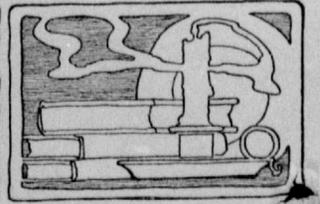


IDEAL ROOMS OF AN IDEAL HOUSE



"Let us have in our houses a room where there shall be space to carry on the business of life freely, and with pleasure, with furniture made to use."



CURELY THIS PLEA of an English architect is met by the living room in our ideal house. It is plainly a room that is lived in. We can easily imagine another picture, made by flashlight (for the time would be evening) with the family gathered about a cheerful wood fire in the wide fire place, while, under the soft glow of the big lamp, Father or Mother reads aloud from one of the many choice books. It is a room that suggests comfort and cultured good sense. There is n't any reason why culture and good sense should not be linked, is there? At least, the books in this room bespeak culture, and the manner in which they are made instantly accessible, although amply protected, denotes sense.

Something from which we may well seek to be delivered is a fussy living room. They are found everywhere — fussy as to furniture, fussy as to curtains and carpets and pictures, fussy as to the paper on the wall. Our room is not fussy. On the contrary, it is a sane, reposeful room. It has just enough furniture; and all of it is, as our Englishman stipulates, "made for use." And yet, it is not too heavy; for the Canton chair by the window adds just the desirable contrasting note to the massive table.

The big lamp indicates that the table is the center of the room's life; but there are also side lights on the walls. Serious mistakes are often made in the lighting of a living room. A strong, central light is to be avoided, and the reading lamp's rays should reach all parts of the table, yet fall too low to strike the eyes. It is best to rely on side lights, properly placed, when additional illumination is needed. The proper placing of them, however, is not so simple a matter as it seems. An excellent idea is to make a plan of the room on paper and to indicate where

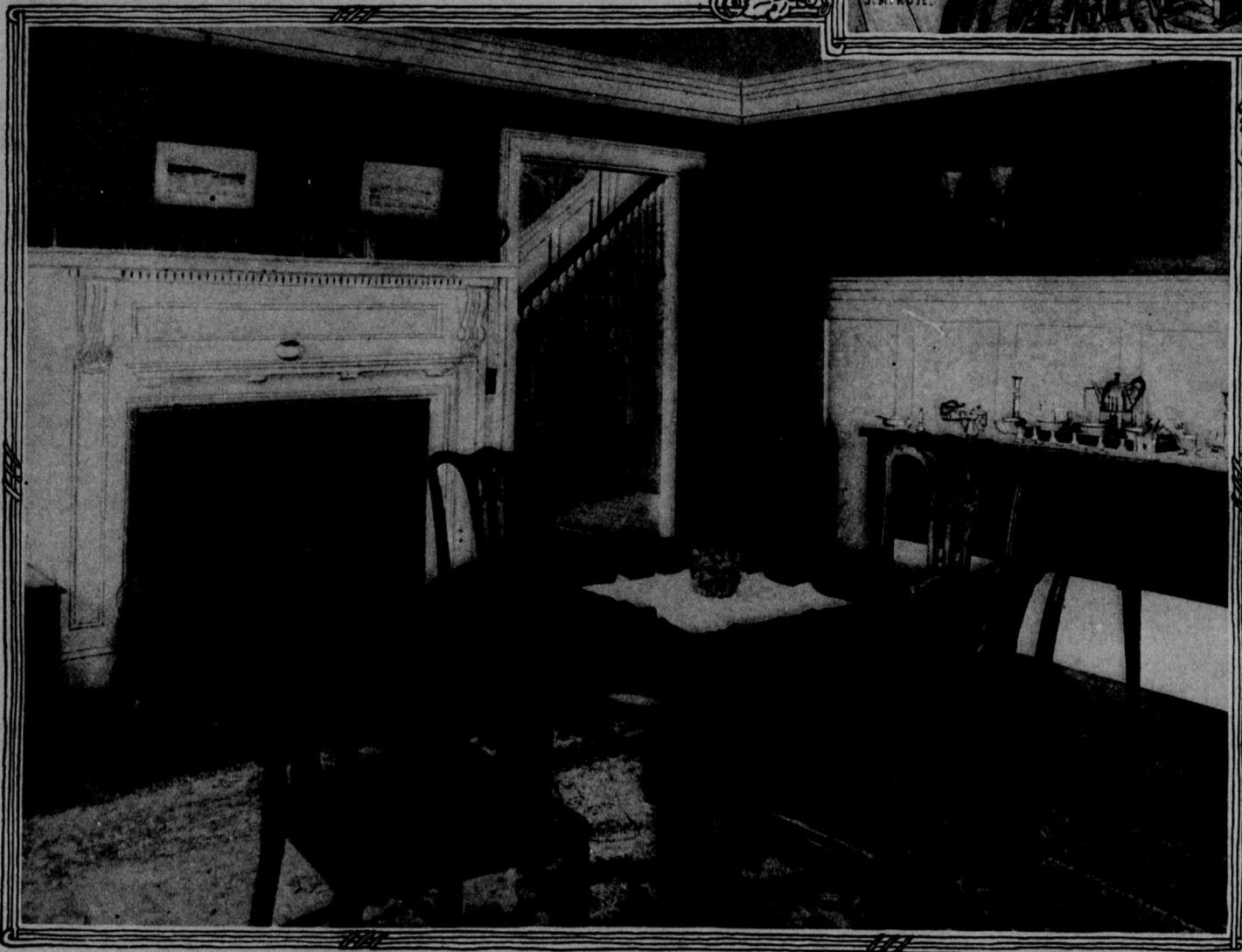
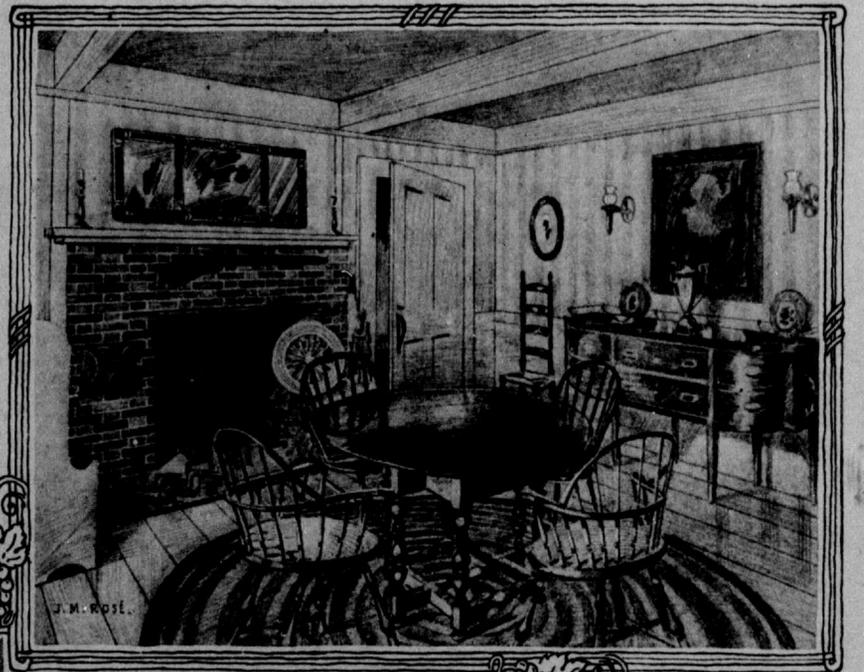
each piece of furniture is to go. Then, the lights may be arranged accordingly — one over, or just beside, the piano, one at the head of the couch and another close by the book case. Let us follow this plan in our ideal living room, and thereby add much to its convenience. If one desires a book from the book cases arranged neatly along the wall, he has but to touch a button to read the titles plainly.

