

The Porch—An American Institution

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HERE are two things in our building in this country which are essentially American. The skyscrapers in our cities and our big, livable porches. Each of these have been developed to fill a definite and pressing need.

Probably no one thing adds a greater element to our comfort in summer living than our roomy screened and protected porches. It is the requirement of screens which has given the direction in which this development has taken.

In Southern Europe the houses are built around their gardens and we call them courts. These give a beautiful outdoor living space. Passing along the streets of the cities, no sign of a garden is visible, only square stone or maybe white-washed buildings, abutting on the sidewalk. Occasional glimpses through an arch or carriageway, left open for a few

minutes, is a revelation to the passing tourist as to the possibilities of the entirely enclosed garden.

The American way is to build the outdoor living space outside of the house in the form of a porch, generally enclosing and protecting it.

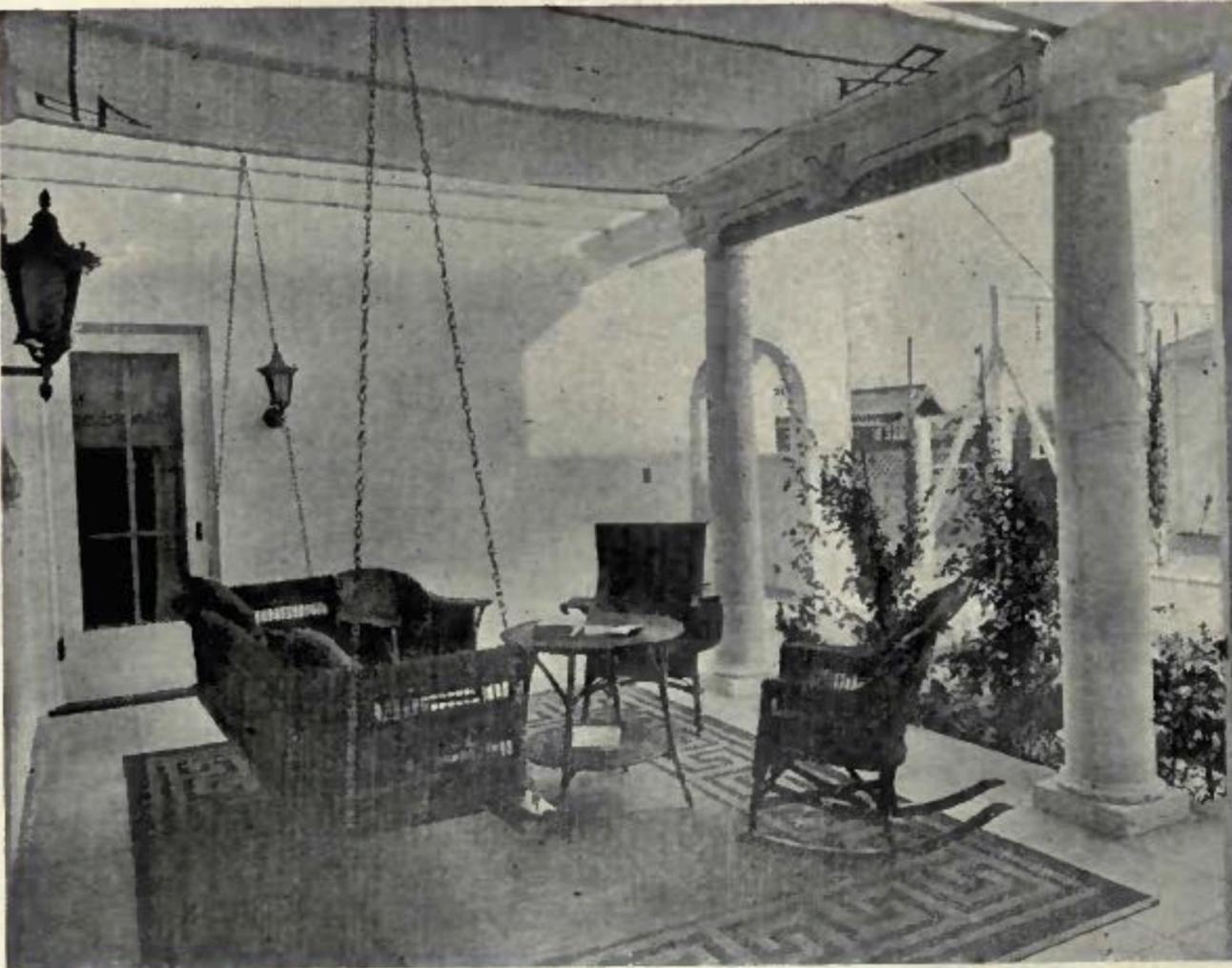
As a matter of fact, climate is the controlling element in the matter of porches. The English house has no porch in the American sense of the term. It may have a protected entrance, a stoop, a terrace, or even a portico; but the difficulty of incorporating a big, luxurious porch into an English type of house has been found by those who have wished to transfer a charming English home to American soil.

