating, stilts, and tether ball. Use of construction tools or toys and play with vehicular toys such as velocipedes, wagons, bicycles, also increase with income. But play with "other toys" is more frequent in the lower-income groups. Play with apparatus and yard equipment such as bars, slides and swings increases regularly with incomes. On the other hand, the richer children are apparently less interested in dramatic play such as dressing up, playing house or school, and other "make-believe" play activities. Is this because mothers in the higher-income groups failed to report this kind of play, or is it because children with more ready-made toys at their command draw less on their imaginations? Here is an interesting question for kindergarten teachers and child psychologists.

If the children of the study had lived in congested city areas, it is certain that their dwellings would have functioned far less adequately than they did in providing enough outdoor play space. A group on "Special Problems of City Living," [9] in reporting to the committee, comments:

"Whatever the compensations of city dwelling, it must be recognized that the price is high. It is evident that such satisfaction is purchased in terms of less space, less privacy, few play advantages for the children, and a thousand hidden economies which produce strain on the family's nerves and purse."

Indoor play space. Often families move to the suburbs to get out-of-door play space for their children without a thought as to

[9] See p. 56-94.

whether or not their houses will offer any opportunity for indoor play in rainy weather. A "good porch—screened," "an enclosed back porch," "space to play where mother is working," "the children have plenty of space to play—each his own room" are statements all too seldom found on the records of this study.

The survey revealed some rather interesting differences between rural and urban houses with regard to this question of where children play on rainy days. Bedrooms are used very much more frequently by the urban children. The same is true of attics, cellars and porches. The urban children play in the kitchen on rainy days far less often than do the rural children, partly because rural kitchens are larger, and partly because they are many times the one heated room in a farmhouse.

Table 5. Where children play on rainy days

Rooms used	Percentage of total number of families reporting*	
	Rural	Urban
Entire house	23	32
Living room	35	30
Bedroom	16	29
Porch	7	15
Playroom, workshop	12	17
Attic, cellar, storeroom, barn	15	23
Kitchen	17	9

* Of the families reporting, some have reported more than one place.

Rainy-day play space, like types of play, seems to vary with incomes. The study made of the urban group indicates that the use of the "whole house" as play space diminishes with income. Play in the dining and living rooms is markedly limited. The kitchen floor as a playground on rainy days decreases from 15 per cent in the group with incomes under $2,000 to 4 per cent in the group with incomes of $6,000 or more. On the other hand, play in bedrooms increases with income probably because children in the higher-income levels have their own bedrooms or spare bedrooms which are available. Special rooms set apart as "playrooms" are found most often in the group with incomes of $6,000 or more. The use of attics and cellars also increases with income,

undoubtedly because basements and attics are more apt to be finished in wealthier homes.

While from the child's point of view the family living room or kitchen may be a very nice place to play, the parents may feel quite differently about it, as shown by the decrease in the use of those rooms when families can afford to make another arrangement. Leisure-time activities of adults may be seriously hampered by the noise of children's games, as well as by the amount of space they require.

The child's work center. The little child likes to think of himself as "working" with hammer, paste or scissors. Such constructive activities should be promoted not only through encouragement but also by setting aside some place where the child may carry on his pursuits continuously.

A place for such work. The kitchen and playroom or shop figure more largely in the rural group, while cellars, attics and bedrooms are outstanding in the urban group. That the urban children are more often handicapped by lack of a place for both play and work is suggested by the fact that 23 per cent of the mothers listed the lack of playroom or workshop among the children's annoyances, while only 12 per cent of the rural mothers did so. A workshop which children may use is probably more often a part of a farm than it is a feature of a city house, although frequently very satisfactory ones are, or can be, arranged in the basement. But since workshops are classed with playrooms, it is doubtful that the rural child has any more often than the urban child a place where continuous "play-work" activities can be undertaken, such as a project in building blocks which can be continued from day to day without having to tear it down and put it away at night.

Study and reading. As children grow up their work becomes more serious, and the need for the house to function as a work center becomes more acute. Supervision and motherly encouragement are needed still, but the impelling need is privacy—a quiet place to study, to read, to concentrate on some special individual interest. The crowding which lack of space demands, reacts unfavorably upon the whole family, but perhaps the sensitive adolescents suffer most.

That the majority of the houses with which this report deals are bankrupt in their function of providing privacy, is once more

emphasized in considering the young people. Instead of there being a quiet retreat where the boy or girl can study undisturbed, the living room serves most frequently as the study room in both country and city. A living room in itself may be conducive to reading and study, but it is a very poor place if a grown-up sister wants to play the radio, and if it is the only comfortable room in the house where the father and mother may converse. Concentration may be gained by the children, but at what a price for all.

Table 6. Places where children study as affected by the heating of houses

Rooms used	Percentages of total number of families using specified types of heating			
	Rural		Urban	
	Stoves	Central heating	Stoves	Central heating
Living room	62	69	73	70
Dining room	29	26	33	23
Kitchen	14	9	9	4
Bedroom	13	23	25	43
Den, library, sewing room	3	16	7	14
Porch or sun parlor	1	4	2	8
Playroom or workshop	2	0	1	3

Central heating seems to increase the use of bedrooms for study, and in rural houses to decrease the use of the kitchen. In urban families also, the use of the kitchen decreases, but the decrease in the use of dining room is the most marked.

The part played by heat and light in opening up room space is indicated by the fact that bedrooms are used for study much more often by urban than by farm children (urban, 34 per cent; rural, 18 per cent) while 12 per cent of the rural children study in the kitchen as compared with 7 per cent of the urban children. Further evidence of the importance of heating is found in the fact that in the rural houses heated by stoves, the use of the kitchen for studying is slightly greater than that of bedrooms, but when the houses are heated by furnaces the use of the kitchen

decreases and the use of bedrooms increases. This condition is more marked in urban families. The fact that the stove-heated houses are found mainly in the low-income groups with cramped dwellings may account for some of the differences noted. The increase in the use of dens and libraries for study when houses have central heating is probably related to incomes as much as to heating arrangement.

A place to put things. Privacy implies not only a retreat for the individual, but some place to keep private possessions.

Children, like grown-ups, in the families studied suffer from the lack of closets and cupboards. Nearly 60 per cent of the answers from both rural and urban districts on "what things about the house are annoying to children" contain some such phrase as "no place for clothes and things."

Table 7. Inconveniences and lack of features

Type of annoyance	Percentage of total number of families*	
	Rural	Urban
No privacy	17	20
No place for clothes and possessions	59	56
No place for pets	1	6
Inconvenient or no bath	9	4
Sleeping quarters inadequate	4	9
No playroom or workshop	12	23

* Some families report more than one type.

Many complained that there is no place for large toys used out-of-doors, as tricycles and scooters. A small child cannot take big toys into the basement, and yet there is no place in the house where they can be stored. If placed on a porch, there is the risk of loss through theft.

One complaisant mother stated that her child needs no place to keep his toys, since they have a good attic. But, unless her attic is far more accessible than in most cases, it is scarcely a satisfactory place to put toys in everyday use. "The child has no room for anything that he wants again," expresses the situation in many homes.

This lack of storage space often leads to disagreements among the children. "The older one has no place where he can keep his toys where the little one won't take them and break them," is a typical summary of endless strife among the younger members of a household.

Furthermore, wraps thrown over chairs, papers littering the table or dropped on the buffet, toys on the floor, tend to detract from the restful atmosphere of a house. "I can't keep things straight. We all nag at each other and are easily irritated," is the way one mother pictures the condition.

Some women, as a solution, want more downstairs closets for coats and hats. Perhaps those who already have such closets need to be reminded that hooks placed low within a child's reach can be a first aid to training children in habits of neatness. Also, bookshelves accessible to children will help them to put up their own things as well as encourage them to take out books to read. Drawers or closed cupboard space for tablets, books, papers and other school equipment seem highly desirable to many mothers. A battered reader does not belong on the bookshelves in the living room. Yet if there is no definite place for it, there may be a wild search and tears when it is time to start for school in the morning. Irritation over lost papers, problems, essays and reference notes is common, but places suitable for keeping such school work are uncommon.

Also play-boxes, with locks if possible, are needed for those priceless collections of stones, stamps, eggs, and whatnot so dear to children's hearts. Only a quarter of the children have any designated place to store such valuables.

The child and his family. It is in the home that the child, even more than the adult, must find continuity of security, affections, intimacies and loyalties to make possible his richest growth. Family life supplies certain very precious values that cannot be delegated to any outside agencies. Toward their fulfilment we expect the mechanism of the house to contribute; instead, we often find it thwarting and obstructing the enduring purpose of the home.

Thus, if the house does not provide opportunities for the family to live happily together, boys and girls will find substitutes for family love. They will go outside the family circle for amusement

if they cannot make merry (and this often means noise) at home. They will seek applause elsewhere, if the family greets their efforts to sing, dance or chatter entertainingly with the words, "Don't bother us. Can't you find some other place in the house to do that?" Many times the only other place is on the street or in a public recreation center.

Again, a breach between parents and children may be caused by housing conditions, by the denial of using certain rooms or the distaste for decorations or furnishings. Children sometimes say they are ashamed of their houses. The antagonism toward the home which results may lay the foundation for mistrust in all family enterprises.

Although lack of money may make it impossible for parents to provide children with space designed for their own particular activities, much can be done toward making the child happy through wise selection of furniture and furnishings. Homes are common in which more heed is given to choosing chairs and rugs which will impress the occasional guest than to making the house livable for the family. Such homemakers could learn much from the mother who wrote: "The best feature of our house is the simplicity and sturdiness of our furnishings. They are not easily marred or spoiled."

Children often will become interested in their homes if they are allowed to help to select and arrange furniture. Among the children studied, an equally small proportion, less than half, of the urban and of the rural group were reported as having cooperated in choosing equipment and furnishings. Selections for their own rooms are made more frequently by urban children, while the rural children are more apt to make selections for the living room.

Another method of encouraging children to feel that the house belongs to them, and that they play an important part in it, is to seek their assistance in making repairs and changes about the house. About 43 per cent of both the rural and urban children shared in this repair work. The rearranging of the child's own room is the most usual achievement in both groups. The rural children, however, help with general construction and repairs such as painting and putting up shelves, to a slightly greater extent than do the urban children (31 and 20 per cent respectively, of those participating). The child's part in both selections and repairs seems to in-

crease with incomes up to $6,000, but to decrease somewhat thereafter. The reason for this may be that outside labor is called in more often where families can pay the price. It is not, however, the saving in money but the aroused interest in the home and its affairs that makes this child cooperation so valuable.

The child and his friends. The welcome and entertainment that the house offers a child's friends are perhaps the chief reasons for his attachment or hostility to his home.

Apparently the mothers of our families are willing to put up with any bother to themselves involved in permitting little ones to have friends come to play. In so far as our data go, play space, limited or extended, seems to make no difference with this younger group in accepting invitations to "come on over and play." More than three-quarters of the children under six years and also from six to twelve years in urban sections have frequent company. In rural places, distances are sometimes far for tiny legs, but, nevertheless, over half the children have playmates several times a week.

Table 8. Companionship among children of specified age groups in rural and urban homes

	Rural	Urban
	Per cent	*Per cent*
Children under 6 years		
Frequent company	51	79
Seldom having company	49	21
Children 6 to 12 years		
Frequent company	59	85
Seldom having company	41	15
Children 13 to 18		
Frequent company	75	68
Seldom having company	25	32

It is when children grow older that the home fails to attract young people. This is particularly true in cities where the house must hold charm, indeed, to compete successfully with the theater, the movies, the automobile, the restaurant with dancing, and too often the road-house or speak-easy. Only 68 per cent of the city children between thirteen and eighteen years have frequent com-

pany, while about a third (32 per cent) seldom entertain. But, in the country, three-quarters of these older boys and girls still entertain frequently in their homes.

Of the rural and urban families with older daughters, a very large proportion (69 and 61 per cent respectively) gave no answer to the question, "What arrangements do you make for your daughter's entertainment of men?" In the urban group provision appears to vary with income. Where the income is under $2,000, about two-fifths of the families make some provision. Among those with incomes from $2,000 to $4,000 about one-half make some provision, while two-thirds of the families with incomes over $4,000 set aside some place where their daughters can receive visitors.

It would seem from the answers, that some of the parents need education as to the place of such hospitality in the lives of their sons and daughters. One mother, after stating that there is no place which can be turned over to the daughter of twenty for entertaining her friends, added, "If the parents are happy and satisfied with the house and equipment, the children naturally will be happy."

The usual reply, however, when reply was made, was that the daughter "can use the living room if she wants." This means, in many houses, that the rest of the family is bustled out of the room and waits glumly in the kitchen for the young man to depart or else retires to bed long before their bedtime. Some daughters do not like to impose on family good nature; others are embarrassed at having to ask for the privilege of the room.

Wherever an extra room, a den, library, or even the dining room is at the daughter's disposal, it is found to be a remarkable aid in preventing family friction, as well as in bringing the home back into popularity as a social center.

Unfortunately, many families feel helpless about this situation. Some can do no more than cheerfully make the best of what they have. But others are spending money for this and for that demanded by their children, when they might more profitably spend the same amount on such house reconditioning as would promote family harmony. Take, for instance, that automobile which so many generous fathers present to elder sons or daughters. The gift gratifies the child, it is exactly what he or she wants; but would

not an equal investment in a room fitted with radio, pool-table and other games, perhaps a good dance floor, have a greater opportunity to turn thoughts and steps homeward than would a car that turns away on to the highroad?

Summary and Conclusions

A review of the comments of these families concerning their houses seems to indicate the need for focusing attention upon certain features of the house which often have been taken for granted, and which raise questions which can be solved only by the cooperation of many interested groups. These following major conclusions and problems stand out from the mass of testimony:

There is need to re-ask the question: "What are houses for?" and to seek the answer in the light of our knowledge of the place of families in our social structure, and of the needs of family members as human beings. As psychology and sociology are concerned with families and individuals, the committee has broadened its conception of what constitutes "good" family life. But is this newer knowledge focused upon our criteria for family dwellings? Are houses being consciously chosen upon the basis of their probable effect upon the family and its members?

The questionnaires indicate that the house is fulfilling its functions of providing for group life of the family more adequately than it fulfils many others. Whether or not the members gather in the living room, dining room or kitchen, there is some place where they may find the companionship which meets their fundamental affectional needs.

The house, however, which adequately serves the family today must be more than a center for group living; it must furnish each individual, within the group, opportunity to develop and express his own interests. Apparently, many houses are failing in this respect. Again and again, the families questioned mentioned the irritation caused by too much of "being together." Family relationships are less likely to develop wholesomely if they are forced by cramped space than if they are a matter of choice. With today's increased leisure, there is time for members of families not only to enjoy one another's company but also to pursue their own interests apart from the group. Since there is more knowledge than ever before of what normal interests are and the activities for persons of different ages, houses should be planned and

selected which provide for the carrying on of these different activities without strain and conflict. Since noise seems to be a necessary accompaniment to many of the pursuits of children and a great deterrent to many of those of adults, the house should provide space where one age group may be undisturbed by the other.

In many instances this extra "space" could be secured without adding more square feet of floor. Adequate heat and better lights would make more rooms available in some houses. Occasionally space may be obtained by changes in arrangement, as adding doors which permit one room to be closed off from another. Furnishings may give space by increasing the potential uses of a room. Thus, the dining room may be so furnished that it becomes a second living room, or the bedroom may become a study, workshop, or playroom during the day. With land and construction costs as they are, and with this need for space, cannot houses and furnishings be so planned that each room may yield maximum satisfactions? What can architects, builders and interior decorators do toward helping to make our houses more flexible?

Is the one large living room, so generally assumed to be desirable, actually as good a use of space for the family with young children as two smaller rooms would be? The two rooms might decrease irritation, although there might be a sacrifice of beauty and a lessened sense of spaciousness. How are these two needs—for privacy and for beauty—to be harmonized?

The sound of the radio may be more destructive to peace and privacy than the sound of human voices. If every house is to have a radio, must it also have a specially constructed radio room? Should not the knowledge of control of sound, so successfully applied in public buildings, be given wider application to family dwellings?

Among the features of the house which cause family discord none was mentioned more often than lack of place to put things. Lack of closets, cupboards, and other storage space leads to disorder—the enemy of the restful atmosphere which the house should promote. Peace and harmony among children may be shattered when possessions cannot be kept separated. How are these storage places to be added to the old house without too great an expenditure of time and money? Are all members of the family sufficiently skilled in analyzing situations to realize the importance of making such improvements?

Much the same situation exists in regard to repairs. Do the husband and children know how much unhappiness and worry the leaky roof or the screen which needs mending may cause the homemaker?

Much of the failure of houses to provide facilities for hospitality and social contacts is due again to lack of space for privacy, for separation of individuals from the group. At the same time this study shows a need for further education of families in regard to the use of the house for entertaining, such as:

The education of parents as to the place of social life and opportunities for entertaining in the lives of normal adolescent boys and girls, and young men and women.

The education of families as to the true meaning of hospitality, to a realization that entertaining friends should not wait upon new dishes or wallpaper.

Who is to do this teaching?

Formerly, families were held together by economic bonds, by working side by side for a common stake in property. Now, it often happens that they all work in different industries for money incomes, without the same united interest. This change is considered an important factor in the weakening of family life. Has there been a general appreciation of the extent to which the house could serve as a substitute for the economic bonds of old—drawing the members of the family together through their common interest in its improvement and beautification? Many questionnaires gave no evidence of real family participation and democracy in either the upkeep or use of the house. There seemed to be little effort to make the child feel that the house is partly his—to plan for, work for, and use. How are parents to be brought to see this potential use of the house as a means of strengthening family ties?

The relationship between the failure of houses to perform their functions and their status as owned or rented has not been traced in detail in this study. However, since about four-fifths of the rural houses and nearly seven-tenths of the urban are owned it would seem that perfection of functions does not necessarily follow ownership. Indeed, a landlord may keep a house in better repair than will the owner who can defer such expenditures without risking loss of income. The family which rents is mobile; if a house is unsatisfactory it may choose to move. The landlord thus faces

the alternative of spending for improvements or losing money through vacancy of his property. Perhaps this indicates the need for a searching review of our generally accepted dogma of the desirability of family ownership of dwellings.

The potential advantages of possession in developing family life are manifest. The family which owns may add beauty to its house year by year, making it an expression of creative ability and esthetic desires. This working together for "our house" may serve to strengthen family camaraderie, giving parents and children a common interest and objective. The child whose parents own such a house will have memories to keep which he never could have if his family moved each September.

But apparently we must face the other side of the picture—the plight of the family which is tied to a house too small for its needs; the family whose house has been bought at such a financial sacrifice that it cannot make repairs or improvements; the family unable to sell a house owned in a neighborhood which has changed for the worse.

We must realize, too, that values are subjective. The possession of a house cannot mean the same thing to all men. While such ownership may bring to some families security, a sense of stability, and other intangible satisfactions, to others it may bring only a sense of burden. The satisfactions which one man finds in his house another may find in other ways, at less cost.

Apparently families contemplating home ownership as an alternative to renting should weigh more carefully the relative advantages and disadvantages of each procedure. They should consider the possibilities of each in helping the family to reach the goals which it has set for itself, and what each may yield in terms of family satisfactions, affections and ambitions. They should also take stock of the changing needs of their growing families in making their decisions.

In conclusion it would seem that there is need for a more general recognition of these fundamental facts concerning the house and its relation to family life.

The house exists as a place for holding the family together. If the family is our most important social unit, the house should be a fit place in which it may live. It should do its part in contributing to the safety, health, security, normal relationships, and social and individual growth of family members.

The very nature of the house, its space arrangements and environment, may help to develop in children judgment, taste, courtesy, comradeship, fairness, and lasting memories. It is an important part of the whole situation of which the child is a part, and should be made to contribute to his education and cultural growth.

A comprehensive housing program should include education in order that families may realize what features of the house are significant for family well-being, and also what money can buy in effective housing. Such a program would tend to strip the house of nonessentials, worthless ornamentation, purposeless furnishings, wasteful space, poor equipment.

Application of principles of art to the planning, decoration, and furnishing of houses will contribute much to the fine art of living. Again, education is needed to develop a more widespread appreciation of beauty among the masses. Only then will families seek and demand houses and furnishings truly artistic. Education alone will not safeguard us against the ugly and the bizarre in housing; the cooperation of architects, builders, manufacturers, and dealers is necessary in making simple and attractive houses and furnishings at prices within reach of the low-income groups.

Sound housing should be an ambition and an objective of a nation. It is essential for maintaining a high standard of human efficiency.

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This limited study of the way in which housing is related to the lives of 2,847 families is by no means conclusive; but it indicates some of the contributions which the house may make, and some of the ways in which it often falls short of fulfilling its ideal functions. It will stimulate, the committee believes, further researches in this fruitful field.

If the committee has overstressed the material aspects of the home, it is not that it undervalues the talent and the will that are the heart of homemaking. The questionnaires have revealed family after family who are making a heroic and a successful effort to build a home from the most shaky timber.

Here is a family of four cramped into two rooms of a farmhouse—a stove, oil lamp, no bathroom, the most primitive of conveniences. The house is "hot in summer, cold in winter." Yet

the mother writes: "I help the children with their school work around the kitchen table. . . . The little fellow keeps his things in a play-box. . . . They ride the pony and play games. . . . For entertainment we have the radio, the church, the community club. . . . If I had two more rooms built on I could do very nicely. . . . The farm life is a free life, my boys love it."

From these scattered, matter-of-fact fragments, we obtain somehow a picture of a united home, filled with love and care and ambition. It is one of the hundreds of achievements in homemaking that exist in spite of difficulties and hardships.

CHAPTER II

SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH[1]

The Problem

The outstanding problem in the relation of modern society to life within the home is, perhaps, the study of the extent and manner in which human activities, both biological and psychological, still are preserved and expressed in family life, the degree to which they are leaving the home, and the relative adequacy of agencies outside the home for giving them expression. Most of the researches so far undertaken in this field center upon or at least have important bearing upon this question. If some measure of these home activities and interests can be secured and related statistically to the various types of houses and home locations, it will add much to our understanding of what modern housing conditions are doing to human life and to our ability to plan intelligently for the homes of the future.

General Methods of Research

At the outset it will be well to review some general principles of methodology which have grown out of the preliminary researches and discussions of the committee, and which may be useful as a guide to future research.

Most favorable scope of research problems in this field. Since little had been done to relate housing problems to family activities or needs, many of the beginning researches attempted to grasp the housing situation as a whole, and to relate to this some measurement of the general success of familial adjustments. To give any satisfactory statistical treatment to such investigations is very difficult. To attempt to construct definite indices on the basis of these panoramic views is generally futile because of the difficulty of equalizing or controlling the complex variables, such as economic status, location, size of house, type of dwelling, and the interplay of the varying personalities in specific situations. Even in instances where fairly uniform conditions of

[1] This report was prepared for the committee by a group composed of the following members: Lawrence K. Frank, Robert S. Lynd, Benjamin C. Gruenberg, Thelma Beatty, *Secretary*, Floyd H. Allport, *Chairman*.

groups of homes for comparison have been isolated, the results have not been successful. The correlation, for example, of maladjustments with specific factors selected under these conditions has been found to be small, the basic reasons for the maladjustment lying probably in a unique complex of factors rather than any single factor. Each type of family adjustment, in other words, seems to be a law unto itself.

The better method seems to be to take smaller problems, in which we may select some single factor such as space or number of rooms, and correlate this, not with general family success or failure but with more specific activities with which it can be associated. For example, if handwork in construction seems to be an important human activity, we can determine the degree to which this is carried on in homes where there are workshops as compared with those where there are not, or in brick houses as compared with frame houses. In this way it will be possible to secure gradual familiarity with a complex social situation which at present cannot be reduced to a single classification, or be made to yield any reliable generalizations as to specific types or conditions of housing.

Techniques for the collection of data. A realization of the value and also of the limitations of particular methods of securing data is necessary to successful research in this field. For example, certain attitudes of family members toward an activity may be discerned by informal questioning; but such questions seldom reveal all that motivates the individuals' behavior in relation to features of their housing. An interview cannot, by its very nature, reveal those effects of housing on family life concerning which the family members themselves are in ignorance through lack of observation or reflection. The following processes in collecting data may be distinguished:

1. The method most commonly used in this, as in many other fields, is that of the topical and scale questionnaire. Questionnaires are often sent out in broadcast manner to be mailed back to the investigator. There are several considerations which militate against the success of this method. There is seldom a question for investigation which is sufficiently well known among people in general to insure an interest to return the questionnaires in quantity. Estimates of returns on various questionnaires sent out by organizations run from one-tenth of one per cent to six per cent. Occasionally a small study among an intensely interested group of persons will net a twenty per cent return. Even when the answers to questionnaires are

secured by a personal call, they are in part likely to be filled out by investigators who cooperated in the study and in part by a member of the family interviewed, thus introducing an uneven factor of personal equation. Some are filled out as an outlet for humor. Since uniformity in filling in the questionnaires is necessary if the answers are to be compared, these considerations are important even in a large-scale solicitation of data.

2. The use of the questionnaire as a form or guide by an investigator who takes down the material uniformly from the interview with the family is a more careful method, yielding on the whole a better return. If this method can be followed without haste, without the intrusion of the personal opinion or standards of the investigator, and without undue prodding of the person questioned, it is probably the best manner of beginning an investigation of the sort under discussion.

3. The most satisfactory technique for collecting data on activities in family life, though most expensive in time, money, and energy, is that of actual observation of the members of the family over an extended period of time. Such observations may be conducted either by continuous living with the family, or by extended or repeated visits.

The first difficulty met by an investigator who wishes to observe directly is that of securing an entree to homes where this can be done. One may try to gain an introduction to homes through organized social, civic, educational, or welfare agencies. Organizations are often slow in cooperating in any study unrelated to their immediate purposes for fear the investigator may arouse attitudes unfavorable to their own contacts with the home. And without the aid of a sponsoring organization one does not often find an investigator sufficiently tactful and resourceful to establish the necessary rapport so that the families shall feel no restraint in his presence.

The methods used to secure an entree to homes are highly numerous and vary with the individual case. To discover and apply them is a good test of the ingenuity of the investigator. For the observation technique, it is necessary to make a contact with the home that will permit the continuance of the observation until the information needed is secured.

The investigation which is being carried on at Syracuse[2] illustrates a number of possibilities in the various methods which have been employed. A canvass of various welfare and service bureaus showed that no one agency could be depended upon for all the contacts needed. As many families as the agency used could provide, however, were reached in this investigation. The field worker of the associated charities has taken the investigator with her to several homes where the investigator explained that study of housing was being made and that the help of the family was needed. After an informal interview the investigator asked permission to return when the children were at home and to observe their activities in and out of the house. Some of the time spent in the home after school hours was used in talking to the children and some of it in going about watching them at their work or play. In one instance the investigator is making frequent visits to give

[2] See p. 50-51 for information on the Syracuse project.

a mother help with her Americanization lessons. As a volunteer worker from a private relief agency she is received as a friendly visitor in several homes. The city commissioner of welfare will use the investigator for such time as it is possible for help in the city relief program, and thus give her an access to homes of a certain economic class. A real estate salesman with a wide acquaintance among working people has introduced the investigator in several homes. This kind of contact has proved especially valuable. The director of parent classes in the public school centers has arranged with several mothers for interviews with the investigator. The homes of the professional group will be reached through an independent solicitation, probably upon the basis of a frank statement of the nature of the project and an appeal for cooperation.

4. A combination of the methods above described will probably be found the most useful in the end. The supplementing of the personal observation method by interviews with outside persons intimately in contact with the family and by the investigator's use of a questionnaire which is kept in the background as a mere guide will help to perfect the picture of family living which we are seeking to portray.

5. The use of records and data already on file with organizations should not be overlooked. This data will give no great amount of information on housing, but it will give a varying amount of detail concerning behavior problems, and facts concerning income, education, and similar matters. These records supplemented by interviews form a substantial beginning. Nursery schools offer particular advantages in this line of investigation. Usually their records are kept carefully. The persons in charge are ready to cooperate with a well-planned investigation, and the parents belong to a class which are aware of their problems and willing to give information useful in making the situation better for themselves and other parents.

Evaluation of the various techniques. It must be remembered that the information gained by the interview, with or without a questionnaire, is more satisfactory where the material and administrative features of home life only are concerned. Questions on the various activities carried on in the home, whether or not they are done in the living room or the dining room, whether or not the family possess such equipment as the radio or the sewing machine and how much it uses this equipment are easily and fairly reliably determined by asking questions. Information about the course of the day's activities of the individual members of the family would, however, be more dubious, because of the unlikelihood that members of the family have kept any careful check-up on the activities of the other members or even of their own pursuits.

The observational method is costly; yet in the beginning of an investigation so vital to the development of the family, careful case

studies of this sort seem to be more valuable than information statistically compiled from questionnaires. The need is for something which will show not merely the physical features of the home and their use, but what is happening to the individual in the process of their use or in their absence.

It may be possible by interview to get some notion of the satisfaction which each individual takes in his home activities; that is, how much he values them, and this is a significant point. In one very important matter, however, the verbal report of desire and satisfaction falls far short. That is in considering how conditions might be altered in such a way as to afford a better chance for self-expression. The individual can report easily on what he has done with his present home equipment, but not quite so readily upon what he might do if the range of his equipment were broadened or the restrictions which conventionally surround his home life were removed. It is all too likely that he has seldom if ever given the matter careful thought. Frequently of late there have come to light cases of men and women of middle life whose family responsibilities had ceased and who took up avocations such as painting and sculpturing, sometimes gaining remarkable success in these fields. If persons continue to function in a conventional way in their families, usually no attention is paid to the question of whether or not they have, in their home, facilities to express the creative side of their natures. Yet here is one of our most important questions: We need to know not only what is wrong with that which the family has, but what new equipment or arrangements could be added to make the lives of its members better.

It is idle to expect that a questionnaire or interview alone will be adequate for housing research. The subject of the inquiry cannot reply with a knowledge or an appraisal of the situation which he himself has never possessed. The observational approach is necessary under a variety of conditions and in many types of homes if we are to get an adequate picture of an individual's capacities or personality in relation to housing situations. We must study the individual's reaction to elements in his environment which make self-expression possible or impossible.

The objection may be raised against the observational method that the introduction of a stranger into the home will so distort the situation as to make the natural conditions of home life, the observation of which is the main object, almost impossible. The

members of the family will realize that they are up for inspection and will behave in a way that is not natural with them. This objection, however, may be satisfactorily answered. In most of the homes visited in the Syracuse study the mother, father or children had no clear notion of what the observer wanted to see, or indeed that she was there to make any observations at all. Even though an investigator's presence is strange at first, children become readily adjusted to it and soon take it as a matter of course. In any event, while the members of the family might have on their "company manners" for the occasion, it is unlikely that their habitual reactions to the physical features of their house would be greatly altered by the observer's presence. Even in a family of a higher social status where the parent is told that the observer wished to study the matter of the family housing, the individuals in the family would be unlikely to realize what particular sort of things the observer wished to see. Self-consciousness or being upon inspection would be likely to affect conduct from the side of etiquette, morals, or self-display; but it would be unlikely to alter greatly the manner or extent in which individuals make use of their house.

The individual versus the group approach. There is the further important question of the determining at the outset whether the approach shall be of the psychological or the sociological type. The plans for the project may include either the approach to the family as a group or the approach to the family as individuals. If it is desirable to take the practical, home management point of view, then the activities of the family as a group will stand out. For example, if a study were to be made of the activities of dwellers in a controlled housing situation, where an intensive recreational program for the community is carried out, the group approach might bring the desired result. We might want to see, for example, how many were participating in the facilities afforded and how they functioned as families or communities in their activity. Here the conditions would be set so as to produce a picture of the activities of the family as a whole. In so doing it is possible to arrange matters in such a way that all the people will fall into certain classifications. This approach has an advantage in considering the family from an administrative point of view. The view of the individual, however, is lost.

There is no room in the picture for the atypical individual. He is regarded as abnormal, or as an outsider.

On the other hand, we may ignore the group and follow the *individual* about in all his activities. This does not mean that the *group situation* is overlooked; for much of the report of an individual's action will deal with his contacts with other members of the family. It does mean that the index of family activities will be the aggregate or average of the individual indices, rather than an index representing the behavior of the family as a unit. From the individual approach one shall not inquire what activities go on in the living room, the attic, or the basement, but what are the daily activities of John or Mary. We shall try to discover whether these activities of John and Mary occur at home or elsewhere, whether they occur more frequently at home than elsewhere, and in what ratio. We shall seek to discover the relative satisfaction of the individual in the activities which take place in the home compared with those which take place outside.

The information regarding reading in the home may be, to take another example, approached from either the group or the individual point of attack. On the one hand, we can find out whether and how extensively reading goes on in the family, what place in the house is used for reading, what kind of light the reader has, and whether other members of the family listen or participate. Thus, reading is a sort of group activity, or a vocational or avocational classification. From the standpoint of the individual purposes, however, reading *per se* is seldom a fundamental category. It is usually merely a means to obtain certain kinds of satisfactions. The motivating interest in reading may be, for instance, love of romance, scientific impulse, literary inclination, social participation, or merely pastime, rather than the mere act of reading as such. It is this motivating interest that is vital in the development of the individual. From the individual approach we are not concerned with the vocational or avocational classification of activity or equipment, but with the biological and psychological functions which that equipment or that activity serves. Bicycle riding is an activity important in the development of balance, in a sense of power, and in control and speed. The real significance of bicycling lies in its ability to give exercise of just this sort to the body and to aid an individual in self-expression. The particular medium of the bicycle, or of bicycling, is not significant. The

exercise of the same functions and the same satisfactions might be secured by roller skating where bicycling is impossible. The formal activity, in and of itself, should not assume an undue rôle. The individual purpose and function of development, expression and exercise are all important, and these objectives can be gained not from the standpoint of the group occupation and equipment in use, but by studying what the individual does throughout the course of the day.

An important contribution at this point would be a research in method to establish the relation between the conventional, cultural, vocational, or avocational activities and the biological and psychological functions which these activities serve in the development of the individual. By taking such a list as a basis, we could then approach the opportunities afforded by differing housing conditions in order to determine their value for personal development.

Suggested Projects for Future Research

From the experience of members of the committee with preliminary researches, the following list of desirable projects for present and future research has been tentatively formulated:

1. **The determination of the degree to which the house satisfies the primary biological needs of the individuals of the family.** This should include a study of the extent to which the fundamental prepotent responses are expressed in the behavior of individuals in the home environment and in the use of the equipment which that environment affords. It should include also the degree to which traits characteristic of particular individuals can be evoked by the housing environment and can be further developed and integrated into the pattern of the individual's personality.

A study along the line of this project has already been begun in the Syracuse University project to which reference has been made above. The method is a combination of the observation and the questionnaire-interview technique, and the point of view is psychological, that is, the study of the individual as a unit in the home and family environment. The approach in part parallels the general questionnaire project (reported elsewhere), but new features are added in the way of direct observation and indices of measurement. Although the meagerness of the funds and time available for the work make the Syracuse project merely preliminary in character, it may be possible to develop from it a basis for studies relating to:

(a) The proportion of the total number of activities that are centered in the home.

(b) Trends in the transfer of activities from the home to institutional agencies.

(c) The activities which represent partial or complete family participation.

(d) The degree of satisfaction experienced in the various activities, and the relation of such satisfaction to individual or group participation.

All these aspects of family behavior can then be correlated with the physical basis of the home to ascertain any relationships which may exist.

A second line of investigation in the work at Syracuse will be an attempt to discover traits of personalities through observing the responses of individuals to the stimuli of the home situation. We shall try to discover whether or not the home evokes a wide enough range of traits and sufficient variation in their expression to enable us to estimate, within the home itself, an individual's whole personality. This will include attention to the conditioning of responses by the factors of the dwelling and equipment, and the problem of the insufficiency or absence of the facilities for the pursuit of individual interests. The activities or emotional responses which fill the gap that is created by inadequate housing conditions will be examined. It is not expected that these observations will give a complete picture of the family's activities or a comprehensive view of any one individual. They will, however, supplement and check the information collected by interview or questionnaire. They will provide also the means, which would otherwise be nonexistent, of observing behavior from the standpoint of the expression and development of personality within the home. The method used in the personality study is that of keeping a case record of those individuals in each family which are likely to be seen most frequently and under conditions which will be most favorable for study.

A supplementary survey is planned which will work through the personnel of the Boy and Girl Scout organizations. Here a questionnaire relating to the housing factors can be used; and it may be possible to discover to what extent the functions of the family in an individual's living and sense of values are realized in agencies other than the home. Another study which the Syracuse investigator hopes to make is the observation of a group of children in a nursery school in comparison with an observation of the same children in their own homes. It may be possible to determine the extent to which the physical factors of each situation brought out particular personality traits, and in which situation the exhibition of these traits was most complete and conducive to their development or inhibition. Although this introductory project is already under way at Syracuse, there is need for greater resources in number of families studied, and in time and money to be devoted to such a study. To be really significant, the techniques of the study should be extended to different types of houses in both urban and rural situations.

The principal contribution of this first type of project we have been discussing would be to devise and employ *a home-participation index* for the individual's biological and psychological activities, and to relate such indices to the various types of housing situations.

2. **The construction of a home-insight index which will measure the degree of awareness of family members concerning the needs and possibilities of their home.** This is a matter of considerable importance, because to a large degree the evils of the present housing situation

may be found to be due to lack of reflection on the part of the family members themselves. In part these deficiencies may be due to lack of evaluating past experience and thinking about actual present needs. Attention has already been called to evidence from questionnaires of the discrepancy between home defects and awareness of those defects or desire to remedy them. We must not forget, however, that in a large measure, also, housing difficulties are due to economic and social conditions far beyond the individual's control.

3. **The use of a home-insight index.** In connection with the use of a home-insight index as mentioned above, a study should be made of *the degree to which the planning and development of home building* has been controlled by commercial interests for the purpose of enterprise in real estate or other forms of business. Such a study should include a survey of the advertising of home developments. The purpose of this investigation would be to expose the pressure brought to bear upon the family by the various concerns interested in profit, and to give people generally an insight into the mechanisms which control their choices in regard to their homes.

4. **The factoring of the influences in family living.** The housing situation may be analyzed into factors, such as location, space, arrangement, equipment, and the like, and the influence of each of these factors traced in the activity of individual family members. It was suggested in the section upon method that it would be more profitable to take small sections of the problem, rather than the home as a whole, as bases for study and comparison. The approach just suggested is merely the converse side of the approach through the individual activities as units. We can begin with the things used in the activities rather than the activities *per se*. Instead of taking the individual as a starting point, the specific elements in the housing situation may be analyzed and related to the behavior of the individual. We can see how the home-participation index of a given individual is affected by the presence or absence of certain features in the home; and we can derive a measure of relative value for these features in making for home participation. For example, it is possible that the index of participation in four-room houses, in one or in a cluster of activities, would vary from that of eight-room houses. The index might also vary in relation to space in the rooms, the presence of certain rooms used for recreation, such as a basement or an attic, the materials of which the house is constructed, the presence of a place for toys, the opportunity which the house affords for self-expression in decoration, the presence or absence of a workshop, shrubs and trees about the house, garden space, and facilities for keeping pets.

5. **A study of the change in home philosophy of individuals over a period of years.** Preliminary observations have shown that the newly married couple, having chosen and equipped a home, will probably find later on that its needs and its satisfactions in the house have been altered by:

(a) The advent of children and the changing needs of these children as they grow up.

(b) The change in the life philosophy of the parents themselves as they are influenced by greater maturity, responsibility, and changing surroundings.

(c) The broad cultural or societal change about them which bears upon their own standards and methods of living.

To what extent these changes are inevitable and demand differences in standards at different periods of life can be indicated only by a study of families at different stages, or by the retrospect of heads of families who are mature in years. Perhaps no one standard of housing facilities can be permanent as the ideal of any given family; and it may be that not only the physical needs of the home must be altered as the family increases, but the very philosophy of household standards and family living may inevitably change. Can these changes in family needs and philosophy be predicted? It may be that the universal principle of learning, namely, that of trial and error, is in the long run better; but perhaps a large number of case studies of families over a period of years could point out some suggestive trends.

6. **The measurement of the effects of consciously planned, equipped, and controlled housing programs upon the home-participation index and the development of personality traits.** In an era in which the slogan is "social planning," it is important to know what success has attended certain attempts to control housing and family life by a carefully arranged program. The Radburn experiment, that of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, as well as Forest Hills, and Sunlight Towers are well known. A study of the detailed activities of individuals living in these housing situations should reveal at least an indication of what is happening to the individual family member in such a controlled form of community life. The question of the distribution of leisure time alone would make an interesting study as compared with the distribution of time in an uncontrolled family situation. Claims for the success of these experiments seem to be couched quite largely in terms of growth and continuity of original plan. The value of a study of family activities in any of these controlled communities would depend in part upon finding a similarly situated suburban community with which to compare it. To make this comparison such factors as income, type of housing, nature of the urban life of which these suburban dwellers partake—both in work and in play, while away in the city—and finally the number and ages of persons in the family, would need to be equalized. Such a study, moreover, could not be made through casual contact. The directors of communities of the type mentioned would quite properly be unresponsive to anything but a sympathetic investigation by someone who had lived in the community long enough to become a part of it.

Resources and Organizations for Research on Housing and Family Living

1. **Scientific and scholarly agencies of research.** Among the agencies which should be encouraged to carry on work growing out of the Homemaking Section are the Family Committee of the Social Science Research Council, the Committee on Child Development of the National Research Council, the Child Development Centers at Columbia, Yale, Stanford, Iowa, Minnesota, and elsewhere. The Institute of Child Guidance, New York

City; the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture; the American Home Economics Association; the American Birth Control League; and possibly the Social Science Research Councils in the following universities: Chicago, Columbia, Minnesota, Stanford, Texas and Wisconsin.

It might be worth while to develop under the Social Science Research Council and the National Research Council jointly, a two- or three-day conference of all members of the staff of some one university whose work touches the problem of homemaking—all the way from home economics education and child psychology to taxation and the various natural science groups whose work is pertinent. If this conference proved successful, it might then be interesting to seek to follow it up with similar conferences in state universities and agricultural colleges all over the country with a view toward interesting a wide variety of scholars and graduate students in research in homemaking.

The American Sociological Society might be encouraged to devote a research conference at the Christmas meetings of 1932 with the general problem of homemaking as conditioned by housing factors.