No living room is complete without books, of course, nor without convenient cases for them, and comfortable chairs in which to read them. It is much better, though, to have them in book cases with glass fronts than in open cases; for the housewife or maid is saved much labor in keeping them dusted, and life is added to the books themselves. Built-in book cases are often installed, and while they are attractive when fitted into a chimney corner or made to carry out some architectural purpose, it is more feasible to have the books in portable cases that may be moved about at will. Why forego the pleasure of rearranging the furniture in the living room at intervals? One feels hampered if the books must necessarily remain always in exactly the same place.

But there may be those who will say that this living room in the ideal house is too conventional; in short, that it is by no means an ideal living room. Very well, a sudden transformation shows it completely redecorated; yet without changing the position

even of a chair. The craftsman style has been adopted and with excellent effect, it must be admitted; at least, that will be the opinion of persons with the craftsman temperament.

In place of a heavy wainscot surmounted by paper on the sidewalls, we have rough gray plaster. The floor, of rift pine, is partly covered by woven rugs in two tones of brown. Open beams across the ceiling help to change the decorative atmosphere of the room, and a fire place of common brick with white joints still farther emphasizes the transformation. The wood work, of chestnut, is stained a dark craftsman oak; but white scrim "Bonne Femme" curtains at the casement windows prevent any suggestion of somberness; while the heavy wood brown silk drapery with cottage valance frames them in appropriately. The mahogany table becomes Tudor



oak or red gum (which, by the way, is not red at all, but a rich warm brown); and the lines are rigidly squared. An electric lamp, with amber shade and a standard matching the trim, stands on an ecru crash scarf, embroidered in stone brown. The book case undergoes similar treatment and by the addition of leaded glass, becomes even more attractive than before.

In the revised room there is a sense of calm strength and perfect poise. There is enough variety to obviate monotony, but not enough to produce restlessness. The plain gray walls are unexcelled as a background for pictures, and in such a room the pictures may well carry warm colors. Books in warmly colored bindings also add to the charm.

"Have nothing in your home which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful," said William Morris — a quotation that may be supposed to apply to every article of the type described. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to introduce a superfluous article into a room of this char-

The Ideal Dining Room must be cheerful, then why not Colonial, or Dutch Colonial?