

FINDS EXECUTIVE MANSION SHODDY

Visitor Says It Is Short Of Paint And Full Of Things Old But Not Antique

CALLS 3D FLOOR WORST

Believes Average Maryland Woman, If Offered House As It Is, Would Spurn It

By AMELIA MULLER
(Continued from Page 24)

circular stairs of the mansion to the third floor, and perhaps for many years there has been no need for these third-floor rooms.

But the massive front doors with the coat of arms of Maryland and the heavy carvings on them are cracked so that the daylight peeps through the chinks into the hall with its old-gold papered walls, now dingy and dark. Here also in the hallway is a strut under the staircase, not placed there in order to preserve the lines of the circular staircase but just there—an unsightly thing, whose sole purpose is to hold up the staircase, which at some time in the history of the mansion showed a decided sag.

Dining Room Drab

Even the state dining room cries out that it is a "has-been," neither very old, nor yet young—just middle-aged, frayed and colorless. The satin damask of the room, which in places gives evidence of once having been a rich French blue, is faded to a nondescript color. The floor also is said to sag.

In the reception room there is the evidence also of lost grandeur of past decades, especially marked in the damask drapes with their frayed edges. The piano, too, is very much out of tune. Everywhere throughout the house there is a cry for paint, paint, paint. It screams at one from every corner, from window frames, from ceilings, here, there, everywhere.

Admits Sun—And Rain

There is a "sun parlor" outside the state dining room. It is perhaps rightly named, for the only thing that is worth remembering is the sun that really comes in. But what does the sun illuminate?—old paint, a roof that seems to have admitted the rain at some time, an old brick ready to fall out of the wall, and a grass rug with a hole in it at least seven inches in diameter. There is also a roughly built-in cupboard, for what purpose no one can quite tell, unless being an eyesore was once a virtue in the history of the mansion.

If some visitor of distinction tires of the beer-saloon-like bulbs of the sidelights in the state dining room, he might find recreation in the "sun parlor." It's an absorbing study, but not a happy one for a Marylander proud of the tradition of the State.

What Visitors Face

If the visitor should chance to remain overnight in the mansion, the Governor and his home-loving wife will be able to take them down into a dark, depressing dining room for breakfast. En route for that morning meal, the guest would pass through a small hall, part of which has been curtained off midway between ceiling and floor.

Nor is that all. There is not a real clothes cupboard in any of the bedrooms, and nowhere is there a real linen closet that would keep the linens of the Executive Mansion free of dust and ready for use at any time.

What will the Nice family do unless they patronize the commercial laundries? There is one washing machine in the basement of the house, but would the average housekeeper in Maryland trust her family wash to it?

A Sink But No Drain

What a laundry! It boasts an egg stove and two-burner gas stove, but even then it is better equipped than the kitchen where the meals for the executive household and all the guests must be made ready. It seems incredible—but there is not even a drain board to the kitchen sink.

And such a clutter of things everywhere—rooms where you can find auditorium chairs and porch chairs and gilt chairs all jumbled together. As for the servants' quarters in the basement and the living room for the servants—there is an upholstered "easy" chair that, unabashed, gives evidence of its internal construction and vies with another chair in the same room—a wicker one—showing even more that a chair may be both "down and out."

Things Do Pile Up

There seems to be a sort of unwritten law around the old mansion against destruction of anything that has once come into the place. There is an old safe with perforated doors in the kitchen that, before the days of ice-boxes, was used for milk and vegetables. It admitted air but kept out dust. It remains as a record of that period, as does an old, now unused ice-box, which in turn has been superseded by an electric refrigerator.

Persian rugs and wicker chairs intrude in bathrooms that have tubs on feet. And never, perhaps, has one household carried such a collection of brass and iron beds.

State's Hostess: State's House



MRS. NICE

Executive Mansion Found Drab And Full Of Things Old But Not Old Enough

Its "Grandeur" Needing Paint, Place State Houses Its Governors Would Be Turned Down By Average Maryland Woman, Says One Of Them

As a result of Governor Nice's announcement that he will ask \$50,000 to modernize the Executive Mansion at Annapolis, Miss Muller, a member of the Sun staff was sent down to inspect the place. What she found follows, in her own words:

By AMELIA MULLER

Offered the Executive Mansion in Annapolis to live in as it is for a period of four years, at least, the average housewife in Maryland would turn it down and select instead a cozy little apartment with modern conveniences.

For, despite its so-called "grandeur," it is not the place a Maryland woman would exhibit with pride to visitors from other cities, and I fancy no housekeeper would invite inspection of a certain large room on the third floor.

No Store Room, This

This room loudly boasts—or suffers—three beds, three bureaus, an old sofa, a roll-top office desk, two washstands, a revolving upholstered chair that would somersault with anyone who tried to sit in it, two porch rockers and an old red carpet—tacked down on the floor. This is not an exaggeration. It is a fact. Nor is the place a store room.

There is something else in this bedroom that must be catalogued if an inventory is to be made—each washstand is equipped with a wash basin and pitcher, and there is a slop jar beside it. It could not be different, because it would be out of conformity with the remainder of the bedrooms in the Executive Mansion. Nor are these articles—they may have been useful before the days of bathrooms—subjects that antique dealers would gobble up. They belong, like most of the furniture, to the mid-Victorian period, and one should not overlook the utility kitchen cabinet that helps to clutter up this room, nor the gilt chair.

But that is on the third floor, and perhaps not everyone climbs up the

(Continued on Page 20, Column 1)

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