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Much Improvement from Little Money

Large Loan Not Necessary to Secure Home Improvement.

Winner of second prize in the Home Improvement contest run by The Winnipeg Tribune, the following essay was submitted by Peter Watt, of Winnipeg. It indicates that a large loan is not always necessary in order to remodel your house.

"Every winter for a number of years I have given a great deal of thought about how to make my house more comfortable and less expensive to live in.

"The back door of my house faces west and there are no buildings for over two blocks to break the wind from that direction. It has been necessary, during the winter months to close this door permanently in order to keep the kitchen warm.

"One thing more that made me think was when I looked down a lane and saw a row of garages on the rear end of the various lots.

"My own was one of these and my work being that of a city salesman I know what it means to go from the house to the garage every morning in the winter months through drifts of snow and in 25 to 30 below weather to get to my car and begin my daily calls.

"There was also the inconvenience in the summer of getting a very decided wetting if one should attempt to take the car out during a heavy shower, or arrive home and leave the car for the house during a rain.

"Now that is all changed thanks to the Government Home Improvement Plan.

"I made arrangements with my bank for a loan of \$200 under the above mentioned plan, called in a contractor, and got to work.

"We planned a porch for the back door to project about four feet past the end of the house to the extreme south side of my lot giving me a door facing east with a walk from the street. Also a door facing west with a walk into the

back yard. The past six months has proven that our back door problem has been solved.

"The next step was the insulating of the roof and walls of the house, which was done with a wood shaving composition and has proved very satisfactory.

"The garage came next and required some thinking. It measured 10 feet by 16 feet and it was a very tight fit for my car. Not an inch of room to spare. We decided to take the end off in two and put in on the sides, making the size 10 feet by 21 feet, giving me plenty of room, even with the car inside.

"A small porch over a door leading from the basement was removed and the garage was moved up and attached to the house, giving me an entrance from the house to the garage without the necessity of going out into cold or stormy weather. Thus was another problem solved.

"When everything was completed and I paid the lumber account I was very agreeably surprised to find that by paying cash there was a discount of approximately \$20. The bank had charged \$6.50 for the loan, so I reasoned that by using the bank's money, made available under the Government Home Improvement Plan, and paying cash I had saved \$13.50 which I could not have done otherwise.

"The arrangements with the bank and the improvements which have been made, have both proven so satisfactory that I am negotiating for another loan, this time to paint the house, porch and garage, which will complete a very satisfactory improvement to my home, thanks to the government and the co-operation of the banks."

Barrie Examiner:—When a Baptist clergyman declared that fair wages were a prime consideration in industrial relations, the Times of High River, Alta., added the hope that congregations will not be slow to take the hint.

Pembroke Bulletin:—The Ferguson Highway must be rough; up in Kirkland Lake, according to the Northern News, some people contemplating a drive first provide themselves with pills to ward off sea-sickness.



