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BETTER HOUSING

Basement Merits Early Consideration

(Prepared By National Lumber Manufacturers Association)

Basement waterproofing, a vital factor in the comfort and trouble-free life of your home, depends upon the climate, the condition of the soil, disposal of water from the roof, and the elevation of the building. If the height of the basement is well-chosen, it will go far toward keeping it dry. Houses situated in a light, well-drained soil have been known to require no further protection, but such houses are the exception.

Houses not provided with wide, over-hanging eaves should have gutters and downspouts to carry off roof drainage. Splash blocks of masonry or concrete should be provided at the bottom of each downspout, sloped to carry the water several feet away from the house, and the slope of the ground should carry it further. Where the ground does not slope in the right direction naturally, underground drain tile should be extended from the bottom of the downspout to a lower point on the lot.

Provision for drainage of the subsoil around underground masonry should also be made. A line of tile around the outside of the foundation, laid with open joints covered on top and surrounded by a gravel or cinder fill, is an effective means of preventing accumulation of water along the outside of the foundation. The tile must be sloped from a high point to empty into a dry well, storm drain, or a spot lower than the bottom of foundation footings.

A smooth troweled parging coat of waterproof cement applied to the wall from the ground line down to the footing, covered when dry with a hot brush coat of asphalt, provides adequate water resistance for the wall in most cases.

Basement floors are often laid directly on the ground. Better insurance against dampness is gained by laying them on a bed of gravel or cinders in which several sloping lines of open tile have been run, connected to pass under the footing and drain away from the house.

The joint between the basement floor and exterior wall and post piers should be kept open by inserting a piece of oiled, bevel siding against the wall before placing the floor, and removed when the floor has set. The resulting V crack filled with hot asphalt will furnish an effective and elastic seal, and take up expansion and contraction without cracking the floor.

Pep Up Summer Refreshments

Here's a "junior" refreshment that has the same lure for grown-ups as the traditional Christmas toy train does for father, in many homes. It's a beverage of party character for children, or it's a bit of afternoon or evening liquid refreshment, too smart for grownups to overlook.

"Calavo Ginger Jerry" has everything that children need in a party drink — a sparkling liquid, ice cream, vitamins and minerals that even parties have to take into account—especially rich in the sieved Calavo. But don't taste it when you prepare it for the children unless you're prepared to make more for the grownups as well.

Calavo Ginger Jerry

½ cup sieved Calavo
Few grains salt
1½ cups vanilla ice cream
2 cups ginger ale

Blend Calavo, salt, and ice cream with electric mixer or rotary beater. Add ginger ale and stir to blend. Serve immediately.

Makes approximately 2 pints.

A few Cook Books from the CATHOLIC COURIER'S "School of Cookery," Series I and II, are still available at the office of the CATHOLIC COURIER, 50 Chestnut St.

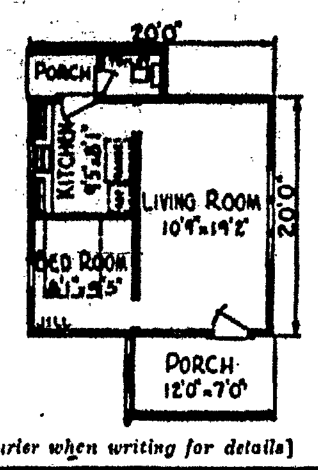
You don't have to have a dark basement, when at comparatively little cost, areaways can be developed and large, modern windows installed.

"AWAY FROM IT ALL"

Picture yourself this summer, and many summers, holed-up in this cozy little snuggery on a quiet lake, while telephones jangle and traffic clatters . . . somewhere else.

It would be fun to build it yourself. After the foundation, which means only a few low-cost piers, such as concrete blocks, set in footings, the framing is hardly more than two days' work for a couple of good carpenters. The rest of the construction is largely simple hammer-and-saw carpentry you can do yourself . . . and like it.

It wouldn't cost much, and there's a world of satisfaction in having your own "country estate". Write the National Lumber Manufacturers Association, 1337 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C., for details, referring to Design Jill.