There are certain local foundations, such as the Buhl Foundation in Pittsburgh, the Couzens Foundation in Michigan, the Wieboldt Foundation in Chicago, which conceivably might be interested in developing homemaking research in their local fields.

2. Practical or nonresearch agencies whose cooperation might be secured.

(a) Those agencies which have personal contact with the family in the home.

1. Visiting nurse association.
2. Public health nurses.
3. Visiting teacher.
4. Family case worker from welfare agencies, clinics, or church organizations.

(b) Those agencies whose approach to the family problem is economic.

1. Life insurance companies.
   (The industrial department collects weekly premiums and the collectors have compiled information on wage-earning groups.)
2. Personal finance organizations such as the Household Finance Corporation. (These organizations obtain detailed studies of the household arrangements of the families and their household budgets.)
3. Budget bureaus of department stores, particularly those which sell on the instalment plan.
4. Public utilities companies.
   (Telephone, gas and electric companies make detailed studies of neighborhoods, kind and number of households, etc.)
5. Personnel departments of large corporations such as the American Telephone and Telegraph, Standard Oil, and manufacturing companies.

6. Real estate agencies.
   (These should include the larger firms which subdivide land, construction firms, and architectural firms.)
7. Building and loan associations.
8. Advertising firms.
   (Some of these have made extensive investigation in the matters of home tastes and family habits.)

(c) Those divisions of local government which are immediately concerned with family welfare.

1. City departments of health, sanitation, city planning, city zoning, and building departments.
2. Child-placing agencies and foster home supervision.
3. Domestic relations courts or juvenile courts, clinics for child guidance.

(d) Those institutions having an educational function in relation to the family.

1. Departments of home economics in elementary and high schools, vocational schools, or extension groups.
2. School counsellors.
3. Parent-education groups, child-study groups.

(e) Magazines which carry on an educational program through their articles and through their correspondence departments on house furnishing homemaking, and child care and training.

CHAPTER III

HOUSING AND FAMILY LIFE IN CITIES[1]

A. Special Problems of City Living

While our technological advances have made possible better houses than the masses have ever enjoyed before, with more devices for making life comfortable, housing is essentially a modern problem. It is closely related on the one hand to what we have come to consider the material essentials of decent human living, and on the other hand to what we assume to be the essentials of homemaking. The problem arises from the presence of resources far in excess of anything former generations believed possible, and from the disarrangements in the home pattern brought about by industrial changes and migrations.

The French have no word for "home;" the Spanish have one word for "home" and "hearth." English-speaking peoples have come to attach to the concept "home" a great deal more than is conveyed by the word "house;" and perhaps a full half of our population does not know what a hearth is. Our housing problem, with its many technical and economic and administrative aspects, needs to be considered specifically from the point of view of the home, the center of comfort and security as well as of warmth.

The extent to which our living patterns have changed is indicated by the recent advice given by a well-known minister in response to a couple who were having difficulties. The advice came over the radio suggesting that they draw up to the fireplace and talk things over calmly and quietly. This couple happened to live in a New York apartment that had neither fireplace nor quiet. This suggests the persistence of old thought forms which, like speech forms, have a way of outliving their significance.

Real estate promotion and the development of housing went forward with scant regard for the needs of the home. Those who had plumbing, heating, and lighting devices to sell succeeded well enough; but masses of people, ignorant of what they really wanted, lost what they most needed. For school, church, and other agencies

[1] This report was prepared by a group composed of the following members: Floyd H. Allport, Lawrence K. Frank, Robert S. Lynd, Benjamin C. Gruenberg, Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, *Chairman.*

of information and guidance were able neither to keep intact the older values of a shifting people in a changing culture, nor to cultivate the best that was being thought and done under the new conditions of living. As a consequence, the housing of the mass of our city population is both inadequate and expensive, and out of all proportion to the income. The usual criteria of adequacy have emphasized sanitary considerations—light, air, water supply, drainage. Although it is possible in these terms to plan entirely satisfactory housing, these tests are both insufficient in themselves and misleading in their application.

With statutes prescribing a minimum of air or of window space per person, many of the worst of our old houses are being replaced, and yet New York City still maintains, according to recent estimates, some 200,000 rooms without windows opening to the outside air.[2] This is undoubtedly an improvement upon conditions obtaining thirty years ago—when there were 350,000 such rooms. Comparable conditions and similar improvements are no doubt to be found in due proportion in other cities. In addition to the thousands of rooms left over from a time when these things were not so well regulated, we have today thousands more in comparatively modern apartments and tenements that do indeed open to the outside air; but they are nevertheless dark all day long, and never get any sunshine at all, being situated in deep wells and canyons amid the beautiful towers reaching toward the sky. We can take no satisfaction in the improvements, since we realize how utterly abominable these conditions are from a human point of view and how utterly unnecessary they are from a purely technical and economic point of view.

Of late there has not been extensive discussion on the relative advantages of city and country living. The pressure towards the city has been irresistible in spite of the heavy premiums people have to pay for living there. In 1900, 40 per cent of the population was urban and 60 per cent rural, by 1930 the urban population had increased to 56.2 per cent and the rural had declined to 43.8 per cent.

The disproportionately high rentals constitute but a part of the burden. If a commercial organization under some such title as

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[2] Wood, E. E. *Recent trends in American housing.* New York, The Macmillan Co., 1932.

the Universal Air Reductions, Inc., should withdraw from the earth's atmosphere all of its oxygen and then dole it out to the inhabitants at a price, we should, at least for a while, consider the monopoly monstrous. City dwellers are obliged, nevertheless, to pay in effect a premium for every lungful of air. The premium that we pay for sunlight is well suggested by the cartoonist who shows a woman calling out of the window, "Come on in, Willie, you have to get your sunlight now." We may, of course, discount the claims of the salesmen who are offering us artificial sunlight through a special electrical appliance; we cannot overlook the fact that the homes of city dwellers are insufficiently exposed to the sunlight.

Whatever the compensations of city dwelling, it must be recognized that the price is high. Among the unexpected side-lights revealed by the preliminary interviews of this committee, was the manifestation by numbers of those interviewed of a certain pride in the fact that rents are high.

Even among some who felt their rentals to be excessive there was indicated a certain satisfying identification with the growth and expansion of the city—a pathetic reminder, sometimes, of the serfs of a past time, who sought to wrap themselves in the reflections of glory cast by their masters. The payment of high rents is apparently also a symbol of prosperity or an indication that the family is rising in the world. In certain cases it is evident that such satisfaction is purchased in terms of less space, less privacy, few play advantages for the children, and a thousand hidden economies which produce strain on the family's nerves and purse.

This satisfaction in the paying of a high rental is akin to that of owning a dwelling. Ownership can be achieved in many cases only through appalling sacrifices, yet so highly approved is it socially that families continue to rationalize it while it acts as an actual deterrent to family development. Certainly there are families who should never attempt purchasing a house unless they can do so through the help of some cooperative or limited-dividend plan; and many families do try, only to find themselves acquiring an attitute of antagonism toward the house which demands far more than it gives.

This desire to own a home is more than the wish to do the socially approved thing, and it cannot be brushed aside; it is too

strong a human desire, and is deeply knit into the whole emotional fabric. There is need rather to direct this emotional flow toward tangible family development measurable in health, emotional stability, and accomplishment. Attempts to meet these aspirations are being made in various cooperative housing projects.

These experiments are solving certain problems satisfactorily, but they naturally raise new ones. The families brought together in these cooperative undertakings come with a certain predisposition to make their homes rather permanently in these houses. When friction arises, whether between adults or between children of different families, adjustment becomes more difficult than is the case in the commercial tenements. It is more unlikely that the "others" will move away soon, and the obstacles to taking the initiative in moving are exceptionally great. In one situation that came before a juvenile court, the judge advised the family to move to another part of the city, to give the child an opportunity to start afresh without the hostilities and unfriendly memories of the neighbors. Notwithstanding the difficulties of separating themselves from the cooperative, because of the commitments and the corresponding losses, the parents had decided already to move, and arranged accordingly. In most cases these difficulties would be insuperable or the losses tragic.

Much of the discussion of city housing has been confused because different parts of the population bring with them various presuppositions as to the essentials of a dwelling. These are derived for the most part from various backgrounds in childhood or in ancestral traditions. There appears to be a marked difference between the things which families born in the city attempt to do in their homes and the things attempted by families moving to the city. The city family has developed a way of living which can dispense with certain activities without feeling that the integrity of the family has been seriously invaded. It is not necessary for the preservation of the family that all of its members have three meals at home each day. Families do survive and maintain a high quality of family living without following this particular pattern of family life. The city family pattern shows distinct characteristics, and should be studied not in relation to the rural pattern but in relation to the advantages offered by the city situation.

Dr. Ernest R. Mowrer has made an analysis of types of housing in relation to types of family. In Chicago he finds five distinct

types of dwelling areas—the nonfamily areas, emancipated family areas, paternal family areas, equalitarian family areas, and maternal family areas.

"The nonfamily areas tend . . . to be one-sex areas, i. e., predominantly male. These may be represented by . . . the areas of hotels which cater to transients. In the growth of the city these areas tend to find a place in or near the center.

"The areas of the emancipated families are the rooming-house areas, the kitchenette-apartment areas, and the residential-hotel areas. . . . There are no children; relations with the neighborhood are casual or of the 'touch-and-go' sort; the interests of both husband and wife lie outside the home; both are employed for the most part, . . .

"Paternal family areas are those of the proletariat and the immigrant. Here the husband is superior and superordinate in the home. The size of families is large. The interests of the wife are confined to the affairs of the home and the care of the children. This type of family is characteristic of the tenement areas and the immigrant colonies, . . .

"The equalitarian family areas are those of the middle and professional classes. Here there are children, though families tend to be small. There is the minimum of superordination and subordination in the relationship between husband and wife in these areas. The wife has interests outside the home, delegating the care of the children largely to a nurse-maid. . . .

"The maternal family areas are those of the commuter. These are outlying districts characterized by single dwellings, typically bungalows, and by large yards. . . . Here the wife tends naturally to become the head of the family, at least so far as neighborhood relations are concerned." [3]

Mowrer's generalizations do not permit us to draw any inferences as to the character of a family from the area in which it lives, but the parallel between the pattern of family development and the types of housing is worthy of note and of further analysis.

According to Mowrer's analysis, the urban home would be shifting from the patriarchal to the equalitarian type. The shifts represent in part economic changes that bring the mother out of the home as a wage-earner, in part economic changes that cause the family from one area and its prevailing mode to move into a new neighborhood where people have different standards and make different demands upon the house. From the point of view of family development, the hotels and the rooming houses, the kitchenette apartments and residential hotels, while not catering to families with young children, may point the way to some kind of congregate dwellings providing cooperative resources for the care

[3] Mowrer, E. R. *Family disorganization.* University of Chicago Press, 1927, p. 110-112.

of children, for recreation and hospitality, as well as for the usual care of domestic services.

The house and its inhabitants interact upon one another. Some people will make a good home under the most unfavorable conditions of housing; and some cannot make a good home with all the resources that can be purchased with money. It is, nevertheless, true that the part which the house plays in the development of the family is not a passive one. It may be a means of expanding the life of the members, or it may be a means of repressing and stunting their growth. The house, moreover, is a symbol with subtle effects upon the members of the family as they identify themselves with one or another of its affirmations or denials.

The girls who are attempting to make their way in social contacts not compatible with the house, stay away from it as much as possible—sometimes trying to conceal it completely from the knowledge of their friends. The breach between parents and children, which may come from various sources, is often emphasized by housing conditions; these latter often hinder the development of that understanding and cooperation so essential to family life and growth. There are involved numerous questions not only of space but of the arrangement of the space, the question of entertaining friends at home or of inviting particular individuals.[4] The antagonistic reaction toward the home lays the foundation for mistrust between the young person and his friends from whom he conceals this housing situation which he feels to be an unsightly part of himself.

Because the house becomes a symbol of social and economic status, it can become a substitute or a compensation. Frequent moving from place to place is significant of more than dissatisfaction with the landlord or the surroundings. It indicates a desire to find the housing situation which will yield an optimum in family satisfactions; although we must recognize also that for

[4] The studies made in Chicago by Clifford R. Shaw have shown that the delinquency areas are always areas in which housing is at the lowest state of dilapidation. The stories told by the boys themselves in "The Jack Roller" reveal a condition of living which makes cleanliness and privacy impossible. Later studies made by Dr. Shaw of families who have moved from the slum areas into residential neighborhoods of reasonably good housing conditions, show that even in families where there was a delinquent the new conditions so affected life that the shadow of delinquency disappeared.

some people the quest is never ended, and in many cases the satisfactions are achieved indirectly. Women, because of their freedom from business hours, often choose the house, and often, because of the dissatisfactions of living, choose a house which will in some way be a compensation. It may be a good address, it may be a house which requires endless expenditure of time, or it may be a house which releases her somewhat from time expenditure. Cases illustrative of each of these situations are sufficiently numerous.

Another compensatory use of the house may be considered as an instrument to further social and economic aspirations. In former times it was the usual thing for a young man to choose his profession and establish himself, and then proceed to choose a dwelling for his family. At present the process is reversed. The house is chosen in X, Y, or Z, because the young man wants to be a doctor, lawyer, or business man. This anticipation of fortune entails incalculable tensions, fatigues, and recriminations within the family; but those who know the problems of families know that securing this house as a bid to advancement may result also in arrested development of common interests and accelerated growth of common antagonisms. Such antagonisms often arise through the transfer of emotional reactions, really due to the house and its arrangements, to other members of the family.

Often the housing condition is completely beyond the control of the persons in the family; more often the family cannot recognize the source of its irritations, and therefore it is unable to do the little that might be feasible to correct the evils. Noise can be measured, and the human ability to bear this noise without irritation can be measured, but the public scarcely knows this—and if the knowledge were commonly available the family would be unable to stop the noise or move to a place beyond its vibrations.

The relation of the home to children is assumed to be of fundamental importance, although little attention has been given to anything more than the minimum physical essentials. The needs of the children are prominent in the thoughts of parents contemplating housing problems. The moving of the family, especially moving from a denser area to a less dense one, or to the suburbs, is often due to the need for play space or for better schooling facilities. Indeed, families will move out of consideration for

such needs on the part of the children, even at the sacrifice of material convenience within the home or of adequate sleeping and play space within the home. Fresh air is supposed to compensate for various shortcomings.

The effect of moving upon children is a matter that has received very little attention. The few studies that have been made indicate at one extreme a fierce eagerness to get away from unsatisfactory neighbors and associates as well as from distressing emotional associations of a home long occupied; and at the other extreme a serious disturbance of security upon coming into a new region amid new faces and new customs. It is, of course, impossible to generalize on the relative advantages of frequent moving and permanent fixation. The economic conflicts do not give us a reliable criterion. Employers often are at one and the same time urging workers to own their homes and clamoring for a mobile labor supply. The attempt to purchase homes has meant for wage-earners in too many cases, a disastrous anchorage for the whole family, with complete loss of a lifetime's saving as the alternative. The necessity of frequent moving has meant an equally disastrous rupture of all stabilizing attachments.

The characteristic delegation by the home of a multitude of functions to outside agencies has resulted in making acceptable to the home hunter smaller and smaller quarters, until the majority of city dwellers find themselves occupying spaces that do not permit the exercise of the remaining home functions. The most conspicuous lack is opportunity for privacy; it is certainly the most articulate of family needs. This privacy which family members invariably mention in almost any conversation is a complex desire and the achievement of it a continuous problem. Privacy may mean merely being out of sight of others; it may mean quiet; it may mean space for equipment and for activities that may be carried on undisturbed by direct interference of anyone. Curious methods are pursued in the effort to secure privacy. One mother has a half hour after dinner when she sits in the living room reading or doing anything which pleases her, while the other adults and the children go about their concerns without interrupting her. Privacy is a curiously elastic thing. It can be reduced or increased by housing factors unrelated to age, interests, and temperament. Any rhythmic sound from without may dissipate

the feeling of privacy. The mother of an enthusiastic tap dancer writhes under the vibrations proceeding from the kitchenette. Any remonstrance brings forth the time-honored poser: "Isn't it my home and why can't I do as I like?"

The old theory that home is the place where one may do as he likes, particularly do the things which he does not do well enough to give pleasure to others, stands in open opposition to the limitation of leisure-time activities imposed by conditions of space, of sound, and of vibrations.

Plainly, the family's fractured nerves will not stand endless tapping or "tooteling." Yet if one retains any notion that creative activity is more valuable to the development of personality than quiet absorption of the results of another's activities, some provision for leisure pursuits must be made.

Many families eat meals outside their homes. They may read, study, find much of their recreation outside their homes, quite willingly, yet no family member wishes to find privacy outside the home. The just indication that the home is not meeting fundamental needs is often couched in such expressions as, "I have no privacy." " I can't be myself when I like." Isolation and contact are both equally essential for social adjustment and satisfactory individual poise, one balancing the other delicately. The house which fails to provide for both can scarcely be said to fulfil its obligations. To a degree, at least, privacy must be thought of in terms of space. The crowding which lack of space demands reacts unfavorably upon the whole family, but perhaps the adolescent whose need is accentuated by his sensitivity suffers most. If the house does not provide needed opportunities the boy and girl find substitutes elsewhere. Girls from inadequate apartments occasionally become problems because they are "fed up" with the crude physical intimacies which lack of space imposes. This condition is not limited to families living in dilapidated sections.

Generally families appraise their own space accommodations in terms of a large living room and adequate sleeping quarters. Dissatisfaction is most frequently expressed with the sleeping facilities for children. Many families whose housing situation appears to be well above the average complain bitterly of the necessity of children sleeping in the parents' room, in the living room,

on a tiny porch, or sometimes in the dinette. The house with the grilled iron door and spotless stair does not always provide the amount of sleeping space which the family feels to be essential. The lack of space may be quite as important in other respects, but the family is most frequently conscious of the lack of space in relation to sleeping. The housing situation which provides a separate bedroom for each of its members rates highest with the majority of families. The relation between health and sleeping arrangements has been abundantly demonstrated; but no study has yet been made to show adequately the relation between sleeping arrangements and behavior problems.

The actual situation cannot be described in absolute terms since it varies with the changing constitution of the family. It is quite possible, for example, for a number of adults to live in quarters which seem to provide privacy; but if one of those adults is replaced by a boy of ten, the possibilities for privacy may shrink for everybody. Or if one is a grandparent whose age removes him from the circle of the family, he may feel that his interests and activities have little room indeed, at the same time that the other family members sense an intrusion.

Age difference which may be unnoticed in matters of eating, sleeping, and general behavior, etch themselves against the background of leisure-time activities. Few adults interviewed have, or say they would like to have, facilities for active recreation for themselves in the home. They prefer a book, the radio, a game of cards, or a hobby. One father who enjoys carpentering can make no provision for his hobby other than a table in the living room. All his tools and materials are confined to that table. The children never touch it, his wife makes no comment on the hurt to balance or beauty which the table causes in the living room.

The problems raised by the family member who wishes to play the piano or the violin, or to sing, are not so easily solved. Leisure-time activities which express themselves in sound may inconvenience other family members. The steel and concrete buildings may have added much to the safety and beauty of housing but they detract from privacy, when they fail to provide against the conduction of sound waves. This problem received no attention in the past when houses were built of wood and brick; but it was then for many reasons less of a problem.

The care of illness which does not call for isolation or hos-

pitalization raises serious problems for the family in limited space. The person who is ill frequently is supersensitive to disturbance; often resenting his inability to join in the activities of the others, he inhibits their activity by complaint. The difficulty of keeping a person who is ill comfortable in small quarters intrudes into all activities of the family. The kitchen often cannot provide adequately for both the invalid's meals and the family's meals, for the sterilization of articles used, for emergency laundry when the person cannot be left alone while the common laundry provided by the house is used. The bathroom often fails to care for the additional equipment necessary. One mother pointed out the difficulty of securing an extra towel rack needed for drying compress cloths. The walls of the bathroom were concrete, and a towel rack could not be put up.

Sometimes it seems that the family attempts to cram into its limited housing situation activities which could better be done elsewhere. Traditionally these things were done in the home and tradition urges that they be continued. The care of individuals not sick enough to send to the hospital is part of the traditional business of the home; and tradition, sentiment and economic necessity all demand that such care be continued in the home. Generally speaking, however, the city home has neither the space nor the competent service to meet the needs. Emergencies of this character, for which every family has in a way to be prepared on the mere doctrine of probabilities, could be cared for by the old-fashioned home passably well because there was always at hand a person or several who could be spared for other tasks, because space was always available, and because the standards of service had not yet been developed to a point that is today within the understanding of ordinary folk. The emergency of illness is one for which the individual family simply cannot provide, and it calls for cooperative or socialized provision and service.

Few families choose their housing situation with any regard for the exposure of the bedrooms. Apparently few houses are planned with any thought for the exposure of the rooms. It is perhaps fair to say that the architects alone must not be asked to carry the blame for shortcomings in this respect. Very few of us have learned what to look for in hunting for houses ready-made, or in planning houses to be made. People will rent an apartment after

inspecting it in August only to discover in October that the rooms which seemed bright are now dark.

Suburban living is commonly supposed to insure more space for the family in larger rooms and more rooms, out-of-door play space for the children, and more social life for the family, than is obtainable in the city on a given income level. The suburbs provide apartments, two- and four-family houses, and predominantly single-family houses set in small grounds.

The move to the suburbs is usually made because the family believes that better conditions will be provided for the children. There is undoubtedly a gain in sunlight, fresh air, and play space. There may be a gain in the social ranking of the neighborhood. The gain in family contact is less clear.

The suburb seems to be regarded, probably erroneously, as a more permanent home than is the city apartment. No thorough study of the turnover in New York has been completed. Dr. James Plant found from a study of the directory of East Orange, New Jersey, which is a district made up largely of home owners, that slightly over 78 per cent of the population is to be found at a new address at the end of a five-year period. Incessant migration is going on even in areas where as high as 84 per cent of the homes are owned by those who live in them.[5] A resident of South Orange, New Jersey, stated that on his street there is not a single family in which the parents were born in New Jersey. These families talk about moving, look forward to moving, and probably will move before they are economically able to do so.

In a well-known suburban section a study showed that 70 per cent of the married men required at least two hours of traveling per day to reach their work and return. In some areas this percentage is as high as 90. In terms of home life this means that the father seldom sees the smaller children when they are awake.[6]

The acquiring of a home is a normal goal of family life in very many cases. One of the strongest "selling points" of the suburb is that it makes possible the acquiring of a home.

The adjustment of the children to these suburban situations after the move, is of primary importance if the family moves on

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[5] Plant, J. S. "Some psychiatric aspects of crowded living conditions." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 9: 112-120, July, 1929.
[6] *Ibid.*

the assumption that it is doing so for the benefit of the child. The reaction of the children themselves to frequent moving ranges, as in the city proper, from a shaking of security to a satisfaction from restlessness.

In some of the material studied there appears a strong prejudice against moving. The children who wanted to move fell into two groups—those who had not moved and those who had moved so much that a wanderlust had developed.[7] While it is true that children often adjust themselves more quickly and with less difficulty than do the adults, it is also true that there is a marked instability among children who have moved frequently.

Moving to the suburbs and purchasing a house, whether in the city or in the suburbs, usually represent definite conscious planning for family life. Very often, however, these important steps seem to be taken on the basis of a rather poor understanding of what is involved. It seems especially important for young people to realize, as they start off to establish a new family, that they must look forward to a succession of stages, in each of which, new conditions will have to be met, and for each of which, it will be necessary to plan. The changing ages of the children will mean changing conditions and needs for the parents as well as for the children. The liberation of the mother from some of the work that young children require will make new demands upon the home. How far a house well planned for one stage lets itself be adapted to new conditions, or how far it obstructs the family at a later stage, needs to be considered from many angles.

The results of this preliminary survey hardly lend themselves to generalization, partly because of the relatively small number of cases from which adequate information could be obtained, partly because of the vast range of interests, objectives, resources, and ideals. There is a common recognition of the disproportionate cost of housing and of the disregard of factors fundamental to wholesome family life. There is a feeling that these conditions would not be tolerated if parents were more articulate or more self-assured. Play space, for example, is rarely adequate; and the provision of formal playground or park spaces is never adequate.

[7] Weill, I. "A Study of change of residence in relation to children's behavior and attitudes." (Thesis). Smith College, School of Social Work, 1931.

There is the feeling that we could do much better in providing privacy, sunlight, air, and protection from the intrusion of unwanted noises, if only some undefined somebody took the trouble to attend to these things. There is also apparently a widespread conviction that the unconscious irritations due to the noises, interruptions, and lack of privacy affect the mental health and comfort as seriously as the commonly recognized sanitary factors affect the physical health.

The inquiry conducted by this group on Problems of City Living was based on interviews and on a brief questionnaire which grew out of these interviews. This questionnaire was circulated among the members of the study groups of the Child Study Association and other urban groups willing to cooperate. In adapting the schedule of questions particular attention was given to the points on which city conditions were most widely differentiated from rural or small-town conditions. Numerous questions which suggested themselves, and others that indicate the area for which our information is at present inadequate, and in which more intensive as well as more comprehensive research seems desirable are discussed on pages 50-55.

The housing situation in cities is like many other aspects of modern life in that it represents a condition into which we have drifted without anybody's having intended the precise results that we find. It was through neither malice nor wise forethought that we deprived ourselves of the essentials of wholesome living in exchange for a variety of conveniences, for proximity to various institutions, and for the distinctive stimuli that make present-day life exciting and interesting. We have insured a nominal access to some of the characteristic advantages of our age, but in doing so have deprived ourselves of air and light and quiet and peace, which are essential to their enjoyment.

The conditions under which most city dwellers are obliged to live have destroyed the older family patterns without supplying opportunities for the development of new ones to meet the fundamental needs of the individual's personal and social development. Many of the traditional functions of the home have been profitably delegated to various agencies; but it is fully recognized by students of social processes and of individual development that some of the home's functions cannot be safely delegated or neglected.

It is in the home that the child, and the mature person as well, must find continuity of security, affections, intimacies, and loyalties needed to make possible his most effective struggles and his richest growth. Family life supplies certain very precious values, and no other agency seems able to take its place. Toward this institution we should expect all the other mechanisms and devices to contribute; instead, we find them, because of their mass and their rigidity, rather thwarting and obstructing the enduring purpose of the home. The school, for example, with its schedule of hours and its long vacation derived from an agricultural pattern of life, fits thus poorly into the needs of city dwellers. Experiments in a certain nursery school attempt to take cognizance of the variety of families and of needs: Hours are arranged to suit groups that have both parents out at work, or children who have older brothers and sisters available part of the time. These experiments indicate a recognition of the new conditions, and of the instrumental nature of the school, as serving the home, rather than requiring of the home that it make all the adjustments.

Our technical advances have enabled us to produce dwelling places for the masses; but homes cannot be standardized, as can bricks and doorknobs. Even when we produce shoes at wholesale, we expect eventually that each wearer will be fitted individually. Houses as dwelling places for developing personalities, as homes of families, need also to be considered in their organic relations, and more deliberately planned with a view to the remoter purposes of human living.

Problems for Consideration

1. A study of the degree to which various types of city houses satisfy the primary prepotent needs such as hunger, protection, etc.

2. The construction of a scale of biological participation in which are indicated different degrees of elaboration of the functions of food-getting, rest, protection, etc. (Houses studied might include the family house in the open country, the spacious town residence with large lawn, the moderate house, the family hotel, the double house, the rooming house and conditions where there is congestion in one apartment.)

3. A study of the difficulties and of the various expedients employed to meet them by urban residents of apartment houses, because of the neglect of adequate provision for their needs in such congregate dwellings.

4. A canvass of various programs of child welfare, public health, mental hygiene, preventive medicine, and similar efforts to promote the welfare of

families and individuals, in order to discover how far the acceptance and practice of the programs they advocate are conditioned or limited by the houses and their equipment. It is important to find out whether, or how far, the major difficulty in persuading people to adopt more intelligent, wholesome, sane ways of living is to be found in the stubborn facts of the houses they live in and their equipment, which are designed, built and set up with little or no reference to these needs. Such a canvass would involve a rather careful and painstaking effort to discover the essential functions which need to be directed for health, sanity, and so on, and the revelation of the changes in housing, house equipment and household operations that would be necessary.

5. Effects of types of housing upon entertaining or hospitality—both as to extent and manner in which they are carried out.

6. A study of the syllabi of home management to discover how far the practices taught ignore or conflict with the requirements of mental hygiene, wholesome child care, adequate provision for recreation, leisure time, relaxation, and so on.

7. The study of how far the individual isolated household, which attempts to be self-sufficient in operation, management, and equipment, is incurring costs that might be considerably reduced by some form of pooling of services, activities and functions. For example, the possible saving in time as well as in money, to the individual mother through a pooling of many facilities and responsibilities, such as oversight during play, preparation of the vegetables for a young child's lunch, and so on.

8. A study of the overhead cost of idle equipment in American homes as seen in the capital investment in washing machines, vacuum cleaners, irons and other labor-saving devices which are used only a fraction of the time but for which the individual family must pay the full carrying charges. Along with this might go a study of how the provision of common equipment or services in apartment houses or in neighborhood groups might reduce the capital investment and carrying charges per family and increase the availability of labor-saving equipment and facilities.

9. A study of the actual costs not only in money but in anxiety through strain and deprivation of the necessities of life incurred by families who have embarked upon programs of home ownership involving too large an appropriation of their total income for payment.

10. An investigation into the extent to which the purchase of a home involves serious losses to the family through an obligation to migrate because of unanticipated industrial or commercial changes; and of the significant correlated factors, such as level of income, character of community, character of industry, and the like.

11. A realistic approach to the problem of the design and equipment of houses with a view to providing for a wholesome, sane way of life.

12. A scale might be constructed to show various degrees of temptation to move into another house. Such a scale could be applied to different types of houses and home environment and used in a comparison of house owners and house renters.

13. A study of the consciousness of other people and attitudes toward neighbors in different types of housing situations. What are the effects of living in close proximity, as in apartment houses, with other people whom one seldom sees. This survey would include possible attitudes of cooperation, or of suspicion and hostility.

14. A correlation between different types of houses and the tendency of the children in the family to belong to or participate in children's organizations in the community. A very important point is involved here, namely, the question of whether community agencies, taking over the old functions of family life, have grown up as a means of fulfilling those functions in which modern family life fails, or whether we find these activities carried on in conjunction with homes which rate high from the standpoint of biological and personality participation.

15. A study of the effect of the intrusion into the family quarters of non-home activities, such as keeping boarders, or the pursuit of some industry which is not directly related to home economy.

16. From the standpoint of esthetic development, a very good experiment can be conducted on the degree of self-expression in room decoration. Rooms may be taken which belong to different members of the family, as well as common living rooms, in order to determine whether or not there is a measurable tendency toward an increased ability to identify the room with the person under varying types of housing conditions.

17. A study of the extent to which people in cities carry on hobbies that require space or special equipment in the home, as compared to rural or suburban populations of similar economic and social status; and of the extent to which city dwellers are aware of the privation they experience because of inadequate opportunity to pursue such avocational interests.

B. A Study of Special Problems of City Living [8]

Scope of Study

The building of houses to meet the need of family development progresses only as these families become conscious of specific needs in relation to certain developmental processes. Since the building of dwellings is a business conducted for profit those families whose income permits them a choice in housing constitute the group from which intelligent and practical suggestions should originate.

There is among middle-class families an inarticulate dissatis-

[8] The cooperation of the members of the Study Group of the Child Study Association of America made possible the following study of family problems in relation to city housing. The study was conducted under the direction of a group on Special Problems of City Living and the staff of the Child Study Association. Members of the committee were Robert S. Lynd, Benjamin C. Gruenberg, Lawrence K. Frank, Floyd H. Allport, Mrs. Sidonie M. Gruenberg, *Chairman*, and Miss Thelma Beatty, *Secretary*.

faction with the system of mutual exploitation in which they are engaged. In the field of housing this dissatisfaction, which exists among renters and owners alike, expresses itself in complaints against the builders of houses and the landlords. Families feel that the architect, the contractor, and the real estate dealer charge too much—and the while, the architect, the contractor and the real estate dealer have the same feeling concerning the doctor, the grocer, and the educator. It is quite natural that some of this dissatisfaction centers in the housing situation. The middle class notes the attention given to providing for the demands of the rich no matter how architecturally grotesque those demands may be; they praise the attempts made to meet the needs of the poor who cannot provide adequate housing for themselves, and see both fields of effort against the background of their own housing difficulties.

The group on Special Problems of City Living undertook an investigation of the housing difficulties of families whose income ranged from $3,000 to $10,000, and a few over. The study began by interviews in order to determine some of the problems which were uppermost in the minds of the women in these families. Those interviewed considered the housing situation primarily in relation to its provisions for the children in the families. The difficulty most frequently mentioned was that of finding a dwelling which provided both bedroom space and an outdoor play space in a park or playground. The need of the child or children for a separate room was emphasized since this room served as a playroom as well as a sleeping room.

Among these families, the moving to the suburbs for the benefit of the children was a constantly recurring and debatable question. Many families consider this problem every year.

High rentals were frequently mentioned. With the general admission that rentals were high came the acquiescent statement that "New York rents are always high." Occasionally there was evident a pride in paying a high rental, a kind of identification of self or of the family with the growth and power of the city.

As an outcome of these interviews a questionnaire was constructed and circulated among the members of some study groups conducted by the Child Study Association of America in the metropolitan area. These groups consist of women from families within the income range indicated, who enroll for the study of

child development, child psychology, and the topics that come under the general term "parent education." Since these women pay a fee for the courses, it is to be expected that their first consideration throughout the study is the child.

Of the 188 cooperating in the study 39 per cent lived in Manhattan, 15 per cent in the Bronx, 11 per cent in Brooklyn. The remainder lived in the vicinity of New York City.

Table 1. Geographical distribution of families cooperating in study

Location	*Number of families*
Manhattan	75
Bronx	30
Brooklyn	22
Long Island	13
Outlying districts	45
Not reporting	3
Total	188

The geographical distribution was varied enough to include all types of houses. The income distribution as indicated by address, occupation, and number of servants further assured a wide range in housing set-up desired by various families to meet their needs.

Composition of Families and Domestic Service

The families studied were with two exceptions unbroken; that is, both father and mother were living and with the children. One family only reported a teacher rooming with the family. Ten of the families had no children.

Table 2. Relatives or outsiders living with family

Relatives or outsiders	*No. of families*
Families reporting grandparents living with family	12
Families reporting friends living with family	3
Families reporting teacher boarding with family	1
Families reporting aunts living with family	1
Total	17

Approximately 19 per cent of the families have one or more servants. This indicates again that the families have income sufficient to enlarge their range of choices in housing facilities. Any

of these families could select a different housing situation if they wished to do so.

The servants listed all live in the houses and are therefore a more integral part of the family life than those who come in by the day. The problem of sleeping arrangements and of privacy for leisure-time pursuits is complicated by their presence. Sixty-eight servants and one student helper were reported for 37 families.

Table 3. Number of families reporting servants

Servants per family	*No. of families*
1 maid or nurse	21
2 servants	7
3 servants	7
5 servants	1
7 servants	1
Total	37

The families studied reported a total of 310 children. Ten families reported no children, 71 families reported 1 child, 83 families reported 2 children, 21 families reported 3, the remaining families reported 4 or more.

The ages of these children varied from infants under one year to adults over twenty-one. The largest age group was that between two and three years. This age grouping was conditioned by the selection of the group cooperating in the study.

Children's Ages and Housing Facilities

From the interviews it was evident that housing problems changed with the age of the children. The changing needs of children at various ages for play space, for a room alone, for school and social contacts, vary enough in some instances to influence a move from the city to the suburbs or a return to the city. The coming of a child into the family almost invariably necessitates a move to larger quarters.

If it were possible to secure data on the relation of the age of children to the adequacy of the house for family needs, it might appear that one dwelling cannot be expected to fit the needs of a family throughout the developmental years of the children. The dwelling is, even in the minds of persons who recognize the changing needs of the family, a symbol of stability. Yet psychic sta-

bility need not be identical with architectural immovability, which may cramp the family's development by failing to meet its needs.

The landlords in New York have been forced to consider the matter of flexibility in apartment houses not because of regard for family needs but because of the fact that, during the present depression, smaller apartments are rented and larger ones are not. If, however, small apartments can be combined into larger ones and large ones divided into small units to suit rental demands there may be developed a planned flexibility which will further the meeting of family needs.

In this study there is an indication that the family needs increase rapidly between the child's second year and his going to school. The need for active indoor and outdoor play is most frequently mentioned. This is succeeded by a need for space indoors to be shared with playmates, which is, in turn, followed by the adolescent's need for privacy.

Out of the change in bodily size, the acquiring of certain toys and equipment to suit changing needs, and the psychic change into adulthood grow the widely varying needs of family members for more flexible housing accommodations.

Types of Houses

As the geographical distribution would indicate, 51 per cent of these families live in apartment houses. These are, in the main, families living in Manhattan. The suburban families tend to live in one-family houses.

The group shows a predominance of renters. This follows naturally because the majority live in apartment houses and apartments for families of this income level have not become cooperative to any extent. The types of houses for the 188 families have been reported as follows:

97 families live in apartments.
60 families live in detached one-family houses, set each in its own yard.
18 families live in two-family houses, set each in its own yard.
3 families live in three-family houses.
6 families live in one-family, row houses.
1 family lives in a four-family house.
3 did not report.

Fifty-eight of the families included in the study were home owners and 123 were renters; the remaining 7 did not report.

Because of the markedly variable notions of what constitutes a room, no attempt was made to determine the number of rooms which the family occupies; although the number of rooms is commonly supposed to influence the satisfaction of the family. Space seems to be the first expressed need, and lack of space the most articulate dissatisfaction. A preliminary study made through the cooperation of Dr. Robert G. Foster and Dr. Ella Day showed that in a group which averages three rooms per person, a minimum of dissatisfaction with the housing facilities was expressed. This group was much too small and highly selected to permit any correlation between the number of rooms and the degree of satisfaction felt by the family. Other preliminary studies indicated no general idea of what constituted a room. Among the city group there was no agreement, particularly on the matter of the dinette as a separate room or a part of the kitchenette. In cases where the number of rooms can be determined with some definiteness, arrangement of doors and windows, color and kind of finish, furniture, as well as the age and temperament of family members enter into the family's judgment of the size of the rooms. The purpose of this study was to find out the attitude of the family toward certain common problems presented by their house in its relation to family development, and to discover, if possible, what these families regarded as their housing needs. The actual number and size of rooms was therefore of relatively little importance.

Mobility of Families Studied

The mobility the family enjoys in relation to its housing problem is, in this group at least, the mobility of moving from house to house. Fifty-two per cent of these families have lived in their present residences two years or less. While this closely approximates the percentage of families living in apartment houses, the number is too small to do more than indicate that this group follows the trend noted in other studies.

In view of Dr. Plant's findings [9] that even in a district where a large percentage of homes were owned, the turnover in a five-year period was around 78 per cent, it would be of interest to find the variation of the numbers of families who move in two- and five-year periods, and attempt to relate this moving to the age of

[9] Plant, *op. cit.*

the children. It is thought that the economic situation of the family dictates its choice of a house—that families "on the make" move most frequently. There is, however, but one certainty—families do move and that frequently.

If this moving is an indication that the families who cooperated in this study are becoming conscious of definite housing needs and move in order that these needs may be satisfied, moving may not be the utter calamity that it sometimes seems. City moving is a relatively simple matter if approached without the mental picture of moving in a rural or small community.

A family which regards moving in the light of a recreational adventure is not unknown. The excitement, the hope of something nearer the ideal, the sense of sufficiency given by the ability to move, particularly into a better neighborhood, are all productive of satisfactions as real to a certain type of person as owning a piece of land is to another.

Were it not for suspicion that this frequent moving contributes instability to the children concerned, it might be welcomed as an indication of growing consciousness of housing needs on the part of these families.

Table 4. Length of residence in present domicile

Period (years)	*No. of families*
Less than 1	29
1 to 2	31
2	39
3	19
4	16
5	20
6	9
7	5
8	2
9	2
10	4
11	1
13	1
15	1
20	2
25	1
28	1
30	1
35	1
No. not reporting	3
Total	188

Reasons for Choice of Home Location

The majority of the families studied chose their present location because of a desirable neighborhood. The meaning of this term should be understood. A desirable neighborhood to most of these mothers means one which provides children with whom they are willing to have their own children associate. Several mothers regretted their present location because the neighborhood had changed and the children must be kept indoors. In one neighborhood a gang from a nearby district makes it impossible for the children to play in the park. The houses in this neighborhood are old houses not equipped with roof facilities. This means that the children in these houses must lose their outdoor play activities with the exception of those that the school provides, or join the gang. Mothers recognize that children cannot be kept from the children in the neighborhood in which they live. The adults may find their friends at a distance but the children meet and mingle.

A desirable neighborhood appears also as an important reason given for desiring to move. It is a grave mistake to belittle the family that wants a "good address" because this "good address" means more than social ambition. It connotes outdoor play space, desirable companions for the children, and good schools.

Summer vacations are a consideration in every family, although few families report that they chose their present home because it helped to solve the vacation problems.

Table 5. Why families have selected their present dwelling

Reason	*No. of families* *	*Reason*	*No. of families*
Desirable neighborhood..	99	Esthetic reasons	5
Nearness to park.....	57	Sunshine	4
Nearness to school.....	52	No answer	4
Nearness to business....	47	Play space	4
Rental or purchase price	46	Nearness to subway....	4
Good school	41	Nearness to ocean.....	3
Nearness to relatives....	31	Desire for country.....	3
Nearness to friends.....	30	Size of home.....	3
Miscellaneous	18	Healthy situation	1
Good for children.....	6	Nearness to club.....	1

* Some families gave more than one reason. This also occurs in some of the following tables.

Ninety-three families even in this comparatively high-income group reported that they had no summer home or week-end place; 55 reported that they had either summer homes or week-end places. Of these, 22 thought the summer place was easily accessible. The families who chose homes because of the vacation time benefits expressed regrets at the amount of time spent by the father in commuting between the home and his business.

That a "good neighborhood" heads the list of considerations which would influence their choice of a dwelling is significant. The family thinks of its problems in generalized terms rather than in small specific segments. "Good neighborhood" in this small study carried innumerable interpretations. More space indoors and out is the common want and perhaps the most common need. How much of this need for space is in terms of comparative housing, how much of it is mere acquiescence to the general feeling that city living cramps, and how much of it is real need for more square feet, cannot be determined. The desire for space tops the list of family needs whether the families are urban or rural.

