

FURNITURE AND DECORATION.

A drawing-room, in the usual acceptance of the term, is substantially a lady's room. It is there she presides and reigns supreme as mistress of the mansion and queen of her company. As a rule, she fills it with articles of bijouterie and knick-knacks—articles which ladies of taste are sure to admire. Rare cabinets, beautiful and exquisite receptacles for everything and for nothing; shells, mounted in gold and ormolu, etc.; easy chairs, couches, ottomans, and every appliance for elegant comfort and cosy chat. The style of its decorations should be in accordance with its general aspect when in use—light, cheerful and rich.

The ceiling, if it is a moderately sized room and not enriched with ornament in relief, may be tinted cream color. A stile may be added next to the cornice, five, six or eight inches wide, according to the size of the room, which may be tinted of a warm grey; an ornament may be stencilled at each corner, and a smaller one in the centre of each side, between corner and corner, and connected by lines either broken and stencilled, or run continuous with a fitch or flat hog-hair brush.

It is necessary to use caution in the choice and size of the ornaments used. Many gross mistakes are made in this respect. We often see ornaments on ceilings which are only fitted to adorn furniture, and which are utterly lost on a ceiling, and in other cases we may see ornaments put upon a ceiling ten or twelve feet high large enough for one twenty-five feet high, and of proportionate dimensions.

In the designing and connection of the corners and centre ornaments, care should be taken to cause the lines to flow out of the corners and form a part of them. A broad line and a fine line look better than a single line, or than two of the same width, either fine or broad. They may be either broken lines with stripes or dots, or interlace one with the other. Their color, or the tints named above, may be, for the broad line, a dull warm gold or golden brown; the fine line may be either a tint made from vermilion and white, or a reddish mauve. The broad line should not be more than three-quarters of an inch broad on a ceiling of ordinary height, and the fine line about one-eighth. The ornaments may be done in two or three tints, as may be desirable. The larger portion, when the ornament will admit, such as a conventional leaf, may be stencilled from the top to the base with two, three, or four colors blending one into the other, or, in stencilling, the half of the leaf lengthways may be covered with a straight-edged slip of paper while one-half is colored, then the stencilled half may be covered in the same manner, and the other half colored, and so two shades of color, forming light and shade, may be got on the same leaf or ornament. Many good effects may be thus got by very simple means. The cornice, whether plain moldings or enriched, should be colored with tints of cream color and white on the projecting members, and tints of warm grey of different degrees of tone in the coves, quirks, and backgrounds, with suitable tints of red or pink on the under sides or fillets against the darkest grey tints. This causes the grey to look warm, and if the whole is properly balanced, the one color will blend with the other, and the effect will be a sort of bloom of color, equalized and toned to perfect harmony. The enrichments may be etched and gilt. A beautiful effect may be got by the judicious use of three colors of gold in conjunction with color, namely, regular deep gold, middle shade, and lemon gold.

The walls may be done in several ways: when the room is large enough, a good style is to divide each wall into proportional panels, with stiles and pilasters, and gold moldings. The centre panel on each wall may be filled with a mirror of the same dimension, and finished in the same manner as the other panels. The ornaments of a dining-room should have some reference to the purpose for which it is used—fruit, game, implements of the chase, more especially of those animals which are used for food, etc. In the drawing-room, we may have the seasons represented by the aid of flowers, birds, butterflies, etc. The wild flowers of the months are a very suitable decoration, unpretentious, and well adapted for arrangement. Large masses of flowers are objectionable. Colored ornament, enclosing medallions, either of the seasons or classic heads, is also a good style. A less pretentious style of treatment is to put each wall or side of the room into one panel, with gold moldings, as before, but in this case each panel should have a centre ornament of a proportionate size, placed exactly in the middle of the top lines of moldings, in order to give elevation, and break the long straight line, which is always objectionable. The form of these and of the corner ornaments must be determined by the style of the room. The centre of panel may, in this case, be either tinted or filled in with a suitable diaper pattern paper. If paper is used we pre-