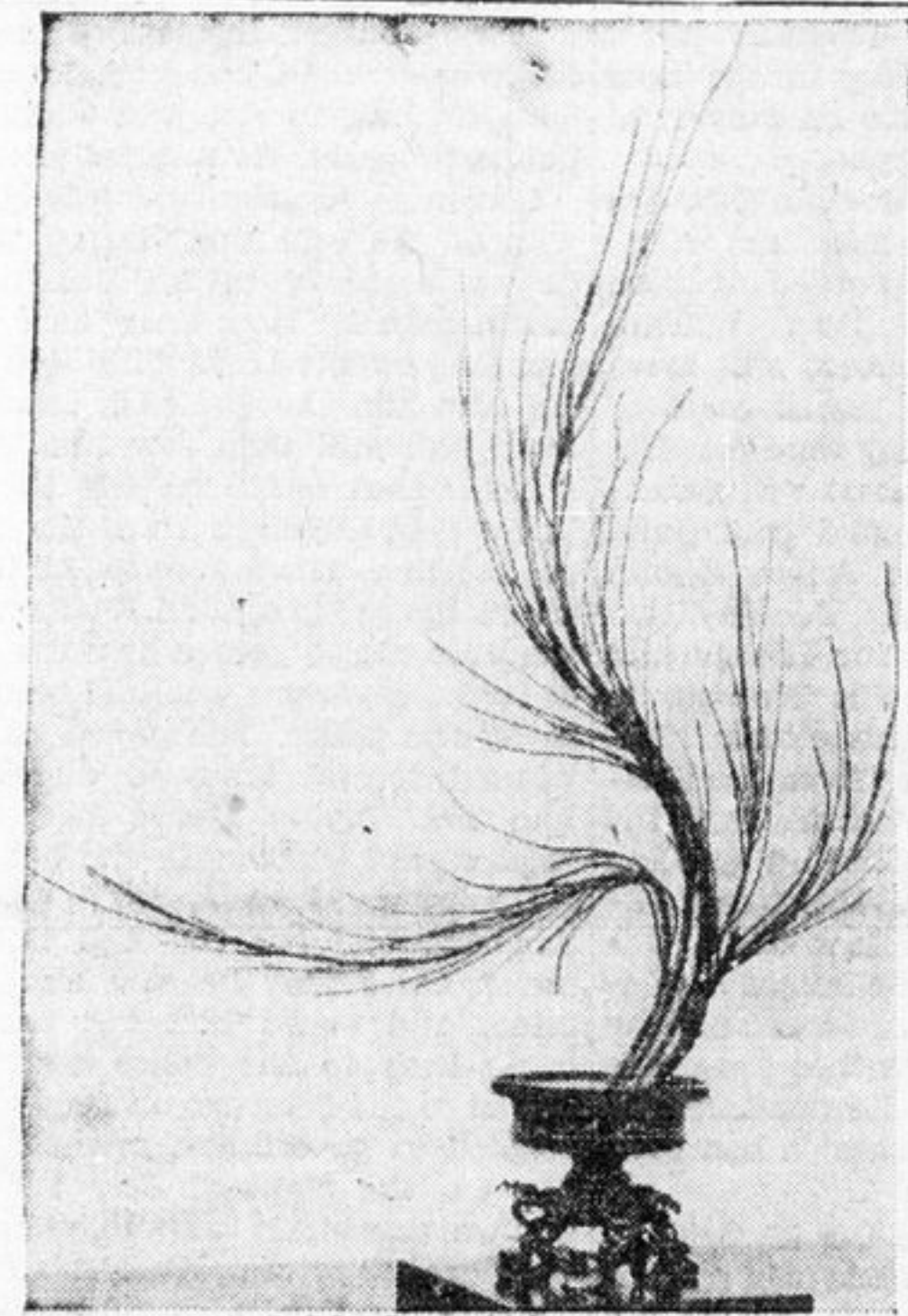
PLEASANT HOMES

by Elizabeth MacRea Boykin

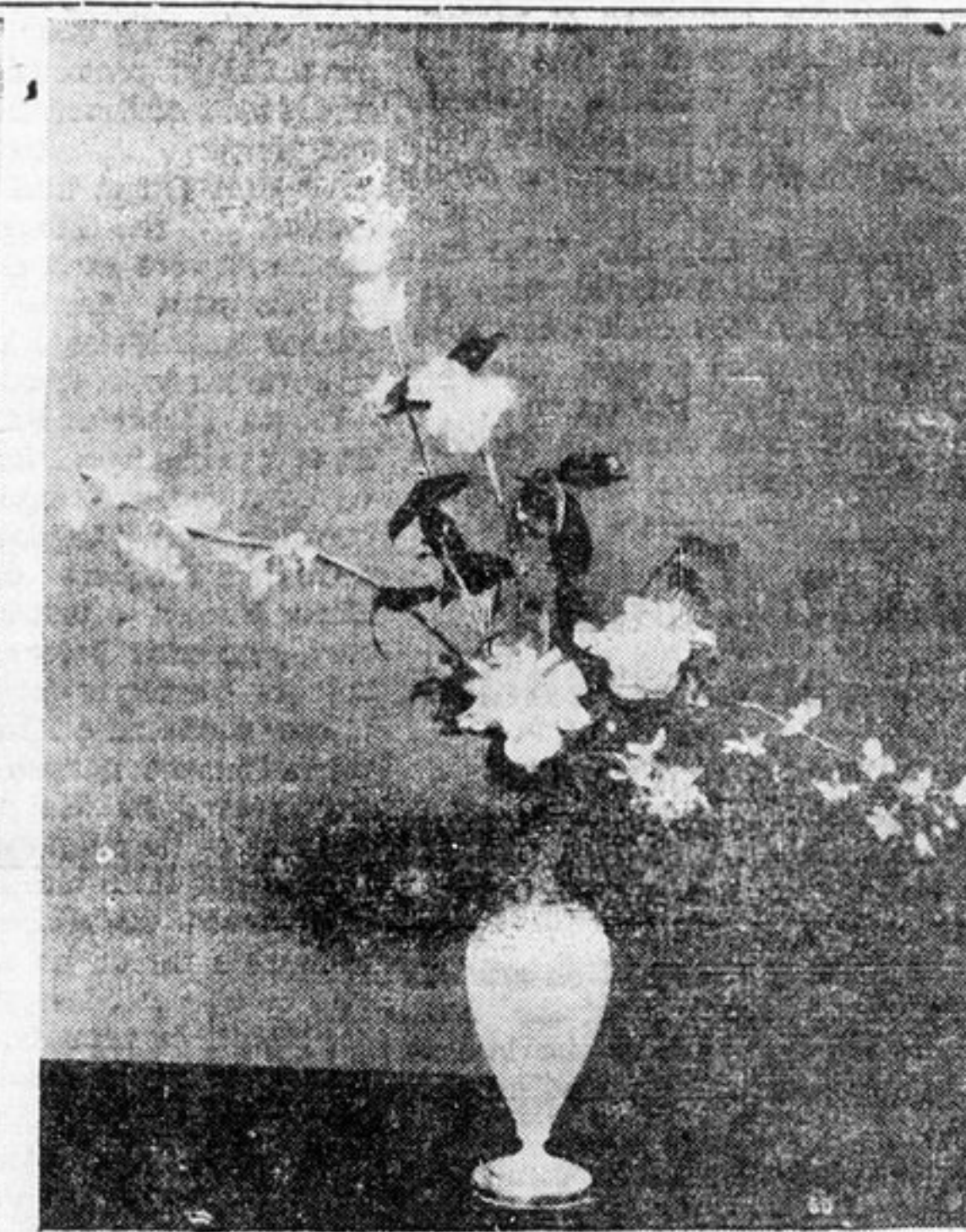
Flower Arranging is an Art that a Lady with a House Should be Skilled at. Plants and Their Place in the Decorative Picture.



A slender frosted glass vase with carefully chosen flowers arranged with an eye for the line form and delicacy of colour. (Courtesy Gardens of the Nations).



Here is a typical and very beautiful Japanese arrangement of branches that shows the consummate skill that the Japanese have developed in shaping stems and branches to make a pattern. (Courtesy Gardens of the Nations).



Here a pattern of plants and flowers is used as a part of the design for this window, and their outlines are silhouetted delightfully against the light that filters through the Venetian blinds. This room was decorated by Edna Kern.

You can't poke a bunch of flowers in a vase of water and let it go at that. Not if you want your flowers to be decorative assets to the design of a room you are planning with such tenderness and care.

For flower arranging is an ancient art, one that real gardeners take as seriously as they do the question of soil and seedlings. In Japan, flower arranging is a lot more important to a girl's education than math or history, and you can spend years studying it. In fact there it takes years to acquire real proficiency, for the subject is so involved with symbolism and skill in shaping stems and branches.