It may or may not be significant that on only four questionnaires mothers reported that they would like to remain in their present dwellings. The question was phrased to suggest moving and the wide scattering of answers may indicate that most of those answering had no definite objection to their present situation, the answers given being their reaction to a question which was on the sheet to be answered.

The answers to the question, "If the family moved what other considerations would influence its choice of a dwelling?" are not primarily in terms of actual housing factors; although location does connote a certain standard of arrangement of rooms, a certain amount of space indoors and outdoors. Only 20 answers deal with more space inside the house. The larger number of answers are in terms of surroundings, social desirability of location, and accessibility to school. Many families who were questioned definitely on this matter admitted that they accepted many inconveniences within the house provided they could live in a good neighborhood.

Question 9 (see *Table 5*), which suggested reasons for a choice of dwelling, doubtless acted as a check on the answers to Question 10, "If a family moved what other considerations would

influence its choice?" In *Table 6* are the answers given according to frequency in the preliminary study.

Table 6. Considerations influencing choice of dwelling when moving *

Considerations	*No. of families*
Park, sunlight, country, more ground about the house, healthy place for children, trees, etc.	48
Desirable neighborhood	23
More space inside the house	20
Good school	18
Rental or price of property	17
Accessibility of school	13
Playground	6
More modern equipment	6
Traveling facilities	5
Less dirt	5
Would like to stay where I am	4
Porch	3
Privacy	2
Change of air and scene	2
To live in the city	2
Accessibility of college	1
Recreational facilities	1
Nearness to relatives	1
Nearness to stores	1
Nearness to business	1
Nearness to mother's business	1
Nearness to subway	1
Privacy for child	1
One- or two-family house	1
Location	1
To live in small town	1
Similar conditions	1
Simplification of household	1
No traffic	1
Fireproof house	1
First floor or one-family house	1
To live in the suburbs	1
To own home	1
More attractive street	1
Cheaper riding	1
Brick house	1

* Some families report more than one consideration.

The selection of a house or dwelling by a personal house-to-house search indicates both the intense interest people have in finding what they want and the inadequacy of description, however detailed, in satisfying prospective tenants. The number concerned in this study is so small that it could not serve as any index of the percentage of persons who depend upon themselves and

their immediate friends for the finding of a house or an apartment. The most surprising bit of information revealed by this question was the small number of houses located through advertisements.

Table 7. How families find their homes *

Method	*No. of families*
House located through house-to-house search	62
House located through friends	48
House located through agent	47
House located through advertisement	7
Inherited house	2
Miscellaneous answers	18
Not reported	8

* Some give more than one source of information. House-to-house inspection was combined with agent's services in two answers only.

Moving to the suburbs is in many families a perennial question, particularly while the children are small and the family is increasing in numbers.

Seventy-four of the families studied state that at some time they had considered such a move. Eighteen of those 40 families give reasons in the following table classified under the heading, "For children's benefit." If to these were added the answers, "To be able to send the children to public school," 50 per cent of the answers would be in terms of the welfare of the children.

Table 8. Reasons for considering moving to the suburbs

Reasons	*No. of families*
For children's benefit	18
More space	6
To be able to send children to public school	3
To be close to nature	3
Financial reasons	2
To solve summer problem	2
More privacy and comfort	1
Better neighborhood	1
Better associations	1
To be nearer father's business	1
Do not like any city west of the Rockies	1
To own home	1

The families interviewed tended to give real consideration to the father and to the time he would lose in commuting. They considered that companionship with the father should be as definite

a part of the children's development as outdoor play or any other advantage which suburban life gives.

The families who considered moving to the suburbs and decided against it gave a variety of reasons for this decision. Nearly half of the replies stated that the deciding factor was the husband's business or profession. Whether this answer meant that the husband's business was of such a character that it demanded his constant attention, or whether it meant that the time demand in commuting would be too greatly increased, cannot be determined.

At no point does the conflict in the family's needs, aims, or objectives become more apparent than on this matter of selecting the location of a home. The reasons for considering moving to the suburbs are mainly in terms of advantages for the children. To conclude that the children of those families suffered seriously, who decided to remain in the city for other reasons, would be overhasty. It is to be noted, however, that the children's welfare is not primarily the factor which decides that the family remain in the city. Here the inconvenience of the father's commuting is the deciding factor. This is a particularly crucial point. The family cannot get what it needs of outdoor life and keep the companionship of the father. The situation demands a choice—a choice involving such complex and subtle factors that the very process of arriving at a decision brings a period of strain upon family relationships.

Table 9. Reasons given for deciding against moving to the suburbs

Reasons	*No. of families*
Inconvenient for husband's business or profession	23
Expense	8
Distance from city resources such as theater, music	7
Transportation difficulties	4
Out of reach of good schools	4
Dislike of suburbs in winter	2
Could not sell present home	2
Fear of inability to adjust to small community	1
Fear of loneliness	1
Fear of depreciation of value of home	1
Have tried it and did not like it	1
Too far from friends	1

The families living in the suburbs include those who have moved recently and those who have been suburban since their beginning.

Of the whole group, 20 per cent state that they intend to live in the suburbs until the children are of school age. While this is insignificant numerically it seems to add to the indication noted previously—the need of the family for a certain amount of mobility in relation to the developmental stages of the children. Over 40 per cent of the families state that they intend to remain in the suburbs. Their reasons for moving to the suburbs and for remaining there are stated in terms of children's needs and their own love for the out-of-doors.

The length of time families expect to remain in the suburbs has been stated as follows:

23 families state that they intend always to live in the suburbs.
15 families state that they intend to live in the suburbs indefinitely.
10 families state that they intend to live in the suburbs through the early years of their children's lives, and expect to return to the city for school advantages.
1 family will remain 1 year for the children's health and then return to the city.
1 family expects to remain in the suburbs for 3 years.
1 family expects to remain in the suburbs for 4 to 5 years.
1 family expects to return for the winter months.
1 family will return soon for business reasons.

The recorded length of residence in the suburbs varies from one year to "always." The largest number of families moved to the suburbs in 1925. Thirty of the families moved since 1925. The average length of residence for these families is somewhat longer than that of the apartment house dwellers.

The question on the place of residence before coming to New York City was omitted in 161 of the answers. It is therefore impossible to make more than a brief comment. Fourteen families came to New York for business reasons. Most of those that gave places of residence before coming to New York mainly gave the Atlantic seaboard states.

Goals of Family Life

For 70 per cent of the families concerned in this study the maintaining and furnishing of a house or dwelling is a goal of family life. Six per cent answered that it was not. One answer explained that the family was not interested in "things." The others who answered "no" gave no reason for the answer.

Although the reasons given for holding this goal for family life

are varied, they are predominantly in terms of the interests of the children. The general impression given by these answers is that stability and security are achieved by maintaining a home. These families feel that children are particularly in need of such a sense of security. That frequent moving menaces this feeling of permanence and security does not seem to be a consideration. Although they want stability they move very frequently. It may be that the moving brings about little change in either surroundings or housing facilities.

Table 10. Why the maintaining and furnishing of a house is one of the goals of family life *

Reasons:	*No. of families*
Concerning children—	
Security and happiness for children	23
Background for children	5
Room for children	4
Protection for children	2
Permanency for children	2
Total	36
Other—	
Keeps family together	9
Provides comfort	8
Gives permanent place to live	7
Gives good environment	7
Creates home atmosphere	5
Gives satisfaction	4
Most happy in own home	4
Gives feeling of possession	2
Provides space	2
Home is our hobby	2
Gives freedom from high rents	2
Gives desirable living	2
Husband is home-loving	1
Provides summer home	1
Provides freedom	1
Provides for responsibility	1
Provides quiet	1
Gives desirable society	1
Gives security for old age	1
Completes our ideal	1
Provides a lawn and porch	1
Artistic attractiveness	1
Frequent and prolonged visits of grandparents	1
Total	101

* In this group answers concerning children were particularly frequent.

Housing and Living Standards

The answers to the question, "Is your present housing situation above, below, or commensurate with the standard of living which you try to maintain in other ways," indicated that the question should have read, "Is your present expenditure for housing, etc.?"

One hundred and four families answered that the housing situation was commensurate with the family's standard of living. Twenty-four answered that it was below, and 22 that it was above. Several who replied that the housing was commensurate with the standard of living went to the next question and explained the satisfactions that justified an excessive expenditure. This may indicate the feeling expressed by families interviewed, that housing expenses are excessive but nothing can be done about it. One answer included this statement, "All residents of New York must pay too much for housing."

Table 11. Satisfactions that justify excessive expenditure for housing

Satisfactions	*No. of families*
Good neighborhood	5
Conveniences	5
Quiet and comfort	5
Room for each individual	4
Satisfaction in a nice home	3
Good schools	3
Love of home	3
Nearness to business	2
Space	2
Nearness to park	2
Sense of security and background for child	2
Health	1
Privacy	1
Sunlight	1
Place for children's friends	1

Privacy

In any study of problems of the family in relation to housing, privacy is one of the first ones mentioned. Privacy, necessary alike to adults and children, usually is considered as a matter of space. Another room, a bedroom for each member of the family, another bath, would solve the family's problem in securing privacy. In some cases, no doubt, this is true, but privacy cannot be considered as purely a space problem.

Privacy may be quite as much a matter of sight and sound as of space. Violin or piano practice may be carried on outside the room quite out of sight and yet shatter all sense of privacy. Members of the family in the room who may remain absolutely quiet may completely destroy the illusion of privacy merely by being within the angle of vision.

The physical factors of space, of sight and sound, are conditioned and emphasized by age differences and temperament among family members. A room which affords ample privacy for three adults may afford none for two adults and a child, or for two adults and an aged relative. The privacy which the adult wishes is, if the needs listed by this group of families were studied, for relaxation, for reading and for hobbies. The points at which these needs conflict with the needs of the children are numberless. Tabulated below are the needs of family members for privacy which were reported. They are listed in the order of their frequency:

Father		*Mother*		*Children*	
Rest	28	Reading	23	Study	21
Study	18	Resting	16	Play	17
Work	16	Study	15	Being alone	8
Reading	15	Quiet	8	Sleeping	7
Quiet	9	Writing	6	Friends	6
Being alone	6	Being alone	5	Work	5
Music	5	Work	4	Reading	5
Writing	3	Piano practice	3	Learn to play alone	5
Thinking	2	Sleeping	3	Rest	4
Art expression	2	Typing	1	Painting, etc.	3
Entertaining without children	1	Dressing	1	Quiet	3
Talking	1	Bathing	1	Music	3
Comfort	1	Outdoor life	1	Freedom	3
Outdoor life	1	Needs sewing room	1	Handwork	2
Sleeping	1			Being away from adults.	2
Needs studio	1			Keeping personal belongings	2

For the grandmother, the reasons for the need of privacy were listed as "friends," "because of age" and "reading." Some of the comments on privacy were: "We all need privacy but cannot have it under present conditions." "Have all we need," 4 families report. "We need a living room that is not a thoroughfare."

There is throughout these answers an indication that city families do not expect the house to provide for the active play of the children. Many answers in the questionnaires made no attempt to differentiate between the needs of the children and the adults

for privacy. Study ranked first among the purposes for which children needed privacy.

The families which listed study as a reason for the children's need of privacy had children whose ages varied from 7 to 22 years. This would indicate one point at which the needs of children changes. The needs of younger children were expressed in terms of play, sleeping, and being alone.

Play Space

Outdoor play space. The astonishing fact revealed by the question on outdoor play space for children, is that in a group of families of high income, keen interest in children, and unquestionable intelligence, 5 have no outdoor space for the children and 12 mention the street.

Table 12. Outdoor play space provided for children *

Play space	*No. of families*
Own yard or grounds	56
Park or drive	47
Street	12
Playground	10
School	9
Porch	8
No outdoor place	5
Vacant lot	4
Beach	4
Woods and fields	3
Swimming pool	3
House roof	2
Nursery school roof	2
Playhouse	2
School roof	1
Court	1
Have summer in country	1
College grounds	1
Own yard with trees to climb	1
Not reporting	26

* More than one type of space is listed by some families.

If this questionnaire is used for further study a differentiation between the needs of the children should be made on the basis of needs characteristic of the age group. A further distinction should be made between work performed by either adults or children as a part of their occupation and work which concerns a hobby.

Indoor play space. The importance of having a separate room for the child increases when one learns that this room is used

as a playroom as well as a sleeping room. A large number of the families report the child's own room as his indoor play space.

Table 13. Indoor play space provided for children

Space used	*No. of families*
Children's own room	70
Playroom	24
Basement	14
Nursery	10
Whole house or apartment	9
Living room	7
Gymnasium	4
Dining room	3
Kitchen	2
Study	2
Attic	2
Foyer	2
Workshop	1
Club	1

It is interesting to note that in only 9 families have children the run of the house. Whether this is the preferred arrangement or a result of lack of space could not be determined.

The problem of recreation, including active play in the home where space is limited is an urgent one. Active play for children frequently precludes any privacy for adults. A special room for play is not a luxury even when the family lives in a small apartment. In a family with more than one child, this separate room becomes a necessity much greater, in some cases, than the need for a dining room or dinette. Children need privacy for their play—freedom from the sight and sound of adults. The group of families contributing to this study recognizes this need but thinks of it primarily in terms of space. This is in contrast to the recreational needs of adults which are expressed in terms of equipment.

Recreational Home Needs for Both Adults and Children

Some answers made no effort to distinguish between the recreational needs of the children and the adults in the family. This occurred most frequently in the mention of music and games. Home recreation for children received much more attention than recreation for adults. Ninety of the questionnaires included no answer on the recreation of adults. The recreational needs of the children center about active play; the needs of adults about

music, games, and books. The tendency seems to be for adults to regard the home as a place for rest rather than active good times. Except in the cases of music, books, and games, no mention was made of recreational facilities which would promote a family recreational program.

Table 14. Facilities needed for home recreation for children *

Facilities specified	*No. of families*
Additional rooms	86
Outdoor space	19
Space	18
Games and equipment	12

* These needed facilities ranged from essentials such as sunlight, books, and playmates to such extremes as a rathskeller.

Table 15. Provisions wanted in homes for recreation of adults

Provisions	*No. of families*
Music	48
Workshop	5
More room	5
Library	4
Game room	3
Study and place to read	3
Place for friends	2
Music room	1
Movie apparatus	1
Open fireplace in bedrooms	1
Den	1
Living room separate from bedrooms	1
Quiet	1
Own room	1
Place for drawing materials	1
Desk	1
Auto	1
Not reporting	90

Indicative of the thought which is given to this matter of recreation in the home is a small number of answers which mention a gymnasium or an especially equipped room for recreation. While such a family need apparently lingers in the thought of promoters and advertisers, mothers of families have recognized the contribution which the school and club can make in providing for these activities. Unless there are a number of children in the family a gymnasium or gymnasium equipment does not provide the op-

portunity for that group participation which is the motivating need in active recreation. While a group may gather at a home for such play the more reasonable place for equipment, expensive and space filling, is the school or club.

Several families need a room which could be used for cards, ping pong, and the like, for both children and adults.

The facilities needed for home recreation for children are in terms of additional rooms for play, or play and sleeping.

Sleeping Quarters

The importance of separate sleeping quarters for the children was emphasized in both the interviews and the answers to the questionnaires. The large percentage of answers received to this question indicates its importance in the minds of homemakers.

Table 16. Extent of privacy for sleeping purposes

Sleeping arrangements	*No. of families*
All members of family have separate room	61
Children only have separate rooms	30
Father and mother share room	36
Child and nurse share room	20
Children have own bed	17
Girls share room	5
Boys share room	4
Adult and child share rooms, separate beds	1
Families place screen between the children's beds	3
Families use the living room for sleeping quarters	3
Family uses the dining room for sleeping quarters	1

The largest group of families are two-child families which report separate rooms for each member of the family. These include a separate room for each child. The next largest group in which each member of the family has a separate room is the one-child family. One family reporting a separate room for each individual member is a six-child family, another reports a five-child family.

According to *Table 16,* many of the families provide separate beds for each child, although separate rooms are not possible.

Occupation

The classification of occupation was a difficult matter because of the multiplicity of ways in which the question was answered. The answers have been grouped under general headings.

Professional and Clerical

Educational work	30
Physician	13
Lawyer	8
Clerk, accountant, etc.	7
Artist	4
Journalism	3
Social work	3
Writer	3
Editor	1
Dentist	1
Pharmacist	1
Optician	1
Magazine distributor	1

Financial and Business

Business	24
Business executive	14
Manufacturing	8
Salesman	8
Merchant	7
Manager	7
Capitalist	1
Banking	8
Broker	4
Investment	2

Building Operations and Trades

Building operations	19
Trades	10

Among the family members mentioned in the occupational list were a number of women who had occupations other than homemaking. These were as follows:

Parental education	Lecturer
Teacher	Insurance
Social worker	School nurse
Physician	Violinist
Advertising	Student
Journalist	

Several older children were reported as clerks, bookkeepers, stenographers and teachers.

Houses and Family Needs

In regard to the question on ways in which the house met or failed to meet the family needs in day-by-day living, 32 did not answer, and 31 state that the house is adequate. The remaining comments concern additional sleeping quarters, usually in order to permit each child to have a room of his own. An additional bathroom or a downstairs lavatory ranked second in the number of answers.

Several individual answers merit a close scrutiny and a careful evaluation.

1. The house is adequate for present needs but if we have another child it will be quite inadequate.
2. We would like another baby if only the house were bigger.
3. Our *house* meets all our needs but the neighborhood has degenerated.

In several families the presence of a relative renders sleeping space inadequate. What can be done to adjust a house to a family is well told in the following:

"Originally a studio apartment with one bath and two alcoves; father drew plans for alterations that vastly improved living comfort when first child arrived. Remodeled again when second child arrived with still greater success and at apparently no sacrifice. Apartment now has eight rooms and three baths and foyer."

"Meets present needs except for more beautiful furnishings which take time to find at auctions. (Cannot use modern stuff.) We forget about this for months at a time and are not half furnished. Father had studio walls done over three times and color is not right yet, so expect to put on damask this year. Would like it to be beautiful for our own delight and as a joy in entertaining."

"This place cannot be stretched again so would be inadequate for another child which I greatly want. Meanwhile it is pleasant and just big enough."

Summary and Conclusions

This study was undertaken with the hope that families who were aware of their problems of family development in relation to housing might express something of their concrete problems and something of their attitude toward their housing situation.

The group studied is too small and the technique of establishing a connection between the housing situation of the family and the development of its members too new to permit of statistical treatment.

In addition to those trends noted in the analysis of the study the following trends are of importance:

1. That the family considers the maintaining of a home a means of securing stability for the family even though the dwelling is rented.
2. That the change in the ages of the children and consequent variation in the composition of the family indicate a need for mobility in both location of the home and space provided by the home.
3. That the housing situation is a source of strains which require the careful balancing of the needs of one family member against those of another. This bifurcation of needs is particularly evident in the matter of selecting a city or suburban location.

4. That housing facilities are rated on the provision which they make for separate sleeping rooms for each child.

5. That the house is not expected to provide for the recreation of adults and in many cases there is no provision for the outdoor recreation of the children.

This study also shows a need for small studies on specific problems. A few suggestions for such studies follow:

1. A study of the housing needs of the family in relation to the age of the children.

2. The changes in family life and their consequent effect upon relationships within the family brought about by a move from the city to the suburbs.

3. The disposition of dependent relatives of families living in apartments.

4. A detailed survey of reasons given for moving by families which have moved at least twice in a five-year period.

5. A comparison of the developmental activities of 25 apartment house families and 25 suburban families.

6. A study to determine the type of family which moves most frequently. Are these families in which the mother pursues a profession outside the home?

7. A study of families which have moved from the suburbs to the city and a classification of advantages for which they moved.

8. A study of the goals of family life in a group of apartment house families compared with a group of suburban families as these goals are expressed in the activities of the family members.

9. An examination of the aims of family life in maintaining a home as stated by members of the family compared with their activities in the home.

CHAPTER IV

THE ALABAMA STUDY[1]

The committee's program included a study of housing in relation to family development. Seven hundred questionnaires were sent out requesting information on the homes in Alabama. These questionnaires were handled by three groups. One hundred and twenty were sent to alumnae of Alabama College, 460 to 50 vocational teachers of home economics, and 120 to 30 superintendents of child welfare in the state.

At the time this report was made, a total of 402 questionnaires had been returned, 35 from the superintendents of child welfare, 317 from the vocational home economics teachers, and 50 from the alumnae. The 402 questionnaires contained information on homes in 47 of the 67 counties of the state. In a large majority of the cases the house was of the rural one-family type. Very few lived in towns and almost none in cities of any size, so that this study is one of rural conditions found in the various sections of the state. Furthermore, the type of dwelling and location are the same, generally speaking, for those in each of the three groups. That is to say, the alumnae, the vocational home economics group, and the child-welfare group, represent essentially the same type dwelling and the same general location.

It is admitted, in the first place, that there are so many factors entering into the success of family life that it is impossible to say, with any degree of certainty, that the housing *per se* has affected the success of children in that home. However, the results are such as to indicate a rather remarkable correlation between the efficiency of housing and home facilities and the success of the home.

For the purposes of this partial report, due to lack of time to make a more complete study, the items in the questionnaire sent out were compiled from only two sections, but only those items that related definitely to the housing situation were included. Data on 402 homes relative to the housing situation itself, including the number in the family, number of rooms, the income of the

[1] This report was prepared by O. C. Carmichael, President, Alabama State College, for the Committee on Housing and Family Life.

family, etc., were studied in relation to the rating of the facilities found in that home as they concern the activities taking place in the home, as they concern the physical features of the house, and as they concern provisions of the house for activities in relation to growing children.

The following tabulation illustrates some facts relative to the actual housing situation in the Alabama counties:

	Child welfare groups	Vocational home economics high school students	Alumnae
Average number in family	6	6	4
Average number of rooms	4	6	6
Average yearly income	$479.94*	$2,214.30	$3,858.37
Number owning homes	8	238	33
Number renting homes	26	76	17
Number with bathrooms	4	82	48
Number without bathrooms	31	235	2

* Many of these families were farm tenants.

From the above table it will be noted that the size of the family is in inverse ratio to the size of the home in the child welfare group. That is, in this group, the home is smallest when the family is largest, while the reverse is true of the alumnae group. As would be expected, those homes studied by the child welfare superintendents, which are in most cases homes in which there have been school-attendance problems, indicate that the majority are renters, whereas with the alumnae group the majority own their homes. The vocational home economics high school group, a sort of midway group between the other two, shows a larger percentage of home ownership than the child welfare group, and a smaller percentage than the alumnae group. Similarly the income of the vocational group is between the other two.

As already indicated, the general situation, that is to say the type of house and its location, is more or less uniform for the three groups. Of the 402 homes, 370 are one-family dwellings. Three hundred and twenty-six are in the country or in villages with less than 2,500 inhabitants.

What about the efficiency of housing according to the rating given by those living in the house in providing for the activities of members of the household? A very brief summary of this compilation is given below. It will be noted that there are five grades of efficiency as considered by the rater, represented by

the figures 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4, zero being the lowest grade and four the highest or excellent. For each home there are thirty-five items to be checked. These embrace facilities for the following activities:

1. Cooking.
2. Eating meals.
3. Sleeping.
4. Renting.
5. Smoking.
6. Being alone.
7. Sunning one's self.
8. Physical exercise.
9. Bathing.
10. Dressing.
11. Courting.
12. Treatment of accidents.
13. Helping family members with tasks not your own.
14. Holding committee meetings community affairs.
15. Entertaining.
16. Playing cards or indoor games.
17. Playing tennis, golf, other games of skill.
18. Being with others for pleasure of company.
19. Washing dishes.
20. Canning fruit.
21. Laundry.
22. Sewing.
23. Repairing household equipment.
24. Care of pets.
25. Making collections of stones, nature collections, etc.
26. Gardening.
27. Cleaning house.
28. Decorating house and arranging furniture, pictures, etc.
29. Storing tools, paints, etc.
30. Art work such as drawing, embroidering, etc.
31. Listening to music.
32. Playing musical instruments.
33. Reading.
34. Reading aloud.
35. Learning new skills, i.e., a new game, or weaving, carving, etc.

A compilation of the answers to these questions is as follows:

	Numbers				
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Child Welfare clients	188	150	190	68	54
Vocational H. S. H. E. students	178	364	1,323	2,625	3,313
Alumnae	12	42	145	234	529
	Percentages				
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Child Welfare clients	29	23	29	10	9
Vocational H. S. H. E. students	2	5	17	34	42
Alumnae	1	4	15	23	55

It will be noted that again as we found in the study of the housing situation itself the rating of the efficiency of the home shows the child welfare group to be the lowest, the alumnae group the highest, and the vocational home economics group in between.

There are thirteen items listed on the questionnaire relating to the physical features of the house. They are as follows:

1. Repair of exterior of house.
2. Repair of interior of house.
3. Size of community.
4. Location of house.
5. Renting property.
6. Owning property.
7. Number of rooms in house.
8. Arrangement of rooms.
9. Size of rooms.
10. Storage space.
11. Heating system.
12. Lighting system.
13. Sewerage system.

A summary of these items as they appear on the records of the three groups studied is shown below:

	Numbers				
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Child Welfare clients	155	105	76	66	40
Vocational H. S. H. E. students	213	344	803	1,210	1,133
Alumnae	12	33	78	188	265

	Percentages				
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Child Welfare clients	35	24	17	15	9
Vocational H. S. H. E. students	6	9	21	31	30
Alumnae	2	6	14	32	46

Even more important than facilities for activities of members of the family and the physical features of the house is the provision made for activities in relation to growing children. One of the sections of the general questionnaire sent out contains eleven items. These items are as follows:

1. Outside play space for children.
2. Inside play space for children.
3. Provision for children having friends to play with them.
4. Sleeping arrangements for children.
5. Place for toys and personal possessions.
6. Place for clothing.
7. Place for outdoor wraps.
8. Place for study and reading.
9. Place for entertaining individual callers.
10. Care of small children.
11. Teaching children to cooperate through homemaking.

The following table indicates the rating of the four hundred homes with regard to provision of the various elements necessary to the growing child. Again will be noted the separation into the three groups:

	Numbers				
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Child Welfare clients	158	100	65	27	13
Vocational H. S. H. E. students	93	251	627	1,074	1,004
Alumnae	11	32	82	137	161

	Percentages				
	0	1	2	3	4
Child Welfare clients.....	43	28	18	8	3
Vocational H. S. H. E. students....	3	8	20	35	32
Alumnae	3	8	19	32	38

There are the most striking differences in the efficiency of the homes of the children studied by the child welfare superintendents and the high school students, and the alumnae. The very low rating of homes in providing the facilities for the children as found in that group which constitute school-attendance problems is sound evidence of the fact that poor housing is closely related to unsuccessful children. It is worthy of note, however, that even in the families of high school students and in the families of alumnae the facilities provided for the growing child are inadequate. When only a little more than 30 per cent are rated as excellent and another 30 per cent as fair, there seems a real problem of providing proper home facilities for the growing child.

Furthermore, play space for children in the open country should be a minor problem. There should be no difficulty in finding it, provided the proper care is exercised to see that available space is converted into playgrounds for children. In other words, it is obvious that much of the inefficiency is due to lack of knowledge or desire on the part of families to provide more adequately for their children.

In brief, the following conclusions may be drawn from the data compiled from the questionnaires received:

1. Poor housing and inadequate facilities for the activities of the members of the household are closely associated with delinquent and ineffective children.

2. That the facilities are unsatisfying, and inadequate to meet the needs of the family and its activities in the homes studied.

3. Especially are the facilities for the growing child inadequate. Those living in the rural communities should have the least difficulty with this phase of the problem of caring properly for children; yet it would seem that on the average little provision has been made and that this is particularly true in the homes where children show a tendency towards delinquency.

PART II. HOME FURNISHING AND DECORATION

INTRODUCTION

This report which is the result of a preliminary survey of the decoration and home furnishing fields offers a definite plan for the progressive development of these fields. Due to the limited time at the disposal of the committee, much further study and analysis should be made before the complete detailed form of the recommendations is determined. This committee, therefore, suggests that the present report be carried forward to completion by a continuing committee, thus providing opportunity to work out more detailed recommendations regarding ways and means of starting the work herein outlined.

This continuing committee should be vested with power to add to its number as need arises. The present committee stresses the importance of maintaining a balance and thorough-going coordination of the educational, vocational, economic and decorative viewpoints. As this work cannot be done rapidly, it is suggested that at least one full year be given in which to formulate plans with the provision that, if the work is not then completed, the committee shall continue to serve for such further length of time as may be determined by the present supporters of the Conference.

Great progress has been made in the field of decoration in the United States during the last twenty-five years. It has reached the place where strong measures should be taken to insure its future healthy growth. The greatest existent evil is in the lack of sound and fundamental knowledge sufficiently widespread to reach all of the forces working in this field. This results in the dissemination of many half truths, much misinformation and misrepresentation which lower standards and lessen values. There is also, in spite of recent improvement, a great lack of good design in household furniture and commodities at present available for the consumer of medium and low income—that is, for the bulk of the American public.

CHAPTER V

THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

To remedy the present condition and provide a sound basis for future growth the committee makes the following specific recommendations. Inasmuch as the proper kind of information cannot be broadcast to our public until there are people who possess that information, it seems wise to start immediately to build for the future by getting people adequately trained. To this end, the first three recommendations deal with the source of information and its branches—namely, the establishment of a Central School for Professional Decorators that shall be of the same high standing as our technological, medical, law and architectural graduate schools, and from which shall emanate training reaching our entire public through institutes, service bureaus and existing agencies.

Recommendation I. The establishment of a central school for the training of leaders—professional decorators—coordinating with industrial and educational forces.

Recommendation II. The establishment of a series of institutes under the central school system for:

1. Commercial workers—now often misinformed regarding decorating standards. Here they would come in contact with sound and accurate information.
2. Teachers, where they would have conference work with leading specialists and so get first-hand information that is at present unavailable to them.
3. Homemakers, where they would receive advanced instruction in home-furnishing subjects.

Recommendation III. The establishment of local decorative service bureaus to which homemakers could go for advice and where they would come in contact with highly trained people from the professional central school and be able to carry through to successful completion any ordinary type of work. These bureaus would cooperate as far as possible with all existing agencies and be station points for the distribution of pamphlets, illustrative material, radio talks, and general educational work.

The committee further stresses the desirability of issuing much needed accurate printed information and illustrative material on these subjects through the central school as outlined in the following recommendations IV, V, VI and VII.

Recommendation IV. For the homemakers—a series of pamphlets carefully prepared by recognized experts, supplemented by fine illustrative material giving proper emphasis to text and showing actual samples.

Recommendation V. For the teaching group—a similar series of pamphlets adapted to the varying types of schools. These would be supplemented by exhibitions and portfolio material composed of actual samples. There also would be a book on methods, after certain experiments with classes using these actual samples and adequate information had been set up and results made obtainable.

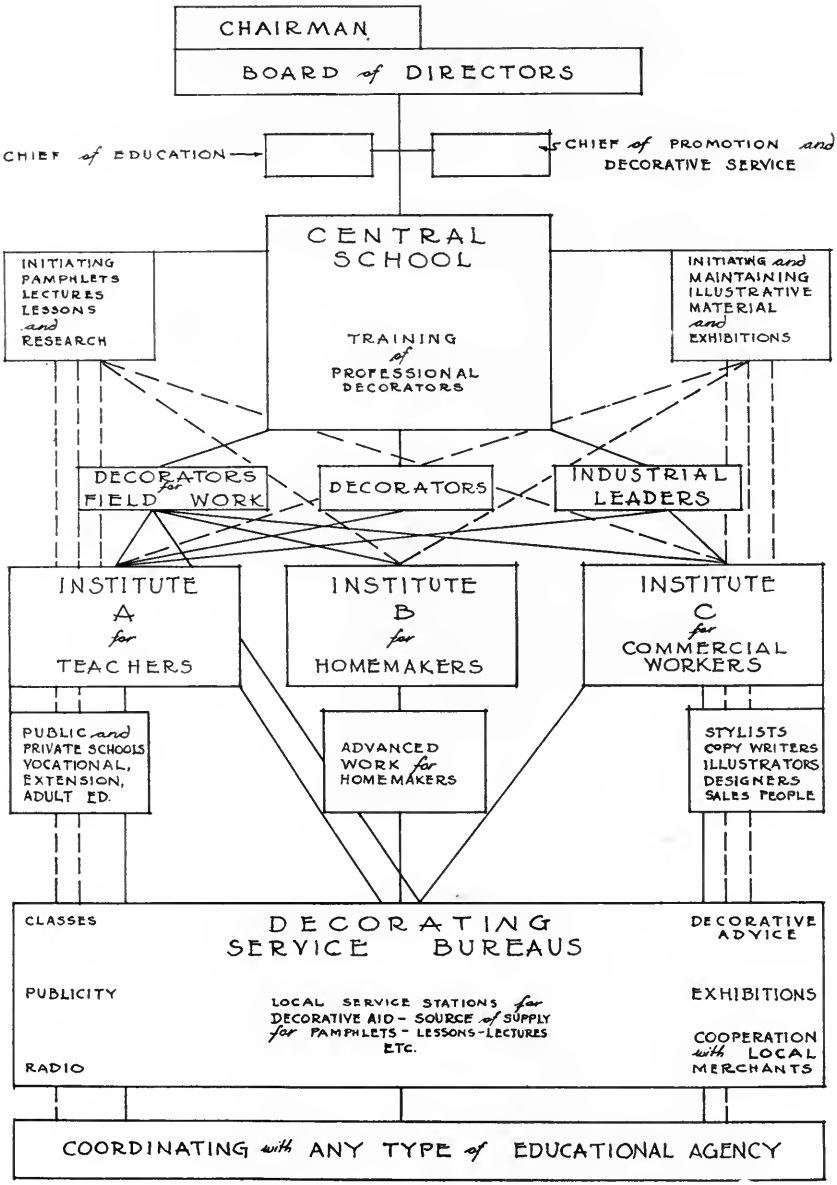
Recommendation VI. For advanced students and technical workers in the industries—pamphlets containing information of the highest technical character. The articles would be written by recognized leaders in each field.

Recommendation VII. For club lectures and classes—a series of lessons and several single lectures to be used where the services of well-versed and experienced decorators are not easily obtainable. These would be accompanied by illustrative material composed of photographs, slides, adequate paint samples, and fabrics.

The committee also strongly urges definite measures to make possible the production of simple furniture in authentic taste.

Recommendation VIII. That a number of practical working drawings of individual pieces of furniture suitable for grouping and based on lowest cost estimates be placed on file at Washington with Better Homes in America and in various stations, such as museums, throughout the country. These drawings would be available free of charge to manufacturers, cabinet-makers, manual training teachers, and homemakers handy with tools. To insure the integrity of this plan, it will be necessary to have the production of these designs supervised by a body of experts represented in the Board of Directors of the Central School.

The recommendations, outlined above in briefly summarized form, are the result of a careful analysis of the situation existing at the present time, taking due cognizance of both the healthy aspects of progress and those that are leading toward undesirable conditions. These recommendations are presented as a basis for action, looking forward to a constructive plan for the future and hoping to avoid the pitfalls of the past.


CHAIRMAN
BOARD of DIRECTORS
CHIEF of EDUCATION
CHIEF of PROMOTION and DECORATIVE SERVICE
CENTRAL SCHOOL
TRAINING of PROFESSIONAL DECORATORS
INITIATING PAMPHLETS LECTURES LESSONS and RESEARCH
INITIATING and MAINTAINING ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL and EXHIBITIONS
DECORATORS for FIELD WORK
DECORATORS
INDUSTRIAL LEADERS
INSTITUTE A for TEACHERS
INSTITUTE B for HOMEMAKERS
INSTITUTE C for COMMERCIAL WORKERS
PUBLIC and PRIVATE SCHOOLS VOCATIONAL, EXTENSION, ADULT ED.
ADVANCED WORK for HOMEMAKERS
STYLISTS COPY WRITERS ILLUSTRATORS DESIGNERS SALES PEOPLE
CLASSES
PUBLICITY
RADIO
DECORATING SERVICE BUREAUS
LOCAL SERVICE STATIONS for DECORATIVE AID - SOURCE of SUPPLY for PAMPHLETS - LESSONS - LECTURES ETC.
DECORATIVE ADVICE
EXHIBITIONS
COOPERATION with LOCAL MERCHANTS
COORDINATING with ANY TYPE of EDUCATIONAL AGENCY

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS AND NEEDS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

As has already been stated in the Introduction, great progress has been made in this field of home furnishing and decoration during the last twenty-five years. One of the most encouraging aspects of this progress is the growing recognition of the value of comfortable and beautiful home surroundings to the well-being of our people in terms of contentment, satisfactions, and aspirations.

This growth has been due to many factors, and the present condition unquestionably indicates healthy progress. Largely through the widespread channels of our educational systems, children from all types of homes have been brought into contact with opportunities for happier living. Hundreds of thousands of people of all classes, representing incomes from the subsistence level up to the higher luxury stages, have been steadily developing their appreciation of the value of better home furnishings in everyday living. This is clearly shown by the increased demand for literature on the subject.

Channels other than the schools have been contributing to this progress. Public demand has been responsible for the appearance of home-furnishing articles in many types of publications besides the specialized decorating magazines. Advertisers have made use of much of the data both in space advertising and through pamphlets, booklets, and, in some cases, the radio. There are, however, several factors in the present situation which, if allowed to run along unchecked, may prove to be serious deterrents to further progress.

From the Standpoint of the Public at Large

The lack of coordination between these widely divergent agencies and their lack of adherence to the best standard practices in design and craftsmanship as measured by good decorating standards are two weaknesses that leave the public with greatly lessened values and low standards. These various agencies have grown up in sporadic fashion, undirected in large measure, and, while they

have done splendid service in many respects, their lack of contact with first-hand sources of information has been a serious deterrent to the establishment of sound decorating values. Some cohesion, some checking and guidance are necessary if the best results are obtained for our people in terms of satisfaction, and for our industries in terms of constantly increasing demands from a healthy growing public taste.

Lack of widespread use of best decorating standards. In many cases, actual misinformation is going out to our people, due to enthusiasm rather than real knowledge on the part of many of those employed to write, speak or sell in the field. Conditions have changed radically in this field during the last twenty-five years. The old days of selling home furnishings with the major emphasis upon them merely as useful commodities have gone. Those were the days when the homemaker depended largely upon the salesman for advice. It was his duty to give the homemaker the best advice that he could, but also to turn over the stock to the best possible advantage to the store.

Our public has changed. Through travel, wider reading and contact with the older standards of Europe, there has come a demand among hundreds of thousands of our shoppers for something better than the taste of the average salesman. Good taste has become a definitely recognized goal, and because of this demand the specialist-decorator has come into existence and, in the best interpretation of the work from a professional standpoint, stands to the public at large in the same relation as the doctor, the lawyer and the architect. The decorator, as in the case of these other professional workers, is necessarily an impartial adviser uninfluenced by the necessity of selling any particular stock. Only when this standard is rigidly maintained can the decorator serve the best interests of the client.

This change and the segregation of the decorators from the usual mercantile field have in turn brought about a gradual clarification of design and craftsmanship ideas and have gone far in training the taste of a large proportion of the public—particularly in the upper- and middle-income groups—to the point of demanding not only useful commodities, but also rooms that represent the finest of decorative standards.

The situation at present is as follows: At the top, representing the clearest ideas of standards in this field, are the best of the

professional decorators. It is to be deplored that attached to this profession are many who do not reflect its highest standards. Their influence does not, however, hinder the steady progress being made by the serious work of those who are the genuine leaders in the field. The gift shops and various small shops where some decorating is done follow as a class between the professionals and the large stores. The emphasis here is upon trading rather than the pure decorating service. In a third group are the large stores where the business is conducted from regular stock in the traditional mercantile fashion. Some of these stores have special decorating departments where the decorators in charge are not held to use of the store stock. In many cases, however, these departments are under pressure to produce a definite amount of business over a specified time—which has the same effect upon giving disinterested advice as does selling from a definite stock.

These changes in the stores and the rise of the decorator have produced a difficult problem from the standpoint of the homemaker with good taste and medium or small income. She cannot afford to go to the artist-decorator who is specializing in fine creative work in the higher-income group. The store, with its ability to reduce expense by handling merchandise according to the best of trade traditions, is her real shopping home. Nevertheless, this homemaker feels that she has a right to the best knowledge of the decorator-specialist applied to the lower-priced articles and simpler designs that she can find in her own shopping home. Stores cannot afford to give free advice that carries too much capital away from their own stocks. They are not philanthropic agencies, nor should they be expected to serve in that capacity. The budgeting departments have done much good work, but in the end, as far as the homemaker is concerned, attention is concentrated upon the store stock and she has not always had the type of decorative advice that is in line with the best of the unprejudiced decorating standards of the highly trained specialist. The result to the public is confusion, due to this fundamental difference in viewpoint between the type and standard of work sponsored by the best professional decorator and that which is frankly based upon trade traditions. Fundamentally, there should be no confusion, and the clarification of standards constantly being carried forward by the serious professional workers should be available to the public through these various intermediate agencies. Mis-

information is costly, both to the public and to the industries. The disappointments of the public who buy under the influence of uninformed high-pressure salesmanship, and learn within a short time how little of real worth and consequent satisfaction their expenditures have brought, act in the end like boomerangs upon the home-furnishing industry as a whole.