[Please mention the Catholic Courier when writing for details]

Landscaping Service

CHAPTER XI

Hardy Vines

CLEMATIS

One of our most charming vine families. It is especially recommended for porches, pillars, fences, arbors, trellises and pergolas, and for covering old trees and stumps. It grows to various lengths, from 8 to 30 feet or more. The small-flowered varieties are very hardy and easy to grow. The large-flowered varieties are hardy, but not quite so easy to establish—needing some care at first and winter protection in severe climates, but when established, cause no more trouble. They are so beautiful, they are well worth while.

Dutchman's Pipe (Birthwort). A magnificent hardy vine of rapid growth. Attains a length of 30 feet. It has very large, heart-shaped leaves, and during the summer has purplish blossoms. The leaves retain their dense green color from early spring to late fall. No other vine forms so dense a growth, keeping out the sun completely, and forming a dense screen. It is very hardy, extremely long-lived, and has the advantage of freedom from diseases and pests.

Evergreen Bittersweet Euonymus Radicans. It is an evergreen with large, rounded, glossy leaves which are attractive the year around, and with yellow fruits. Grown as a vine it attains a length of 10 to 15 feet. It is essentially a cover for low walls. For this purpose it is unsurpassed, being close-covering and absolutely hardy. It thrives in dry, sandy and barren places, and as a seashore vine, and is a success in the rock garden. It clings to walls and trees by its aerial roots, and adorns them all the year. It is useful on hillsides or embankments to prevent erosion. It may be set in rows, a foot or two apart, and used as a border or edging for paths and flower beds, for which use it is admirably adapted, as it retains its green leaves the year around.

HONEYSUCKLE

Hall's Japan or Lonicera Japonica. Grows 10 to 15 feet in length. Has very attractive blossoms which open white and turn to yellow, from June till September. It is a strong grower, with deep green foliage which remains green till midwinter when the vine is grown as a climber, and is evergreen till spring when grown as a ground cover. The blossoms are dainty, very fragrant and very sweet, with honey-juices which the humming birds love.

It grows in partial shade; is thoroughly at home whether along the woodland paths of a large estate, or covering porch, arbor or trellis in the more modest home grounds. It succeeds in dry, sandy places, or in half shaded locations, and adds to the winter aspect with its green leaves and colored fruits.

If there is a hillside or a bank which you want to plant, either for beauty alone or to prevent erosion, try this recipe Set out here and there, low growing, flowering shrubs, like Rugosa Roses, the shrubby Dogwoods, the low Spireas, Barberry Thunbergi, etc., then on the ground for ground cover, for beauty, and to hold the soil, plant the Evergreen Bittersweet, Memorial Rose and Hall's Japan Honeysuckle, to run here and there under the shrubs. You will have color all summer and all winter from foliage, blossoms and fruits.

Our landscape consultant is always at your service to answer any questions you may have. There is no charge for this service. Write Catholic Courier Landscape Consultant or Phone Stone 1136.

Low Areas Often Subject To Floods

In many cities certain low areas are subject to periodic floods. While floods are frequently nothing more than a temporary inconvenience, they are sometimes attended by serious property damage and great danger to personal safety.

The prospective home owner should consider this possible drawback when choosing a location. This and other hazards are considered by the Federal Housing Administration in rating properties for mortgage insurance.

Conversion of Older Homes Is Sought

The building industry should take a more active part than ever in the conversion of old houses in order to provide additional living units in the present defense emergency, Jay Keegan, Assistant Administrator of the Federal Housing Administration, told the Home Builders' Institute of America at a meeting in Washington recently.

"It is safe to say that conversion has been a more important source of supply than has been ordinarily realized," Mr. Keegan said. "Under normal conditions it has apparently been a common way to provide low-rental housing.

"In the present emergency, when time is of such importance, this type of operation promises to provide the most accommodations in the quickest possible time at the most reasonable cost.

Thousands Available

"There are thousands of single-family houses located in accessible neighborhoods, built 20, 30 or 40 years ago, which could be converted into two or three-family houses. Many could be converted into rooming houses to take care of the great influx of single workers in some areas."

Title I of the National Housing Act provides for FHA insurance of institutions making loans for these purposes.