But don't worry, we're not advocating that you go after a Ph.D. in flower arranging, or anything like that. We just mean that every lady should learn to arrange flowers with "charm" as a part of her effort to make her home as beautiful as she can. Because fresh flowers from a garden aren't a matter of a big income. They're the result of loving work. So that all of us can have flowers if we want them, and shame on anybody who doesn't!

Make It a Habit
Whether you grow your own or buy them, and buying flowers isn't nearly so expensive as it sounds and should be a habit if you don't have a garden, plan to have certain coloured flowers to complete certain rooms. They should be as much a part of the colour scheme as the rug. Maybe you'll want to go toward the lavender-to-purple tones in your floral accents if you've used dusty pink, turquoise and beige elsewhere in the room. Or if you have rust, green and gold for your colour scheme, the yellow-pink flowers and the new copper coloured flowers would be charming. For a room in Williamsburg blue and old wine tones, dramatic white and yellow flowers would be stunning. And in a white room with vivid blues and cherry colour, we'd like red tulips, blue delphinium or handsome red gladioli.

Of course a plan for a room that makes a gorgeous big crystal bowl of blue flowers necessary doesn't mean that you can't introduce extra and unexpected bouquets and nosegays about. But you'll want your regular colour scheme flowers fixed and holding their share of the decorative plan of the room, while even the added spur-of-the-moment arrangement should be placed with an eye for the design of the room.