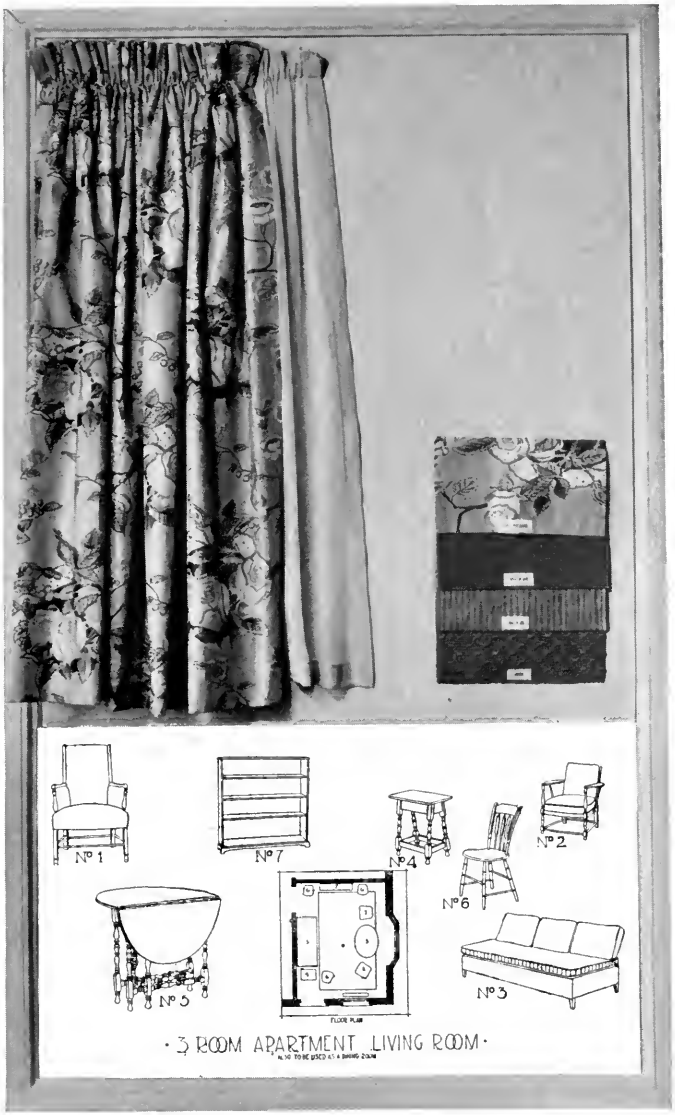
The committee believes that this unfortunate situation, which is a real deterrent to progress over a widespread field, can be remedied. Constructive suggestions relative to its solution will be found on pages 119-131.

A second phase of this situation, as related directly to the values received by our public, demands equal attention. Many goods are made from inferior materials. Some of them are unsanitary. They are placed before the public with certain trade designations, and accompanied by statements that are in effect, misrepresentations in that they are misleading. The answer to this difficulty seems to lie within the scope of the work of the various trade organizations in standardizing and marking products in such open fashion as to preclude the possibility of deceiving the public by these misleading trade designations. Some of the manufacturers already are safeguarding their standards in this manner. The misuse of decorative information to create false impressions is also to be deplored in this connection.

Incomes and Budgets

The buying power of the American public, as shown by incomes and the normal range of expenditures, is a necessary basis for any concrete suggestions regarding qualities of merchandise, details of decorating-interpreting of the best professional standards, or the character of the educational work needed to counteract some of the rapidly spreading evils.

Luxury incomes are represented by a very small proportion of the public. As the average family income of a large proportion of the population in both urban and rural communities in the United States appears to be $1,500 or under a year, these groups may be taken as the ones upon which major emphasis should be placed. Among the incomes ranging from $1,500 to $2,000 and from $2,000 to $10,000, with their several subdivisions, also lies a great problem to which attention should be directed.



Living room. The wallpaper is a rich deep cream with small pattern in slightly darker tone of the same color. The woodwork is a lighter tone of the same color. The glazed chintz curtains have a green background with figures of orange, brown, yellow and white. The furniture is finished in walnut and maple tones with the exception of the bookcase which is painted green. The couch is covered in rep of soft rust tone and has pillows like the curtains. Rust and green materials are used to upholster the two arm chairs.

Bedroom. The wallpaper has a light ivory background with fresh, clean green and red in the floral pattern. Woodwork matches the green ground. The curtains are of ivory organdie with green ruffles. The side chair and the mirror are in maple finish; the bed and chest are painted green.

In Group I, composed of those living within an income of $1,500 or less, the most careful planning is necessary for even minimum comfort. Some members of this group are among those having discriminating taste and their problem is one of the most difficult that we have to face. The greater bulk, however, belong in a different classification and must be reached through very different channels. The usual contacts are by means of teaching through the public schools, the home demonstration work, vocational classes, extension classes, and settlement work in both adult and children's classes. From the standpoint of the children, suggestions for this group are very important, as they are far reaching in their effect upon setting better standards of living, arousing ambition, and opening the eyes of both children and parents to richer enjoyments of life. A little work with these children may have important results in terms of later citizenship. So far, the material of fine taste content adapted to meet their information needs has been woefully inadequate. Much work remains to be done, and the agencies laboring in this field are badly in need of assistance. Special attention should be given to the simplest of suggestions applicable to these homes of low-income families which would require of them but a minimum of expenditure.

Many low-income families are found in the rural groups. Buying home furnishings wisely at low cost is exceedingly difficult. However, the tremendous improvements in a few types of merchandise in this field during the last few years, and the increased information made attractively and easily available to the members of the farm family open new opportunities. There is a great need for more well-trained extension workers and more and better instruction in the public schools. There is also need of industrial cooperation for better design at these lower price levels.

The next income level—that of Group II—may be taken from $1,500–$2,000.

Houses for this group are reported as in the $3,400–$5,000 class. These houses have from three to five rooms. A family of five requires three bedrooms, assuming father and mother, one or more sons and one or more daughters.

These houses, as well as those in the following income groups, vary from the California style, based on examples from the Mediterranean, to the New England clapboard styles. The ex-

perience of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau seems to point to the following classification:

1. The Mediterranean style, i.e., the stucco or plaster house of simple contour, with low-pitched roof and colorful tiles and trim.
2. The New England style, rectangular in character, usually with moderate gable roof, clapboarded and, in the later expressions, showing the classic influence of the English Georgian styles.
3. The half-timber English houses with stucco or plaster and marked overhang.
4. The modern American, by which is meant the nondescript house of no particular period inspiration, and often of the ugliest proportion.

Ordinarily a fair basis for the computation of the expenditures for furnishing in relation to size and type of house is 20 to 33⅓ per cent of the cost of the house and land. In these lower-income groups, the sum represented by this investment seems to be entirely out of scale, for both urban and rural conditions. Five hundred dollars seems to be an outside sum available for the city dwellers of this income group, and the committee working on the Wyoming report for farms recommended $442. In the majority of cases, it is probably safe to say that the usual rate of expenditure actually does not run so high as either of these figures. From $250 to $400 is much more common, with replacements and additions averaging somewhere between $40 and $100 a year.

It is a well-known fact that the $250-$400 furnishing budget is much too small for these houses costing from $3,400 to $5,000. There is little doubt that young couples could greatly increase their comfort by being properly informed as to when and how to plan proper expenditures for the furnishings. The committee wishes to place special stress upon the importance of laying out a complete plan, including the furnishing, when contemplating building. A definite budget for the furnishings should be part of the original financing budget. There are hundreds of thousands of houses in this country with exteriors which represent an expenditure far above the quality of the furnishings within. There are consequent lack of comfort and lessened total value in terms of daily living. This is due to the failure to consider the structure and its interior furnishings as a unit in the first instance, as wise economy dictates for the average householder.

Another point for strong emphasis in relation to the furnishing of houses in this group is that of the importance of buying good

furniture at the outset. It must be low-priced furniture, but it should be good in design and as good in respect to construction and materials as the price will allow. It should not be showy at the expense of quality nor should "things" be bought merely to fill space. It is better to buy a few pieces wisely and have them for years to come than to furnish with more pieces of too temporary a character. Much can be said and done in this connection to improve the proportioning of the various expenditures within rooms. Many interesting opportunities can be opened up for these lower-income groups if the interest and attention of the professional decorators can be enlisted.

This higher-bracketed Group II has many more points for contact than Group I. Schools should offer one of the best opportunities, and much more can be accomplished through this channel than has been done up to the present. With more adequate information and illustrative material suited to the solution of the problems of this group placed at the disposal of art and home economics teachers, and with opportunities for these teachers to have intensive training in the subject, thousands of homes that are now entirely untouched by the possibilities for better home environment could be helped. There is great need of combined effort to work out practical and satisfactory suggestions for school work in this field, representing this income level. There is also great need of encouraging a better grade of design in furniture and furnishings at this low-cost level.

For this group, the newspapers offer another excellent means of contact through special articles, provided these articles are not controlled to too great an extent by undesirable types of advertising. Statistics show that an appreciable amount is spent by these groups upon reading matter. Household magazines afford excellent outlets for information in this field provided their departments present the best of decorating standards. The radio offers another means of communication and contact. With the present custom of selling time to advertising programs, it is difficult to see how much good educational work can be done in this field. The emphasis is on the salesmanship aspect. It is a problem upon which definite constructive work is much needed, as a large part of the information given out by this means falls far short of good decorating standards.

In this Group II, the items of replacement and additions to the furnishings represent small amounts that require the most careful planning, in order that the family may accumulate furnishings wisely over a period of years. Much spasmodic and wasteful buying can be eliminated by means of intelligent planning. When the home is owned, and moving is not likely to take place for several years, the idea of a careful plan for the first year and supplementary plans for the ensuing years is easily appreciated. Even if the home is rented, much waste easily can be eliminated by careful budgeting and choices that are sufficiently adaptable to stand the strain of new settings. These statements apply equally to rural and urban homes of this income level, with the exception that magazines and books will receive more attention in the rural sections than among the workers at the same income level in cities.

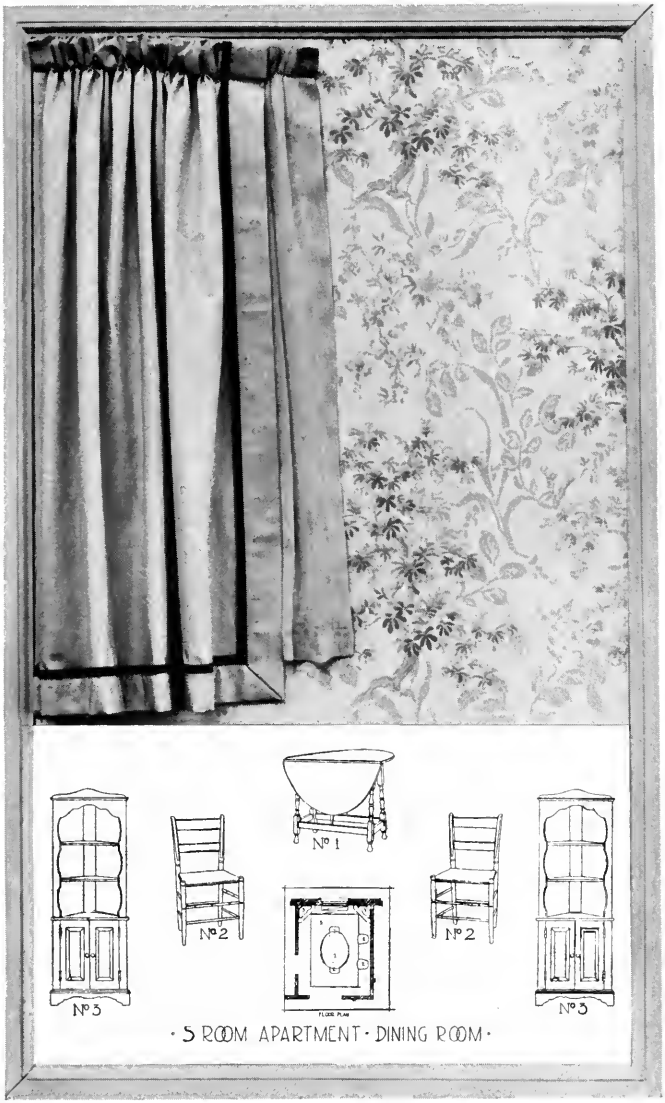
The wide diversity of tastes plus the present lack of really adequate income and budget data make the present types of budget planning less effective than is desirable. The committee has made several specific suggestions regarding this procedure and recommends strongly the adoption of a new type of budgeting for this purpose. This new type is discussed on pages 125-128.

The next income levels have been grouped under one heading. Group III, represents incomes from $2,000-$10,000. These incomes group themselves again in the classifications $2,000-$3,000; $3,000-$5,000; and $5,000-$10,000. Each one represents widely divergent possibilities. One family places the emphasis upon a particular phase of living in the expenditure of the surplus above the ordinary necessities; another finds greatest satisfaction by placing the emphasis in another direction. There are many unknown factors in the affairs of each family that make it difficult to know what proportion of the income may be available for the house and its furnishings.

There is great need of information regarding articles available at various sums, and what their values represent in terms of both decorative quality and structure with its correlative of wearing quality. Over and above this stands the need of the development of good judgment—which can come only through considering rooms and houses as decorative units. This is a matter of knowledge in the field of decorative composition.

From the standpoint of the public at large, there is, in the incomes from lowest levels up to $10,000, great need of:

Living room. Wallpaper of simple dignified character in warm grey with soft, reddish-orange figure and fine lines of green. Curtains of glazed chintz with mellow cream ground, and pattern of blue-green, rich, deep orange-red and yellows and a few notes of brown. The binding is of green of the same material as that used for binding of curtains in the dining room. The couch is covered with green rep with lighter green jaspé pillows. The Cape Cod easy chair in maple finish has orange strié cushions. The other easy chair, painted green, is upholstered in the curtain material. The side chair and bookcase are painted green.



Dining room. The wallpaper has orange and grey figures upon a soft yellow background. The woodwork for both rooms is carefully toned to suit the two individual papers and is a warm deep ivory. The curtains are orange Indian head with piping of blue-green—the same as the banding on the living room curtains. Papers and curtains in these two adjoining rooms show contrast yet are woven together by means of careful balance in color and scale of pattern. The corner cupboards and table are in maple finish. The chairs are green.

1. Sound, accurate and authentic information.
2. Greater opportunity for authentic and unprejudiced advice regarding home interiors.
3. More merchandise that follows the best standards of design and craftsmanship.

Constructive plans to cover these needs are recommended in the section of the report found on pages 119-131 and in the Summary of Specific Recommendations on pages 101-102.

Industrial Aspects

Danger of false style stimulation. An existing factor of weakness almost as intangible as those mentioned under the subject of misinformation going out to the public through ignorance, lies in false style stimulation. The present efforts to introduce fashion elements into the home-furnishing field produce an artificial stimulation of interest that like the misstatements and misrepresentations may prove to be boomerangs. When materials and structures are of such a nature as to presuppose continuous wear, and their cost represents a genuine investment, as is the case with furniture, it is fair to assume that undue effort to upset the normal satisfactions of acquiring and using them is an unsound procedure. It is an effort to make today pay as much as possible regardless of what happens tomorrow. It has the further unfortunate effect of giving many people the feeling that there are no laws governing good taste, that taste is the whim of the moment and of some particular person. The logical conclusion to them is that there are no permanent values, no real investment values, ugliness is as valuable as beauty, and change, in order to be like one's neighbor, is a fair standard of living. All of these conclusions are essentially unsound and uneconomical.

Substantial sums go into the furnishing of any home, no matter how simple it may be. Whatever proportion they bear to income or wages, they represent a noticeable percentage. Particularly in the lower- and middle-income groups, these sums always represent effort and often great sacrifice in many other directions. There is every reason for demanding full value for money spent and refusing to be warped out of good judgment by blandishment, argument, or the subtleties of trade propaganda. Any object that is once good design is always good design. Items are soundly

bought when they represent good design in as good material as the price will allow.

Normal Style Trends

It takes several years for a design idea to become accepted and established in this type of work. Normal style "sets"—which usually last over a period of many years—develop ordinarily from the work of one or more creative designers. Their designs are not only taken up for the moment; they give continual satisfaction which in turn sells them to other people. Creative designing of this nature is necessarily fostered first in the upper-income group. More or less rapidly—dependent upon many factors—these designs are accepted by larger and larger groups of people. Price is a large controlling factor in general acceptance; and when an idea reaches the stage of sufficiently wide acceptance to warrant the lower-price manufacturer to take a gamble on quantity production, that idea is widely launched. But there are likely to be modifications made necessary by the lower-price range. These are sometimes good, but often poor. By the time the idea has reached these last stages, creative effort in the upper price levels has produced something else—normally, it is something not utterly radical but rather something usable in the previous setting and indicative of fresh ideas.

At all of these various price levels with normal style trends, people buy items expecting to add to them over a period of years and gradually create home centers. These developing tastes create new needs which in turn, assuming ordinary increase of income, provide the basis for growth of business. Effort to upset this normal trend of style by means of trying to shame people into buying radically different things, and by constant change is an unsound method of getting present quick profits at the expense of sound, steady and continuous business. House furnishings cannot be treated like wearing apparel, and in the end artificial style or fashion stimulation is bound to bring overstocking on the part of retailers as well as slow turnover of stock.

That the industries themselves have begun to be conscious of this false style stimulation and the consequent production of too numerous and unrelated types is indicated by movements recently sponsored by trade organizations.

The danger of the insufficiently educated stylist. Another

factor indicating weakness in relation to this style question exists in the commercial so-called "stylist." It is generally acknowledged that the weakest spots in the home-supplying industries are shown in the personnel of the factory salesmen, the wholesalers, the retail buyers and salesmen and clerks. The public demand for better things and better taste already has far outstripped the growth in the industrial field, i.e., the willingness of these workers to learn and progress. Some of the most progressive stores have been doing splendid work and making every effort to break through the inertia. Their success has been marked, but, unfortunately, they are isolated examples.

Manufacturers for the most part are willing to make any kind of goods provided they can be assured of a reasonable return upon their investment. Many of the far-sighted ones have been wise enough to go beyond the story of last year's sales and to study with care the trend of the times as it is affecting the public at large. This observation refers specifically to the study of groups buying in the price range immediately above that in which their own commodity stands. In so doing they follow the well-known style law, that is, it is from the behavior of the group above that their main style push comes. Reports merely of what people bought last year are not necessarily a healthy index of trends of the public desire. Due to the shortsightedness of buyers and salespeople, these reports may be limited to what the public in desperation can find to buy.

Some manufacturers have enlisted the aid of service departments of the leading magazines and added to their staffs persons known as "stylists" who are familiar with these trends at all the price levels, are familiar with the design details of home-furnishing products in general, and also with national merchandising problems. In a few cases, where the stylist has had sufficient training to do this difficult task, the results have amply justified the means. Unfortunately, there have arisen many claimants for this type of position who have had insufficient training in both the merchandising and art side; they have enthusiasm, a little taste, and some knowledge—not enough wisely to guide a manufacturer facing the difficult problems of adjustment in a market that is in a frankly transitory position with respect to the element of style. Too high praise cannot be accorded to those who have done able work; but the weaker aspirants have already

done much harm. The stylist evil also enters into the retail situation. Many retailers have tried to supplement the work of the buyers with these young, untrained, and insufficiently oriented advisers. A few outstanding successes have not compensated for the difficulties established by the tyros. Whether the proper education of the buyer or the combination of a keenly tuned buyer with an adequately trained stylist is the best solution is outside the province of this report. In either case, as the situation now exists in its relation to the buying public and the growth of the industries centered about the home furnishings and decoration field, there is a crying need for education—information sound and fundamental in character.

The dangerous fad. The establishment of proper training facilities for these elements might serve to better another unfortunate phase of the present situation. Excellent judgment in these intermediate markets is needed to sift the chaff from the wheat, the fads and fancies from the major trends of style. The perversion of a fanciful idea used by a decorator under particular and individual conditions often has produced a decorative horror by the time it has reached the store public. This statement is made with all due allowances for differences in individual tastes. But there are some things far beyond the bounds of good taste—the actual violations of fundamental laws of design. These result in an uneconomic waste of income that the great percentage of our families cannot afford. Conspicuous examples are the badly designed china figures, the bead portieres, the millinery lampshades, the crush tablecovers, the floor pillows, the pseudo-tapestries and even the wildly painted breakfast rooms and sun parlors. Often these fads are expensive in entirely different fashion to the consumer. For example, in the case of the present-day colored porcelains, the color firings are often uncertain. Bad firings have to be repeated. The consumer pays the price in the good one she buys. Manufacturers are not magicians. There seems to be open opportunity here for wider cooperation that would at least stem the tide of some of this flagrant waste, give the lower-income groups of our people sound decorative values for the carefully saved portions of their income that can be expended upon furnishings, and release the manufacturers from the bugbears of fallacious style trends.

Lack of sufficient fine creative design in the United States. Considered nationally, in view of the records of history and of the normal trends of creating and producing, we show a most unhappy weakness in fine creative design in this field. The majority of our best work still comes from European inspiration, past or present. We have mechanized the process of production; we have done wonders in the establishment of machinery to "get it across;" but we have not studied the sources of our design inspiration with any thoroughness nor have we set ourselves to the task of selecting, fostering, and protecting our best talent or of educating our people to appreciate the results. Great design needs an audience to support the work of its creators. It is questionable if we shall ever reach the zenith of our power and take full advantage of our wonderful opportunities until culture and taste take an honored place among our people and their presence is recognized as an everyday necessity.

Furniture design and price levels. In any discussion of furniture designed and manufactured in the United States, it is first advisable to set up a basis for comparison by accepting the antique standard for perfection of outline and general practicability. As to the nature of design, it seems necessary to establish a viewpoint midway between the pure antique and modern commercial furniture as it stands today, because a great many antique pieces do not reach the peak of perfection, while in modern furniture there is also good and bad. It is only the outstanding pieces of the antique which we have accepted as ideal.

Noticeable improvement in high-price furniture design in this country has been apparent for some time. This is largely due to increased knowledge of correct period examples and an actual demand for refined and authentic furniture. The lower grades, with which we are chiefly concerned, reflect only to a certain extent the general improvement of the upper group. There are a few instances where factories have specialized in types of period furniture of which they have considerable knowledge. At the present time this small group of pioneers in good moderate-priced furniture is scattered among manufacturing centers in the East, West, and South. Strictly speaking, correct period furniture of the lower grades, adapted from European and American originals, is at a very low ebb. Most of the so-called Early American Re-

production Furniture is largely misnamed. In this field we find a decided lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of design as applied to our early furniture, and the same is true of the Colonial and Federal periods which follow. It would seem we lack the taste and knowledge necessary to reproduce or adapt with distinction the designs of our native cabinetmakers, many examples of which are available for guidance and study. To the casual student of American antique furniture it might seem that to reproduce these designs would prove an easy task on account of their simplicity. Quite the contrary. This furniture exhibits certain salient features peculiar to the section or locality in which it was made, so that a thorough knowledge of these characteristics must be had in order to manufacture with any degree of accuracy. Furniture in New England was definitely limited in scale to the small rooms in which it was intended to be used. Each little cabinet shop or section contributed some type of design, perhaps some peculiarity of turning, carving, or inlay, or the use of certain moldings and beads. Many of these pieces run so true to type that even the scale varies but little over a period of years. In like manner the stately homes of Philadelphia, together with early wealth, made possible the large massive Chippendale designs of William Savery.

It is evident that the large majority of American manufacturers have practically ignored the important matter of scale in their reproduction furniture. Further, the details of turnings, moldings, beads, flutes, and carving are not only out of authentic scale but hopelessly intermingled as to period or source. Fancy veneers are applied without discrimination or regard to period, and hardware is either inadequate or inappropriate. From the angle of truthful presentation of historic design it would appear that some qualification for advertising matter is much to be desired.

Further preparation to meet a growing demand for well-designed and well-made American furniture in the lower-price field is necessary. Construction and finish are sufficiently improved in all grades to merit confidence in our manufacturing future. We, therefore, turn to the correctness of form, and arrive at the conclusion that the basis of good design as applied to moderate-priced and inexpensive furniture is largely a matter of absolute simplicity of thought and outline. One of the greatest needs in the home-furnishing field is for more well-designed merchandise—priced at

levels that make it available to the great masses of our people who cannot afford to buy in the luxury group. Simple furniture of good proportion and sound style can be produced to meet this demand.

The same statement holds true for practically every phase of the supply for this field. Suggestions for budget proportioning and expenditure are exceedingly limited as to taste at the present moment, due to the low quality of design available at the low and medium price levels. Specific recommendations to aid in remedying this situation are included in this report.

Teaching Problems

Need for leadership and cooperation. With the acceptance of the point of view that the only real satisfaction that can come to the homemaker in this field of furnishing will arise from good design, and with full knowledge that the present information available for use by the teaching forces leaves much to be desired, it seems wise to place special emphasis upon the absolute necessity of considering this phase of the work with the utmost care.

Much of the material that has been gathered through experience by the various types of specialists has never been put into forms available to the public. It remains a closed book. The material that already is available is, for the most part, written or given forth orally without the rich background of experience that has been the acid test in the progress of the specialist. It is neither rich enough in content nor sufficiently wide in range to supply the rapidly growing need. The time seems ripe for a coordination of forces—professional, educational, and industrial—in the effort to bring these finest standards into the open. Regardless of the income, regardless of whether the amount to be spent is twenty-five cents or twenty-five hundred dollars, fundamentally from the taste and design standpoints these problems are all akin. It is not primarily a matter of money; it is a matter of clarifying the statements of principles and giving them the widest possible range of practical application.

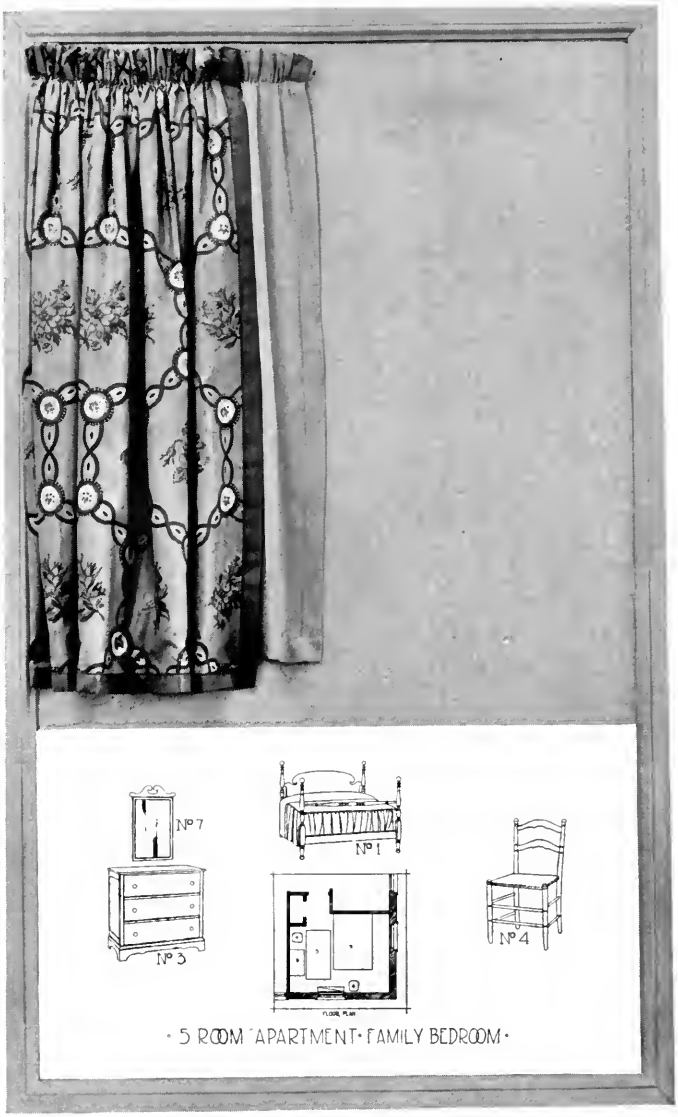
Industrially, there is great need of leadership in this field. Cooperation with the educational work, provided that it is established upon a sufficiently broad basis, should bring results. Further cooperation through the combined efforts of a public-spirited group of professionals and manufacturers may lead to a better grade of

design, spread over a wider price range, and thus make it available to many thousands of people from whom it is now barred, because there is so little they can buy throughout this whole market that is good in design. There is much pioneer work to be done in this field.

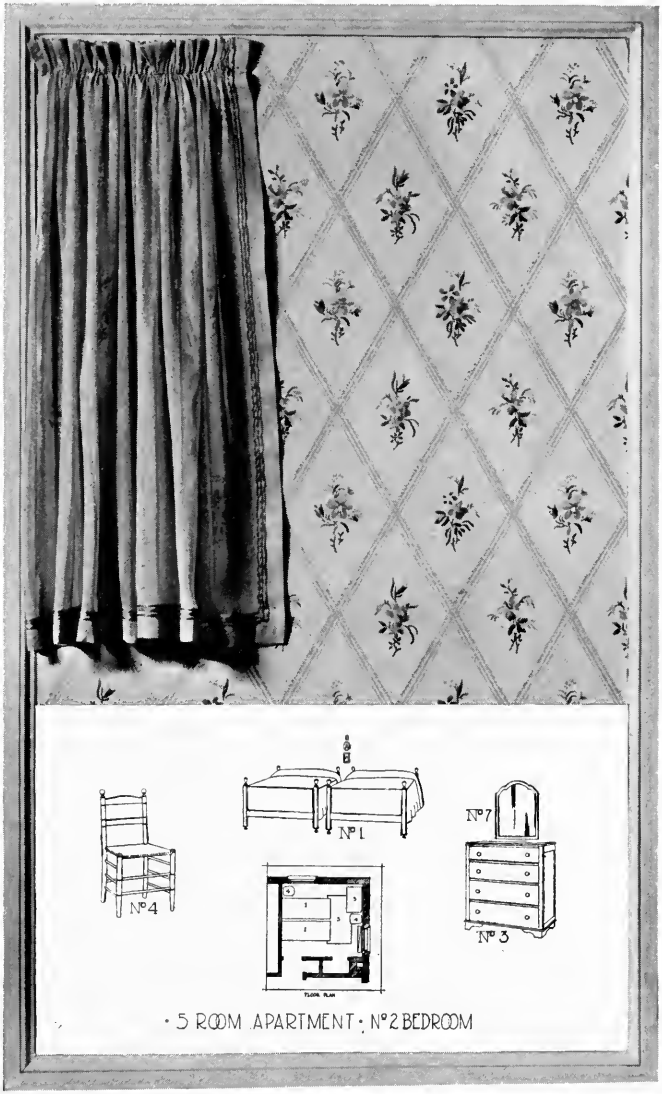
Sporadic efforts unsatisfactory. The committee also recognizes that the time for unrelated educational efforts in this field has passed. They have already been outgrown. The specific recommendations made by the committee are, therefore, sweeping in character. There is imperative need for action that will provide a real remedy for the rapidly growing evils.

One of the greatest gaps in training at the present time is due to the use of words in place of things in the texts relating to home furnishing. Words are symbols and are variously interpreted. Even the most accurate word description fails in terms of color, form, and texture composition. One of the reasons why standards are so low is that there are few people who have ever been in contact with the best productions actually used in fine combinations, and the word pictures used fail to give these standards accurately.

Another bad element is seen in the types of pictures that are used as illustrative material in the texts as well as in our advertisements and some of the magazines. Few fine picture examples are available in forms easily usable by the schools. Some of the illustrations are so bad as to be pernicious in their influence. Until some reasonable standard is set by specialists who know this work, this type of illustrative material is not likely to be bettered.



Family bedroom. The wallpaper is green with a fine all-over pattern in white that gives the wall the effect of being slightly textured in a green tone. The curtains have a green ground with figures in green, white, and red with floral motifs. The binding is of rose chintz. The furniture is painted ivory and striped with rose.



Bedroom No. 2. The wallpaper has a warm peach background. The figures are in soft red and green. The woodwork matches the background of the paper. The curtains are a lighter peach marquisette with embroidered stitch in green and rose. The iron beds and the mirror are painted light green; the chair and bureau are finished in maple.

CHAPTER VII

DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTRUCTIVE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

A Central School

The only answer to the difficulties in the preceding pages of this report would seem to lie in a better understanding of the subject among the workers throughout the entire field—producers, retailers, and those giving information to the public, from the decorator to the teacher. In the last analysis, education is the only answer and it is a crying need in this work. There is much enthusiasm, some good work, a great deal of machinery for getting facts across—and a great dearth of facts that are sound and well understood. Education is a long, slow process, but nothing can be substituted for it. Any educational program to be effective in this field must have as its basis the combined work of the industrial specialists and of the professional decorators of marked ability, sound training and wide experience, and must be guided at its source by them.

For these reasons, the committee stresses its recommendation for a central school for the purpose of training selected students of marked ability with its branches leading to the various commercial, industrial, teaching, and home groups needing this type of information.

The quality of work and effort in this field can rise no higher than its source. At the present time there is no adequate training for serious students of decoration who wish to become decorators of the highest standing. The best of the existing schools are hampered by the necessity of being entirely self-supporting and cannot, therefore, occupy the place in relation to this profession that is occupied by our best graduate schools of engineering, law, medicine, or architecture. There is need of a school not to duplicate their work, but to go beyond it. It would have as its faculty, trained and experienced decorators, architects, and experts in the art-industrial field. Its sole purpose would be to train selected students of marked ability. Pupils would be admitted on a selective basis of quality in much the same fashion as at the Curtis

School of Music in Philadelphia. There are ample room and great need both in the profession and in the industries for leaders of marked talent and sound training. There are at present far too many calling themselves professionals who have no right to the name by virtue of either talent or training. The following statement by Mr. Frederick Allen Whiting, president of the American Federation of Arts and director of the Cleveland Art Museum, is significant in this connection:

"I sometimes wonder if we are not offering too many young people the opportunity for what purports to be a professional training in the arts—or perhaps making that training so easy to enter, and so intellectually comfortable, that many young people take art school courses as an interesting experience and an easy way of deferring the dreaded day when they must face the actualities of life, in the form of a job, and a regular daily grind under a boss who has to get his money's worth and is paying for, and not being paid for, the service. The result of the system is that many people who are ill-adapted and ill-equipped for the career (and too frequently without adequate mentality or imagination or character to give them a real message to express) are seeking unsuccessfully to earn their living as artists."

The committee recommends that this school be supported upon some such basis as endowment so as to safeguard its independence, provide for the continuity of its work, and allow it to progress with experiment and research without bias or prejudice. It would correspond to such institutions as the Beaux Arts in Paris or our own fine technological, medical, law, and architectural institutes.

We believe that this school should be established with a four-year course as a minimum requirement and cover a wide range of lecture, research, and laboratory work in the strictly decorating field. By laboratory work is meant actual work in design, fundamentals of architecture, painting and drawing, mechanical drafting, modeling, and the industries allied to the subject such as upholstering, painting and glazing, cabinetmaking, curtain making, and lampshade making. It should also, through its research laboratories, serve as a testing station for commodities in this field. Students would be expected to have had thorough training in the elements of design, color, drafting, modeling, and drawing before being admitted to this graduate type of school. It might be necessary to provide a two-year preparatory course under the supervision of the school in order to provide adequate preliminary

training and save the time of pupils who would be definitely determined to make this their profession.

We further believe that, if feasible, this school should have an industrial department for the training of workers in these allied fields of industrial production and that the strictly professional work and the industrial work should be interlocking—that is, the selected groups of professional workers should take a minimum of the industrial subjects, and the selected groups of industrial workers a minimum of the professional subjects. This committee has not had time to carry investigations into the field where it is possible to make this last recommendation with full knowledge of conditions. Therefore, we recommend further investigation by the continuing committee regarding details of possibilities of this industrial section of the central school.

This central school should be governed by a board of directors composed of professional decorators, an architect and an industrial leader in the textile or furniture field—the decorators to comprise the majority of the board inasmuch as the school will be essentially for professional decorators. The chairman of the board should be an outstanding decorator of recognized skill and authority. Intermediate between the governing board and the faculty there should be two officers—such as: (1) Director or chief of education, and (2) director or chief of promotion and decorating—who would serve as liaison officers between the school as such and its connection with the other interlocking cooperating institutions as herein outlined or described. These officers would work directly with the governing board and be responsible to it, and the school would be directed by it.

An Institute for Workers

This school would not, by itself, be equipped to meet the difficulties presented by the current situation, nor would it provide a sufficiently broad basis for future work. It would clear the source of the stream—a task that must be accomplished before the work can seep through to the great bulk of our people who need the results very much.

In order to provide training for teachers, for industrial and commercial workers and for homemakers, there should be a common meeting ground between the existing institutions and this school for highly specialized workers.

The committee therefore recommends that institutes of six-weeks' duration—probably held during summer months—be established and be directed by these liaison officers in conjunction with this central school in a few selected places in the United States, and that teachers, industrial specialists—stylists, advertising writers and artists, designers, and salesmen—be given courses that would provide them with sound training in harmony with good decorating practice. It is recommended that these courses be further supplemented by work for homemakers which would be in harmony with the best thought in home economics as well as in the decorating field. For the teaching groups, it is recommended that one institute be held that would bring to it—in conferences—representative decorators, manufacturers, and distributors in order that first-hand contact and information may give the greatest possible amount of stimulation and bring a mutual understanding of the common problems within the shortest possible time.

These institutes would offer certificates only upon completion of three summers or terms of intensive study. If possible, they could be held in conjunction with other summer courses at colleges or universities, provided proper facilities and adequate freedom could be arranged.

Decorative Service Bureaus

In order to help the homemakers—urban and rural—who at the present time are drifting aimlessly, the committee recommends in connection with this central school the establishment of a number of decorative service bureaus throughout the country to which homemakers could go for advice, and where they would come in contact with highly trained people from the central professional school, and be able to carry through to successful completion any ordinary type of work.

The use of these decorative service bureaus is also possible in connection with other forms of educational effort. It is hoped that the Federal Government and state departments of education, private agencies, and such institutions as Better Homes in America, would find it possible to work with the illustrative material at hand and cooperate toward the extension of better taste standards. Radio talks, exhibitions and local publicity furthering the taste-education program could easily center in these organizations.

Pamphlets and Illustrative Material

From other sections of this report, it is evident that the information available for the public as well as for producers and workers in the home-furnishing field is woefully inadequate and needs to be brought up-to-date. Therefore, this committee recommends the preparation and publication of material as outlined below, initiated by the central school, and further suggests that it be distributed through the central school, the institutes, the decorative service bureaus, as well as through all possible existing agencies.

The committee also recognizes the fact that the preparation of material such as is herein suggested cannot be done quickly. If the work is to be soundly and thoroughly done, sufficient time should be allowed. We recommend that it be planned with a definite time for minimum accomplishment—such as four years—and that the governing board of the central school, through its two directors, initiate and keep the pamphlets and illustrative material checked and maintained at highest levels. Some of the information such as that represented in the illustrative material of textiles changes frequently and should have constant checking to make certain that the best of current material is being included. The information in the main body of the pamphlet material would be more permanent. The needed information seems to group itself as follows:

A wide range to cover needs of (1) homemakers, (2) schools, (3) technical workers. These in turn would subdivide to cover various types of schools, various costs suitable for use at the income levels previously discussed, and a sufficiently wide range of subjects to be of definite assistance to manufacturers and distributors in the home-furnishing industries.

Homemaker pamphlets. It is recommended that these pamphlets be published in small, easily handled, well-illustrated units of sufficiently attractive appearance to be allowed a respected place on the living-room table. It is also recommended that these pamphlets, which could be purchased by the homemaker at a nominal price, be supplemented by collections of illustrative charts in portfolio form which could be obtained through local agencies. These portfolios would contain illustrations of set-ups (from the simplest of units to entire rooms), detailed drawings, and photographs of furniture types (these illustrative of period styles and

of the types obtainable at present in the current market), and of swatches of materials, samples of paint, paper, and wood, sufficiently large to illustrate adequately the color, pattern and texture composition suggested in the pamphlets. These would be cross-indexed for easy reference.

The pamphlets and portfolios should be made available for a nominal sum and distributed through as many channels as possible. The committee recommends that these pamphlets and portfolios be planned in two series: (1) The general information group, and (2) the suggestion group with adaptations to various cost levels.

The general information group would comprise such topics as the following:

1. Planning the home as a unit—including the architecture, planting and decoration.
2. Room character and composition.
3. The theory of color and color schemes.
4. Designing the room with upholstery fabrics.
5. Walls and wall finishes.
6. Wallpaper.
7. Floor and floor finishes.
8. Rugs and carpets.
9. Furniture selection.
10. Window treatment.
11. Furniture finishes.
12. Renovation of old furniture.
13. Reupholstering and slip covers.
14. Making the most of what you have.
15. Home-built furniture and knock-down furniture.
16. Upholstery fabrics, kinds and uses.
17. Lamps and shades.
18. Pottery, silver, glass and porcelain.
19. Pictures.
20. The use of flowers in interior decoration.

Correlative with these would be the portfolios of illustrations covering the points discussed in the text.

The suggestion group would comprise such topics as the following:

1. First investment in furnishings for the one-room and the two-room dwelling in sums under $200.
2. First investment in furnishings for the three-room dwelling in sums under $300.
3. First investment in furnishings for the five-room dwelling in sums under $500.
4. Additions to furnishings—from $5 to $100.

5. Planning the furnishing budget from the standpoint of attraction, value and wear.
6. First investment in five- and six-room dwellings for sums from $500 to $1,000.
7. Adding to the $1,000 furnishing investment.
8. Planning the house with $2,000 to spend for furnishings.
9. Planning the house with $2,500 to $3,000 to spend for furnishings.
10. Planning the house with $3,000 to $5,000 to spend for furnishings.
11. Planning the house with $5,000 to $10,000 to spend for furnishings.

Direct reference would be made to both the pamphlet and the portfolio material in order to avoid duplication.

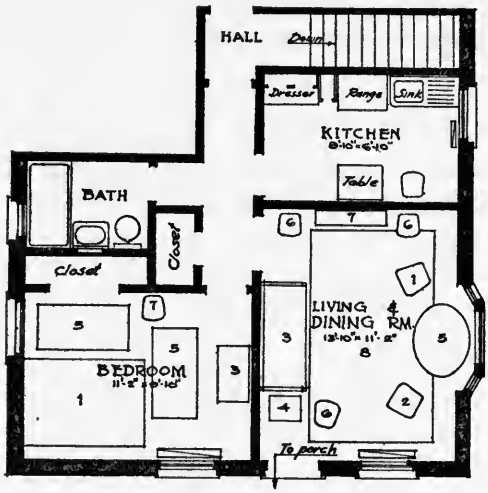
In connection with these pamphlets, the committee wishes to draw further attention to the question of the improvement of the usual budgeting methods based upon percentages.

As suggested on page 109, much can be done to improve the proportioning of the various expenditures within rooms. Good taste and a knowledge of the market and of sound values can make a few dollars go much further than is the case ordinarily of the person who depends upon "being sold" and relies upon stereotyped and conventional furnishing schemes for the basis of the selections.

