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WHEN WRITING TO ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE GUIDE

The House Beautiful

HOUSE CLEANING SUGGESTIONS

Someone, asked to define a cultured person promptly replied, "A cultured person is one who says the house beautiful when he means the beautiful house." Rather, I would say, the cultured person is one who makes his house beautiful, and the object of this department is to help all of us to attain more beautiful homes.

Let me say again that, while this happens to be a hobby of mine, I am only a student like yourselves, and the more I study the subject the less I feel that I know about it. However, there are certain fundamental principles on which all authorities agree, and these I will endeavor to set forth.

First of all, many homes that are now ugly could be made quite attractive without a cent of money being spent upon them, merely by making a bon fire of the hideous staring calendars and senseless gew-gaws that clutter up the place. Let me suggest that at the impending house-cleaning season you take every solitary thing out of your sitting room, and, when you have cleaned it, put everything back slowly and carefully, consigning to the attic or the bon-fire everything that does not add to the beauty of the room, even to the enlarged photographs of your relatives, if you find that they do not seem to fit, and you have the courage to put them away out of sight.

If, when the room is cleared of all its fittings, it is still not beautiful, one of three things is the matter. Your paper is ugly, or the woodwork does not harmonize, or you have the wrong color for the light in your room. If, when anyone enters the room, the first thing they observe is the pattern of the paper, it is bad. Anything that rises up and hits one in the eye, as it were, is offensive, and should not be tolerated a moment longer than necessary.

In our next article on house furnishing we will take this room strip of all its furniture, and see how we can build up from it something that is a gladness to the sight.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

CORRESPONDENCE

Wanted—A Practical Wall Covering

Dear Miss Beynon:—As spring, with the house-cleaning and re-decorating problem, will soon be here, I have decided to take advantage of your kind offer to help us puzzled housekeepers by advising us in the selection of shades and materials to be used in making our homes more attractive and sanitary. The plain, white plaster on the walls of our house has become soiled by smoke and children's fingers, and I fear that wall-paper would soon meet a like fate. What do you think of Sanitas as a wall covering? Would it be suitable for any room except kitchen or bath-room?

I have seen an advertisement for "Silkstone," which stated that it would wash. Would it be suitable for the walls of dining room, living-room and bedrooms? What are the flat wall colors you have mentioned in the Home-makers page? Can they be applied to smooth, white plaster? I would like to get something that I could use myself, as it may be impossible to get an experienced person to do the work. Our house faces west, and is well lighted. The rugs in the living-room and dining-room are in green tones. What would be the best color for the walls? If it is not too much trouble, will you kindly answer me thru the columns on House Decoration in The Guide. Thanking you in advance, and wishing you every success in your good work of helping women on the prairies.

"HEATHER."

Answer

I don't think I would recommend Sanitas for the covering of living-room walls, as the patterns are rather suggestive, as you say, of kitchen or bath-room, and it is fairly expensive.

Silkstone or any other dull finished paint would be excellent. I am mailing you samples of these, which show you the actual materials and colors. They are ideal for applying to a smooth,

plastered wall, such as you have, and each firm sends full directions for applying. They all claim that it is easily done with a large, flat brush.

You forgot to mention the finish of your woodwork and furniture in asking for suggestions as to wall colors, but I assume that it is brown and would recommend a rich buff shade, such as I have marked, for the wall, and a cream for the ceiling.

If you are changing the curtains in the room, under curtains of cream scrim, with over ones of green and tan cretonne or madras would be pretty.

F. M. B.

What Tints for Wall Board?

Dear Miss Beynon:—Will you kindly give me your opinion on wall decoration. We intend to build a house pretty soon, perhaps this next year, and we have been sending for plans. Some of them call for this new plaster board. I have never seen a house finished with it yet, but would like to know how it would look. Could you suggest a color scheme for plaster board, in a living-room twelve by fifteen feet? It will have one window in west and one in south. Also, I would like your help in deciding whether to have a hardwood floor stained, or plain floor with a carpet square on it. I saw your answer to Shamrock of 11th February, to stain and varnish floor, and then rub it with wax. Is it just common stain you buy, and how do you keep it clean? Can you wash it, and does it stand wear better than paint? I know floor paint won't stay on, nor floor enamel, either, for I have used both on different rooms. I would like my house to be beautiful and convenient. It seems so hard to get a plan suitable. I have about two hundred plans here, none of them just what I want. The most of them are too small or else too large. I think we will have to sketch one out ourselves off the ideas we have here. Could you help me with the doors; I would like to stain them. Do you have to do anything to them first, or just put oak stain on them right away, or whatever else you want?

I think it a splendid idea to have a column or two on House Decoration. What woman is it that doesn't love beautiful surroundings? This is to be a farm house, and is to be twenty-eight feet by thirty feet, or something like that, with kitchen, pantry, dining-room, living-room and hall, downstairs; four bedrooms and bathroom upstairs.

EMBLEM.

Answer

I am sending you samples of wall board, which I think is the same thing as the plaster board you mention. Either the pale green or tan tints would make your southwest room very beautiful.

From the standpoint of durability and cleanliness there is nothing quite as good as a well-laid hardwood floor, but there is a great difference of opinion among housewives as to whether polished floors or carpets make the most work.

If the floor is left natural color and polished it does not show the dust much, but it gives the room a very bare and unfurnished look, while, if it is stained and polished, it needs to be kept free of dust to be beautiful. So it resolves itself into a question of how much labor you are willing to expend upon your room in order to have it absolutely clean and sanitary. Polished floors should never be scrubbed. If mud is tracked onto them it should be wiped off with a cloth wrung out of hot water.

As to how to finish the floor, that depends upon the wood, and as you are not going to build immediately I hope you will let me hold that question over for a longer article on this subject.

The firm that has sent me the wood samples, I have mentioned in this page several times, say on the back of their samples that the effect was produced by applying one coat of the stain and wiping off with cheesecloth. Let me know what wood you contemplate using for finishing, and send eight cents to pay postage and I will send you out a box of these wood samples.

F. M. B.