In winter, when out flowers are not so plentiful, substitute plants and potted flowers. If the places you want

them aren't sunny, you'd better have a selection to rotate from their "growing" window to their spot in the decorative scheme. Greenery such as laurel, huckleberry leaves and ivy is usually available, and there are always evergreen branches too. And the florist will surprise you with what he has at moderate cost the year around.

Flower Furniture
It's fun to plan unusual and interesting places for flowers. Those glass top tables with places for flowers in the bases are nice, so are tables with plant holders set right into the top sections. Many window stands for flowers are now available in excellent design, and not infrequently we see ledges along mantels with concealed containers for flowers to stand the entire length of the mantel. Concealed illumination from above adds extra interest to an arrangement like this. Often tiers of shelves in china cupboard or book case are made doubly interesting by the use of greenery and flowers in rather stiff formal arrangements. Glass shelves and wall brackets for flowers are decorative and delightful, too.

The first thing to think of in planning flowers for a room is the place they're to occupy. Don't put a huge vase of tall imposing flowers on a little table in a crowded corner. Nor is it effective to depend on a tiny vase of valley lilies as the centerpiece of an imposing mantel, and you can't put tall flowers on a mantel either. Consider not only the general size of the space available with relation to the flowers that should go there, but think also of the shape and mood of the bouquet and how it will harmonize. A delicate slender arrangement with height naturally can go places that a wider or more luxuriant arrangement of the same height could not, and vice versa. Sometimes you will need a feeling of weight and importance in a flower piece where no height is needed. Decide whether the spot needs a flower arrangement that stresses line or mass.

Balance should be achieved by seeing that the blooms on either side of the central focal point of an arrangement should seem to be of about the same weight (not in pounds!). The weight in flowers depends first on colour—the dark ones give a heavier impression, therefore should usually be low or toward the centre of the arrangement. And the ones that are high and spreading carry more weight than those that are low and clinging, therefore the longest stem should often have its

highest point above the centre of the vase. This does not mean that the arrangement need be absolutely symmetrical (that's usually the easiest way to get balance but not the most interesting). A triangular shape is often the most effective outline.

Pleasing Outlines
Keep in mind the fact that the pleasing outline of the empty spaces in an arrangement stressing line is just as important as the shape of the branches and stems. And this is attained by placement of the main stems rather than by filling in awkward gaps with indiscriminate foliage. (Don't rely on ferns to cover awkward gaps, instead make the gaps as graceful in themselves as the stems.) The selection of the main stems and branches becomes the matter of first consideration. A curving line or an unusual shape can give fascinating design to the entire arrangement. On the other hand there are bouquets that are lovelier for being full and luxuriant looking. These stress mass. In either case the focal point of the arrangement (where stems come together) should be just above water level or top of container. But don't have the main stems cross.

In combining flowers, you'll find that certain varieties aren't good together, while others are lovely. One interesting way for the beginner is to copy arrangements in flower paintings. The old Dutch florals are the most intricate and dramatic of course, and there are exquisite modern flower paintings that have simple charm in their arrangements. And we've often gotten ideas from floral chintzes. Don't try to imitate each leaf and bud but follow the general theme of colour and shape.

Nature Plays Pleasant Tricks
Certain flowers contribute mostly colour to an arrangement, others have grace of form and shape to offer. And some have both. As a rule there aren't any rules for what to use when and where and with what, except not to contrast heavy with dainty flowers or pastels with overwhelming vehement colours. Nature plays pleasant tricks with growing things and many a flower that ordinarily doesn't mix well with others may co-operate unexpectedly in something perfectly lovely, while flowers that ordinarily can't stand alone may blossom forth in such profusion that they're lovely by themselves. However, calla lilies, gladioli, chrysanthemums, magnolias, hydrangeas, camelias, gardenias, sweet peas, geraniums, pansies iris and the large lilies are usually considered better alone. Roses,

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carnations, valley lilies and violets are friendly and versatile and can be used alone or in combination with equal ease. The flowers that nearly always need other flowers with them for best effect are the spike flowers such as delphinium, lupinus, hollyhock, stock and sometimes gladioli, and many of the incidental flowers that grow in an old-fashioned garden.