Owing to the wide diversity of tastes and the lack of really adequate income and budget data, the committee suggests that the pamphlet material described in Recommendation IV be presented in such fashion as to give definite suggestions for planning based upon the simple principles of room composition with specific applications to:

1. The spending of various amounts of money from $5 to $500 for additions or replacements with these first two income groups specially in mind.
2. The ways in which these amounts can be adjusted and apportioned in order to get various effects to suit families of widely varying taste.
3. The consideration of the relative values and prices of representative objects that are both desirable and available. This method is recommended, in place of the usual formal budget system with set articles and prices, as being a way of providing greater flexibility and at the same time furnishing a wider basis for information.

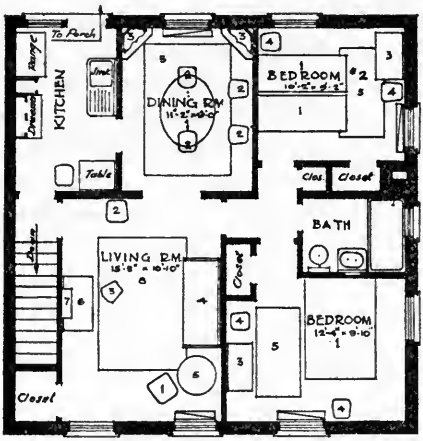
A radically different basis for budgeting and selecting furniture items has been developed recently by Mr. Leon Pescheret of Chicago. It has been thoroughly checked by several prominent decorators, who report that it works out admirably and that it is a most valuable asset in giving a basis of selection far superior to the ordinary percentage method. The principle underlying it is sound, whether the total of the furnishing budget is $250 or $2,500.



BUDGET *for* 3 ROOM APARTMENT

	RELATIVE UNIT VALUE	No. PER AVERAGE APARTMENT	
LIVING & DINING ROOM			
#1 EASY CHAIR	1	1	
#2 EASY CHAIR	1	1	
#3 SOFA	3	3	
#4 SMALL TABLE	¼	¼	
#5 LARGE TABLE	2	2	
#6 SIDE CHAIRS (3)	½	1½	
#7 BOOKCASE	1½	1½	
#8 RUG	1	1	
#9 CURTAINS (2 WINDOWS)	½	1	12¼
BEDROOM			
#1 DOUBLE BED	1	1	
#2 SPRING, MATTRESS, & PILLOWS	1½	1½	
#3 CHEST OF DRAWERS	1½	1½	
#4 CURTAINS (2 WINDOWS)	½	1	
#5 RUGS	¾	¾	
#6 MIRROR	¾	¾	
#7 SIDE CHAIR	¼	¼	6¾
KITCHEN			
KITCHEN EQUIPTMENT	1	1	
GLASS & CHINA	1	1	
LINEN (COMPLETE APT.)	1	1	3
ACCESSORIES			
LAMPS (2)	½	½	
PILLOWS	½	½	
VASES & PICTURES	1	1	
BLANKETS	1	1	
		TOTAL	25

25 UNITS *at* $10.00 *each* = $250.00



BUDGET for 5 ROOM APARTMENT

	RELATIVE UNIT VALUE	NO. PER AVERAGE APARTMENT	
LIVING ROOM			
#1 EASY CHAIR	1	1	
#2 SMALL ARM CHAIR	1	1	
#3 SMALL SIDE CHAIR	½	½	
#4 SOFA	3	3	
#5 SMALL TABLE	¾	¾	
#6 WRITING TABLE	¾	¾	
#7 HANGING BOOK SHELVES	¾	¾	
#8 RUG 6'×9'	1	1	
#9 CURTAINS (2 WINDOWS)	½	1	9¾
DINING ROOM			
#1 TABLE (OVAL)	2	2	
#2 SIDE CHAIRS (4)	½	2	
#3 SMALL CORNER CUPBOARD (2)	1½	3	
#4 CURTAINS (1 WINDOW)	½	½	
#5 RUG 6'×9'	1	1	6½
FAMILY BEDROOM			
#1 DOUBLE BED	1	1	
#2 SPRING, MATTRESS, & PILLOWS	1½	1½	
#3 BUREAU	1½	1½	
#4 SIDE CHAIRS (2)	½	1	
#5 RUG 3'×6'	½	½	
#6 CURTAINS	½	½	
#7 MIRROR	½	½	6½
BEDROOM #2			
#1 SINGLE BED (2)	½	1	
#2 2-SPRINGS, MATTRESSES, & PILLOWS	1½	3	
#3 BUREAU	1½	1½	
#4 SIDE CHAIRS (2)	½	1	
#5 RUG 3'×6'	½	½	
#6 CURTAINS (2 WINDOWS)	½	1	
#7 MIRROR	½	½	8½
KITCHEN			
TABLE & CHAIR	¾	¾	
EQUIPTMENT DATA TO BE FURNISHED BY COMMITTEE ON KITCHENS			¾
ACCESSORIES			
GLASS & CHINA	2	2	
LINEN	3	3	
BLANKETS	4	4	
LAMPS (2)	¾	¾	
PILLOWS FOR SOFA	½	½	
VASES & PICTURES	1½	1½	11¾
		TOTAL	45¾

45 UNITS at $10.00 each = $450.00

It consists briefly of the process of dividing the room into a given number of units and alloting to them a fraction in proportion to the relative importance of the items of furnishings. This sets up a definite relation of value between the individual pieces and precludes the possibility of overexpenditure upon any one item. Moreover, it keeps a constant ratio in the balancing of values. For example, there is no need of buying a $150 rug to place in a room where the values of the furniture are relatively much less. Checking the units as given with market prices shows a nice adjustment in this important consideration. The scale has been worked out by the decorating members of the committee with two budgets: (1) For a three-room dwelling—total sum to be spent, $250; (2) for a five-room dwelling—total sum to be spent, $450. The results and method of working are shown on the preceding pages. The committee suggests the careful consideration of this type of scale in place of the ordinary percentage type.

School pamphlets and portfolio collections. School teachers interested in this subject have not only been hampered by lack of opportunity to get into direct contact with the best professional standards, they have also been sadly hampered by lack of adequate illustrative material. To assemble the latter properly for individual schools would be very expensive. By cooperation with such a central agency as the one outlined above, teachers of both fine arts and home economics could have excellent illustrations at a reasonable price.

This committee recommends therefore that a series of pamphlets be prepared by an advisory committee working under the direction of the governing board of the central school and composed of both decorators and teachers. These pamphlets would include:

1. The necessary subject matter such as contained in the homemaker's pamphlets couched in language and form suitable for the types of schools where they would be of definite service.
2. A short series of pamphlets for teachers of various groups making concrete suggestions regarding the formation of outlines of study for this subject and methods of presentation.

As much experimental work remains to be done in this field —after the teachers have adequate material available for work— it is suggested that the last-mentioned series be held in abeyance until these experiments can be set up and their results checked by the advisory committee.

The portfolio material should be simpler than that for the home-

makers and should include materials and group suggestions that will be applicable to the lowest-income levels represented by our school children both in urban and rural groups. It should also include large samples suitable for classroom experiment.

These pamphlets and illustrative material should cover every type of work from settlement classes, grade schools, vocational schools, junior and senior high to private schools and colleges.

Pamphlets for technical workers. It is recommended that the assistance of leading experts in various fields of home furnishing be enlisted and that technical studies representing the best thought on various subjects be prepared. This again would of necessity be a part of a program extending over several years as work of this nature cannot be hurried.

Among the pamphlets suggested under this heading are the following:

1. Cabinetmaking in period furniture and its reproduction. Woods, joinery, decoration, and finish.
2. History of textiles—textiles for household use with critical study from point of view of design.
3. Historic backgrounds and modern adaptations.
4. Porcelain and pottery—historic and modern.
5. Glassware, silver, and plated ware.
6. Accessories that belong with period furniture.
7. Lighting fixtures of the periods.
8. Modernistic design in furniture.
9. Modernistic design in textiles.
10. Modernistic design in accessories.

These are only suggestive—not inclusive. The committee recommends that the list be worked out in detail by the governing board of the central school in collaboration with manufacturers, decorators, and distributors, particularly those working with the higher-income groups. The texts should be available for students in colleges, professional schools, and for shop and sales forces which are advanced in the character of their work.

The committee also recommends the writing of: (1) A series of lectures suitable for use in club classes where no lecturer or instructor is available, making use of both the homemaker pamphlet and illustrative material. (2) Single lectures for use in clubs working under these conditions. Illustrative material in this case should be similar to that suggested for school work—adapted to different spending levels. The committee further recom-

mends that these supplementary portfolios of illustrative material on larger scale be arranged in such form as to be available as traveling exhibits usable by libraries both urban and rural. Supplementary texts for stores could also be worked out, thus making it possible to suggest to the local merchants the desirability of cooperation in so far as it would prove practicable in each community. Much helpful cooperation could be fostered through club work and the efforts of the art, home economics and vocational teachers.

Furniture Working Drawings

The committee strongly urges definite measures to make possible the production of simple furniture in authentic taste. It recommends specifically that a number of practical working drawings of individual pieces of furniture suitable for grouping and based on lowest-cost estimates be placed on file at Washington with Better Homes in America and in various stations such as museums. These drawings would be available free of charge to manufacturers, cabinetmakers, manual training teachers, and homemakers handy with tools. To insure the integrity of this plan, it will be necessary to have the production of these designs supervised by a body of experts represented in the board of directors of the central school.

It is suggested that as a start three groups of furniture be arranged based upon really authentic models and simplified in good taste to the lowest possible degree for purposes of low-cost production. These three groups would cover examples from three fundamental styles that have wide acceptance and use—namely, the Georgian, the early American, and the French country. They would also cover types in these three styles for living room, bedroom and dining room.

The group centering about the later eighteenth century or Georgian would be named in some fashion such as the Washington group; the group centering about the early American and heavier types of turned furniture would be called the Bradford group; that centering about the French country styles of the Louis XV period would be called the Lafayette.

The designs for these groups would be endorsed by an advisory committee from recognized expert decorators in order to assure authentic design standards and quality. They would be further

checked by an advisory committee of representative manufacturers and furniture experts in order to insure their practicability.

The committee also recommends that furniture manufacturers give thought to the following suggestions: In the interests of better furniture, as well as economy, the typical dining-room set or suite be reduced to eight pieces—sideboard, dining table and six chairs. The china cabinet and serving table, being considered unnecessary for group sales, should be designed so as to be appropriate when combined with several different sets or suites and purchased as extra pieces when desired. By eliminating these two pieces of furniture which are not absolutely required in the dining room there would be a saving to both retail merchant buying for stock and the customer. For budget purposes two chairs from the dining set could be used in the living room.

CONCLUSION

An appreciable body of evidence indicates that the time is ripe for the rapid assimilation of wholesome educational facts regarding home furnishing and decoration.

To insure widely spread comfort and satisfaction in our American homes, economically and artistically, no basis can be better than a well-informed public.

With such a sound foundation, there is the added hope that decorators as well as other creative designers may rise to the heights of producing an art in this field thoroughly American in character that will embrace the work of a vast number of our industries.

Note. Some of the members of the Home Furnishing and Decorating Committee felt strongly that the conclusion arrived at in the preceding recommendations included the only sound method of meeting adequately the situation. It is, therefore, a source of deep regret—especially on the part of the professional decorators of the committee—that these officially recommended points have not been brought out in the report subsequently issued by the Committee on Standards and Objectives, and that the latter committee has set up, without consultation, specific standards that are at utter variance with the best decorating practice. The analysis of the Home Furnishing and Decoration Committee was drawn from knowledge gained through years of experience in that field of work.

Dated, February 27, 1932.

PART III. HOME INFORMATION SERVICES AND CENTERS

INTRODUCTION

Where can those needing advice on buying, building, or managing a home go?

The findings of this committee show that there are many sources of information available where individuals may obtain advice—some sources disinterested and some frankly of a sales-promotional nature; but that this information is, in general, given without plan, that it is often hard for the individual to find and evaluate, and that it is frequently inadequate.

The importance of reliable, widespread information on homes is evident when one considers the large share of family income which goes toward acquiring and managing a home, and the effect which the wise solution of these problems has on family welfare. Moreover, buying or building a house, as well as making a home involves many and varied technical questions which no single individual can answer; for example, such questions as those on real estate values, house design, and the selection of equipment.

To all but the few who can afford individual professional service, then, the provision of centers and other sources of reliable, sound information on homes appears to be a real need in furthering the aims of this Conference.

Definition of Terms

Since the terms "home information service" and "home information center" are not commonly used, it seems best to begin by defining them.

As used here, home information service means any method by which information on community planning, home building and remodeling, home ownership, homemaking and home equipment is made available to the public.

By home information center is meant a local agency, usually disinterested, from which authoritative information is offered to the public on problems related to the home. As a rule such centers have centrally located headquarters and cooperate with other agencies in the same or allied fields.

Classification of Agencies

The committee naturally has been concerned chiefly with a consideration of those agencies which may be called disinterested, as distinguished from those which have primarily a commercial point of view, though the latter are so numerous and their services and methods are so varied that they challenge attention and appraisal. The diverse organizations which are interested in home and community development can be classified in many ways, but the committee made only two general classifications of agencies for its use. It tried to distinguish between those whose purpose is primarily commercial and those whose aim is primarily social or educational; and it also tried to distinguish those which are national or regional, state or local in scope.

Among the educational agencies are the schools and colleges, with their formal instruction, the extension services, the various agencies for adult education, and some types of clubs with their less formal, voluntary membership. Among those working primarily for some form of social improvement, are the religious organizations, the relief agencies, and those which attempt to reach certain racial or other special sections of the public. There are also the numerous professional groups—the architects, the city planners, the home economists, the sanitary engineers, and so on.

Among the commercial or industrial organizations, classification is simpler because they naturally exist primarily for the promotion of a definite interest, as some form of home sale, financing, or construction, or the use of some special building material or equipment or some home utility.

The underlying purpose of the disinterested agencies seems to be to help individuals to meet everyday problems and to develop their knowledge, taste and judgment in the matters of selection, equipment, decoration, and management of their homes; to promote home ownership; and last, but by no means least, to increase comfort and happiness in the home. Some of these agencies strive to establish communities of better homes and to bring such homes within reach of the lower-income groups.

The chief aims of commercial agencies are to protect investments, promote sales, and to improve their products and the services they render the consumer. Many give instruction and advice in the methods of manufacture, construction, distribution, selec-

tion and use of materials in order to prevent waste of labor, money, and time, and to make the materials more desirable. Such educational programs are often arranged for the employees of the organizations.

However varied the purpose, the general methods used for disseminating information are not dissimilar. Prominent among these methods are personal interviews, correspondence, group instruction, lectures, demonstrations, exhibits, lantern slides and moving pictures, radio talks, the use of the press for news items, stories, and advertisements, and the distribution of a great variety of printed matter. Each agency of course chooses the methods adapted to the nature of the information it wishes to give, bearing in mind the facilities available and the special groups it wishes to reach.

National agencies. There are many agencies functioning nationally through which information in the field of the Conference is disseminated. Among the most important and helpful are the various ones within the Federal Government; the civic, educational, professional, technical, and trade associations; federated organizations including agricultural groups, men's and women's clubs, religious and social agencies and racial societies. In a few instances home information or instruction is provided by church organizations, particularly by those denominations which have immigration or country life departments or maintain educational institutions for young people. Periodicals of national circulation which deal with subjects within the field of the Conference might also be considered here.

Commercial agencies and trade associations of national and sometimes regional scope often distribute information on the home. In this group are many manufacturers and distributors of building materials, house equipment and furniture; a large number of gas and electric companies; and a few mail-order houses, particularly those with building materials, furniture, and exhibit departments.

State agencies. Several branches of state government, variously named, are concerned with the home and community problems which this Conference is considering. Some of them cooperate or are affiliated with Federal bureaus or county organizations. They include departments of education, universities,

colleges, professional and normal schools, particularly those concerned with agriculture, architecture, landscape architecture, and the teaching of home economics and manual arts; state libraries; housing and building departments which are often connected with boards of health; and the state licensing and examining boards, particularly those relating to corporations, real estate dealers, and building and loan associations.

Local units. Local units, both municipal and county, which aid in distributing information on home and community development, are, building departments; planning commissions; educational systems, including not only full-time schools but also part-time and night schools; the county extension service; public libraries and museums; health, recreational, and welfare departments; social, educational, and certain religious agencies; housing associations and various kinds of home information centers; city planning and civic affairs committees and local improvement clubs.

Also in the local group come various commercial and industrial associations and agencies, such as the chamber of commerce, newspapers, certain public utilities, and many departments of household equipment and furniture in stores. There are also building material exhibits, "own your own home" expositions, model home exhibits, plan services of lumber and other dealers in house building materials, house inspection and certification services.

Important in the community are organizations such as various civic and business men's clubs and farm association groups, rural women's organizations, women's clubs, parent-teacher associations, service clubs, and others, through which information may reach the people, and whose support of and interest in community projects is most helpful.

The committee has not attempted to list completely the phases of home information supplied, and in its discussions has considered only a few general divisions naturally suggested by the subjects of the various Conference committees.

Even without considering the adequacy of the subject matter used, it is evident that there are so many organizations and interests and so many possible methods of aiding the public involved, and the needs of the people vary so greatly, that this pioneer study must be considered as merely illustrating the need for further investigation.

The committee respectfully submits its conclusions and recom-

mendations for consideration, with the reports upon which they are based. These are presented as follows in Chapters VIII to XII.

Home Information Services for Home Building and Home Ownership in Cities.
Homemaking Centers and Services in Cities.
Home Information Services in Rural Areas.
Home Information Services of Libraries, Museums, Schools, Colleges, Universities, and Other Sources of Public Information.
Home Information Centers for Urban and Rural Communities.

CHAPTER VIII

HOME INFORMATION SERVICES ON HOME BUILDING AND HOME OWNERSHIP IN CITIES

The building or purchase of a home is, generally speaking, the largest and most momentous investment which a family makes. Upon the wise solution of the problems involved in this undertaking rest the family's financial security and well-being for years to come. Instances are only too numerous of hardship and loss resulting from financial burdens too great to bear; or of dissatisfaction and dissappointment following ill-advised transactions made through ignorance.

The building or even the purchase of a home requires specific knowledge of technicalities which cannot, from their very nature, be familiar to the average layman. That mistakes as to questions of financing and planning are frequently made is not surprising when one considers how meager and scattered are the sources from which the average urban family can procure sound advice and disinterested information concerning these problems.

The purpose of this section has been to find out just what these sources are and to what extent they meet or fall short of meeting urban community needs.

Summary

The committee's studies confirm the need in cities for well-coordinated, well-advertised, practical, reliable, and disinterested information of the following types for the prospective home builder, home buyer, or home remodeler:

Advice as to whether or not he can afford to build a home and, if so, within what range of price.

Advice as to conditions which make for a suitable location, information on zoning and building code regulations, methods of financing, liens, contracts, house design and plans, types of construction with their advantages and disadvantages, equipment, interior decoration, landscape work, etc.

Advice as to whether the home owner can wisely undertake to remodel and, if so, advice as to financing, planning, materials and construction, and equipment.

As to information now available nationally and locally, the following facts are revealed by the committee's studies:

1. There are many types of information relating to practically all phases of home building and ownership.

2. The amount, type, reliability, and quality of this information vary widely in different communities, as does also the extent to which the available sources of information are known to the public. Usually these sources are widely scattered and limited in scope.

3. In no community studied can it be said that the requirements are met of a well-coordinated, complete, reliable, and practical information service on these subjects. Available facilities of high standard along one or two lines exist in a few communities and encouraging efforts are being made in other communities to meet certain needs.

4. Many commercial and educational organizations give unreliable and inaccurate advice, due to the tendency to employ persons not qualified by training and experience to give technical information.

5. The sources of home information are in most communities poorly coordinated and there is little attempt, in general, for organizations concerned to work together.

6. Publicity and educational programs are on the whole entirely inadequate. They do not succeed in reaching those seeking information.

7. This lack of accurate, complete, and unbiased information and education is responsible, at least in part, for poor house planning and design, since the typical family undertaking to build or buy a home lacks a knowledge of the rudiments of these subjects. It is responsible also for poor construction and rapid depreciation of property values which, in turn, tend to discourage home ownership.

8. The present methods of education in these fields have failed to reach the small contractors as well as those who build two or three homes at a time as a speculative investment and who lack adequate knowledge of design, house planning, cost estimating, and other subjects. These builders constitute the majority of the total who, it is stated by the Committee on Design of this Conference, construct probably 90 per cent of the homes built in American cities and towns. Because of the failure of education in these matters, they are adding yearly to the quantity of houses poorly designed, badly constructed, and unwisely laid out—both as to house and site plan. Efforts by national associations to organize and raise the standards of this group are under way, but they must undoubtedly be supplemented by a concerted effort to improve taste and increase the knowledge of people as well as their inclination to own a home.

9. Too much unwise, high-pressure salesmanship is causing families to buy beyond their means. The total amount of the investment is usually not realized by home builders or purchasers.

10. "Fly-by-night" real estate and mortgage concerns mulct the public in many communities, fleece the prospective home builder because he does not know where to seek reliable advice, and thereby discourage home building.

Seventy per cent of the persons consulted on questions relating to the subject of this report felt that their community would profit

by some type of complete, centralized, and impartial home information service. The facts disclosed indicated that information available on the problems of home building and home ownership was neither as satisfactory, nor nearly as adequate as information on homemaking.

On the matter of standards necessary for a satisfactory service, the great majority of those interviewed cited as essentials, disinterestedness of motive, a high standard of leadership, and practicability. The local agencies most frequently mentioned as able to give support and to cooperate were the chamber of commerce, the regional office of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau, the real estate board, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the builders' exchange, building and loan associations, building material exhibits, libraries, the council of social agencies, schools, and volunteer membership groups.

Scope of study. Existing sources of information on home building and home ownership seem to be most readily grouped as: (1) Local—that is, agencies functioning within the city, such as social agencies, commercial firms, civic organizations, libraries, schools, and the like; and (2) sources of information not originating locally, but coming from outside, such as Governmental agencies; national, civic, educational, and commercial organizations; and periodicals.

From study of existing conditions the committee has prepared a statement as to important community needs which can be met by extension or improvement of the activities of *local* agencies, or by their better cooperation, or by featuring new organization machinery. On its findings it has also based suggestions for the definite organization of community activity along the lines of home improvement and civic betterment.

The committee obtained its facts from correspondence and interviews. The number reached was about 1,200 and included business men, educators, librarians, social workers, city officials, heads of national educational and professional, trade and civic organizations, individual home owners, and would-be home owners from many walks of life.

The response would seem to indicate that the whole question of supplying the public with reliable information concerning home building and home ownership has been one of real concern to a large number of persons.

Information Services Available within the City

To find out what information was available on problems of home building and home ownership in typical cities, twenty-six cities were studied.[1] In all, some 900 personal interviews were held in these communities with key people familiar with sources of home information or connected with organizations dispensing such information. There were approximately 300 additional interviews.

In each case effort was made to determine the kinds of information available and whether or not sources of information were coordinated.

Information is given, it was disclosed, by or through a variety of local organizations. These might be grouped broadly as educational groups, membership and other cooperating groups, and commercial organizations.

The types of service which local agencies claim to give include advice on financing, site location, house plans, and construction.

Disinterested agencies. *Educational institutions* include not only regular schools which have trade classes and courses in architectural drawing, and which sometimes give instruction in

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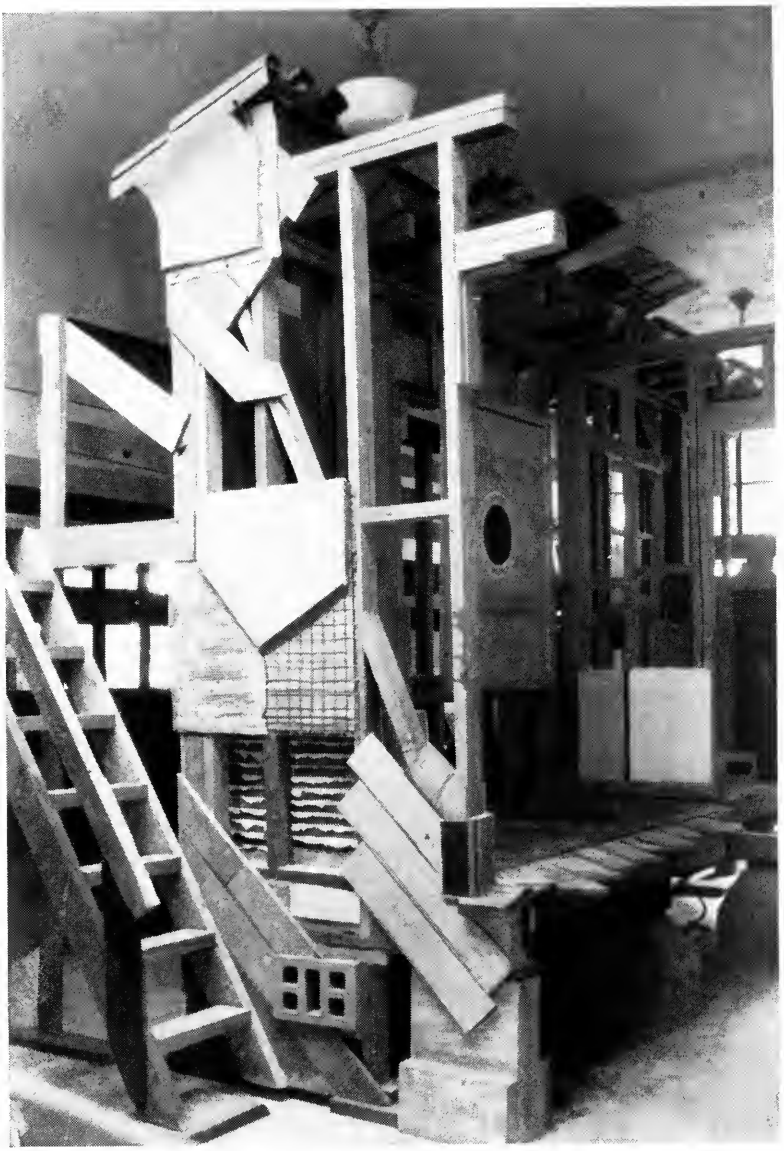
[1] The following were selected to represent different localities and different types of communities: Boston and Springfield, Mass.; Rochester and Utica, N. Y.; Lafayette, Ind.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Rock Island and Moline, Ill.; Davenport, Newton, Mason City, and Des Moines, Iowa; Madison, Wis.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Denver, Colo.; North Platte, Nebr.; Mitchell, S. Dak.; Atlanta, Ga.; Shreveport, La.; Little Rock, Ark.; Salt Lake City, Logan, and Provo, Utah; Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, Calif.; and Seattle, Wash.

Agencies and persons most frequently visited for the study of urban home information services included the following:

1. Commercial
   Better business bureaus, builders' exchanges, building and loan associations, building material dealers and organizations, including dealers in lumber, cement, brick, and plumbing supplies, building material exhibits, building trades councils, chambers of commerce, department stores, mortgage companies, newspapers, public utilities (electricity and gas), real estate boards and savings banks.
2. Educational and social
   Civic centers, colleges, councils of social agencies, home information centers, libraries, museums, parent-teacher associations, public schools, Red Cross, social settlements, visiting nurses' associations, women's clubs and Young Women's Christian Association.
3. Governmental
   Building departments and city planning and zoning commissions.
4. Individuals
   Bankers, builders, civic leaders, contractors, real estate men and social workers.



Contractor members of the Builders' Exchange prepared an exhibit showing various types of roofing, wall, and foundation construction at different stages of completion for the Santa Barbara Better Homes in America campaign.

The Alice Ames Winter House in Minneapolis, headquarters of the Woman's Community Council, was opened as a Better Homes demonstration house. Many homemaking classes, lectures, and demonstrations have been held here.

(House Plan No. 5-A-50, Architects' Small House Service Bureau, Inc. Copyrighted.)

Close observation of houses during construction is encouraged by instructors in the manual arts department of the high school in Kohler, Wisconsin. Men and women also are taken through the Better Homes demonstration house at intervals.

house purchasing, but also night and part-time schools with special courses for adults. Subjects relating to the home as taught in the public schools, in vocational and extension classes, are limited in scope, but are increasingly useful.

Better Homes in America, while described later in the report as a national organization, should be mentioned as a local force also. Though its local service is not continuous throughout the year, the annual Better Homes campaign, which culminates during Better Homes Week, often brings interest in home and civic improvement to a climax, and reaches a public which would be unmoved by more formal methods of education. Not all the cities studied have Better Homes committees. It is probably true that this type of program, up to the present, has seemed to be more effective in small and moderate-sized cities than in large ones.

Social agencies give advice on home problems, particularly as to questions concerning renting, renovating, and purchasing homes, but it is difficult to estimate the number of people reached. This help is available usually to underprivileged groups and is of undoubted importance. Much of this service is of an informal personal nature, as in the case of a neighborhood or settlement house in a foreign district of a large city, where well-informed directors and teachers have the trust and confidence of the neighborhood. Sometimes trusted business men give advice on business problems.

Voluntary membership and other cooperating groups. Some of these organizations are not so much a present as a potential force in that part of the community's activities relating to the home. Others are already effective and rendering fine service.

1. There are the various special-purpose civic committees, such as citizens' committees on city planning, taxation, housing, building code revision, committees of the chamber of commerce on building; and there are housing and other civic associations.

2. There are professional groups, such as local chapters of the American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects, or the American Society of Civil Engineers, which occasionally may become interested and active in local problems.

3. There are women's and men's clubs of various kinds. This type of organization is rarely interested in problems of home building and home ownership as such, although their programs may touch upon some phases of them. The value of such groups in a home information program is that their membership is frequently made up of the most alert people in the community,

who are accustomed to working together and to using effective publicity methods.

4. The Architects' Small House Service Bureau is treated later as primarily a national organization. However, in the cities in which there is a regional office (Minneapolis, Denver, Indianapolis, Seattle, New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Chicago), and in those where there are suboffices (including Milwaukee, St. Louis, Cleveland, and Cincinnati), the Bureau organization is a local force in efforts to improve small-house designs. The disinterested information centers which deal with homemaking, although not at present giving attention to problems of home building and home ownership, ought, nevertheless, to be mentioned here, as it is possible that their services may be expanded in certain instances to include activities along these lines.

Commercial agencies. In the average city the following provide the most widely used sources of information and advice: (1) Newspapers, with their daily or weekly home building sections, and (2) real estate companies, financing agencies, contractors, building material and equipment companies—both as individual firms and as trade organizations.

The second group reports that in 80 per cent of the cases home information was given through personal conferences.

Other methods of giving information reported in order of frequency are answers to inquiries, printed matter, exhibits and expositions, lectures, and classes.

Little use is made of the radio or the movies for educational talks, entertainment being their primary object. Any extra time usually is devoted to direct advertising. It must be noted that there is little educational material in this field available for use by the radio or the movies even if either were willing to give time to it. However, several new programs along these lines were reported.

The foreign-language press is seldom used. It is suggested that this means be employed more frequently in order to give information and to advise people where services may be procured.

The exhibit and demonstration method for stimulating interest in home building and improvement is, of course, well known. It is exemplified not only by exhibits in connection with sales rooms, but by cooperative commercial efforts, such as building material exhibits, "own your own home" expositions or shows, and model houses.

It must be said that many of these cooperative efforts are of doubtful educational value, particularly those expositions which are

temporary and very expensive in proportion to their service to the public. The chief object seems to have been real estate and retailers' sales promotion. The method of selection and character of the exhibits, and their arrangement, as well as the kind of information given out may well be improved.

Disregarding the report that nearly half of the building material exhibits closed in the last year, the fact that scores were started and discontinued in the previous decade would seem to indicate that they had not been managed entirely to the satisfaction of either the exhibitors or the public. Smaller cities have seldom been able to support an exhibit for long. In most cases those in charge have been unable to give authoritative information. Improvement in this service would make these exhibits of real value to the public and to the industries represented. Properly supervised, the material exhibit would be one of the most useful agencies cooperating with a local home information center. In certain cities such cooperation has been profitably maintained over a period of years.

Often the "model" houses shown by commercial agencies were declared by many to be poorly designed. They were, in many instances, equipped and furnished in an inappropriately elaborate and expensive manner, showing little taste or knowledge of architecture, interior decoration, furnishings, or landscape gardening. Higher ideals and the practical application of professional skill to the problems of the small house would make the demonstration house an important factor in the upbuilding of public taste. This has been exemplified in many cases where the houses were shown by disinterested committees and by commercial firms with competent professional advisers.

The architectural exhibits usually have been limited in their influences and except in a few instances the subjects shown have not been in the small-house field.

Generally speaking, the source of information on home building and home owning most familiar to the average city dweller is the business man—contractor, realtor, dealer in building materials, or loan agent. The weakness of these sources lies in the fact that the prospective builder or owner does not always know which are the best-informed and most reliable business men, and even more in the fact that the most reliable of business men usually have ac-

curate information in only a limited field and often have a somewhat biased point of view. While there are notable exceptions, frequently those undertaking to give advice on the very technical subjects of design, house plans, cost estimating, financing, and selection of site are not qualified by training or experience, or are moved by the terms of their employment to promote a definite project.

There are many professional and business interests giving reliable advice and rendering good service, but there seems need in our communities for disinterested agencies which, through educational efforts, will help the home builder and owner to judge such services and to demand the kind offered by reputable business interests.

As conditions exist, it appears that commercial sources of information on home building, remodeling, and home owning for persons of small means, are scattered, incomplete, little coordinated, and on the whole not such as to inspire the inquirer with confidence.

It is considered very important to convince the loaning agencies that they have a serious responsibility toward the effort to improve small-house design and construction, and that they form important contacts with the building public, through which to convey, to owners and speculative builders, sound information regarding small-house design and construction. It is felt that they should cooperate nationally with other organized national agencies representing architects and other sources of home information, and make available such information and, through subscription fees or otherwise, help in bearing their share of the cost of its preparation and distribution.

Local sources of plan and inspection service. A special study was made of plan and inspection services in forty-seven cities. Two questions asked were: What sources of information on plans, design, costs, and similar topics are available for the home owner? What inspection service (other than official building departments) exists to insure good design and good construction? Further detailed reports were received of special activities.

Results show that the cities had no inspection services except through building departments, save in two instances, and that none had a central source of information on home building and home ownership.

Some persons interviewed stated that savings and loan banks,

and building and loan associations inspect plans prior to the approval of loans, and in a few cases indicated that these institutions make some inspection during construction for approval purposes. It is quite evident, however, that in most instances this is usually neither expert nor thorough. Two cities report a system of continuing inspection during construction. In one it has proved successful over a period of years. In one locality the League of Building and Loan Associations undertakes to offer information to prospective home builders and home buyers and has also an inspection and certification service in home construction. In another city, landscape architects offer, in addition, advice on home location and beautification.

Some cities in the north-central and northeastern part of the country refer to the information, house-plan, and inspection service offered by local branches of mail-order houses in connection with their house building division. One mail-order house, for instance, has an extensive remodeling service.

Many lumber and other material dealers who furnish house plans free or at a small price stated that as the cost of the plan services which they offer to clients is a concealed one and is often established merely to meet competition, they cannot afford expert architectural service. Good stock house plans, moreover, are not available in the form and at the price which they at present feel justified in paying.

It is reported that many contractors and builders of small homes furnish plans free to their customers. In some instances the contractors themselves have little or no knowledge of the principles of design and the details of these plans have frequently been collected from different sources.

A few private firms, newspapers, building material exhibits, building and loan associations, and some real estate firms were found to have a house-plan service—that of the real estate firms usually was connected with large subdivision developments. Some apparently employed architects. Others used an established plan service.

The time and expense involved in the preparation of a new house design, and the training and experience necessary to enable the architect and landscape architect to prepare good house and landscape plans are seldom mentioned and practically never emphasized.

These are a few of the conditions which help to explain the poor and cheap plans and plan books so widely circulated.

A particularly interesting example of an effort, better directed than usual, toward furnishing this service is the project which is being worked out in a Pacific Coast city. A small-house planning service under the direct supervision of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects is maintained by local contractors, material dealers, and the building and loan associations. These firms cooperate in the employment of one or more well-trained draftsmen who, under the daily supervision of an architect appointed by the American Institute of Architects, prepare or revise plans for houses costing under $6,000 for the use of the clients of contributing firms.

Persons in a number of cities indicated that they felt the need for both general home information and better house plans; also for an improved building inspection service by the city and possibly by the combined interests of finance, design, and construction.

After careful consideration of the results of the whole survey the committee agreed that house inspection and certification as occasionally practiced under the supervision of building and loan groups are not the duties of home information centers such as are discussed, the functions of the centers being chiefly advisory and promotional. Exceptions to every rule may be expected, but it is believed that this conclusion applies also to other complete individual services which have a commercial value, such as are involved when original designs are furnished for house plans and remodeling, landscape development, and interior decoration. All these services, if they are to be properly executed, require thoroughly trained and paid specialists. It is highly desirable that such complete services should be made available for the lower-income groups.

Where these services exist or are created, however, they should be closely related to the local home information center, and assist it and cooperate with it in every way possible. This does not mean that a home information center might not handle stock plans approved by architects and possibly by house management specialists, or be associated with disinterested services on home building and financing or on homemaking, such as the Architects' Small House

Service Bureau and the New England Home Information Centers described later.

Other services. There are a few cities in which a builders' exchange, a building and loan association, a savings bank, or a chamber of commerce, real estate board or better business bureau is rendering a valuable information service in relation to home building and home ownership. These services are of various kinds and usually are initiated in response to local demand and the special interest of a few individuals.

The activities of certain associations, such as builders' exchanges and city building congresses, which have united various interests connected with the building industry, have been helpful, but their efforts usually have not been directed along public educational lines.

City planning, architecture, and landscape architecture are naturally closely related, and it is believed that many persons whose major interest is in one field will actively support programs for improvement in another. In planning organization programs it is important to consider the possibility of developing harmoniously and side by side projects of related interest.

A fact often lost sight of is that good design is the fundamental and unifying factor in all things which affect the appearance and livability of cities, towns, and houses.

Another fact needing emphasis is that in most communities there has been little or no attention given to the relation between the house and the neighborhood and the responsibility for harmonious neighborhood development. This idea needs to be brought out repeatedly by the city planning commissions and by all agencies interested in community improvement and the maintenance of real estate values.

Improving existing services. Suggestions for improving the services of existing commercial agencies and the possibilities of use of their facilities by home information bureaus and local councils have been presented by various business men. Many are practical and helpful and should be considered by local committees organized to improve home information services or to establish a distinterested home information center.

Local business men, as well as those with wider interests, would in many instances be willing to submit proposed publications to an

authoritative group for approval as proper material to distribute through a local home information bureau or through educational agencies. They would be willing to prepare exhibits in whatever form and on whatever subjects might be considered most useful and which might be approved by the disinterested group. They would cooperate with local campaigns and other educational efforts by furnishing speakers, demonstrators, and materials as required. They would make studies and prepare data helpful in surveying and making plans for local developments. They would provide prizes for certain competitive efforts and share in the expense of operating mutually beneficial services. They would make efforts to direct the attention of their trade associations to the importance of joint action within the group, and cooperation with others, in the improvement of local conditions with which they are concerned.

Some association officers said they would try to reach by educational programs, in the interest of improved standards, persons who had no affiliations and were as yet untouched by any progressive movement. Other suggestions included the offering of personal conferences to individuals upon request of the local center.

It has been suggested that a permanent "clinic for small house builders" in which such specialists as the architect, landscape architect, and interior decorator are associated would be desirable. This experiment has been tried as a business proposition for the higher-price establishments. While it has very evident benefits, the fact remains that the great majority of people have not been taught to value professional services, or to require them, particularly if the cost is more than a nominal one.

The committee believes that such public clinics are possible in a number of cities. They could be self-supporting, however, only with an intensive and sustained educational campaign in an actively growing community, and with the active cooperation, not the competition, of other commercial and educational organizations.

Home builders' service bureaus have been suggested in connection with building and loan associations. In attempting this new service, associations are faced with the necessity of adding to their personnel an individual or individuals trained in the knowledge of materials and construction, selection of plans, contracts, realty values, locations, finance, and other problems. An ordinary association cannot afford to hire such a person or persons, though

several associations might combine their resources to do so, and would, according to the statement of officials. This plan would provide for a valuable service for the clients of the institutions and protect their investments.

In all the cities studied there was a strong feeling expressed to the effect that there was a great need for better and more complete and disinterested home information service. Commercial agencies try to fill this need. They must in some way satisfy the demands of a potential buying public. It is unfortunate that usually they cannot afford a trained staff and often hire incompetent or poorly informed persons. Consequently much of their advice is unsound.

There is a fundamental need for keeping all those engaged in the building of houses well informed and alert as to the best current practices in their field. A number of trade associations have done much toward educating foremen and mechanics in the proper use of building materials. The suggestion has been made that home financing agencies obtain reliable statistical data on current population changes, the vacancy or occupancy situation, and related business conditions in order that they may be able to give intelligent assistance to home buyers in this field.

Librarians and book dealers deplore the fact that there is a very definite lack of satisfactory material on this subject while the quantity of bad and mediocre plan books is large. Architects assert that there are few books which have even the slightest justification for existence, judged on the basis of practical plan and attractive design.

The observation to be drawn from this review of existing home information services within the community is that many local groups already carry on some phase of home information service as a part of their local programs. Usually, however, there has been no attempt to coordinate separate interests or to exchange experiences, or to build up a complete service to meet the needs of the people.

Information Services from outside the City

The sources of advice on problems of home building and home ownership outside the city may be classified as noncommercial and commercial. Most of the organizations in each group are national in scope.

Noncommercial agencies. Under these are the Governmental, educational, civic, and other disinterested agencies.

Governmental agencies[2] which give out information on home building and ownership problems include those listed below.

1. In the United States Department of Commerce are the following:

(a) The Division of Building and Housing of the Bureau of Standards issues pamphlets on these subjects and on home financing and repair; as far as possible it also answers individual inquiries. It issues monthly reports of prices of major building materials in some fifty cities; conducts surveys of trends in the small-house construction field. It has issued a Standard City Planning Enabling Act and a Standard State Zoning Enabling Act, as well as pamphlets on zoning and city planning. It also collects statistics on zoning and city planning; and it has issued several reports on minimum standards of various phases of building construction.

(b) The Bureau of Standards, through other divisions, tests building materials of various types. The results of these tests are published in its bulletins.

(c) The National Committee on Wood Utilization of the Department of Commerce, a semi-governmental agency, has issued pamphlets whose purpose is to help the prospective home owner and others concerned with building problems.

