

Concerning Home Adornment.

Mrs. J. Alexander, of Norton, read the following before the Kansas State Horticultural Society.

This subject should be and is one that interests a great many people. What! do you mean to say that everybody is not interested in the subject of home and home adornment?

Certainly: the majority of the people in this, our fair country, think very little about beautifying their homes, and would stare in amazement if the word "adornment" were mentioned in their hearing, in connection with their own homes.

There are people in the world, and some of them in Kansas, too, who seem to be content with four bare walls and a covering of hay and dirt, and would deem it extravagance to suggest anything better for them: but, my friends it is for just such people as these that every effort of the thinking minds and kindly hearts of God's children should be brought to bear on the subject of making better homes.

In speaking of home adornment, I might draw a beautiful word picture, furnishing and arranging a grand place from palace to cellar and attic. But that would be presumption on my part—in truth, it would be folly, for the rich and grand would not thank me for my advice, and would smile at my conceit.

But seriously there are a great many people who could be helped to make better homes for themselves, and to make their children better fitted to make the future homes of the nation, if in some way they could be brought to realize the need of more beauty and cleanliness in their own homes, and to see their responsibility for cleanliness and beauty in the homes of their neighbors.

But I hear someone say, in what way are the future homes affected by our present way of living? And in what possible way can the lives and homes of the coming generation be benefited or injured by the way in which people live in this day and age of the world.

There is an old adage, and a truthful saying, too, that "As the twig is bent the tree's inclined"

When heredity and environment together tend to teach slothfulness, and to blind the eyes to the beauties of nature, and to dull the sensibilities to freedom of thought and to aspiration, you cannot expect refinement and thrift as a result. It seems there is but little hope for the future of children who are brought up in homes devoid of beauty and attractiveness, because it is not so much what we have that makes the home comfortable and happy.

There are homes and homes that I know, where the barrenness and homeliness are not because of poverty and want, but because of ignorance, indifference to the better way of living. There are so many people who count bare existence as living, and do not trouble to think of the home further than to supply just a shelter to cover themselves and families.

One writer has said of home: "The sweetest word in every tongue is home. It breathes of the simple joys of childhood, the struggles, sorrows, trials and shadows of manhood; it summons up the consecrating memories of the past; it speaks of the fireside and of our youth, and of the roof-tree of our fathers where in sweet content we rested and trusted, not fearing evil or hurt because of the trust and confidence we had in the love of father and mother, and the sure protection of home."

If this be home then how earnestly we should study and plan to make it the place God in his love and indulgence intended home should be!

When we look back to this first home, and see the beauty and grandeur, the peace and content, the joy and happiness, the trust and confidence, that existed in that household, may we not believe that it is man's duty to make of the home the brightest and purest and cleanest place possible?

But here again, as of old, may come in that fell destroyer, sin, saying: "But you have not the means to make your homes bright and beautiful—how can you fix up homes and make them pretty without money?" I will say here that in some homes too much money is what destroys the beauty of those homes.

It does not always take money to make a home beautiful. Love

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