It Depends
But we repeat, it all depends on the particular flower, the occasion and the room it is to be used in. Remember that there's period design and degrees of formality in flower arrangement just as there is in furniture. Here again we refer you to famous flower pictures. For a French room, of course, you will want dainty elegant flowers conventionally arranged in an alabaster urn, a tole container or a French china vase. An 18th century English room should have the dramatically classic arrangements indicated in Georgian floral linens and chintzes, while a Victorian room should have hearty abundance, colour and large roses. A simple colonial room should have old-fashioned garden flowers. The modern room can use one or a few large splashy or exotic blossoms arranged with spectacular simplicity.

But most of us live in rooms that are neither this, that nor the other period but a beloved and gracious blending of various stages and influences in our lives. So we are lucky in that we can use our imaginations and create flower arrangements that have individuality and express the personality of our own homes, rather than the restrictions of a period. It's especially fun for a lady with a "hand" at arranging to break the rules and experiment with novel ensembles. A flat long tole container or an oblong fish bowl can be used for tall straight flowers—regiment them in a garden formation as if they were growing in a very even row. Or take carnations, cut the stems short and mass them in a low container so that they look like a single enormous blossom. Two or three similar containers like this with different colours can look like a bouquet of single big flowers. We're always harping on the stunning effects to be had by using your pitchers, tea pots and punch bowl for flower arrangements. Chinese tea cups (without handles) are sweet to use for nosegays of tiny flowers, with or without frills from lace paper napkins. Sometimes pretty perfume bottles are graceful to save for little blossoms, while old rum bottles are graceful with unexpected branches.

A Sense of Fitness
Although the container should not be too dominating, it should be wholly in accord with the spirit of the flowers it will hold. A lady should cultivate a sense of fitness rather than lay down a set of rules. Here are a few suggestions, but don't take them too seriously. Glass is lovely for roses and the more fragile flowers. But it's not usually recommended for heavy flowers, vines, branches or dried things. Pottery containers are so versatile that there's something for nearly every type of flower, depending altogether on the

particular pottery container. Just watch to see that your blossoms are in keeping with the shape, finish and colour of the pottery. Wood has a hearty charm with zinnias, branches, dried flowers and pods, geranium, cactus and certain exotic plants. Silver is beautiful to hold rather formal arrangements of roses, gladioli, fine tulips, delphinium or any especially distinguished blooms. Brass and copper you'll like with autumn flowers, ferns, zinnias and many ruddy, sturdy blooms of branches. Pewter is grand with almost any kind of flower except the very stiff and formal or the very dainty and it has a pleasant character to bring to an unpretentious arrangement.

A fair warning—if you get engrossed in this business of flower arranging, you're certain to start collecting containers of all shapes, sizes and conditions. And that's the right way to go about it if you are going to achieve really distinguished effects. Better find a nook or corner to devote to your vases, containers, holders and shears... you'll also need a table or wide shelf to work on, and a tall stool to sit on is a good idea. A closet is an ideal place for this, but the back porch will do nicely in the warm weather at least. Or maybe you can spare a basement spot if you can't make room in the pantry. Whatever you do, be sure you manage to keep all this paraphernalia together. Don't forget to have plenty of those little glass and wire things to go in the bottom of containers and hold stems, and save an assortment of little rocks to hold flowers in low containers—don't depend on trying to find just the right one on the spur of the moment in the yard. For taller vases wedge a forked branch into the neck to hold stems where you want them. Chicken wire can also be used. Or else wedge a piece of soft wood across the neck of the vase.

"This is a big subject we've launched on to-day, much too big for a single article. But we have a new bulletin—"Principles of Flower Arranging" which will be sent on receipt of a stamped, self-addressed envelope. It includes full directions for creating beautiful flower effects in your home. (Copyright, 1937, by Elizabeth MacRea Boykin.)

Bracebridge Gazette:—A motorist picked up a hitch-hiker the other day and the hitch-hiker told him he had bought a bunch of ties at Woolworth's and was going to sell them to the Bracebridge Mugs. Are you a Mug? Do you buy from just such persons things you can buy just as well or better at your own store? To these peddlers you are just Mugs, rubes, easy marks. In fact, they go to you to sell you almost anything from a nail brush to an electric washer believing that you are a softy; by getting you alone in the house they think they are so much more clever than you that they can sell you, not only what you can buy at home on equally good or better terms, but that they can sell you what you have no intention of buying. To the peddler you are just another Mug.

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