(d) The Bureau of Mines issues publications on domestic heating plants and the uses of fuels.

2. In the United States Department of Agriculture are a number of Bureaus and Services that issue publications of interest to home owners and homemakers.

(a) The Bureau of Home Economics has made studies on household equipment and issues publications of interest to homemakers.

(b) The Bureau of Agricultural Engineering issues farmhouse plans and publications on such equipment as water and sewerage systems. It has also published information on special building materials.[3]

(c) The Bureau of Plant Industry furnishes publications on landscape development.

(d) The Extension Service is discussed on pages 178-184.

The information services rendered by Governmental agencies

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[2] A list of Governmental bulletins relating to the home may be found in Price List 72: *Publications of interest to suburbanites and home-builders.* This may be obtained free from the Government Printing Office, Washington.

[3] Miller, T. A. H. *The use of logs and poles in farm construction.* United States Department of Agriculture, Farmers' Bulletin 1660, Mar., 1931.

Betts, M. C., and Miller, T. A. H. *Rammed earth walls for buildings.* United States Department of Agriculture, Farmers' Bulletin 1500, Aug., 1926.

are so valuable and so varied that the committee believes that a bulletin should be published describing in detail the work of these services on city planning, home building, and homemaking. This would provide a greater utilization of these services by the public and by cooperating agencies. The committee suggests that in the preparation of this bulletin, consideration should be given to the possible cooperation of several Federal departments in setting up a clearing-house for such inquiries; and if the need for a clearing-house becomes evident, the committee favors its establishment. Through this clearing-house, questions could be promptly relayed to the offices which could best answer them. A record of the types of questions asked, their regional source and seasonal occurrence, would assist in the preparation of new publications, timely releases, form letters, mimeographed replies and printed material in the entire field.

Disinterested agencies (*not Governmental*) giving out information relating to home building and home ownership include Better Homes in America and the Architects' Small House Service Bureau. More than any other agencies, these two are interested in the educational aspects of these problems.

Better Homes in America serves as a clearing-house for information on home building and home ownership problems. It issues and distributes pamphlets, reprints of articles, and book lists, and answers yearly thousands of inquiries on problems in the field of housing. Lists of publications may be obtained upon request. It has a research department.

The Architects' Small House Service Bureau is a nonprofit-making organization, established and operating under the auspices of the American Institute of Architects, whose purpose is to improve architectural taste and to make available good stock small-house plans at a reasonable cost. It publishes a monthly magazine, *The Small Home,* and prepares syndicated articles on problems of home building which appear weekly in a number of newspapers. It issues also a number of pamphlets and answers individual inquiries on home building problems. It provides the only unbiased plan service in widespread use in the United States.

Among other disinterested organizations which were reported as occasionally furnishing special information to local committees, through correspondence and publications, are the National Con-

ference on City Planning, the National Housing Association, and the American Civic Association. The Chamber of Commerce of the United States was also reported among these organizations. Many others have a regional or special service. There are a large number of research groups and investigation departments connected with national, regional and state organizations, business corporations and foundations, which supply information in various ways. Much of this material is extremely valuable but most of it is not readily accessible nor is its existence generally known.

The committee believes that if, through a disinterested national organization, the efforts of these research organizations working in the field of this Conference could be correlated and made more available, a work of great value to industry and to the public would be accomplished.

Commercial agencies. Those of national scope most frequently reported included magazines, certain trade associations in the construction field, the building departments of mail-order houses and magazine services.

The work of national trade associations in giving out information was the subject of a special inquiry of this committee.

Trade associations. Reports from nearly fifty national associations of dealers in the construction field show that these organizations have limited themselves for the most part to giving out such information on matters of construction as will further the sale of their products. The educational efforts of the associations have been extensive, but most of them have been toward promotion of training in the industry and have been carried on for the benefit of their employees.[4] This reaches the public indirectly but is none the less important. Recognition of craftsmanship is one of the most interesting developments. In a few cases material manufacturers have fostered architectural competitions and prepared books, pamphlets or exhibitions from the material secured. Several of these have been of high quality.

One material manufacturers' association points out that at one time it had a home-plan service which was discontinued in view of the plan service of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau.

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[4] Land, S. L. *Trade associations—their services to education.* Heating and Piping Contractors' National Association, 1931.

Systematized education by trade associations. Trade Association Department, Chamber of Commerce of the U. S. A., 1930.

U. S. Department of Commerce. *Trade Association Activities.* Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1927.

An electrical association cites its plan to sponsor a program of adequate wiring under which an emblem is awarded after inspection of work done, provided it meets the minimum specifications required in the territory. The American Gas Association sponsors a program on adequate gas appliances in the home, in which an emblem also is awarded after inspection of the work done, provided the equipment meets minimum specifications. There are also other certification plans in operation, whereby houses which are equipped to conform with specified requirements are certified.

Other associations have a certified heating program which gives the home owner assurance that the heating plant in his home will be designed and installed according to specified requirements. Certain associations in the construction field have published "construction standards." There are other interesting examples of educational and service programs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is generally admitted that the sources of information in the country as a whole are widely scattered, uncoordinated, and largely inadequate. There is a definite lack of exchange of information and usually a considerable lack of cooperation between the various business and professional interests connected with the building industry. There is almost no adequate machinery for directing urban people to sources of information.

The wastefulness of the present system—or lack of system—is apparent when one considers the innumerable overlappings of the various agencies, national and local. The committee again urges the necessity of general cooperation and education of the public on all matters relating to the subjects of this Conference.

In regard to information on problems of home building and home ownership, the committee recommends that:

1. More accurate and reliable information be prepared in convenient form by competent authorities on all the important phases of home building and home ownership; particularly, that inexpensive books on small-house design, and information on the fundamental principles of construction, remodeling, landscape design, and city planning, adapted to various regions of the country, be prepared by architects and other specialists for the citizen and prospective home builder and buyer, and for the public schools and colleges; also well-selected book lists for librarians.

2. Every effort be made to encourage standards of reliability and accuracy in advertising products in the field of home building, equipment, and fur-

nishing in order to eliminate some of the vast amount of unsound advice and information now being received by the public.

3. Methods be developed to make it easier for contractors and builders of small houses to become well informed about city planning in relation to housing, house design, estimating, financing, blue-print reading, and the relative values of building materials.

4. A more effective educational program be inaugurated by noncommercial agencies in cooperation with Government agencies to:

(a) Teach people to save and to buy wisely, to patronize reliable business men and avoid "fly-by-night" promoters, to know the importance of good planning, good design, and where to seek disinterested advice.

(b) Discourage both commercial and educational organizations from attempting to give information outside of their fields and from employing people unqualified by training and experience to advise on technical building problems.

5. Families which cannot afford to own a home be so advised.

6. Home financing agencies be urged to realize their responsibility in improving conditions of home building and consequently be asked to insist upon both good design and good construction of houses for which they make loans, and to assist in the distribution of approved information.

7. Through the cooperation of state, business, and civic agencies, more effective methods be developed to control the type of activities in real estate, subdivision development, speculative building, and mortgage loans which have caused so much loss and unhappiness to many of the American people; and that better regulation of home financing agencies be worked out for the protection of prospective home buyers and home builders and of investors in these agencies.

8. A central address be established in Washington, D. C., to which all inquiries directed to the Federal Government on the various phases of home and civic problems might be sent, and from that place referred to the proper department or agency; and that a compilation be made of the type, frequency, and regional source of inquiries for use in the preparation of material for distribution.

9. The Federal bureaus which furnish information on various phases of city planning, home building, home ownership, and homemaking collaborate in the preparation of a pamphlet describing their services to the people.

10. A national institute be established to foster accurate, complete, and unbiased information to the prospective home buyer, home builder, and homemaker and encourage establishment of a system of disinterested and autonomous home information centers throughout the country.

11. Individual communities organize to correlate their existing sources of information on home building, home ownership, and homemaking; take stock of deficiencies; and where necessary set up a new disinterested organization—a home information center, suitable to the community's size and needs, in order to foster and maintain interest in, and sound knowledge of, home and civic development.

CHAPTER IX

HOMEMAKING CENTERS AND SERVICES IN CITIES

Summary

In urban communities information on homemaking is more commonly available than is information on other phases of home building and ownership.

A detailed study was made of fourteen homemaking information centers, the majority of which trace their origin, directly or indirectly, to urban home information bureaus opened during the war, and which were and are now administratively a part of the Cooperative Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics. Those that are most useful appear to owe their success to reliable financial support from a variety of civic organizations as well as to close contacts with disinterested research or educational agencies, to adequately trained personnel, and to programs adapted to actual local needs. None offers any extensive help regarding home building and ownership in connection with programs on homemaking, though such a combination could probably be easily arranged if this seemed desirable from all points of view.

These organizations are not the only ones to give home information in cities. Besides home economics classes in schools and colleges, there are many educational agencies which offer homemaking instruction and information to urban girls and women. These include the programs of university extension, of various adult education groups, women's organizations, and many others. Formerly cooking and sewing were the most popular subjects, but more and more interest is now shown in budgeting, in household management, in family relationships and child development.

The Young Women's Christian Association, Girl Scouts, and Campfire Girls have developed varied homemaking programs for their members. Other sócial service organizations often give instruction in various phases of homemaking because these are essential to family welfare. Some have developed valuable services for certain age, sex, nationality and underprivileged groups.

Purchase of food, diet, clothing, budgeting and household management are subjects which often are taught low-income groups.

Many national commercial organizations in the fields of public utilities, life insurance, house furnishings and equipment, and other household commodities, give out information on homemaking by means of exhibits, lectures, and demonstrations under the auspices of local agencies, sometimes by agents sent to individual homes, most frequently by means of printed material distributed free. The accuracy of the information and the attractiveness of the publications vary greatly. Usually only one type of information is offered by any one agency. Some newspapers and magazines have a wide influence among homemakers. A considerable number offer free consultant service in addition to their homemaker's section and woman's pages. Some of this material is excellent; part of it is poor and even harmful. Local banks, department stores, and other business organizations occasionally offer free information service on subjects along their lines, such as budgeting and selection and care of home furnishings and equipment.

It is not easy for the homemaker to judge the reliability of the information offered her from these varied sources. In purchasing household goods, she would be helped greatly by the more general use of reliable standards, specifications, and grades; and of certified labels or other devices to indicate the real quality of the goods or the performance or service they may be expected to render.

There is practically no attempt at coordination or cooperation in the service of these various agencies, either locally or nationally. Much more could be accomplished by the same amount of effort if some central national agency could be set up to assemble and evaluate available information, provide for gaps not now filled in, and generally serve as a clearing-house for information on homemaking as well as home building and ownership. The expansion, however, of existing local home information centers and their better adaptation to meet local need and the coordination of effort of all agencies in the community will be necessary if adequate service is to be offered in any city. In many communities opportunities for the public to obtain reliable home information are so limited that new home information centers are indicated—the exact

type of center in each case depending upon local conditions and resources.

Scope of Study

It seemed important that the committee should study the types of information service on homemaking which are already available and the conditions under which they operate.

Homemaking is considered ordinarily to include the subjects of health, child care, family relationships, foods and nutrition, clothing, the house, its furnishing and equipment, household and income management, and household arts and crafts. It was agreed to confine this discussion to the different kinds of organizations which give out information on the subjects of special interest to this Conference, including:

Use of family income with reference to expenditures for the house and its appurtenances in relation to those of other items of the budget.

Arrangement and management of the home, with special reference to the use of household labor and time.

House furnishing and equipment.

Landscape design and planting. (Included because it is often part of the program of local groups.)

Various aspects of homemaking subject matter and allied topics are dealt with by other committees of this Conference.[1] The present study naturally deals with the means by which information is disseminated and only incidentally with the subject matter.

Homemaking Information Centers

The fourteen city centers which were carefully studied are agencies from which information and instruction may be obtained on homemaking. Most of them are centrally located and cooperate to a greater or lesser degree with other local agencies concerned with home improvement. The majority of them draw on national, state, and other local sources of information.

None deals with all subjects related to the home; most of them have a restricted service, that is, do not provide it free to everyone who applies; this is particularly true of class instruction.

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[1] See *Planning for residential districts,* vol. I, ch. V; *Household management and kitchens,* vol. IX, Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership.

Some of these centers are partially supported by public funds; none of them is completely so. Most of them trace their origins to home information bureaus organized during the war in connection with the food and clothing conservation program. The subjects with which they deal are selection and preparation of food, selection, construction and care of clothing; home equipment and furnishing; household management and budgeting; and, in recent years, child care and family relationships. Several give advice and have effectively developed interest in home gardening.

Some of the services of these centers resemble those occasionally rendered by educational or welfare agencies, except that in these special centers all activities are more closely coordinated around the idea of homemaking.

There are two groups of such agencies, one here considered under the designation of Urban Home Bureaus; the other, of New England Home Information Centers.

Urban Home Bureaus. These centers developed from the food conservation work of the World War and were organized between 1917 and 1920. They are to be found in Duluth, Minneapolis, and St. Paul, Minnesota; in Paterson, New Jersey; and in Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, New York.

All seven centers in this group are formally affiliated with the State Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, have the benefit of services of the specialists from the state college of agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture, and are, in short, special local urban developments of the home demonstration work carried on by the states in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture.

Organization. The policies of each of these centers are directed by the state college of agriculture and local committees. The Paterson, Rochester, and St. Paul centers are housed by the chamber of commerce. The Rochester center is the only one reporting an executive committee composed of chamber of commerce members, a fact due to a by-law of the local chamber providing that each department of the chamber shall be directed by a committee of not less than twelve chamber members; however, the program of the center is determined by an advisory board elected by the membership. In each of the other centers, except Duluth, a single board elected by the membership de-

termines policies, finances, and programs. Duluth also has an advisory board consisting of five prominent business men.

Financial support. Each center has close connection with the extension department of its state college of agriculture. Only Paterson reports direct financial aid from the state college, although each center receives indirect financial support in the form of administrative supervision, printed material, exhibits, publicity, and service from extension specialists. Paterson also receives aid from the city and the chamber of commerce, which provides office space, telephone, and a secretary. Duluth, Minneapolis, and St. Paul report receipt of direct financial aid only from a community fund. Duluth also reports other forms of assistance from both city and county; and St. Paul, from the county and the St. Paul Association of Commerce.

Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse receive appropriations from their respective county boards of supervisors, also from annual individual membership fees of one dollar. The Rochester Chamber of Commerce contributes no actual cash to the budget of the Rochester Home Bureau but it affords the Home Bureau the exclusive use of a suite of four rooms and two offices; the use of its assembly halls, lunch room, and committee rooms, and departmental cooperation, prestige, and administrative council.

Staff. The local staff consists of home economists selected by the state home demonstration leader and the local executive committee. Each center has an office secretary. The regular teaching staff varies from one to three in number. Their work is supplemented by that of the extension specialists from the state college and other professional persons. With the exception of Buffalo, the volunteer local leadership plan is used; that is, leaders for the various projects are trained by the specialists or the local staff, and in turn relay the information to their respective groups. By this means the maximum number of people is reached with the least expenditure. Approved representatives of the educational departments of commercial concerns occasionally make contributions to the program.

Program. The program of all seven centers consists largely of homemaking subjects. Each center builds its program up from one arranged according to the expressed needs of the local community. The widening interest in the programs offered by these

centers and the increase in number of the projects included, indicate that the methods are successful in getting valuable information into the home. Some of the subjects taught in the field in which this Conference is especially concerned are household management, including budgeting of time and money; house planning, with reference to arrangement of interiors; house furnishing; and landscape gardening. The aim of these centers is to organize the subjects taught so that information and instruction may be obtained quickly by the busy homemaker and be adapted for immediate use, and by so doing to develop community interest in home improvement.

The New England centers. The six New England cities in which home information centers are found are Boston, Cambridge, Holyoke, and Springfield, Massachusetts, and Newport and Providence, Rhode Island.

All of these organizations are classed as social and educational agencies. With the exception of the one at Holyoke, they are related through American Homemakers, Inc., an organization formed to promote their work by maintaining mutually helpful contacts between them. For two years a general director was employed for this purpose. The center at Holyoke enjoys the distinction of having functioned continuously since 1914.

One of these centers offers its services to women only; the others devote a large part of their time to work with girls, as well.

Program. The homemaking subjects considered at the centers may include: Household finance, house furnishings, household management, refinishing furniture, window treatment, child care, child training, rug making, dyeing, basketry, weaving, woodworking, gardening, chair seating, upholstery, menu making, cookery and dressmaking, millinery, recreation, home nursing, and first aid.

In addition to giving information through personal conferences and correspondence, the centers have a limited program of classes, lectures, and demonstrations. It is, however, the general policy to offer instruction only when opportunity for it is lacking elsewhere in the community. In several centers the teaching of handicrafts is emphasized. Some have exhibits, provide for radio talks, and prepare regular news releases and educational feature stories. One center has made investigations of consumer demand for retail firms. Some have educational exhibits in the Eastern States Exposition at Springfield each fall, and take an active part in the

annual Better Homes in America campaigns; and one offers the use of rooms and equipment to those who cannot afford labor-saving devices. Where budgeting specialists are available on the staff of the centers wide use is made of their knowledge and experience.

The home information center can be of immediate and practical service to its clients whatever their income and previous education.

Clients are advised of the activities of the centers by press notices, circular letters, radio, contacts with other organizations, and in some instances by membership campaigns. Dues are one or two dollars a year, except in one center where there are no dues.

Some of the centers in the larger cities feel that one of their chief functions is to act as a clearing-house and direct women and girls to those organizations and activities in the city which will be most helpful to them. One center prefers to lend a staff specialist to other organizations as consultant and supervising instructor rather than develop many classes itself.

Staff. The staff of the centers varies according to the type of work and the number served.[2] The financial resources control the extent and character of the work to a considerable degree. There are usually a trained director, one or two full-time office workers, and several part-time specialists or visiting instructors. One of the centers has as many as nine workers.

Financial support. The centers receive their financial support from various sources, including small membership dues, fees for class instruction and services, money-making enterprises, appropriations from local welfare funds, and private donations. The

[2] The number and classification of services of two of the centers may illustrate how the division of time and effort varies:

	A	B
Individuals in classes	672	2,646
Consultations on budget	243	
Consultations on other subjects	2,383	2,400
Letters, advisory	1,725	not reported
Telephone calls		2,137
Audience (outside talks)	4,245	300
	9,268	7,483

There were no estimates of radio and exhibit audiences, nor of the number of pamphlets distributed.

one at Newport is maintained from an endowment and occupies a house left to the local Civic League. The Springfield and Holyoke centers receive grants from the Service League Foundation and the Board for County Aid to Agriculture, and the one at Holyoke also receives an appropriation from the city. The Rhode Island center at Providence runs a salvage shop; another rents its house in the summer to help raise funds.

Cooperating agencies. The nature of this list differs slightly in each community. Some of the more important organizations listed in Boston are given here because they illustrate the types of agencies which can and will assist in developing homemaking projects. These include: Boston University, Simmons College, Garland School of Homemaking, Child Welfare Commission, the State Department of Health, the Young Women's Christian Association, Campfire Girls, Girl Scouts, State Federation of Women's Clubs, Congress of Parents and Teachers, Women's Educational and Industrial Union, Architects' Small House Service Bureau, Better Homes in America, New England Home Economics Association, the city public libraries, the Society for Mental Hygiene, the Judge Baker Foundation, New England Dairy and Food Council, trust companies, retail firms, and the local press.

The home information center in a civic association. An interesting type of center has been developed in Salt Lake City. It has grown out of the parent-teacher work and is in part at least due to the fact that there is no state or local program of adult education. The center combines the functions of clubhouse for various groups; rest room for country people; meeting place for classes in cooking, sewing, decorating, home nursing; and headquarters for a nursing clinic and for an information service through personal conference and correspondence. It is located in an old three-story building in a down-town section recently redeemed from a formerly disreputable neighborhood. The staff consists of a competent, college-trained director, serving nine months of the year, and specially qualified instructors for various part-time services. It also has a large group of volunteer leaders and workers. Financial support includes payment of rent by city and county, small dues, and rentals from subtenants. Gifts from business men paid for the economical but attractive furnishings and equipment.

The center is taking an active part in the work of the State Conference for Child Health and Protection. It is a type of woman's organization doing a big work with little money.

Outstanding features of urban homemaking centers. Several features seen in all successful homemaking centers, and not always apparent in those less successful, seem significant enough to list here:

1. Financial support and active cooperation from a sufficient variety of local sources to make the center a real community enterprise.
2. The services of a professionally trained and experienced director and instructors.
3. Close relations with a state or local college or university, or other disinterested source of technical information.
4. Programs of instruction adapted to the expressed needs of the community and drawn up with consideration of the services rendered by other agencies, day and evening schools, social welfare associations, civic, religious, and business organizations, to avoid duplication.

Homemaking Information from Miscellaneous Sources in Cities and Small Towns

How much useful information on homemaking is available in cities is an important question, and the answer as to the amount, character, methods and value of the work undoubtedly would vary with each community, for the resources of every city are quite different as to quantity and quality of service.

In connection with the field work done for the committee a great number of organizations in twenty-six cities in different parts of the country reported that they gave homemaking information.[3] Indeed the reports from this survey indicate that information on homemaking was more nearly satisfactory in several communities than information on the problems of home building and home ownership anywhere.

It is probable that much of this homemaking information dealt with cooking, sewing, and child care, but there is no doubt that some information on other phases was included. There is evidence, moreover, that the facilities for disseminating more and better information could be developed if the demand warrants it. It was impossible to evaluate this information or judge how many received it. It was apparent that there were many unrelated

[3] See p. 140.

sources of partial information, but in none of these twenty-six cities was there a central agency which offered complete and disinterested information on all phases of homemaking. That such an agency would be highly desirable was the opinion of the great majority of persons interviewed.

Various agencies were suggested as being competent to take the lead in organizing a service of this kind. It appeared unlikely, however, that any one of the agencies mentioned—schools, social agencies, business firms, newspapers, civic organizations, women's clubs, including parent-teacher associations and garden clubs, would be able to take over the work on the scale which complete effectiveness would demand, though several might assist financially and others through participation and cooperation. Any scheme providing a complete community service would have to take into account the established agencies and provide definitely for their use in cooperation with any new agency which might be set up.

Because of the lack of experience in this field, it is suggested that a service which will more completely meet the community needs be established on an experimental basis in one or more cities where there is a desire for more and better service and where cooperation of the people and existing agencies is assured.

An intensive study of the sources of information on homemaking was made of several of the smaller cities. The report from Santa Barbara, which has a well-developed educational and civic program, may be taken as indicative of the variety and extent of work along these lines. The Council of Social Agencies in that city stated that the active sources of instruction and information on homemaking as discussed by this committee were as follows: (1) Schools and public agencies—day, part-time and night classes; home teachers; parochial schools; teachers' college; public library; playground and recreation department; public health nurses. (2) Membership groups—the women's clubs; the eleven parent-teacher associations; and three garden clubs. (3) Social and educational agencies—the Girl Scouts; the Campfire Girls; two neighborhood houses; a Catholic welfare center; Associated Charities; Visiting Nurse Association; and Catholic orphanage. (4) Civic organizations—Plans Committee; Planting Committee; and the Better Homes in America Committee.

(5) Commercial groups—the gas company, the electric company, the builders' exchange, local merchants through demonstrations, and occasionally newspapers and local merchants cooperating with national manufacturers and distributors.

The organizations agree that, while they are all willing to cooperate, they have not sufficiently coordinated their educational programs on homemaking. They have, moreover, failed to advertise their services sufficiently and have not done as much year-round educational publicity as would be desirable. Publicity comes chiefly at the time of community chest and Better Homes campaigns, when the services rendered by each and every home information service are listed, and when most of them share in public demonstration of their work.

It is suggested that representatives of schools and social agencies study local conditions and needs with a view to improving their services and reaching more people. A committee of this kind might form a section of a larger committee or city conference on home and community development.

While nearly all public school systems throughout the country include some home economics instruction, this varies greatly in extent and value, and there are undoubtedly many small cities and towns in which other reliable sources of home information are lacking. That there is a widespread demand for such information is clearly shown by the eagerness of persons all over the country to take advantage of instruction wherever it is readily available and adapted to everyday needs.

In regard to the need for information concerning household problems, Dr. James Ford says:

"For most married women, homemaking and household management constitute their major occupations. All men who are owners or renters of houses or apartments are also intimately concerned at times with many of the problems in this field, especially with household budgeting and home financing, and with problems of the care and repair of the home. The majority of persons are, therefore, very frequently in need of information as to best ways of meeting problems which arise in the course of the day's activities, or which grow out of hopes and plans for the future. The business of operating a household is so complicated that the casual instruction received in one's own home, and the quite incidental training in these subjects provided in the public schools are not adequate. The progress of invention in household appliances, in building materials, in equipment for heating, lighting, cooking, ventilation, refrigeration, etc., has been very rapid.

It is not easy for the individual to keep up with the progress of science in these fields; and thus in buying new equipment, in replacing old fixtures, or in coping with such daily problems as the removal of stains on clothing and repair of rugs, the stocking of the medicine cabinet, or the provision of three adequate meals a day at minimum cost and with sufficient variety of food to render it appetizing, the individual is likely to get his information solely from advertisements or from salesmen who have a limited knowledge of special materials to sell, and not from disinterested and well-instructed sources of information."[4]

Homemaking Information Disseminated by National Organizations

The organizations of national scope that give out homemaking information may be divided into three groups, the commercial, the educational, and the social-welfare organizations. The following generalizations are based mainly on information supplied by them to the committee. No names of firms or associations are given here because only a few of the reports received can be specially referred to.

Commercial organizations. In general, the material prepared for householders by associations of manufacturers or dealers in materials and equipment describes their products truthfully, but naturally puts the best foot forward. There is little or no effort to consider their relation to other factors of home building, home ownership, or homemaking.

As regards the methods by which the information is disseminated, printed material for free distribution was by far the most common means employed in addition to newspapers and magazine advertising. Personal conference, correspondence, demonstrations, lectures, and classes were all reported more or less frequently. Radio broadcasting was used by some agencies.

In the public utility field, the electrical and gas industries maintain extensive home service departments, with a considerable proportion of the staff made up of women with home economics training. These women frequently give information on phases of homemaking other than those immediately concerned with the installation, use, and care of electrical or gas-burning equipment. A few cases have been reported in which advice on home decorating and

[4] From "Clearing-houses for educational information," an address before the National Conference of Social Work, 1930.

budgeting has been given by women without adequate knowledge and experience in these special subjects, an unfortunate practice in a service which in most respects is well conducted. The number of women reported as in the home service of electric light organizations is about 450. Home service departments were reported in 367 gas companies. A joint conference of women in these two services is held annually.

In this connection may perhaps be mentioned the testing of domestic gas appliances in the laboratory of the American Gas Association and the seal of approval that it grants to those which pass certain national requirements for safety.

One national association gives out some information about house furnishing and equipment, and use of family income, chiefly in the form of news releases and in connection with "own your own home" campaigns. Other companies distributed free thousands of home budget books.

A life insurance company has maintained a home economics department for some years which gives disinterested advice on household problems to the families of policyholders. It has prepared a series of lessons on all kinds of home problems, including those in the economic field. The director of this work is an experienced social worker with home economics training.

One national board maintains a nation-wide service of information along the lines of fire protection and prevention in the home. Much of this deals with home conditions and includes publications prepared especially for the housewife. Another national association is working definitely for the prevention of accidents in the home. The report of a study of the subject made by a research fellow has been completed recently and is expected to furnish reliable information on the relation of household equipment and management to home safety.

Educational and social-welfare organizations. Information was received from twenty-eight national educational and social-welfare organizations, including Federal agencies, known to provide information on homemaking.

It was interesting to note that the national organizations often felt unable to answer for local member organizations, though they thought the latter gave some homemaking information. Among those definitely reporting such service should be mentioned the

Family Welfare Association of America, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association, the Visiting Housekeepers' Association, and the Social Service Department of the American Home Economics Association. The programs of the Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, and 4-H Clubs for girls give much attention to various phases of homemaking. It may be mentioned in this connection that the program of the Boy Scouts includes some excellent work on home building and ownership, though not on homemaking in particular.

Better Homes in America is a national agency organized to promote better standards in the field of home building and ownership, including also certain aspects of homemaking. Its headquarters are in Washington, D. C. It serves as a clearing-house for information on many phases of housing and homemaking and distributes literature, including pamphlets, book lists and reprints of articles. The information most frequently requested is on the following subjects: House plans, remodeling, construction problems, furniture, interior decoration, household equipment, kitchens, and landscape gardening.

The majority of local committees, of which there are over 9,000, are in small cities, towns and in rural districts. They render various types of service to their communities. During the annual campaign which terminates in "Better Homes Week," programs are held which coordinate the work of libraries, schools, civic organizations, and other agencies in each of the communities.

The work of distinctly educational agencies is referred to on p. 140-142, and work in rural areas on p. 176-197. It may be said here that the Federal Board for Vocational Education shows increasing work with adults along various lines of homemaking, both in cities and in smaller communities. Public schools in many cities are doing similar work which is not aided by Federal funds. Nineteen states have supervisors of adult education; of these, California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, and South Dakota report adult homemaking education in other subjects than cooking and sewing, and the work in most cases is well organized and successful. The director of adult education in Rhode Island writes that in English classes for foreign women homemaking provides the best line of approach.

Special Services

Home information given by banks. The home economics consultant in a Cleveland bank thus summarized the home information given by banks:

"Division of the family income and the selection of a home from the standpoint of financing are the phases in which banks give the most home information. The banks that give this help usually have some printed matter on the subject, but they invite personal consultation and, in addition, some banks send out lecturers and some reach people over the radio. To my knowledge only one bank has made a practice of giving information on other than the financial phase of homemaking. At the Utica Savings Bank, Utica, New York, a kitchen has been equipped and courses are given in food preparation and meal serving. Most banks give advice on home and personal finance and refer their clients to other agencies according to the needs." [5]

About a dozen banks in the United States are said to employ special advisers on home finance.

Home information given by retail stores. No complete picture could be obtained of the kind or extent of home information distributed by retail stores. Several have for some years given disinterested advice on family budgets. In general, there appears to be an increasing tendency for furniture and decorating shops and department stores to supply advisory service to clients. Demonstrations by specialists sent by manufacturers are frequently arranged.

Home information given at exhibits of household goods. Combined exhibits are sometimes arranged by dealers in different lines of household equipment, furnishings, and other commodities, sometimes under the auspices of a woman's organization. In connection with such exhibits demonstrations are usually made of the individual articles displayed and information is given also about general homemaking problems. The value of these, of course, depends on the technical knowledge, fairness, and skill in presentation of the demonstrators or speakers.

Home information given through homemaking cottages, Girl Scout houses, and rest rooms for rural women. Many states have established home economics cottages for the purpose of providing practice for high school students in connection with high school home economics work. Some of these states,

[5] From a letter to the committee.

especially in the South, have as many as a hundred or more of these cottages. In certain communities the houses are equipped with laboratories; in others, typical homes have been provided. The homemakers of a community often visit these cottages for the purpose of obtaining information on equipment, furniture, decorations, and household operations. Many of the hundred or more Girl Scout houses throughout the country provide a similar but more limited service. In addition, there are a small number of rest rooms which are furnished and equipped as houses or apartments and which serve a double purpose, that of rest room and a demonstration of furnishings and equipment. Valuable as these are, improvement in design and equipment is often desirable.

Possible guides in household purchasing. The committee recognizes the importance to homemaking of reliable guides in the selection of household goods, a matter on which the successful use of the family income and the comfort of home life very largely depend, and which become more difficult as the goods offered are less easily evaluated. The Committee on Household Management of this Conference has made a careful study of this problem. There are some points, however, which should be included here.

There is obvious need for disinterested information as to the quality and performance of household goods, and equally obvious difficulties in the way of preparing and giving out information which will be of genuine help to ordinary housekeepers. Several promising attempts in this direction have, however, been made. To begin with, there are the published specifications used by the United States Government for its purchases, not a few of which might be used or adapted for the use of individual consumers. The same is true of some of the commercially accepted standards; of the labeling and grading used in the Food and Drug Administration; and the "willing-to-certify" service of the Bureau of Standards of the United States Department of Commerce. Commercial laboratories and magazines which conduct and publish the results of tests made under properly controlled conditions are rendering another noteworthy service. So, also, is the magazine which assembles in simple leaflets for homemakers basic information regarding kinds of commodities.

The American Home Economics Association has a committee working on general points to be observed in evaluating advertising material, and hopes soon to report on food advertising. It may be that the newly inaugurated service of the American Medical Association, which gives a seal of approval to food products whose advertising claims as to nutrition value are borne out by scientific tests, will indicate a method for other organizations and commodities.

Before any or all of these methods can be generally successful, consumers themselves must be educated to appreciate the possibilities of such guides to purchasing, and to demand them from manufacturers and dealers. For some years the American Home Economics Association has been working to this end, and is enlisting the cooperation of other consumers' organizations, notably the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

In the opinion of the committee this whole matter of aids to the individual consumer for intelligent selection of household goods is worthy of serious attention.[6]

Information from Federal Government and other research groups. Several bureaus of the Departments of Agriculture (particularly the Bureau of Home Economics), Commerce, Interior, and Labor collect and disseminate information on homemaking subjects. They form an extensive source of authoritative and disinterested information. Research on many important subjects is now under way and new material is constantly being prepared for public use.

Research departments connected with colleges and universities and with many other organizations are adding to the total of information on homemaking subjects, but much of it is not quickly and readily available for use by educational agencies or the public.

There is apparently as much need for coordination in such research as there is for increased cooperation between disseminating agencies.

Opinions of Qualified Observers

To supplement the information obtained from those actually rendering homemaking information service, the opinions of several

[6] See *Household management and kitchens.* Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, vol. IX, p. 65-99.

specially qualified observers were obtained. Among those approached were home economists in social service work and in the employ of business firms. Both of these groups seem in an especially good position to judge the value of homemaking information services because they combine professional training in homemaking with practical experience in "putting over" the information to special groups or to commercial organizations.

The social service group reported that its members have local service on many aspects of homemaking and that all of them had received professional training for this purpose. They were employed as visiting housekeepers, nutritionists, case workers, and staff consultants. The following general comments were made:

"Persons engaged in distributing such information should have received training complying with standards set up by their professional organizations. This standard should also apply to commercial organizations which cannot be completely disinterested in motive. The type of service rendered will depend upon the aim of the organization with which the home economist is affiliated. Overlapping of functions of the organization from both local and national standpoint should be avoided."

* * * * *

"There is a growing tendency for home economics information to be disseminated by nonspecialists in this field, i.e., nurses, social workers, dentists, dental hygienists, school teachers, etc. This tendency seems necessary in some cases and is probably desirable, provided these groups realize their own limitations and constantly use the specialist as a consultant."

* * * * *

"Well-trained personnel is the first essential. In addition to training they should have a background of experience. It seems that the only way to evaluate commercial material is to have a central committee for that purpose made up of representatives from national organizations of professional workers. Gradually they would be able to work out standards for commercial material and possibly make firms realize that there is a difference between 'education' and 'sales promotion.'"

The following quotations from home economists employed by business firms are of interest:

"From limited observation it seems that those local bureaus which are not dependent upon commercial support are the most reliable sources of information to the homemaker. I refer particularly to urban home bureaus (notably in Duluth, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse) and to home information centers maintained by community funds, as in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

"In my opinion, certain commercial agencies are also doing a good piece

of work along these lines. For example, an electric light and railway company in its Home Service Department advises on problems of home lighting and decoration, and works with architects and builders."

The same observer felt that centers organized by noncommercial groups or supposedly disinterested agencies, but supported by commercial agencies, were of dubious value to the homemaker, and states:

"Because they must depend upon the manufacturers for support, the information which they give can hardly be unbiased. On the other hand, the average patron of these agencies thinks of them as disinterested and noncommercial and does not weigh their information as she would that offered by ordinary commercial organizations."

Another member of this group felt that the two home information centers with which she was familiar (neither belonging to the groups previously described) suffered from lack of a "national source of reliable information" and "national or regional direction and sufficient support for capable leadership."

Still another connected with an organization which has an exceptionally well-planned program of education for homemakers writes, "I wish there were some places where one could go to learn what women really want from firms like ours. I do not know whether home information centers would be the solution for this or not."

Many correspondents deplored the influence of high-pressure salesmanship which makes women dissatisfied with their homes and equipment, if they are not the latest "style." They also emphasized the danger of the partial-payment plan when carried to an extreme in the purchase of furniture and equipment.

In short, all the replies received indicated that there is special need of reliable, sensible information applicable to the homemaking problems of the simple, inexpensive home for the average American family.

Recommendations

Local home information centers. Homemaking information centers, properly located, organized, and conducted, have proved capable of rendering social service well worth the investment of time and money. It also appears that the problems of home information centers of wider scope are in essential respects similar.

Where local conditions warrant, it would seem feasible and desirable to combine information service on home building, home ownership, and homemaking in a single organization; partly to reduce cost of operation, but also because of the importance of bringing those concerned with the separate phases of the general subject to a more complete recognition of the fact that no one phase is an end in itself. Each contributes to the fundamental aim of such service; namely, to help provide homes in which the family's investment of money and household labor will bring the best returns in individual development and satisfactory family life.

The committee therefore recommends that:

The Conference consider a general plan for the development of local centers for the dissemination of information on home building, home ownership, and homemaking. (See also Chapter XII.)

The work of one or two successful homemaking information centers be enlarged for one or two years to include information on home building and ownership, as a means of testing out the type of organization for a center of larger scope.

National clearing-house for home information. Experience in homemaking centers and study of the homemaking information given out by various agencies have made clear the lack of coordination among such sources and the importance of some means of lessening this confusion if the homemakers are to get full benefit of the efforts made in their behalf. The committee therefore recommends that:

A national, central clearing-house for home information be set up under auspices which will inspire general public confidence and with a program for assembling available knowledge, encouraging investigations to find and supply the present lacks, and disseminating home information in forms practically useful to the different groups concerned with building, owning, and actually living in homes.

Study of applicability of methods and principles of agricultural extension work to urban conditions. The educational principles and method of organization adopted by the Agricultural Extension Service have proved successful in rural work and in the few urban communities where they have been followed for homemaking centers. The committee therefore recommends that:

The Conference make careful study of the application to urban conditions of the educational principles and method of organization adopted by

the Agricultural Extension Service, including their use in urban home information centers.

Guides for household purchasing. Because of the importance of providing consumers with guides for the selection of household equipment and furnishings, the committee recommends that:

The Conference endorse efforts, such as those of the American Home Economics Association and the General Federation of Women's Clubs, to educate household purchasers regarding the possibilities and importance of standards, specifications, and labels which will aid in knowing the quality and performance of goods offered for the retail trade.

CHAPTER X

HOME INFORMATION SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

Introduction

The Federal Census of 1930 classes 44 per cent of the population as rural. Fifty-four million people live on farms, in villages of less than 2,500 population, and in rural areas that are neither farm nor village. Thirty million of these are on farms. Ten and one-half million more live in towns of from 2,500 to 10,000 population.

The problems which affect the housing of this population living in rural territory are varied and in many particulars are different from those which affect the urban and suburban population. There is a striking contrast in the number and type of information services available for these different groups. The informational service to rural people is effectively organized and seems well adapted to its present use. There is, however, a great need for expansion along the lines of home improvement.

The number and resources of local organizations naturally decrease with the population. In some poor and sparsely populated areas there has been little change in fifty years.

Conditions and needs of the farm and urban population have been studied frequently from many angles. There is, however, apparently a real need for further study with relation to housing, Few studies have been made of the problems of the families living on a few acres of ground who are classed neither as farmers nor as city dwellers. They have recently moved from the city and are unused to country conditions. These part-time farmers,[1] and country homemakers are reported as inadequately reached by active educational agencies in the field of home improvement.

This report will discuss some of the conditions that exist with relation to sources of information on subjects relating to the home. Emphasis will be placed upon the organization and methods of the Cooperative Extension Service, as it provides one of the most effective means of reaching rural people with an educational pro-

[1] See *Farm and village housing.* Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, vol. VII.

gram of home and community development, and upon the experience of Better Homes in America in stimulating nation-wide activities along all these lines.

In about 600 rural counties there are practically no authoritative and impartial sources of home information to which farm and village people may readily turn.

In 2,432 counties, or 79 per cent of the total number, the persons most frequently available for directly aiding farm people in the county are the agricultural and home demonstration agents of the Agricultural Extension Service. In a more restricted degree, the local public school teachers of home economics, manual training, and agriculture are helpful, and serve to some extent as sources of information. Reports from several hundred persons throughout the country show that the outstanding sources of help from without the county are the state agricultural colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture, which aid chiefly through publications, correspondence, personal contacts by agents in counties, and the advisory service of specialists. Magazines and mail-order houses were mentioned next in order.

The advice on home building that is most frequently asked by rural people from the Extension Service is on home remodeling and renovation, and the installation of water, sewerage and lighting systems; in the field of homemaking, help is requested on a variety of subjects. There is little or no professional advice on architectural design and home construction; and advice on financing home improvements, furnishing, and landscape design, is as yet limited.

The fact was stressed in reports from all over the country that manufacturers and dealers in household equipment and furnishings, editors and advertisers, officers and program chairmen of national organizations have not realized the particular problems and needs of the rural population.

It was reported that, while the rural newspapers have a wide circulation, few papers give much space to the subjects considered in this Conference. It was noted that a great many farm families have radios. The programs presented especially for farm families, however, deal largely with matters relating to crops, animal husbandry, marketing, and foods and nutrition.

The committee's report is based on special county surveys, letters from numerous organizations, agencies, and individuals, and the

reports from several hundred home demonstration agents and over a hundred bankers.[2]

The services listed fall into two classifications: (1) Those within the county, and (2) those outside the county.

The study showed that Better Homes in America campaigns have increasingly proved a very effective means of drawing together all agencies in a county or community in support of a home improvement program.

The study also showed that the agencies best able to develop a program for home and community improvement are schools, the Agricultural Extension Service, business interests, the rural press, social-welfare agencies, and membership organizations of men and women, particularly farm groups.

The purpose of this study was as follows:

To determine and list the type of information services now available for farm and village people on all phases of home building, home ownership, homemaking, and landscape planning and planting.

To determine upon desirable methods of coordinating and improving existing information services.

To suggest those services which the committee believes are needed to meet adequately the needs of farm and village people.

Agencies within the County

Those most concerned with the problems of home improvement within the county are the educational and commercial agencies and membership groups.