"A widespread program of conversion could go far toward supplying low-cost long-range housing needs and at the same time help maintain the stability of the community's investment in its community services," Mr. Keegan stated.

Mr. Keegan citied figures showing that in some cities conversions of old houses exceeded the number added by new construction in recent years, notably in Boston from 1934 to 1937 and in Trenton, N. J., where conversions in one period amounted to more than twice the number of new dwellings. He said also that in such cities as Newark, Akron, South Bend, and Pensacola "a surprisingly large proportion" of additional living units has been made available through conversion jobs during the past 10 years.

During the decade of the thirties conversions throughout the country apparently were at a ratio of about one to every four or five homes added through new construction, he said. Such conversion units generally appeared in lower rental ranges.

A FEATURE

Design Living Room For Convenient Use

AVOID A 'ROOM OF DOORS'

To plan a utilitarian living room which also embodies attractiveness is a difficult problem requiring careful consideration.

The living room, as the meeting place of the family group, should be the largest room in the house, according to the Federal Housing Administration. Its size will vary with the size of the house, the size and needs of the family, and the contemplated use of the room.

If the living room is intended for more than one use, its size should be enlarged to accommodate additional functions and furniture. For example, a living-dining room should provide added space for tables and chairs, so placed that this additional furniture will not reduce the effective space of the room for other living purposes.

Study Openings

Openings should be carefully studied, the FHA recommends, since long and unbroken wall spaces are needed for the larger pieces of furniture normally used.

It is quite important that the living room have a favorable location with respect to sunlight and attractive views, although not to the exclusion of favorable locations for the other rooms. A bay window often adds to the attractiveness and homelike character.

There is a growing belief that the living room of a house may be placed in the rear rather than in the front. By this arrangement, and by closely associating the living room with the yard or garden through a terrace or a porch, the relaxation space is greatly increased for a large part of the year and is removed from the dust and noise of the city street.

Plan Large Room

Wherever the living room is located, FHA officials say, it should be comfortable and cheerful, wtih plenty of sunlight during the day. It should also be large enough to allow the various members of the family to use the room without any one person encroaching too much on the privacy or pursuits of others.

If possible, the living room should be entered through a small hall or vestibule in which outer garments may be removed; this acts as a buffer against direct intrusion into the living space.

Where this is not possible, the entrance to the room preferably should be at the end. The necessity of passing diagonally through the living room to reach other rooms of the house should be avoided.

The living-room fireplace has often been called the "heart of the home." Improper location of a fireplace, however, will destroy completely the sense of intimacy and comfort which is desired. Fireplaces improperly located at the end of a living room or in the middle of a side wall flanked on both sides by doors destroy all privacy, prevent desirable furniture arrangements, and give occupants the uncomfortable sense of not being in a room at all but rather in a thoroughfare.

A Place of Rest

Chairs should be of a type that contribute to relaxation. Lamps and other sources of illumination should be of a type and so located that glare and eyestrain are avoided. Furnishings and decorations should be harmonious and avoid a sense of restlessness and distractions. While the living room can be cheerful and gay, it also can be restful to the eyes and mind.

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Light Is Cheap!

Last night the Jones family entertained. The party began at 8:30 and lasted until midnight. A neighbor saw every room in the house brilliantly illuminated and commented. "I'll bet they have a big light bill this month."

Many people do have an exaggerated idea of the cost of light. One reason, perhaps, is that so many of us refer to the cost of such services as refrigeration, washing, ironing, vacuum cleaning, radio, toaster, percolator, etc., as the "light" bill. Taken alone any one of these services costs very little, and, even in the aggregate, they cost less than any other item in the family budget.

Light is just about the cheapest thing we buy. For instance, the Jones family at their party lit every room and the lamps consumed a total of 1,100 watts. When you burn 1,100 watts for three and one-half hours you consume 3.85 kilowatt hours.

Normal monthly use of electricity by the Jones family is sufficient to give them the 2-cent rate for any additional service, so the 3.85 kilowatt hours of "party light" cost them just seven and seven-tenths cents.

One of the many good things about electric service is that the more you use the less the average cost. Therefore, each new appliance you add to your household equipment cuts the operating cost of every other appliance in your home.

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