It might be interesting to trace the development of the porch from the early stoop or portico, through the all-enveloping porch, to the well designed entrance which may or may not incorporate a beau-

tiful little portico; with the porch idea developed into a sun parlor, removed from the front entrance and placed on the airiest corner of the house, or where it will get the finest view. As people are becoming more sufficient to themselves, and less dependent on the neighborhood and its gossip, the feeling for more seclusion is growing. Full view of the street and the people passing is less necessary, a garden view is more important, and the sun porch is built at one side of

a way that the whole space may be opened as desired, the porch is more completely useful, for it can be quickly closed at the approach of a summer storm. This protection from storm allows the porch to be furnished in a dainty yet practical way; and willow and rattan furnishings, and chintz and prints of various kinds are specially designed to make the sun porch a charming rest spot.

In those parts of the country where screens are not essential, a much wider



A porch which becomes a real sun room when the overhead awning is drawn.

latitude is given to porches and to porch furnishings. A southern California porch is shown in the illustration which is a veritable sun porch as well as outdoor living room. It is pergola covered, with only the rafters overhead, which may, or may not, eventually be covered with vines. The awning overhead has rings attached to the edges, and these metal rings slide on wires beneath the pergola beams.

the house instead of always at the front. Nevertheless, the charming little porch incorporated under the main roof and extending across the front of the house is always a popular one. As much of a screen as desired may be obtained by the planting of shrubs and vines.

Probably the simplest and least expensive type of porch is screened for summer, with storm sash set for winter use, where on mild days the porch is a delight, while in severe weather it gives protection from wind and storm. If the windows are glazed permanently, but in such

These are so arranged, either by cords or otherwise, that the awning can be drawn over the porch when the shade is preferable to the sunshine, or the porch left open to the full sunshine on the cooler days. For this reason vines will not probably be allowed to cover the porch in such a way as to exclude the sunshine.

Wicker chairs and table and the big porch seat make this a comfortable retreat after a strenuous set of tennis in the nearby court.

Some porches seem to "happen," others seem to belong where they are placed.

and are an essential part of the house, not an after-thought. Even a porch which is added later should have this quality of "belonging."

One of the most popular forms of porch is that which comes under the extension of the roof either at the front or the rear of the house. There are various ways by which to bind it into the scheme of the house as a whole, if the thought is kept closely in mind. Verge boards in the gable ends, exposed rafter ends, and brackets to support the wide projections of the eaves are often very decorative in effect, giving strong spots of high light and interestingly broken shadow lines, while at the same time they are constructional features.



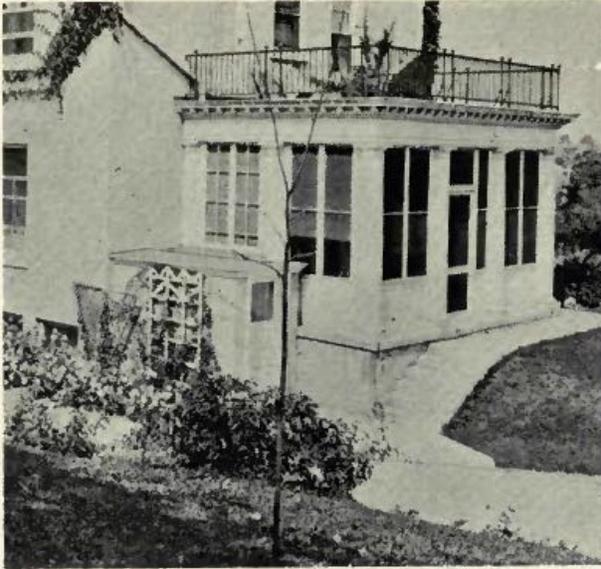
A porch incorporated in the house.

The various forms of Venetian blinds and shades give a certain amount of real protection from the weather in a simple and inexpensive way, when it is not practicable to glaze the porch.

The sun room at the end of the living room, and which may also open into the dining room, is a very favorite placing, especially if it is to be glazed so that it becomes an intrinsic part of the house, both as to the arrangement of room and on the exterior. It is given the same treatment as the body of the house and roofed separately or perhaps treated as a balcony from the second floor. Whether this porch shall have an outside entrance depends on the location of the house and perhaps even more on the size and garden aspect of