Educational agencies. All the reports show that the most numerous, active, and effective workers along these lines are the county home demonstration agents, the county agricultural agents, and teachers of vocational home economics and of agriculture, and to a lesser degree the librarians, county welfare workers, county health officers, and public health nurses.

Agricultural Extension Service. This work has been defined as follows:

"The nation-wide system of extension work in agriculture and home economics is a cooperative system of rural education which is fostered and maintained by the state colleges of agriculture, the United States Depart-

[2] The questionnaires distributed to county home demonstration agents and to bankers were sent out and analyzed by the Agricultural Extension Service, under the direction of Miss Grace E. Frysinger.

ment of Agriculture, the local county governing bodies, and local groups of people. This work is financed almost entirely from public funds and the educational aid is available to all rural people free of charge. Various types of extension workers are employed in this system, including directors, supervisors, state subject-matter specialists, county club agents, county home demonstration agents, and county agricultural agents."[3]

Approximately two dollars of state and county money is appropriated for each dollar of Federal money in support of this work.

During 1930, approximately 2,000,000 farms and farm homes improved practices due to the aid of extension agents, and 293,149 men and women served as volunteer leaders in promoting the work as conducted in 65,388 communities.

The large number of counties having extension agents, their methods of work, their close cooperation with farm organizations and their willingness and ability to interest rural people in meeting together to discuss home and community improvements undoubtedly make the Cooperative Extension Service the most important agency through which information is brought to farm and village people.

On September 30, 1931, there was a total of 6,139 extension workers. Of these, 4,438 men and women are *county* extension agents, located in 2,432 counties of the United States.[4] The educational work on various projects which can be done by the cooperative extension forces of the United States Department of Agriculture, the state land grant colleges, extension specialists, and the county extension agents, makes it possible to enlist the interest and cooperation of at least fifty men and women leaders in each

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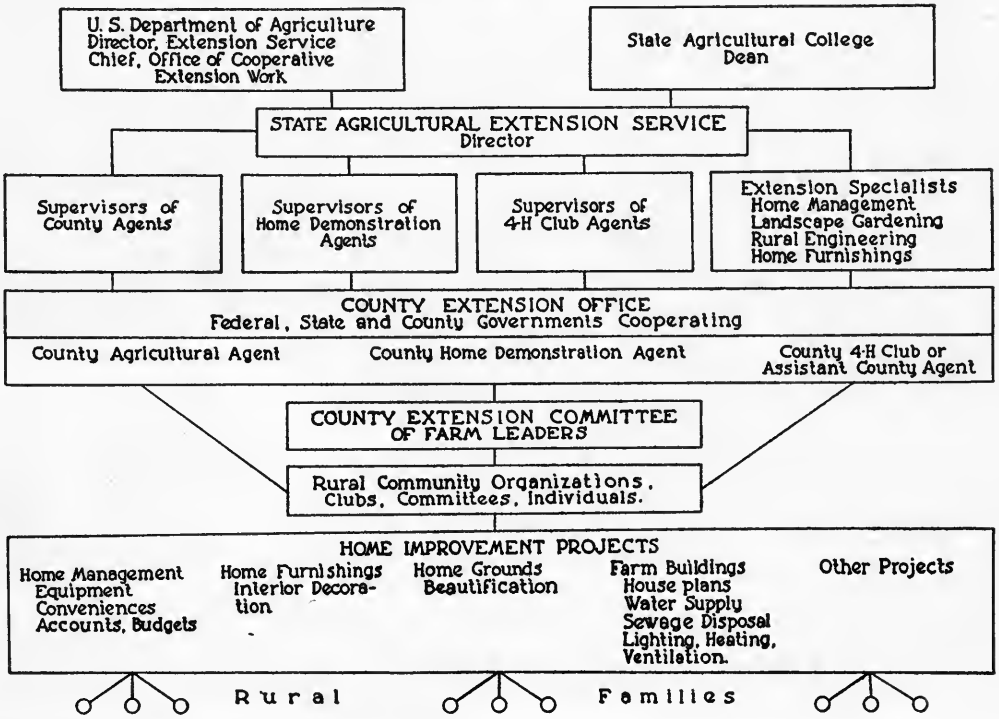
[3] Mann, C. R. *What action is of most worth? Significant actions and criteria of achievement.* Washington, D. C., [American Council on Education], 1931, p. 17.

[4] There are 2,776 county agricultural agents, including 2,382 white agents, 227 assistant county agents, and 167 Negro county agricultural agents. There are 1,411 home demonstration agents, including 1,236 white home demonstration agents, 52 assistant home demonstration agents, and 123 Negro home demonstration agents. There are in all 251 county club agents, including 214 white agents, 36 assistant county club agents, and one Negro agent. In addition, on June 30, 1931, there were the following numbers of states with specialists having headquarters at land grant colleges: Thirty-six with home management specialists, and 31 with agricultural engineering specialists; 15 states reported employing landscape or horticultural specialists devoting full time to landscape work; 18 states reported part-time specialists in the field of home-ground beautification; and 12 states reported home furnishing specialists. All of these are paid from Federal and state funds and are available for educational work in the field of interest of the Conference. (All figures are as of September 30, 1931, unless otherwise stated.)

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM IN RELATION TO HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



of the 2,432 counties organized for extension work, or a total of more than 100,000 leading farm, business, and professional men and women. In counties without extension agents, local improvement clubs can be given assistance and guidance by state extension supervisors and extension specialists.

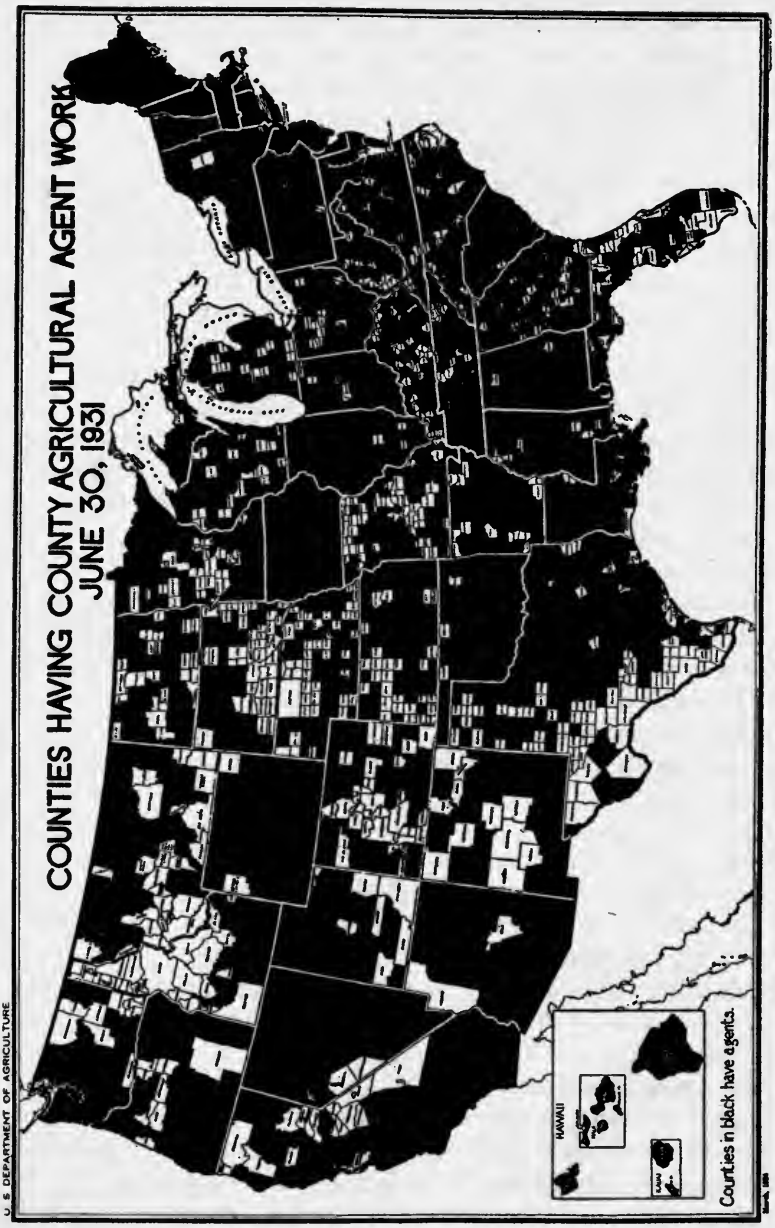
The methods of instruction used by extension agents are varied, but the basis is practical demonstration presented through group instruction, with or without the assistance of local leaders. In many states the agent usually assembles one or two representatives of each community of the county for a one-day meeting where the subject-matter extension specialist gives them special instructions. These "leaders" then return to their communities and relay the information to the members of the local group.

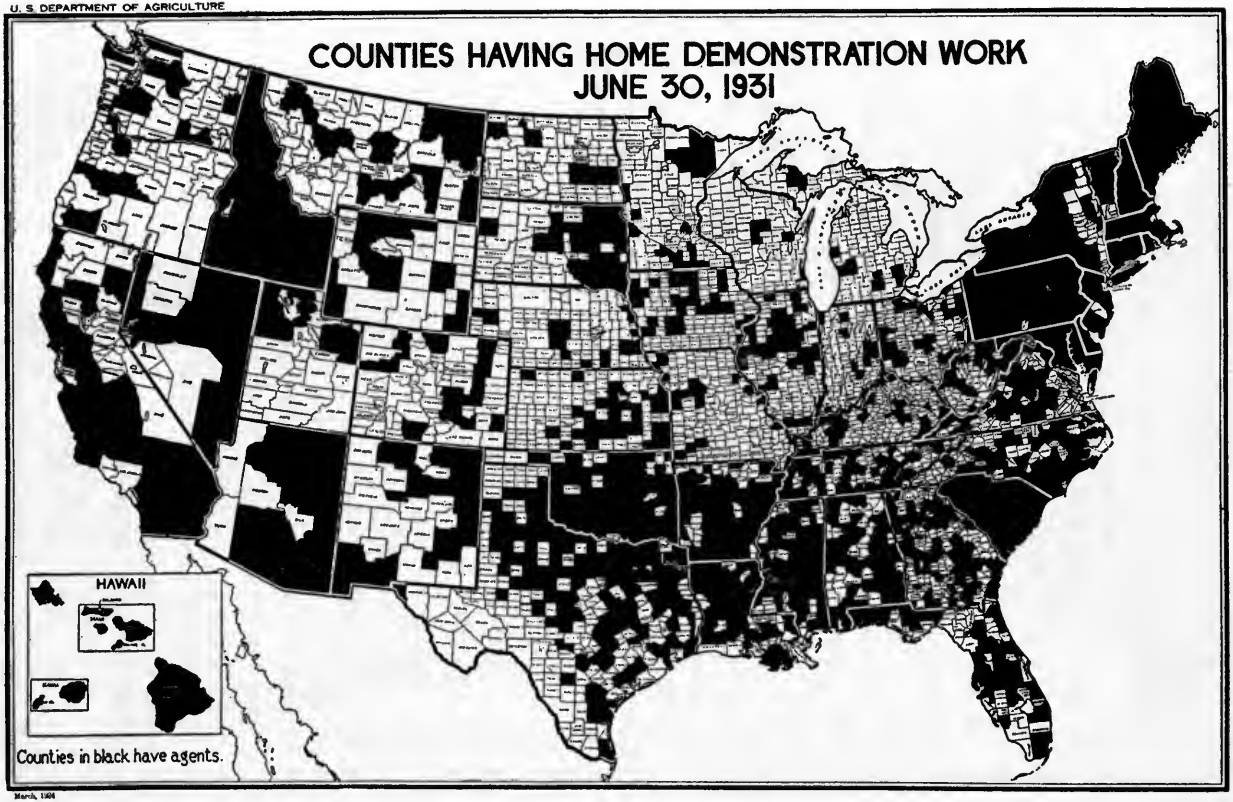
This method makes possible contacts with large numbers of people in widely scattered centers. The means of disseminating information are extremely varied, and the agents have a wide experience in organizing meetings, planning demonstrations, tours, contests, and surveys. They usually prepare material for local papers and arrange exhibits, frequently send circular letters, and otherwise participate in activities which serve to disseminate educational data to many people. These methods could be used effectively in behalf of an enlarged and improved program for home and community development.

Through the Extension Service some assistance has been given on matters included in the field of agricultural engineering, particularly on the installation of water, heating and lighting systems, and sanitary improvements on the farm. Advice is given upon laying out the farmstead, and to a considerable degree upon the remodeling or construction of houses as well as other farm buildings. This service can be readily adapted to village conditions.

The help of specialists in the field of architecture and finance is inadequate. It is agreed that not enough information based on technical study of local conditions is available to make possible assistance along architectural and financing lines except when it is very simple in character.

In addition to these sources of information, there is a very considerable source of home improvement to be found in unorganized exchange of information as assistance between neighbors. An experienced farm woman interested in home betterment often has a profound influence on the homemaking activities of other women


COUNTIES HAVING COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AGENT WORK
JUNE 30, 1931
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
HAWAII
Counties in black have agents.


U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COUNTIES HAVING HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK
JUNE 30, 1931
HAWAII
Counties in black have agents.
March, 1931

in the community. The farmer who has the ability and desire to make improvements on his home and grounds often stimulates his neighbors to undertake similar improvements.

It is important to discover these progressive individuals and their interest in home and community improvement. The farm and village population is having an unusually large number of leaders developed through the system of group education sponsored by the Extension Service.[5]

Vocational classes. There are an increasing number of vocational classes in high schools and part-time evening classes, many of them connected with the Federal Board for Vocational Education. The Board reports that in 1930 there were approximately 2,500 evening classes in vocational agriculture for adult farmers, with an enrollment of about 95,000. While the subject matter in these evening classes varies, there is no question but that there is an increasing amount of attention given to subjects touching on the problems of home improvement.

The Board states that there are no definite statistical data available as to the amount and extent of teaching activities devoted to home building, home ownership, and renovation because no reports have been compiled on this basis.

For the first six months of 1931 operating under the Smith-Hughes (1917) and George-Reed (1927) Acts, there were 3,800 homemaking classes or centers for women and girls over 14. Of these classes, it is interesting to note that 48 per cent, or 1,833, were located in schools in rural communities and small towns under 2,500 population. Of this number there were 1,272 in all-day classes, 17 part-time, and 544 adult. The proportion of Federal appropriation to that of states and local communities for vocational education in home economics was one dollar to three to seven dollars.

If additional educational material were made available to the teachers they undoubtedly would be in a strategic position to make practical use of it in connection with programs of all-day and

[5] Frysinger, G. E. *Local leadership in extension service.* United States Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics. (Mimeographed) May, 1931.
Gilbertson, H. W. *Rewards of leadership.* United States Department of Agriculture, Extension Service Circular 131, Mar., 1930.

evening school instruction in vocational agriculture, manual training and home economics.

In addition to vocational schools, other rural high schools have courses in art, including some instruction in home decoration. In some counties there is a general science course in which instruction on various phases of home life is included.

Libraries. The county library system is well organized in 231 counties, and the library trucks are welcome visitors in the rural district.[6]

County social service workers, health officers, and nurses encourage home improvement, particularly in the field of sanitation.

Better Homes in America. The work of Better Homes in America is carried on through the organization of committees in cities, villages and in country districts. A large proportion of these committees, in fact over 80 per cent, are in towns of 2,500 population or under and in rural areas. In 1931, 45 of the 48 states were organized and county organizations were at work in 906 counties. In addition to these there are many counties which have unit organizations in small communities.

Each local campaign serves through its varied demonstrations as a home information service. In many of these thousands of campaigns, a completely equipped and furnished, new or remodeled demonstration house is open to the public. From such a demonstration house, families in the community receive information on planning, remodeling, furnishing, equipping, and landscape development. The exhibits and programs which usually are a part of such a demonstration add to its value. The county-wide tours are a means of disseminating information. In 1931, 4,000 houses were shown in such tours. In one particular county 267 tour houses were opened to the public. These demonstration houses and tour houses in rural areas have two major home information service values—the supplying of actual information from the houses demonstrated; and the interchange of ideas through the assembling of rural homemakers.

In addition to these types of information services, various permanent demonstrations have been established, such as carefully furnished and equipped demonstration houses, some of which are

[6] The small-town libraries are often useful in this educational program. Their services can and should be more closely integrated with it. (See p. 198-201.)

used as rest rooms for county women. Permanent kitchen demonstrations also are in operation in a few places.

The work of Better Homes in America is closely correlated with that of the United States Extension Service (see p. 178-184). In some counties the emphasis of the Better Homes campaign is on the demonstration of Extension Service work to the public during Better Homes Week.

Membership groups. These include those volunteer membership organizations which combine civic and educational purposes, such as those associated with the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, junior organizations, parent-teacher associations, women's clubs, some church societies, and local garden and improvement clubs.

American Farm Bureau Federation. The County Farm Bureaus are so organized that any vital message can be promptly relayed to the members through the bureau officers and committees. Membership is on a family basis with more than a million participating men and women members. The Federation maintains an active Home Modernization Department.

In several states the County Farm Bureau is, under state law, the legal organization to cooperate with the state agricultural colleges and United States Department of Agriculture in conducting extension work.

The National Grange. Continual emphasis has been placed in Grange programs, first, on home ownership; second, on the convenience and healthfulness of the farm home; and third, on beautification and attractiveness. Since the subordinate granges in the nation hold approximately 200,000 meetings each year, the extent of this influence is apparent.

The Master of the National Grange reported that the national lecturer keeps in direct contact with the state lecturers, who in turn reach directly all of the 8,000 subordinate granges in the nation. One or two special home improvement programs can be arranged each year. State and national bulletins can outline sources of material so that through the years ahead the Grange can continue to promote home ownership and home development.

Women's clubs and similar membership groups. Women's clubs, many of which are federated, take part in most of the home and community development projects through lectures and prepara-

tion of exhibits, and join with other organizations in sponsoring educational endeavors regarding better home conditions. The General Federation of Women's Clubs has an American Home Department, and other sections, including a Committee of Rural Cooperation, which help develop local interest in home and community affairs.

Although few in number in rural areas, garden clubs and garden sections of women's clubs are, through lectures and contests, a helpful source of information and inspiration. Reports indicate that they are increasing rapidly throughout the country.

Local parent-teacher associations often share actively in home and community development campaigns.

On the whole the activities of most of these organizations are very little concerned with home improvement projects except when stimulated by regular or volunteer educational agencies. Each has an organization program adapted to rural needs which could be strengthened along the lines under discussion if it seemed desirable to do so. The committee believes that the national officers of all these organizations could be consulted, with great advantage, as to means by which their program can be effectively related to the work of this Conference, both in urban and rural communities.

Junior membership groups. Of the twenty-five or more young people's organizations operating in the rural field there are nine or ten, not including the church and Sunday school societies, which are widely active, and half a dozen of these have programs related to home and community improvement.

This group includes the 4-H Boys and Girls Clubs, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, the Campfire Girls, the Future Farmers of America, the Future Homemakers of America, the Juvenile Grange, and the Order of de Molay.

Most of those enrolled are members of organized clubs with adult leadership and sponsorship. They meet once a month or oftener. Certain isolated members are kept in touch with club activities or troop work by correspondence or occasional visits from leaders. The largest groups of organizations are the 4-H Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Boy Scouts.

The 4-H Clubs have a membership of over 800,000 from ten to twenty years of age, organized in approximately 60,000 clubs.

They have the attention of 4-H Club supervisors and specialists in every state, and in 214 counties there are county club agents. Approximately one-fourth of the time of the county agricultural and home demonstration agents is given to this work in other counties. Most of the individual projects undertaken have to do with farm or homemaking practices, as well as other practices which are related to the subjects discussed by this Conference. There are more than 90,000 voluntary leaders, secured largely from farm organization or town club groups, about one-fifth of whom are college trained. In some states the club work is organized through and with the help of the schools; in others the work is entirely separate. Another organization known as the Future Farmers of America is composed of about 55,000 boys over fourteen years of age. It is organized into chapters throughout the United States as an outgrowth of vocational education school work. The Young Men's Christian Association reports that its work touches young people in about 3,100 rural communities.

There are 265,500 Boy Scouts enrolled in the Rural Scout Service, in troops and as Lone Scouts. Much of their work relates to home and community activities. Their Merit Badge program includes the following home development subjects: "Farm Home and Its Planning," "Farm Layout and Building Arrangement," "Landscape Architecture," and "Sanitation." Other similar subjects can be developed. The scouts have prepared exhibits and demonstrations for city and county fairs. The exhibits often include models of homes and gardens.

The Girl Scouts are growing in numbers and have troops as well as Lone Scouts in many states. Out of a Girl Scout membership of over 213,000, approximately 22.9 per cent, or 48,880, live in rural communities. While their program naturally is closely related to homemaking, only a few of the activities are concerned with home management and the other subjects of the Conference.

The members of these organizations have proved most helpful in preparing public exhibits and demonstrations and have participated in campaigns to clean up and beautify their communities. They have been particularly active in Better Homes campaigns.

It is important to reach the young people, through these organizations of which they are members as well as through the schools.

Commercial agencies and services. The commercial agencies usually found include the rural press, representatives of loaning agencies and public utilities, lumber and other material and equipment firms, contractors, carpenters and other trades people. Boards of trade and chambers of commerce may be considered here, as well as under membership organizations, for upon them often rests the responsibility for encouraging or checking participation of business men in local improvement projects.

The influence of the loaning agencies is great and any change in policy may cause a stoppage or a renewal of local building undertakings.[7] Business men should be urged to share in and obtain a clear idea of all projects for home and community development fostered by local groups.

Methods employed by some commercial agencies include giving information by personal conference, by pamphlets, exhibits, advertising articles, and the furnishing of stock plans for houses.

Department stores and dealers in household furnishings, building materials, and equipment usually cooperate with county extension agents in the preparation of educational demonstrations and exhibits. Some electrical companies demonstrate the use of electrical equipment in the home.

Architects, contractors, and builders are of course sources of information on home building, but their services are not readily available, except in connection with specific jobs. They are usually willing to cooperate in special community programs. Architects especially, whenever available, help to suggest plans for demonstrations and exhibits and act as judges in home and garden contests.

The rural press may be considered for purposes of this report to include both the county newspapers and those from cities which are widely circulated in rural districts. Both are generous with space for community activities. This is particularly true when home improvement projects are under way, such as those of Better Homes in America and "Clean Up" campaigns.

In many communities there is some individual who acts as general adviser on home problems to many families.

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[7] See *Farm and village housing, op. cit.*

Agencies outside the County

Agencies outside the county which disseminate information on home building, home ownership, and homemaking fall into a classification similar to intracounty services; namely, educational or Governmental agencies, and commercial agencies.

Educational agencies. *The Federal and state agencies* which furnish information on various phases of homemaking include the United States Department of Agriculture, the Federal Board for Vocational Education, the state land grant colleges and their extension services and the state school systems, besides various private institutions. The Division of Building and Housing of the United States Department of Commerce serves as a clearing-house and answers requests for information on housing problems.

The Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and the state colleges is administered by the state director of extension within each state. It includes also state subject-matter specialists who, upon request of farm people or county extension agencies, prepare suggestions for local procedure and material applicable to conditions in the state. In counties which have agricultural and home demonstration agents the local work is carried out by them. They obtain from the agricultural college or from the United States Department of Agriculture and other sources bulletins and circulars for distribution in these fields.

Sometimes the rural engineer, landscape gardener, home management specialist, or other technician visits the rural home to be built, remodeled, or beautified. Such homes serve as demonstrations in the community and county. Sometimes groups of rural people are given illustrated lectures on home building, homegrounds beautification, and homemaking.

In counties without extension agents the local home improvement committees can be given assistance and guidance from state extension supervisors and specialists and also from state supervisors of vocational agriculture and home economics.

In addition to the above-mentioned Federal and state agencies, there are a number of educational agencies, organized on a national or state basis, or both, which render direct service. Two of these are Better Homes in America,[8] and the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association.

[8] See p. 185-186.

Commercial agencies. Under those reported as bringing information to rural families are listed mail-order houses, trade associations, farm journals, magazines, and the radio.

Mail-order houses. Reports from hundreds of communities were to the effect that mail-order houses were, after the Department of Agriculture and the land grant colleges, one of the chief sources of information on home building and homemaking. Their catalogues are circulated throughout the country, and many ideas of style and price for house furnishings and equipment are obtained from them. Two of the largest have developed an extensive home building service in the north-central and eastern sections of the United States.

Farm periodicals are reported as dealing chiefly with subjects in the field of agricultural production and marketing, and, to a more limited degree, with home improvement and homemaking topics. As a rule these journals do not subscribe to syndicated services because of overlapping subscription lists. Some of these publications include house plans for farm homes, and information on other housing subjects. One or two well-known magazines of large circulation among rural women publish helpful articles on rural home improvement and gardening. Several low-priced magazines have a wide circulation in rural districts but little of their material, except in a few instances, is directly applicable to the inexpensive rural house.

Radio. The United States Department of Agriculture's radio network program in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company includes forty-eight stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company system. The time of the program is one hour. A "Western Farm and Home Hour," including ten stations, was established in January, 1932. The Department of Agriculture also supplies a syndicate service of broadcast programs in manuscript form to 227 individual radio stations. These programs include material on homemaking and home improvement.

The committee believes that the "National Farm and Home Hour" and the "Western Farm and Home Hour" are effective means of sending information to rural people.

There are eighteen radio stations connected with land grant colleges. They could assist in carrying helpful programs on home and community development.[9]

[9] These figures are as of July 1, 1932.

Other programs relating to home practices are reaching radio audiences to a limited extent. "A little information, a lot of entertainment," was the comment upon some of the general advertising programs.

Information needs. Among the information needs related to home and community improvement for rural people as reported by school and extension workers are:

1. *Home building.*
   - Types of homes and accessory buildings which are suitable in exterior and interior design to local conditions of topography, climate, income levels, vocational needs, etc.
   - Estimated costs of various building materials.
   - Desirable layout for dwellings and farm buildings.
   - Plans for rural houses costing from $750 to $3,000.
   - Suggestions for unit building: Plans showing how houses may be enlarged from time to time, and finally completed in good design; improvements in frame construction; use of local materials; use of unskilled labor.
   - Insulation of houses.
   - Ideas for renovating and remodeling homes.
   - Suggestions for color schemes for exterior and interior.
2. *Home ownership.*
   - Ways and means of financing home building.
   - Cost of financing home purchase or home building.
   - Cost of upkeep, including taxes, insurance, repair, etc.
   - Values to be derived from home ownership.
3. *More and better information for women and girls* on household management, equipment, furnishing, and decoration of homes at small expense.
   - Personal accounting and budgeting.
   - Standards of family life.
   - The family in relation to community life and development.
4. *Landscape planning and planting.*
   - Principles of landscape design and planting.
   - Suggestive three- to five-year planting programs for home grounds, roadside improvement and community development.
   - Estimates of cost, time and labor.
   - Varieties of trees, shrubs, flowers, etc., suitable for local conditions and obtainable at little or no cost. Instructions regarding planting, care of trees, grass, flowers and shrubs, and maintenance of grounds.
   - Screening unsightly places.

Special Topics of Interest

Community beautification. Rural America offers vast potentialities for home and community beautification at but little cost,

yet the majority of rural homes and communities are not beautiful. This condition could be remedied if better-trained leadership were available in rural districts.

While some state agricultural colleges offer instruction and advice on landscape planning and planting, many do not do so. In states in which some instruction of this kind is available, it is often inadequate. As suggested elsewhere, the staff needs to be increased.

Suggestions for improvement of home grounds are sometimes obtained from extension specialists in home-ground beautification (found in nine states), from horticultural specialists, from county agricultural agents and home demonstration agents, from nurserymen, and other persons in the county. In several states the development of community beautification projects on the basis of a three- to five-year plan has aroused interest. In these projects the support of the schools and many local organizations has often been obtained. Thus community and home beautification projects have become the joint undertaking of town and country people—men, women, and young people.[10]

Clean-up and beautification campaigns have been useful and popular in many sections of the country. As part of this work many schools, courthouses, parks, community churches, and halls now have more attractive surroundings.

This movement has been encouraged by the suggestion and stimulation of interest through reports of similar action in other rural communities, and through illustrated articles in the papers and farm and garden magazines. The method of arousing interest in inmprovement in large areas can be followed to a considerable degree with respect to housing projects if local committees and councils develop the plans carefully.

House planning in rural areas. The types of houses and methods of house construction are discussed in other reports. It is sufficient therefore to point out here that many rural houses have been built of late from stock plans supplied directly by material dealers or through builders. Most of these plans are said to be designed for small lots and urban conditions. Contractors and

[10] An example of beautification work is that of the Interstate Dixie Highway sponsored by state home demonstration leaders. Many of the county Better Homes chairmen of Arkansas have reported this project and the improvement of all homes bordering on this highway.

carpenters also often prepare rough plans for their clients and many houses are built by rule of thumb. A limited supply of stock plans is also available through the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering of the United States Department of Agriculture, the state agricultural colleges, and from some periodicals. Very few plans are said to have received the attention of an architect.

It is reported that two-fifths of the requests for information on house building in the rural districts are concerned with remodeling the home. Those most closely in touch with conditions in the rural districts all over the country state that the need is for information and help, not only for the designing and construction of new houses, but for the remodeling and repair of old ones.

Reports also show that a great many houses in rural America cost but a few hundred dollars.[11] Improvements of these dwellings, either in remodeling or in refurnishing, it is said, must come mostly by individual effort, and must of necessity, because of lack of funds, be of the simplest character. Results of studies of improved methods would be helpful.

It is important also that better plans adapted to rural conditions, particularly those of the farm, be made readily available through existing educational agencies and that their use be encouraged by local builders and their clients. The American Institute of Architects and the Cooperative Extension Service could work together most effectively in this field. The Architects' Small House Service Bureau and the magazines most widely circulated in rural communities could also be of great help.

Local centers, county extension agents, and Better Homes committees could assist in the program for more attractive, convenient and comfortable homes.

Building codes and zoning. Many small cities and towns do not provide protection to home owners through building codes and zoning regulations. There are few building codes or regulations enforced in counties, outside of incorporated municipalities, and usually professional services of architects and landscape architects or city planners are not readily available even in an advisory capacity, or are not made use of. To these conditions many of those interviewed attributed the unattractive, almost dis-

[11] See *Farm and village housing, op. cit.*

orderly, development of many of the smaller communities of the country. In states where regional or county planning boards are at work there have been some notable improvements, and there are a number of planned developments in rural areas from which lessons should be made available to other rural districts.[12]

Close connections should be established by the Extension Service and other Governmental agencies with any regional or other planning groups which might advise on rural problems. It is suggested that many towns would adopt building and zoning regulations if local people could be helped by experts to develop the program.

A campaign of public education based on the advice and with the help of specialists is a preliminary necessity, and plans which are mutually satisfactory to representatives of the local committees and experts in this field would be the basis for further action.[13]

Recommendations and Conclusions

There are two methods of procedure indicated when plans for improving the sources and the scope of information services to people in the rural districts are considered. They may be developed side by side; undoubtedly one would stimulate the other.

The first method would provide for the gradual expansion of the existing educational machinery to give attention to such problems in classes in agriculture and home economics, for an increase in the number of home demonstration agents in the counties not now served (for the 3,073 counties of the United States, there are now 1,288 white and 123 Negro agents) and for adding to the staffs of the land grant colleges more rural architects, landscape architects, and such other persons as are needed to supplement the present extension staff in order that the best professional experience may be applied to the problems of home building, remodeling, financing, and home and community beautification in the rural districts of every state.

The second method would increase interest and participation in

[12] See *Planning for residential districts.* Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, vol. I.

[13] Records of the Division of Building and Housing of the United States Department of Commerce show that on December 31, 1931, there were 1,150 towns and cities with zoning ordinances. The smallest has a population of only 64. There were also 786 municipalities which had city planning commissions, some of them inactive.

home and community improvement undertakings by encouraging the organization of a special county committee, probably with the support of a larger advisory group, including the individuals with information to give, and representatives of those agencies through which it might reach the people. It would provide for concerted effort for a broadened interest and participation in home and community improvement undertakings on a year-round basis and, if possible, for a home information center. There would be close cooperation with and use of the Agricultural Extension Service and other educational agencies. This new organization would be especially valuable because it would focus attention steadily on the problems related to the home and would include persons from farms and towns not enrolled in extension groups. The Better Homes in America campaigns would in many instances form an important part of the program.

The establishment of demonstration rural home information centers, with a person with a knowledge of the fundamentals of housing in charge and provision for consultation with rural architects and landscape architects, is suggested particularly where the communities are growing. The committee believes that, for experimental purposes, at least one demonstration center should be arranged for in a county where there are no county extension agents and another one in a county where the Extension Service is well established.

An effective clearing-house of home information for rural people implies cooperation on the part of all commercial and civic organizations, membership groups, and educational agencies within the county. It should represent the best thinking of all, pooled for the benefit of farm and village people.

There is every reason why county-wide committees and county councils should be formed in each county where there is active and efficient community leadership and where a competent educational staff can be relied upon to help arrange lectures and study groups, and to select and distribute helpful literature appropriate to community needs. The committee believes that the calling of county and state conferences to consider the findings of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership would undoubtedly increase local interest and local activity. An outline for county organization leading toward such a conference is included in this report on pages 226-229.

It is desirable that the President's Conference emphasize the need for improvement in and extension of educational services for rural people on home building, home ownership, and homemaking.

It is therefore recommended that:

1. As the United States Department of Agriculture, the Federal Board for Vocational Education, the state agricultural colleges, the state departments of education, and university extension services are already active in this field, they be urged to devote more attention to and increase their services for people in the rural sections of our country:

(a) So that courses of study may include more instruction on the problems connected with home and community development, wherever there is a need and a demand.

(b) So that more professional advisory services be provided in rural architecture, landscape architecture, home equipment and financing as soon as possible.

2. All educational and commercial agencies offering information services on home building, home owning, and homemaking be encouraged to provide more information than heretofore for rural people. This information should be based upon careful study of conditions as they exist in small towns and on farms.

3. Research be undertaken to determine the needs and desires of farm and village people for instruction and assistance in matters related to home building and improvement, home ownership and homemaking, and to devise adequate ways and means of supplying these needs.

4. A special study be made as soon as possible of ways and means for coordinating the services that are now available to farm and village people, with the object of securing better results, over a wider area, without duplication of effort and at the minimum of cost.

5. A special field study be made, preferably by the Division of Building and Housing, of the established practices for care, repair, and remodeling of houses, and that suggestions be prepared for improving these methods for the benefit of home owners in rural areas as well as in cities.

6. Two or more demonstration rural home information centers be established which will aim to provide all available information on home building, home ownership, remodeling, homemaking, landscape planning and planting; to coordinate local efforts and increase interest in home and community improvement within a given area, and to record the best local practices.

7. Encouragement be given to the organzation of county committees and conferences on home and community development, and such town and neighborhood committees as will coordinate and promote throughout the year the efforts of existing agencies—educational, commercial, and volunteer—for the improvement of home conditions and for community development.

CHAPTER XI

INFORMATION SERVICES OF LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS, COLLEGES, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND OTHER SOURCES OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Libraries

Services of libraries to home builders. The public library takes an active part in furnishing information in the field of home building, home ownership, and homemaking. The larger libraries endeavor to purchase the best and most recent books of a practical character on city planning and zoning, real estate, financing, architecture, house planning, house construction and repair, interior decoration and furnishings, landscape planning and planting, gardening, and household management. Books are supplemented by files of trade directories, current and bound periodicals, pamphlets, Federal and state bulletins, clippings, pictures, plans, and often by lantern slides. The branch libraries have duplicate collections of the most-used printed matter. A memorial collection on the "Finer Arts of Homemaking" has recently been set up in the Indianapolis Public Library with an initial gift in cash and an endowment provided by will. One library, needing to enlarge its building, is proposing to throw out a wing for a department to include all the printed and visual material on the home, from zoning and city planning to home management and child care.

Home planning, interior decoration, and real estate practice are especially popular subjects. Requests come not only from would-be home owners, but also from architects, salesmen, engineers, teachers, financiers, builders, realtors, decorators, and specialists in business firms. Selected printed reading courses are available from the American Library Association or are prepared locally in cooperation with architects, interior decorators, or some local organization.

The library is constantly alert in referring inquirers to other sources of information in the city and elsewhere. For research workers, books are frequently borrowed from the Library of Congress and from special libraries.

Correlation with other agencies is an important part of the library's work. By setting up exhibits of books and reproductions of pictures in connection with expositions; by collecting the needed printed matter and by compiling and distributing book lists on special topics for various groups and organizations; by lending the library clubroom for lecture courses, the library cooperates with organizations both local and national ranging from the city planning commission and the local board of education to the American Institute of Architects.

Publicity for the help the library can give in the field of home building is also carried on, both inside and outside the library, by book lists distributed at the library and through organizations; by exhibits within the library of books, plates, drawings, textiles, architects' plans, and art objects; by posters in library show windows, books on home decoration in furniture store windows, and displays of book jackets; by talks on books, with book displays, in the library and before clubs and organizations; by newspaper notices of exhibits, book notes, book lists; by special organs, such as chamber of commerce bulletins, book notes, and lists; by radio talks on books about home building, home ownership, and home-making.

Even the very small library, given good leadership, can and does carry on many of these services, though on a smaller scale. Books are borrowed as needed from the state library extension agency to supplement the limited local collection. Better Homes Week is widely observed with special displays, and newspaper space is given generously for notes and book lists.

The county library combines resources comparable with those of a large city library and the personal contact of the small library. All of its books and other printed and visual matter are available at any of its many branches and stations by means of the book automobile, parcel post or other method of delivery. The county librarian cooperates closely with the county extension agent and other county workers.

Through the *state library extension agencies* printed matter and pictures are available for lending free of charge anywhere in the state, going direct to those without public library facilities or supplementing the small library collection. Publicity for the service is carried on by means of exhibits at state

fairs and meetings; broadcasting over the university radio; notes and lists in newspapers, state farm journals, and special organs, such as that of the state association of real estate boards. Cooperation is carried on with other state agencies, such as the Agricultural Extension Service. The state agency also serves as an information center for the smaller libraries.

Limitations, handicaps, and needs. It must be frankly admitted, however, that library service of the quality and breadth described is by no means universally available. In a survey made by the American Library Association in 1926,[1] over forty-five million people in the United States, most of them in rural districts, were found to live outside library service areas. Many more have access to very small libraries only, with inadequate book stocks and librarians without professional training, without the alertness to borrow from the state agency as needed, or to collect free material. The hope of both small town and open country is in the spread of the county-wide library systems, which already number 231.

The outstanding need reported from all sections of the country is for house plans and designs for small, inexpensive, single houses, two-family houses, and summer cottages, prepared under the direction of competent architects. Other widely expressed needs are for literature on financing the home; on real estate treated from the point of view of *the buyer rather than the seller;* and on cooperative ownership, not of expensive apartments, but of small, cheap apartments and multiple dwellings. It is felt also that a good, comprehensive, general history of domestic architecture is needed; and, for the man who contemplates building, there is need for plans and specifications with information on costs and suggestions for ways of reducing costs.

There is a great need for literature for the amateur in carpentry, masonry, paper-hanging, painting, and plastering; need for reliable printed matter about the selection, use, and care of electrical appliances for the home; for practical suggestions for landscape planning and gardening in designated sections of the country; for suggestions on interior decorating for small houses; and for relia-

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[1] Merrill, J. W. *Library extension: A study of public library conditions and needs.* American Library Association, 1926.

ble helps to the housewife for making a wise selection of advertised articles.

Museums and Exhibits

Museums of art have much to offer home builders and homemakers. Their work may touch upon both the design of houses, and the decoration and furnishing of rooms. The American wing of the Metropolitan and other museums, for example, has had a far-reaching effect.

Several museums of science give information upon technical matters related to house construction, gardening, and horticulture. Many hold an annual flower show in cooperation with the local horticultural society. These exhibitions doubtless have some influence upon home efforts in flower gardening and home decoration with cut flowers.

The larger museums of industry, of which there are only about half a dozen in the country, give some emphasis to industrial art in which they include, or plan to include, exhibits on housing. Museums of this kind are comparatively new in this country and their work may be considered at the present time as potentially important, rather than highly influential.

The report of the new Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago states that an area of about 35,000 square feet will be devoted to exhibits on construction and equipment, together with related fields of public works and city planning. Of course, only a small portion of this area will be devoted to the home since most of the technically interesting problems in connection with building construction are those relating to large structures. There will, however, be a reasonable amount of exhibit material on the "mechanical age" in the home, including modern kitchen equipment, furnaces and water heaters, vacuum cleaners, and lighting and ventilating equipment. The municipal problems of water supply, sewage disposal, parks and playgrounds, traffic handling, and city planning will receive due consideration.

Services of art museums to homemakers. *Exhibits.* Features most directly useful to homemakers are those which offer study material for interior decoration, such as exhibits of furniture, glassware, ceramics, metal work, textiles, wall-paper, and other art products of industry. Sales from traveling exhibitions are effective means of placing some good works in homes.

Lending collections. Most art museums lend lantern slides, photographs, prints, and other reproductions of objects widely scattered throughout the world. In some instances projection lanterns are lent, with slides and manuscript, for private showings in homes. They also lend illustrative material for talks before study clubs.

Reproductions for sale. A few art museums sell photographs, prints, or casts of objects, the originals of which are in their own collections, or of masterpieces elsewhere. The chief advantage of these sales, as compared with those of art dealers, is that the association of the name of the museum with the reproduction sometimes adds to its value in the mind of the purchaser.

Lectures and instruction. Most art museums give lecture courses on the history and appreciation of art. Some of these courses are designed for specialized groups of students, as for example sales people, designers, business men, or club women. Some museums extend their lecture work beyond their own walls. The rotogravure section in the Sunday newspaper sometimes has pictures of museum exhibits which are used as the subject for a lecture over the radio the following day. Most museums guide special groups through the exhibition rooms on schedule and by appointment. This service is of especial value to clubs and study groups and is utilized extensively.

Publications. About forty art museums issue monthly or quarterly bulletins. Some of these are mere leaflets; others are as large as an ordinary magazine. Circulation is limited to the museum's own members and exchanges. Incidentally there are handbooks and guide leaflets to be purchased in most museums.

Museum libraries. Practically every art museum has an art library which is primarily for the use of staff members and other specialists, but which the public may use. Many museums extend their influence by contributing articles to newspapers. This is a service of wide value.