fer that there should not be any of the so-called gold in the pattern, but when the gold patterns are used for this purpose they should be chosen of as quiet and undemonstrative a pattern as possible. A simple and inexpensive manner of treating a drawing-room is to color the walls of some light pleasing tint in distemper, then decorate with a floral border round the top part of the wall about 6in. wide, enclosed in simple gold beads, and forming a frieze; a narrow ornamental border in one color may also be put round the bottom of the wall about 6in. from the skirting. Many suitable arrangements of borders are manufactured by the paper stainer, and if good taste is exercised in the choice of color, an excellent effect may be obtained at a slight cost.

White and gold is a favorite style for drawing-rooms, and is considered to be in the purest taste. Large rooms of unrelieved white with heavy deep gold moldings do not appear to us to be in good taste. Where pure taste is exercised, gold leaf will be used sparingly, for there is no stronger evidence of a vulgar taste than a too profuse use of gilding in decoration. Any one may produce a gorgeous effect by a prodigal use of gold and color, but the true test of the decorator's art is to produce a rich and harmonious effect without the aid of gold leaf. Instead of white and gold the doors and all other wood-work in the drawing-room may be painted in tints; or the panels, moldings, and quirks tinted, and the stiles white; by adopting this course we retain its purity, but add warmth and harmony. The panels may be painted either with floral arabesques, or simple lines and ornaments, in quiet, pure tones of color. It does not follow that because the work is well executed it is necessarily in good taste; this is not so. Mere manipulative skill, although indispensable in the execution of all good work, is the result of practice. Taste and judgment are much higher qualities, and very rare, and may be possessed in a high degree without the possessor having any manipulative skill whatever, but when all these qualities are combined in the same person, successful works must result.

The imitation of woods we think to be out of place in a drawing-room, except elaborately inlaid work; but in a large drawing-room, in which pilasters or columns form a part of its constructive features, imitations of light-colored marbles may be used with propriety, if well done—not otherwise. The morning room or breakfast room should be treated in a cheerful style, warm and comfortable. The wood-work may be grained any light, clean-looking wood, or a well executed imitation of inlaid woods, all good and serviceable of its kind; above all things it is necessary to avoid a depressing dullness in such a room. When we enter it in the morning, all should look bright and cheerful, and in accordance with the good things spread out for our use. Such a room judiciously colored gives zest and relish to our food, and soothes our tempers. With regard to the decoration of the hall and staircase, much depends upon its size, style of architecture and general character. The Greek, Italian, and Roman styles admit of marbles being used as a lining for staircases. On the walls of a grand hall and staircase, we know of no style of decoration so much in accordance with its grandeur as marble, veneered with the real marble if possible, but if that is unattainable, a good imitation may be used with taste and propriety. In painting imitations of marbles on staircase walls, it is always advisable to make choice of a medium tint of the marble to be imitated, that is to say, there are certain blocks and slabs of (we will say) Sienna marble which are less strongly marked than others, both in vein and color. These are better adapted for painting than the darker parts, inasmuch as they allow of a more uniform tone of color being kept throughout. Nothing looks worse than to see one block or slab strong and dark, and the next light and faintly marked. Yellow or yellowish drab is the prevailing color certainly, but this is mixed and blended with such a variety of tints of pinks, greys, browns, blacks, blues, and purples, that the yellow is sobered down, and made into a perfectly harmonious whole.

The marbles suitable for walls are so well known that we need not describe them here. Vestibules or entrance halls are often done in imitation of inlaid marbles, which, when well executed, is an admirable style of decoration for this purpose. Much care and judgment is required in the selection of the marbles, and the choice of a suitable design. Designs for the inlaying of marbles should be very different to those which are used for inlaying of woods. This is necessary from the difference of material, and should always be kept in view in getting out designs for either. It will be evident to the plainest comprehension that almost any pattern, however intricate, may be cut out of thin veneers of wood with the greatest ease, when the same patterns, cut out of marbles, would entail an immensity of labor and an enormous