

## Across the Editor's Desk

THE cover painting this month is by Seymour Snyder, who also did our October cover. Back of the cheerful fireplace, which radiates warmth of a happy Christmas season, is a little story. Do you wish to look back of the scenes? Here are some of the circumstances surrounding the painting of the picture:

First a photograph of a new and well-designed fireplace was selected by Architectural Editor John Normile and Christine Holbrook, *Better Homes & Gardens'* home-furnishings director. Then Associate Editor Alfred C. Hottes and Fae Huttenlocher, editor of *Better Homes & Gardens'* Garden Club Exchange, selected Christmas greens and arranged them at Mrs. Holbrook's home. The photographs embodying the several features were sent to Mr. Snyder for use in the painting. At first the mirror effect over the mantel was missing. The tree looked as if it were standing on the mantel. Art Director Wallace Hainline was able to overcome this difficulty. Then the painting was ready for reproduction. Other ideas worked out during this series of meetings were used in the feature "It's Christmas Greentime," published in this issue.

These circumstances are mentioned to show it often happens an editorial feature which appears comparatively simple may involve much unseen planning, and the members of the staff are always striving to present distinctive ideas.

A LETTER written by a large financial institution to its clients throws out a hint which may interest you.

There are persistent rumors of governmental inflation of money. This letter points out that one of the best ways to "hedge" against inflation is to buy real estate. Real estate is a very basic form of property, and if commodity prices go up, it will go up proportionately, and if you have real estate, your dollar will be worth as much proportionately under inflation as it is now, if not more. In other words, if inflation comes, hoarding money is the worst possible thing to do, and money invested in commodities is obviously not as secure as that invested in real estate.

This is one more good reason why you should buy ground for a home these days.

YOU all know that the country is confronted with the necessity of raising huge sums of money by taxation. Money to pay our government's bills doesn't come out of thin air. It has to come out of our pockets.

As home-owners, then, you are interested in guarding your own interests by seeing to it that when these new tax burdens are imposed they are not allowed

to constitute a penalty on home ownership. In other words, if your next year's tax bill is to be increased one or two hundred dollars, you will not want to feel that the only way to escape an unbearable burden is to dispose of your home.

There is a movement on foot in several states to secure laws providing for a tax exemption on homes up to \$5,000. Such laws would be entirely fair, for a home is not a materially productive enterprise, but a means of building better citizenship as well as happier home life. The only way to get action along this line is for YOU to get busy. Write us what you are doing, and tell us what you think we can do.

THE second More Beautiful America Contest entries are being judged as this is written. Despite the very unfavorable weather in most parts of the country the past year, the entries this year are better, more comprehensive, and represent a larger aggregate amount of work than those of two years ago. The winners will be announced in due time. In the meantime we wish to congratulate the entrants for the fine showing.

C. N. AINSLIE, Sioux City, Iowa, calls us down for saying, in the October ant story, that a "decapitated" ant carried a burden to its nest. Checking with the author, Hiram Herbert, we find that he wrote "truncated," which technically means something different, but which in the ordinary sense might mean about the same as decapitated. Someone along the line changed the word because it seemed to fit the thought somewhat better. If you check back you will see why. It's always the unseen board that flies up and hits you when you are walking along cheerfully and looking the other lieve almost anything.

THE nation and the world are facing complex economic problems, tho the worst of the crisis was past two years ago, according to business charts. It requires all the sober maturity of the adult mind to cope with them, and every good citizen should give due thought. But there comes a season when it is best that all of us throw aside, for a time, these cares, as far as possible, and come as little children. That is the season of Christmas—the season of simple joys. The three wise men came to worship childhood and purity, nearly two thousand years ago, and even now all wise men and women enter into the spirit of their great adventure.

Editor

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# "I'm a Widow...with 5 Children

... and I can't afford to take chances with cheap, doubtful baking powder.



(An interview with MRS. MERLE BROWN, of Kansas City, Missouri)

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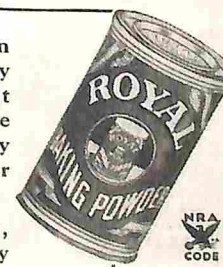
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