Extent of museum facilities and services. There is a very irregular distribution of museums. The museum is still in its infancy. No one can say what proportion of the country's population is within practical range of museum service. The greatest need is for development of museums in the unserved, small communities.

Needed extensions of the service of individual museums. In relation to particular museum services many needed extensions might be suggested. More museum instruction might be organized, specifically for homemakers and home designers. From the standpoint of the homemaker there are two subjects which could profitably be given more emphasis. The first is industrial art and the second is architecture. Temporary exhibitions could be multiplied by regional cooperation. Projection lanterns should be made available for borrowing to accompany sets of slides. Lending of original art objects should be more extensive. Many art museum bulletins would be more useful educationally if they were written from the point of view of the reader rather than that of the curator.

Exhibits and lectures outside the museum. *Traveling exhibitions.* Among the 762 collections circulated by the American Federation of Arts are a number in the field of this Conference, such as collections of architectural photographs and renderings of good small-house designs; photographs of landscape settings, private estates, etc.; renderings and photographs of interior decorations and furnishings; and pictures for the home—both originals and reproductions. The latter are occasionally placed in model flats designed as homes for working girls. Other exhibits have been sent to state agricultural colleges and state fairs. One extension of the exhibition service is the circulation of portfolios containing original prints or reproductions of paintings to individuals in their homes.

The Museum of Newark assembled and circulated an exhibition of objects for home use, all good in design, purchasable at from ten cents to twenty-five cents each.

One summer a Chautauqua association cooperated with the American Federation of Arts in sending out in a van, with a lecturer, a group of paintings and prints, to demonstrate to the people of various localities the significance of art in the home. A somewhat similar service is now planned by the University of Oregon in the rural districts of northern Oregon.

One national magazine annually sends out a traveling exhibit of small-house designs resulting from an architectural competition. These are shown in many cities under the auspices of local chapters of the American Institute of Architects and local civic groups. Certain trade associations and commercial firms supply on request

small building material exhibits showing construction methods and use of home equipment.

House building and furnishing might be included in automobile exhibits such as those sent out by the Agricultural Extension Service in several states and the exhibition trains sometimes supplied by railroads.

Lectures. Sets of stereopticon slides, with "canned lectures," are circulated in places where authoritative lecturers could not well be secured. These lectures cover such topics as "The American Wing in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," "Design, Its Use and Abuse," and "Home Furnishings and the Decorative Arts." This field still offers large and unrealized potentialities.

Undoubtedly an enormous amount of improvement in taste in home furnishings and decoration is due to lectures that are practical and not only demonstrate the difference between what is good and what is bad, but send the audience home with a knowledge of how to accomplish improvement.

To be of real worth, a museum must demonstrate to the community the importance of art in its relation to everyday life. This might be done by establishing little galleries in which a series of changing exhibitions could be shown, comprising not only paintings and sculpture but decoration, or art for the home. The various accessories of the exhibitions should be on sale at a price within the means of the average citizen.

Three years ago, the American Federation of Arts, under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, established, as an experiment, a little gallery in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, a city of 60,000 or more inhabitants. It was located in a basement room in the business district, and fitted up tastefully as a gallery. Contacts were established with the educational department of the public schools in the city and its adjacent neighborhood, the women's organizations, the men's organizations, the business interests, the newspapers, the public library, etc. So gratifying and satisfactory was this experiment that at its conclusion the city itself was determined to continue the service.

Cooperation in exhibits. Educational, social, and Governmental agencies, as well as museums, are using exhibits to further a particular purpose. To reach the public they use fairs, schools and colleges, museums, libraries, clubs, chambers of commerce, bank lobbies, and store windows. If it is desired to make the ex-

hibit technique of museums available for such exhibits, in the field of the Conference, the best method would be to select one or two specific projects, and work these out fully with individual museums interested in that particular field, before developing a comprehensive program.

Cooperation between a museum and the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects is already under way in Los Angeles. The plan is to build two small inexpensive houses on museum grounds and to furnish and equip them at low cost and in good taste, drawing on ordinary commercial stock. The setting of the houses will be carefully worked out. Arrangements will be made to have the caretakers actually live in the houses, which will be open to the public a part of each day.

Schools, Colleges and Universities

Members of the staff of the United States Office of Education, the Federal Board for Vocational Education, and others known to be familiar with the situation throughout the country were consulted as to the information on home building, home ownership, and homemaking offered by schools and colleges. This information is presented on the basis of these opinions and generally available facts.

Elementary and secondary schools. Homemaking is the phase of the subject most generally covered, usually under the designation of home economics. There is considerable variation from state to state but, in general, instruction of this kind begins in the sixth or seventh grade and deals with good health habits and simple food preparation, sewing, and housekeeping. Home economics is offered in most high schools and one- or two-year courses are frequently required of girls; in some cases it continues throughout the four years. Emphasis is placed more and more on wise selection of food and clothing, and on the economical use of time, labor, and money in the home, rather than merely on the development of household skills. There is also a rapidly growing tendency to include child care and family relationships. A little time usually is devoted to the general subject of planning and financing the house, and rather more to house furnishing and the place of housing costs in the family budget. There is an increas-

ing tendency to provide specially adapted home economics courses for boys.

Civics classes are including in their courses information on the principles of housing, particularly with relation to the community. Problems on health and sanitation, city planning and zoning, satisfactory layout of subdivisions for light and air, and the effect of community improvement on the home should be further emphasized in these courses.

The practice cottages or apartments that are frequently provided to give actual experience in homemaking activities offer excellent opportunity to teach the essentials of good housing. Usually they are planned and operated according to a scale of living within the means of the families of the pupils. Unfortunately, they do not always represent the best available for the money, and indicate the need of trustworthy, easily available advice, especially in matters of design.

The Better Homes demonstrations have helped both to raise the standards of practice houses by encouraging their demonstration and preparation for such a demonstration during Better Homes Week. This campaign also has stimulated many home economics departments to give greater attention to housing problems. Frequently a home economics class or department has taken the furnishing of the demonstration house as a special project. Sometimes this work has included the choice of design for the house and the problems of financing it for an imaginary family typical of the community.

The so-called junior business science or business training courses usually required for commercial students in high schools often discuss questions of home financing, household accounting, and family budgeting, and include problems of taxation and methods of house purchase. Many of these subjects are also introduced through commercial arithmetic.

House planning appears in mechanical drawing and arts courses, although the amount and character of the information given depends largely on the individual instructor.

Household decoration is a common subject in art departments, and in these both boys and girls frequently are enrolled.

Colleges and universities. Home economics departments are very generally found in state colleges and universities and in many private ones, as well as in most teacher-training institutions.

That problems of the house are receiving more attention is indicated by the fact that the home economics section of the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities has for several years had a committee on courses in this subject, and that "The House" now forms one of the five subject-matter divisions of the American Home Economics Association. Some Federal and state funds are available in state experiment stations for scientific research in home economics subjects, and several projects on household equipment and management have been undertaken.

The economic and sociological aspects of the home often are treated in the social science departments, the amount of attention given them usually varying with the interests of the instructor. Art departments usually touch the esthetic aspects of the subject by courses in appreciation, in the history of architecture and the applied arts, and in special courses in house furnishings. So far as is known, there have been no attempts outside of home economics departments to combine these different problems of the home in a single course or group of courses. There is little emphasis in departments of architecture upon low-cost housing.

Special programs of adult education.[2] University extension services, the more highly developed of which consider the whole state their campus, carry on varied activities in the field of home building and home ownership. Larger extension centers offer series of lectures on one general subject, such as interior decoration; for example, Indiana University last year enrolled nearly two hundred in such a course, offered in cooperation with a large department store in Indianapolis.

These services often provide visual materials for the people of the state. Motion-pictures, slides, art collections, and posters are used by many hundred communities in the course of a year, sometimes for a nominal fee. Such subjects as the following are included: Architecture, lighting, plumbing, household conveniences, construction materials, design, home furnishing and decoration, landscape development, rural beautification, better homes, and what constitutes a good home.

Package libraries offer pamphlets, magazine and newspaper clip-

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[2] Cooperative extension work, which is an adult education program, is described on p. 178-184.

pings on a wide range of subjects, including the home. These have a large circulation, particularly among club women.

Correlation with other agencies, such as the state committee of Better Homes in America and other state-wide agencies, is part of the program of the extension service. Cooperation with the state Congress of Parents and Teachers is sometimes developed through a special bureau.

Homemaking subjects are taught in the public part-time classes and in evening classes, attended by both older girls and actual homemakers. In a few cases fathers as well as mothers are enrolled. The programs, which are planned in response to local demand, frequently include household management, family budgeting, and house furnishing, but seldom touch the other aspects of housing.

A noteworthy project, the Better Homes Schools, which originated in Arkansas and which now is carried on in several states, shows the increasing demand for information on all aspects of home ownership, home building and homemaking. These schools are conducted in the various communities and the problems selected for discussion are those most in demand in each community. Home owners, construction and trades groups, educators and others take part in these educational projects.

Schools as agencies for promoting home improvement. The general impression left by the description of the information given by the public schools and the colleges and universities is that various departments in the educational system are touching on separate phases of the problems, but without much knowledge of one another's efforts or any thoroughly considered plan.

Nevertheless, the school is the logical agency to work through the children with the present generation of parents. The influence of college and university instruction also is important. A creed of home ownership, comparable to the Children's Charter growing out of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, would have wide influence. It is always well to emphasize such thoughts as:

Buying a home during the early productive years of life provides an incentive for a definite plan of saving, and sets an example for saving after the home is paid for, provides a home for the later and less-productive

period of life, insures an estate for tomorrow, is a protection for the home circle against emergency, provides a means for obtaining credit in case of need, develops self-respect, and inculcates American ideals.

Dr. F. J. Kelly of the United States Office of Education thus summarizes the possibilities of schools and colleges in promoting a wider understanding of the general subject:

"While specialists may be trained in departments of home economics, engineering and architecture, a very great influence on home building and ownership can be exerted through courses which reach the students who are not specializing in these departments. The point of view concerning home building and ownership, the general awareness of the significance of home building and ownership will be brought about through such general courses. Only as the public is able to understand and willing to cooperate with the specialists can any movement such as that for home building and ownership make headway.

"It is important, therefore, that teachers of economics should develop a student-consciousness on the significance of home ownership. Instructors in sociology should make their students conscious of the significance of home building and home ownerhip in building up the strength of the home as an institution. Teachers of art should make their students conscious of the joys which accompany the artistry which one may incorporate in one's own home. In short, if the home is as important as most students of social problems believe, then all the courses for the general education of the college youth should tend to make students conscious of the part which the home plays in satisfying social needs."

Other Sources of Public Information

Character of publications for distribution by home information services. As a basis for evaluating publications to be distributed by home information services, it is assumed that they should be unbiased, reliable, easily understood, convincing, and attractive in appearance. Many of the publications examined by the committee had some of these qualities, but none had all of them. For example, the printed matter sent out by the Government appeared to be wholly without bias, but was unattractive in appearance. The writers of the commercial publications were more often practised in the art of persuasion than in clear and definite instruction. In some instances supposedly useful information was offered as a bait for reading advertising copy. Some examples, however, were found of practical and helpful information in which the advertising motive did not overshadow the conscientious aim to offer a useful service.

Appearance and style are important, since the desire to read must be created or encouraged. Single-topic pamphlets are desirable. The printed matter issued by Government departments appeals chiefly to the small group who want information and are undeterred by dull covers and solid pages of type in their efforts to get it.

It is suggested that there is need for the development of a plan by which the Government bulletins are advertised and sold to the public more widely than they are, and that it be made more convenient to purchase them.[3] The commercial printing at the other extreme is often very colorful and inviting, but not intended for distribution among small-income groups.

Between these two extremes were found a very few handbooks, pamphlets, reprints of articles, and folders which were moderately attractive.

Printed matter, such as that issued by one of the insurance companies in the health field, is greatly needed. This company issues fairly inexpensive but attractively printed and illustrated booklets with generous margins and large type, in which facts are told simply and briefly. If a national institute is established it might be able to encourage similar publications among trade associations either by placing its imprint on approved material or by endorsing publications suitable for distribution by the local home information centers and educational agencies. There will still, however, remain a need for pamphlets and folders prepared by an entirely impartial organization. Occasionally private organizations have popularized bulletins issued by Government agencies for general distribution. If any organization is set up to prepare and distribute private educational material for the use of local information services, it is urged that use be made of the wealth of material scattered through many Federal Government reports.

The majority of persons interested in problems of the home probably buy real estate only once in a lifetime, and are ready to buy a large amount of furniture only once or twice. They are interested in information on a particular phase of housing only when they are ready to use it. They may by chance find in magazines,

[3] Because the Government Printing Office states it will not accept stamps, it is said that many a "mail order" is not sent. In Great Britain, government publications are sold in easily accessible shops which His Majesty's Stationery Office maintains in several cities.

departments in newspapers, or radio talks the specific information needed at the right moment; or they may not chance to find it. An inexpensive, readily available booklet or folder on a specific topic can be consulted at any time.

The newspaper and home information service. A national news service for home information could no doubt find in releases from Government agencies and other news sources reliable facts and figures which could be combined with the local center's own news stories. Local news is generally more in demand than that from a national source, but the local center can strengthen its own stories by quoting from the Federal Government and other national authorities.

Home information features listed in *Editor and Publisher's 1931 Directory of Features* include: One builder's page; four garden columns; house plans offered by three syndicates; one interior decoration feature; and nineteen homemaking or household features, under such titles as household hints, domestic science articles, and helps to homemakers, many of which no doubt include food and equipment. In contrast to this small number of features covering home building and equipment there are twenty on foods and fifty-two on fashions.

The Architects' Small House Service Bureau offers to newspapers at small cost a service called "Help for the Man Who Wants to Build." A national association supplies free a feature called "Looking into Real Estate" which, like its news service, is "keyed to sell real estate, home owning, and the advantages of dealing with the members of our organization." The feature is said to reach a regular circulation of 33,000,000.

Information in this form in newspapers has great value in stimulating the demand for details which the local information services would be equipped to give.

A disinterested national institute might to advantage study the demands for newspaper features on various phases of housing and direct a national program of educational publicity.

Magazines. Magazines in the United States which publish information on matters relating to the home may be roughly classified under four heads: (1) Professional or technical magazines; (2) trade periodicals, whose purpose is chiefly sales publicity and promotion, and employee education or stimulation; (3) so-called

"home builders' group" of publications, many of which offer free consultation service and timely information for the layman on one or more of the following subjects—home design, home building, remodeling, landscape planning and planting, and interior decorating and furnishing; (4) so-called "women's group" of magazines which display an ever-increasing tendency to include published matter relating to house planning, landscape design, and interior decoration, presumably because of a demand on the part of their readers.

All the magazines in the women's group devote a large proportion of space to matters of homemaking, including home furnishing and equipment. They also offer free consultation service on home building and several have plan services. The standard of service of a few of these is of a high order. These magazines of the women's group reach the lay public and have a large circulation. When they have the right professional direction, and the material for publication is selected and edited by qualified experts, they apparently have a wide influence in formulating standards of taste. They have undoubtedly broadened and improved the layman's knowledge of subjects relating to the home. They have also helped to stimulate the desire for types of house equipment which are beyond the power of most families to purchase without unbalancing their budget.

It is practically impossible to evaluate the service given by any individual publication. Many magazines have rendered a valuable service in attempting to raise standards of taste and discrimination, but too little material seems aimed at the low-income group which forms so great a proportion of our population and which comprises most of the readers of the low-priced magazines.

The term "small house" has a different connotation in different magazines and is applied to structures costing from $3,000 to $50,000, according to the estimated income level of the readers. It is well to remind ourselves that we are deeply concerned with service to those who cannot afford to own a place costing over $5,000. One reason why magazines do not publish more good small-house plans is that they are hard to obtain, as few of the better designers among architects and interior decorators have the opportunity to devote their efforts to low-cost work. Interest stimulated by this Conference will undoubtedly result in a

gradual growth of professional interest in the small house and definite plans for improving such services have been worked out by other committees.

It is suggested that some permanent agency, perhaps an informal one in the shape of an occasional conference, should be initiated to obtain the cooperation of various magazines and periodicals (including the Sunday magazines of metropolitan newspapers) in establishing a definite program to advance the cause of the small home.

It is suggested that some magazines whose circulation reaches those of modest means be requested to devote more space to the very small house selling for under $5,000. Such a house may have many possibilities in the way of remodeling and renovating at small expense. Magazines could be a potent influence in interesting young people in practical problems of home owning and homemaking.

Home information by radio. There is always likely to be a demand from broadcasting stations for information to be used in morning and afternoon programs addressed to the housewife. At present food, clothing, and beauty predominate in the topics found on radio programs. The radio is a less readily available medium for reaching men with information about housing, since evening hours on the air are difficult of access owing to the general preference for entertainment. However, talks on investment are common, particularly on real estate, stocks and bonds, and undoubtedly it would be possible to insert in some programs incidental references to the saving for and financing of homes.

National programs have an important place in radio education, since the chain broadcasting claims so large a share in the attention of radio audiences.

In addition to programs sponsored by national or local home information services, much could be done to make their services better known through announcement and references included in the programs of other broadcasters. "Ask your home information center on Blank Street for further information," could be included in many talks on the home, as a frequent reminder to the public that the home information center supplies continuous service through which information is to be had on matters relating to individual problems. One way of supplying the thread of con-

tinuity to these talks would be to dramatize in a series of one-act plays the experiences of a family in buying and equipping a house.

Visual material. Pictures, plans, models, materials, and equipment are so essential to an understanding of housing that they should be the most carefully planned and perhaps the most widely used form of education.

Stereopticon slides and motion-pictures are forms of visual material well suited to home information, and especially adapted to the uses of a home information center. Film strips, slides, and non-inflammable motion-picture films can be taken into homes, classrooms and before all manner of audiences. Collaboration by home information services with amateur motion-picture enthusiasts might produce excellent local material.

Window displays arranged in cooperation with home information services by banks, stores, material dealers, and real estate offices might have great educational value. An important factor is that the displays should be interpreted through carefully prepared labels. Added interest might be given them through accompanying newspaper articles and radio talks, and occasionally through contests.

One of the most desirable visual methods is the tour arranged to take visitors to actual houses under construction, finished and occupied houses, and home grounds. Such tours under the leadership of able instructors will go far beyond less-realistic educational methods in influencing the home builder and home buyer.

Summary and Recommendations

Information and help are now available to the would-be home builder and to the homemaker within the community through such civic agencies as the public library, the museum, the public school, and the college or university. One of the first steps forward would be to develop these disinterested services more fully. There is also a need to correlate them closely, as is done in some cities through an educational or adult education council, or through a local committee established to study and further interest in the home and in civic development.

Libraries. The city, small town, and county public libraries, supplemented by the state library system, are in a key position

to assist in giving home information service. The quality, breadth, and availability of library service are therefore of great importance. Additional rural library service is especially needed.

The home information services of libraries now in existence should be further developed. Their services should be more widely advertised and used. There is need for suggestions on building up and weeding out library collections on the subjects of interest to the Conference; for the compilation and publication of selected lists of readable books and pamphlets; and for provision for continuing advisory service.

The committee therefore recommends:

1. That this Conference direct action toward:

Experimentation in placing in a few libraries "home information centers" supported by the various interested agencies, to the end that the relative advantages and disadvantages of such placing may be determined, and methods worked out for correlating the center's work with all existing library services and with those of other agencies that would be helpful of whatever origin—educational, commercial, civic, social, or religious.

Encouraging further use of libraries by educational agencies in the field of the Conference, as centers for displaying traveling exhibits and for distributing free leaflets and pamphlets.

Encouraging and assisting the publication of the needed up-to-date and simple books and pamphlets, and magazine and newspaper articles on topics not now covered, either through regular publishers, Government departments, or the Conference itself.

Compiling and publishing a carefully selected, up-to-date list of readable books, pamphlets, and free material, covering the whole field of the Conference, using all lists prepared for the various committees, to be prepared cooperatively by librarians and subject-matter specialists, to serve as a stimulus and guide in building and weeding library collections.

Providing for a continuation of book selection service, possibly through a national housing library.

2. That this Conference recommend to librarians further development of their services in the field of the Conference by:

Greater emphasis upon careful selection and frequent weeding of the books, pamphlets and visual material, using the help of local specialists as well as of library book selection aids.

Further correlation of their activities, national, state, and local, with those of other agencies in the field of the Conference.

Wider and more intensive publicity for the services they can offer.

Developing in established libraries, wherever it is possible, outstanding home information collections and services.

3. That this Conference call public attention to the value of the information services in civic affairs, housing and homemaking now given by public libraries at their best, and recommend:

Wider use by other agencies, business men, educators, and individuals, of the library facilities at their disposal.

Museums and exhibits. Museums are giving direct and indirect educational service in the field of home building and particularly in homemaking. The American Wing of the Metropolitan and other museums has had a wide influence. Museum exhibits, lending collections, sales of reproductions, lectures and courses have all contributed to home improvement. Further service could be given, however, through greater emphasis by art museums on industrial art in the home and domestic architecture, through establishment of more popular courses in this field and of simple exhibits for use of schools and libraries, through regional cooperation among museums and between them and other educational and industrial agencies.

Museums of industry, while few in number and newer than art museums, are potentially very important. They are already emphasizing industrial art and including or planning to include exhibits on housing. This service could be greatly developed.

Outside of museums, the American Federation of Arts has demonstrated the value of traveling exhibits, with and without demonstrators, "canned lectures" with stereopticon slides, and little galleries in the smaller communities. All these could be far more widely developed.

Through cooperation between a museum in Southern California and architects, an experiment will be tried in carrying over the "American Wing" plan into an exhibit of the modern small house of good taste, inexpensively built and furnished. This points the way to further cooperative developments.

The committee therefore recommends that this Conference, through the appropriate channels:

1. Give the weight of its approval to development by museums of art and industry along the specific lines of the Conference.
2. Draw public and professional attention to the bearing of industrial art on the home.
3. Encourage experimentation in carrying the "American Wing" plan over into exhibits of the modern small house of good taste, through cooperation between museums and other agencies.

4. Encourage further development of traveling exhibits, demonstrations, little galleries, and similar educational services outside of museums.

Public schools, colleges and universities. In the established educational system lies one of the greatest opportunities for reaching a large part of the adult population, and the best means of increasing the knowledge and interest of all our young people, in the important matters which relate to city planning, home owning, home building, and homemaking.

Instruction has apparently been limited and sporadic except in the field of homemaking. Printed material has often been lacking or ill-adapted to school use. We believe that it would be of benefit if courses of study could be developed which relate the work of many departments to these subjects.

The committee therefore recommends that the Conference, through the proper channels:

1. Arrange for the appointment of a special committee representing manual arts, home economics, business, science, architecture, city planning, finance, landscape architecture, interior decorating, and also the underlying social and natural sciences, whose purpose should be, first, to assemble material from pertinent bodies of knowledge, skills, and appreciations; and second, to develop suggestions for course-of-study committees for the introduction, into the various levels of the educational system, of material dealing with civic development, home building, home ownership, and homemaking, including proposals for projects for boys, for girls, for both boys and girls and for men and women as seems desirable.

2. Urge upon college faculties their responsibility for spreading among the students a better realization and appreciation of the part which home building, home ownership, and homemaking play in social progress.

3. Recognize the importance to problems of city and rural planning, home building, home ownership, and homemaking, of university extension, vocational education, cooperative extension work, and other adult education activities, and urge wider use of their facilities by the public, and an increased attention to these subjects in courses of study.

4. Encourage the preparation and publication of better school manuals in this field.

5. Encourage local and national organizations which give out disinterested home information to develop contacts with the public schools, and whenever possible make their information material and services available through school channels.

Other methods of disseminating public information. Any plan for the development of local information service with the cooperation of a national organization should recognize the great ad-

vantages to be secured through national and local teamwork in using the various channels of public information. This is especially true of printed matter, the newspaper, radio, and visual material.

A national institute should be established which could appraise, select, and popularize information which is either too technical or too weighted with propaganda for use in its original form. Specifically, the national body might:

Prepare and supply at cost pamphlets of from eight to sixteen pages, attractive in form, popular in style, and reliable in content; encourage similar activities by other organizations.

Review and evaluate material offered by other national organizations, and encourage preparation of such material in their fields as educational agencies may deem advisable.

Prepare features for newspaper use and for periodicals, if there is a demand for them, and supply local centers with facts and figures to use in local news and feature articles.

Broadcast educational radio programs and suggest program ideas to local centers and other organizations.

Prepare or encourage the preparation of slides and motion-pictures for local use and supply ideas and plans for local exhibits.

Conduct a continuous exchange of ideas and experiences in popular education among local centers and other cooperating organizations through a news bulletin.

Among the many available methods of spreading home information locally, these are suggested as especially important:

Adaptation of nationally supplied material to local needs.

Preparation of leaflets and folders for distribution and letter enclosure to invite use of the services of the center.

Publication of inexpensively printed or mimeographed booklets on subjects of local importance.

Organization of occasional events which create news, as meetings, exhibitions, contests, tours, and intensive campaigns.

Radio cooperation, with approved broadcasters, in advertising the home information center, and radio programs arranged by the center which would have continuity and individuality.

CHAPTER XII

HOME INFORMATION CENTERS FOR URBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Principles of Organization

The preceding pages have brought out the facts that there is a vast quantity of information offered, but that the ordinary householder has difficulty in knowing where to find it, and how to judge its value when found. It has been suggested from various quarters that coordination of these many unrelated efforts to guide the householder would result in marked economy. Consideration of these facts suggests strongly the advisability of *establishing some clearing-house* for information and some plan for organizing a well-rounded service for those interested in acquiring or improving homes, and in getting from their investment the best possible returns in health, convenience, and enjoyment. If in such a plan, city and rural planning, home building, home ownership, and homemaking can be considered as different parts of a single problem, a long step forward will have been taken toward improving existing conditions with relation to information services to the end that more satisfying homes may be provided for our American families.

The types of organization plans outlined later may serve to stimulate and help coordinate the efforts of local agencies concerned in home and community development and suggest means for disseminating through existing and new agencies the best available information.

The reports to this Conference show that, all over the country, there are many practices connected with home and community development which may well be improved, and that there are many people who need disinterested information and advice on the varied subjects related to the home. The fact that much of the material gathered by The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership should be brought to the attention of the public as directly and as effectively as possible, will be an inducement to leaders to organize conferences and other organizations in various localities.[1]

[1] See *Housing objectives and programs.* Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, vol. XI.

This committee and many others have suggested methods for improving or extending the practices and activities of different agencies in the field, and for developing activities and material which will make the people want the information. This problem is largely a matter of education, and education is usually a slow process. It must be carefully directed and stimulated if satisfactory results and lasting improvements are to be obtained.

A Plan for a Home Information Center

The committee believes that local autonomy and initiative with advisory service and assistance coming from national and regional centers should be the basis for all organization plans of this kind. The basic recommendation is for the provision of the improved home information services which have been shown to be necessary. These plans are submitted as suggestions only, with the understanding that every community has different requirements and faces different conditions.

A new kind of city home information center or bureau is suggested. Its objects would be to assist in activities leading to home and community development, and to give out information on subjects pertaining to home building, home ownership, and homemaking, and on local city planning and zoning conditions, as they affect the individual. Its control and policy would be disinterested. It would cooperate with all kinds of reliable agencies, and offer its service to any person that required them, particularly to those of small means.

Important factors for success. In considering the set-up of such centers attention should be given to the following factors which have proved essential in the success of homemaking information centers, the best of which represent the nearest approach yet made to the complete, well-rounded center:

Selection of a well-balanced governing committee representing varied interests and therefore a disinterested control.

Training and personal qualifications of staff, including technical or professional training for leadership, and ability to present subject matter.

Adequacy of financial support with preference for general and varied sources.

Location in relation to the clientele it is hoped to reach, and without handicapping connections.

Programs planned in response to local demand.

Arrangements for continuing and effective publicity.

Good public relations.

Cooperation with local educational, civic, and commercial agencies that have information services on any phases of the subject.

Development on the part of the local community of sense of ownership and responsibility in the center, with share in its administration.

Formal tie-up with state board of education, state university and college of agriculture and extension service, and similar agencies, for the sake of help and prestige.

Cooperation with Federal and national organizations with similar aims.

Close cooperation with disinterested research and technical institutions to provide a check-up on technical information.

Preliminary local survey. It is important that, before formulating a definite operating program for such a bureau, a local survey should be made by the disinterested committee or organization sponsoring the undertaking. The chief importance of such a study would be to show what services were needed in the community, and to avoid the fundamental danger of duplicating any adequate service.

The survey should show:

1. Existing services: (a) Scope; (b) character; (c) approximate number and classes served.

2. Apparent need for: (a) Coordination of existing agencies; (b) expansion of existing services; (c) new services.

3. The attitude toward the project, including the probable willingness to assist financially or through service of local leaders, including: (a) Influential membership organizations—chamber of commerce, service clubs, women's clubs, garden clubs, and others; (b) philanthropic individuals and civic leaders, city officials, architects, landscape architects; (c) newspapers, certain business firms and associations connected with the building industry.

Organization. The plan might be developed as follows:

The committee which will supervise the activities and outline policies might consist of a small group of unbiased persons. They should be keenly interested in the project, familiar with the problems involved, and able to command the respect and support of the community in general and of the business, professional, educational, and civic interests in particular which are concerned with home and community development. It is suggested that an attempt to represent organizations as such might not be desirable because of the large number involved.

The origin of the committee would vary in different communities. It might be appointed by a local organization formed to promote home and community improvement along disinterested lines,

or, if such an organization did not exist, it might develop from the committee which had made the preliminary survey; whatever the origin, the unbiased character of the group should be maintained.

The staff of the organization set-up should be carefully selected. It might function in three divisions: (1) General section, with a secretarial worker and occasional publicity service on a fee basis; (2) homemaking section, with a home economist in charge specially trained in housing problems and consultant service available from specialists including other home economists, interior decorators, landscape architects and gardeners; (3) building and home ownership section, with a housing specialist in charge, preferably one with architectural training and experience in handling realty problems, and consultant service of city planner, building inspector, architects, real estate dealers, lawyers, building and loan officers, contractors, building material dealers and others.

The consultants, both men and women, would be organized as a *service committee* which would help formulate the working program of the center and would also act upon such special committees as were necessary.

Services. An effective home information center should be in a position to give advice, or refer inquirers to appropriate sources of information upon all phases of home building and homemaking. These may be indicated by the following headings:

Zoning restrictions; lot or farmstead selection and purchase; house design to suit lot and available funds; construction and choice of materials; supervision; financing methods available; contract procedure; repairs, alterations, and maintenance; household management, budgets, and administration; equipment; furnishing and decoration; landscape planning and planting; community beautification.

The services might be rendered through:

Personal conferences with staff members or consultants.

Distribution of printed matter adapted to local needs and lists of useful books, magazines and pamphlets.

Loan or display of magazines and books, particularly of plan books carefully criticized by architects.

Exhibits of various kinds for different uses.

Display of carefully selected plans, possibly their sale if there is no local branch of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau.

Stimulation of special programs and outlining of projects for study groups, lectures, and classes.

Publicity material for city, foreign-language and possibly rural press, radio, etc.

Cooperation with and stimulation of all existing public, social, and commercial services of value.

Assistance to Better Homes in America Committee, Clean Up and Beautify the Community, Thrift, and other improvement campaigns organized for the public benefit.

Furtherance of local studies and other activities which need stimulation and upon which members of the committee, or advisory group of specialists could work, particularly those which would be of benefit to members of different building trades and business groups.

Other suggestions for methods of spreading home information may be found in the discussion of "Other Sources of Public Information," p. 209-214.

The opportunities for cooperation with architects, landscape architects, contractors and builders, building material and equipment firms, real estate and financing agencies would be frequent, particularly when dealing with problems connected with small-house design, construction, and finance. The public library, public schools, city planning and building departments would be able to further and assist in any educational projects. The chamber of commerce, service clubs, women's clubs, business organizations, and improvement associations would be helpful and would share in many parts of a home and community improvement program.

This plan would be modified by the amount of money available and the character of the local home information services.

The suggestions as to activities can be adapted to other types of information centers, either to those of rather limited scope or to those which are connected with existing agencies.

Information Centers in Connection with Existing Agencies

Any plan for improving opportunities for education and information on home building, home ownership and homemaking should make provision for using existing services. If it is not possible to establish the ideal central home information center, it might be possible in certain localities to use existing disinterested agencies more effectively and extensively, including both public and private; and to conduct continuing services for the public through a disinterested home information center connected with a public agency. Some of these agencies are suggested:

Public agencies. 1. *The city or town public library* which will distribute printed matter, show exhibits and act as directory for other local home information services, and, in some instances, serve as the location for the central home information center if means, staff, and space can be provided (see p. 198-201).

2. *An educational institution* which can provide space in a demonstration cottage, or other school or college building to be developed as a public home information center, effectively connected with home economics, art, landscape planning and planting, architecture, manual training, and engineering, and other related departments. In some instances, it may be possible for faculty members to be assigned as part-time consultants.

3. *An urban home information center* which is recognized by and connected with the Cooperative Extension Work of the Department of Agriculture and the state land grant college and receives the assistance of the state specialists in homemaking subjects; which is dependent upon local support, usually obtained from several of the following sources: City, county, community chest, organizations, and individuals; and which provides for advice to individuals and instruction of groups and promotion of group and community activities at present functioning chiefly along homemaking lines (see Chapter IX).

4. *The County Agricultural Extension Service* which is supported by funds contributed by Federal, state, county, and sometimes other local contributions; which has an office in the county courthouse or some other convenient and centrally located place in the county; which has agricultural agents and often home demonstration agents who organize local groups for discussion and instruction, and carry on a varied educational program, a large part of it connected with homemaking, some of it with home building; and where the local workers are supervised and assisted by specialists from the state land grant college.

The home information center connected with any of the organizations described would probably be developed along lines related to home building and homemaking and community improvement.

Disinterested organizations for public service. In some cities there are disinterested agencies especially concerned with housing and community development which already render valuable service along some lines. Through a close connection between the home information center and such organizations, necessary services on city planning, home building and home ownership could probably be provided but further provision for subjects related to homemaking would be required. Such organizations are:

1. *The Architects' Small House Service Bureau,* which operates under the auspices of the American Institute of Architects and provides small-house plans and specifications at nominal cost, conducts an information service on small-house design and construction, distributes literature, prepares publicity

along this line, and offers a special service to building and loan associations (see Chapter VIII).

2. *Housing associations* which conduct studies of and prepare plans for improvement of local conditions, publish pamphlets, distribute literature, sometimes organize classes, arrange exhibits, and provide consultant service on a variety of local problems; which are usually supported by private contributions and sometimes receive public grants.

3. *A community arts association* which promotes interest in city planning, good architecture and gardening, and provides instruction and information on these subjects through personal conferences, publications, exhibits, lectures, classes, competitions, general publicity, loan library, and limited plan service, and which provides all professional services free or on a reasonable consultant-fee basis.

4. *A community or civic affairs association* which has one or more major interests such as promotion of a city plan and has active committees on several subjects relating to housing and community improvement.

In addition to agencies of the type listed above there are in almost every city:

Agencies for the service of special groups, including the social agencies that serve a membership, neighborhood, or racial, or special age or underprivileged group, such as a neighborhood house, or community center, a welfare agency, a Girl Scout House, Y. W. C. A. or Y. M. C. A. center, or a home information center giving a limited service of instruction or information. These agencies are usually supported by a community chest or by private contributions.

If these agencies would cooperate closely with a central home information center and with each other, the home information service of a city might readily be made more adequate in the homemaking field.

The committee feels that, if it is possible to do so, demonstration centers should be established in different communities and under different conditions, and the results of their activities carefully observed. These centers in every instance should be established with the hearty support and cooperation of all the local organizations and under local direction.

The committee also feels that further study of the activities of the home information services of certain existing agencies and commercial organizations should be made in order to work out a more efficient program for service to home builders, home owners, and homemakers.

Every plan of community organization should consider the es-

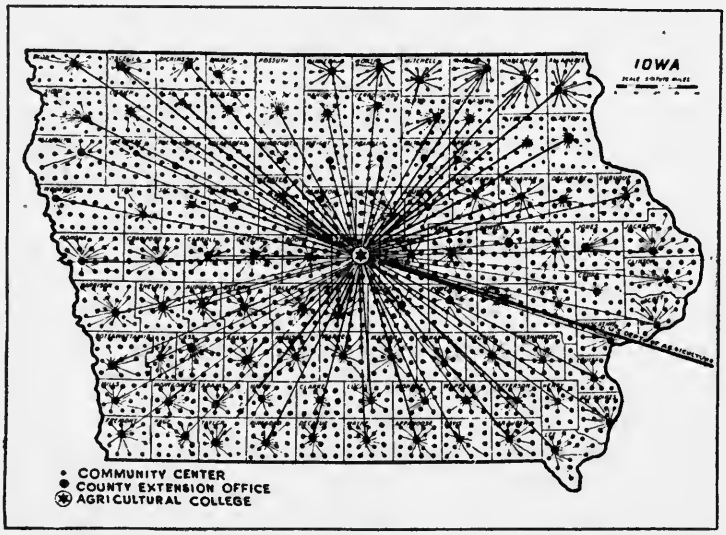
tablished agencies and provide definitely for their use and development in cooperation with such other new agencies as are needed to supplement existing efforts or to correct unfortunate practices.

County Organizations and Agencies

In rural areas the success of a home information center would depend to a large degree upon a series of planned activities leading up to its establishment. Such activities furthered by local people undoubtedly would serve to stimulate interest and coordinate the efforts for home and community improvement throughout the county.

The development of county activities and organizations by methods which already have been found successful among rural people would be most likely to secure the desired results. The procedure of course will vary greatly according to local conditions.

The suggestions which follow are based on experience in many parts of the country.



How the Cooperative Extension System is organized to reach rural people in the state of Iowa in time of emergency. A similar system might be used in relaying home information directly to rural areas.

Planning committee. A preliminary meeting might be called of from six to ten men and women, chosen as representing the leading farm, business, educational and civic organizations and the county agricultural and home demonstration agents, teachers of agriculture and home economics, librarian, and superintendent of schools.

The initiative in calling the meeting should be taken by county workers best acquainted with local conditions and the outstanding leaders most interested in the subject. It would be the duty of this committee to plan for a study of local conditions and to plan, arrange for, and conduct a county conference.

County conference on home and community improvement. A meeting might be held of forty or more delegates, well distributed and representing all interested organizations of the county. Its objectives would be: To summarize the home improvement situation in the county, and the material developed and the conclusions reached at other conferences; to make suggestions applying to the majority of the homes in need of improvement in the county; and to select a home and community improvement committee.

Home and community improvement committee. This committee might serve as the board of directors of a permanent county-wide council.

County council. Those who attended the Conference might vote to organize a council and to select other members to represent communities and organizations not represented to elect delegates.

The objectives of the county committee and the county council would be to:

Conduct further studies of county problems.

Stimulate county-wide interest.

Coordinate services of existing agencies and the efforts of leaders most interested and best able to promote home improvement.

Plan for establishing home information center or centers.

List information materials to be collected for distribution and places to distribute such information.

Assist in the dissemination of information to dealers and individuals interested.

If the decision were reached that special attention should be given to the problems under discussion, a county home information center might well be set up.

County home information center. A small committee should be appointed to direct and supervise the activities.

The headquarters might be in the county courthouse, possibly in the county extension office, with the chamber of commerce, or in the county or village library. The office should be readily accessible and have regular office hours.

The service of a county center would be to:

Provide unbiased and authoritative information through staff or consultants.

Further educational programs on home and community improvement approved by the county committee.

Evaluate published material, as far as possible, with relation to suitability to local conditions.

Distribute approved publications, house plans, programs.

Cooperate with schools, library, Extension Service and other local state and national organizations.

Prepare publicity material, news releases, exhibits, etc.

The person in charge of the center should preferably, in order to meet the most frequent calls, be a home economist, especially trained in housing and experienced in handling the problems of rural people. Consultation service should be provided on professional and technical subjects by the ablest persons available.

If possible the financing of the center should be done as a cooperative and a community project.

If no special worker can be obtained at first, the program for home and community development should be carefully planned by the council with the resources of each of the educational agencies and the number of persons to be helped in view. The existing agencies should be strengthened and, through correlation of efforts and the supporting interest of the county council, more work should be accomplished and a greater number of people benefited.

From time to time, it will probably be found effective to arrange other meetings.

Other county conferences and meetings. Additional conferences of delegates might be held to discuss such timely topics as:

Home building and remodeling.
Interior decoration and furnishing.
Home equipment and conveniences.
Home-ground beautification.
Long-term program of community improvement.

The conferences might be followed by community meetings at which one of these topics would be discussed. These meetings might be open to the public. Small group meetings might be held of persons interested in special subjects such as those connected with the house building industry who might discuss the latest recommended practices and their application to local conditions.

Town committees and councils. The outstanding problems of the villages and towns in the county may be different from those in the farm districts. Other organizations and agencies will be operating in the town. Under such circumstances, special committees may be formed to carry on purely local programs of home and community improvement. Close cooperation should always be maintained with the county organization.

One of the most interesting annual programs is for each community to assume a definite civic improvement project and carry it to completion within a set time. The most expert advice should be secured and efforts made to make the major community activity an inspiration and guide to individual effort.

If a state or district conference is held following The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, it would help to stimulate the development of local activities. It is not necessary, however, to await such a conference before organizing local groups and starting to improve local conditions.

National and State Organizations

Some state organization, a state council or conference, may follow The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership.

There is a widespread conviction that a great need exists for a permanent organization, disinterested in its connections and nation-wide in scope. Suggestions have been made in previous parts of this report which express the desirability of a clearing-house for the collection, evaluation and distribution of home information. Such a "national institute" would be of untold value, and of the greatest assistance to local home information centers.

The committee believes that the type of organization best suited to carry out the necessary program should be determined by a group that represents the Conference as a whole. The task ahead of the officers who have so splendidly led us thus far is to find means for doing something more and to determine on the scope

of the activities which will follow The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership.

CONCLUSION

As long as families live in houses, just so long will there be a demand for information concerning the home. The advice and help that an information center can give on these housing problems should be one of the most important factors in raising the standards of homes. Any community, regardless of its size, can start some type of a home information service. The beginning of such a service might be no more than a committee of representative citizens, but the development of the service into a perfected organization providing unbiased information on a wide range of subjects should be the concern of every person interested in home and community improvement.

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