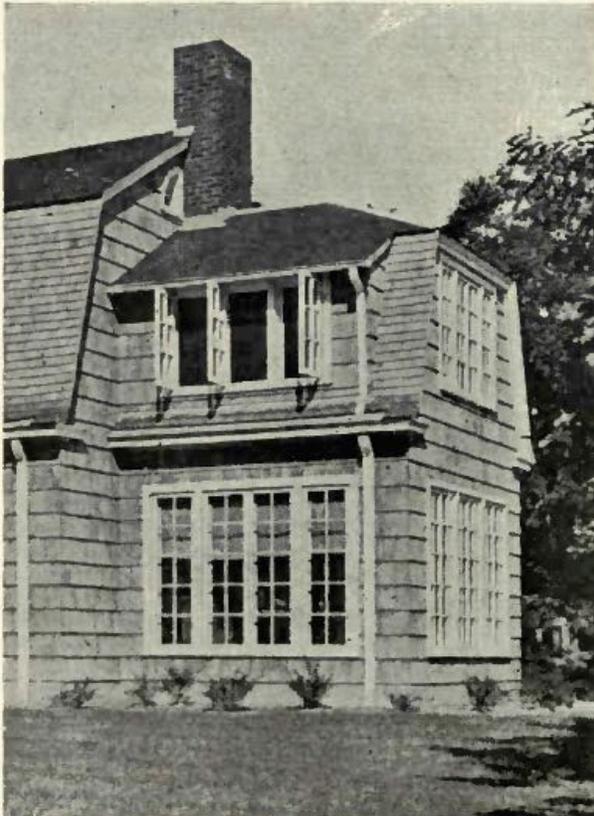
The popular porch across the front of the house.



An open balcony over the porch.

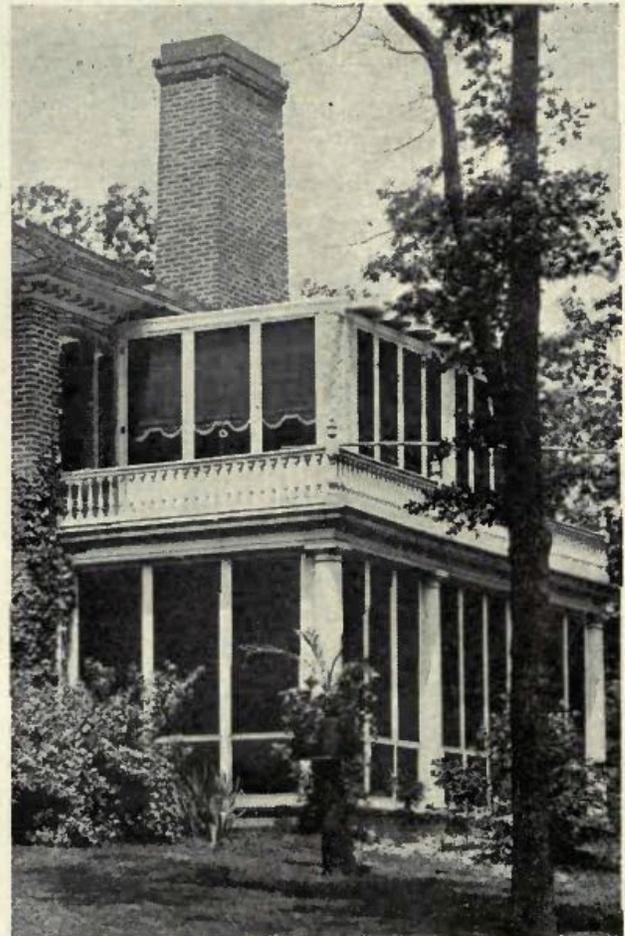
the grounds. On a narrow lot the outside door often is not practicable, but when it can open on a garden the porch itself is doubly charming.

Next comes the matter of the sleeping porch on the second floor and its treatment with relation to the porch on the main floor. Many people are loath to



A two story porch.

give up entirely their open veranda on the second floor for the sake of the sleeping porch. One solution of this problem leaves an open balcony around the sleeping porch, making it some three feet smaller each way than the downstairs porch. A French door from the house opens on this balcony. With this smaller porch on the second floor the roof may



There is a balcony around the sleeping porch.

be more simply treated. Something like a pergola treatment may be adopted, with projecting rafter ends, and a screened ceiling, if it is desired to sleep under the open sky, similar to that shown over the open sun porch in the first illustration. Canva's awnings and curtains may be arranged to give protection in case of rain, although in the case of a heavy storm withdrawal is likely to become necessary, even to the greatest lover of outdoor living.

Sleeping and living out of doors has brought renewed health and vigor to so many people that planning for outdoor conditions in the house is likely to expand in many ways. The stuffy little "sun porch," which has been added to the commercially built houses in response to the demand for outdoor living conditions, has not tended to increase in popularity. These, however, have added a few more windows to the house and can be incor-

porated into the body of the house by the elimination of partitions, in the conditions where they do not prove to be as livable as they were originally intended to be.

The popularity of the sleeping and sun porch have added greatly to the sum of comfort in living conditions, and they will probably develop along widely differing lines as they are made to fit more definitely into individual needs.