

Mansion-Keeping Would Be Problem Without System

As Mrs. Average Housewife Assembles her dust cloth, vacuum cleaner, and other spring housecleaning equipment, she might envy the position of Mrs. Theodore R. McKeldin, wife of Maryland's Governor, whose housecleaning activities consist mainly of supervising a staff of competent workers hired by the State to keep her home in order.

However, since the Governor's Mansion does not have a regular housekeeper, Mrs. McKeldin must assume the executive task of delegating housecleaning duties to the help, whose function is to keep the 43 rooms and 13 bathrooms of the chief executive's home in order. And she must carry out this task in such a way that she still has time to act in her capacity as First Lady of Maryland.

First Impression

Mrs. McKeldin mentioned that her first impression of her new home when she and her husband became custodians of the mansion was of "so much house," and she was somewhat awed at being entrusted with its responsibility. But she has since found, as housewives usually do, that a workable system of operation can be proportioned to fit any possible job.

Because of its vast expanse, the Governor's home must be kept thoroughly presentable at all times. It must always be ready to welcome important state and national officials in the proud and dignified tradition that has been established since its construction in 1868.

party. Continuous traffic makes frequent rug cleaning a must, too.

Cleaning Curtains

Having the curtains cleaned in the McKeldins' home is not an extraordinary affair, since they are simply removed from the windows when they show the need of refreshing. Of course, this must be done when it is quite certain that no company will be present for a few days. One set of window hangings, which are heavy velvet drapes, do demand special attention because they are too massive to remove from their fixtures. Application of the vacuum cleaner is the only solution for cleaning them.

Since the physical makeup of the mansion demands that its appointments should remain of the same dignified character throughout the year, there is no frenzy in the spring to change the window dressings to light, frilly curtains or to lug the heavy carpets up to the attic to make way for cool summer rugs. However, there are certain tasks that are dutifully performed periodically.

Twice-Yearly Job

A twice-year job is renewing the sparkle of the four crystal chandeliers that hang with intricate balance from their respective ceilings on the first floor. This job is assigned to the two butlers. One climbs a ladder, detaches the chandelier from its moorings, and hands it to his partner who is waiting below with the washing equipment and cautious hands.

Another periodic job, which is done three times per year, is washing the outside windows. Professional window washers carry out this assignment.

If the housecleaning were not kept up-to-date, a great flurry of activity would ensue if the Governor should unexpectedly telephone at 11 in the morning to announce that he was bringing a few senators home for lunch.

Housecleaning Squad

The nucleus of the housecleaning squad at the Mansion consists of two butlers, a downstairs maid, and an upstairs maid. Substitutes are called on occasionally when a member of the crew is having a day off.

Each day this staff goes through a regular routine of dusting, sweeping floors, and other minor duties. This is probably much the same, although more thorough, than the average housewife's daily lick and promise. Other duties which are more or less routine are done as the need arises. These include cleaning and polishing brass and silver, and washing the windows on the inside.

Also among the jobs done on an "as needed" basis are waxing floor and cleaning rugs and curtains.

The constant influx of people into the mansion for receptions and other social affairs makes caring for the floors a constant task. In order to keep the polish high and the surface smooth, floor waxing is mandatory after every

A third task which is performed at intervals is one that Mrs. McKeldin herself handles about every three months. This is the quarterly inventory, which involves keeping track of every item of silver, glassware, china, and linen that is a part of the mansion property. The Governor's wife counts each article, checks it against a list from the previous inventory, and replaces it if it is missing.

China Problem

On completion of this task, Mrs. McKeldin is faced with one problem for which she has yet to find a solution. That is, what to do with chipped china. A stack of plates which grows higher after each inventory has joined this category. These pieces are too shabby for state dinners, and too good to throw away. And they must remain on the premises because they are recorded in the inventory. The Governor's wife commented that any suggestions for eliminating this dilemma will be happily received.

One major difference between the chief executive's household and that of Mr. Average is that the man of the house is never disturbed by housecleaning activities. He is never asked to lift his feet in order to make way for

an oncoming broom or to plow
through piles of disarranged
tables and chairs whose seating
places are in a state of renovation.

Perhaps that is one of the greatest
advantages that befall a man
when he attains the position of
Governor.