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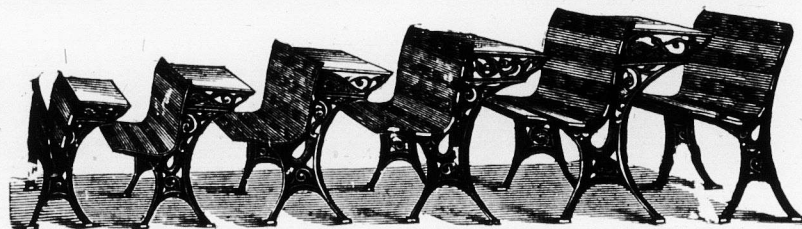
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Home Decorations.

CURTAINS

A clever woman who has studied the art of house decoration says: "The beauty of a room depends chiefly upon its openings; to conceal these is to hide the key to the whole decorative scheme." This applies with equal force to windows and doors, and the tendency of modern decoration is a reaction from concealing these openings with voluminous, stuffy draperies toward beautifying them with appropriate treatment.

It is interesting to note that what is to-day an unsanitary nuisance, the door drapery, was when first used an absolute necessity. Their use originated with the use of sliding doors in houses and was designed to protect the room and its occupants from draughts. In most houses of to-day this is still a perfectly legitimate purpose for them to serve, since house-building is not brought to that state of perfection which absolutely excludes draughts. However, let us bear in mind that portieres, then, have a distinct purpose, and it is not for mere ornament. Door hangings should be weighty enough to exclude draughts and also to hang in proper folds. Because of the size of the openings they guard, they should be as unobtrusive as possible so as not to break into the architectural scheme of the room.

Good materials for door hangings are silk, cotton tapestry weaves, and denims in plain colors with stenciled designs along the border. Denim makes excellent curtains, since it is washable. Wool should not be used since that fabric holds odors for a long time and also catches dust and dirt and is difficult to launder satisfactorily.

With the increased attention given at the present time to the principles of architecture, the treatment of doors and windows from an architectural standpoint is given much thought.

Doors in modern houses are the subject of plain, elegant treatment in perfect harmony with the rest of the room so that it is not necessary to hide ugly features with voluminous drapes. A modern, well made, well hung door is its own excuse for being and nothing more ornamental or more in good taste could be supplied when it is necessary to close an opening part of the time. It is cleanly, and entirely efficacious in excluding draughts, and when open, harmonizes with the entire room and gives pleasant unobstructed view into adjoining rooms.

So far as the architectural treatment is concerned, the foregoing is as true of windows as of doors. A well designed

and well made window needs no drapery to conceal its presence as a feature of interior treatment. But the window curtain has a separate purpose which must be fulfilled. The curtain should be hung to regulate the amount of light admitted into the room. It should be dignified by this very useful purpose, and not degenerate into a meaningless accessory.

We must say a word in regard to the window shade, that contrivance most obviously used to regulate the light in a room. This serves the purpose best when hung to roll from the bottom; an arrangement easily accomplished. The window shade should be of some quiet color, buff or olive green, alike all over the house to harmonize with the exterior treatment of the building and at the same time not break into the scheme of each individual room. At present one can get shades of one color outside and of different colors inside to match each room. The rollers should be fitted inside the casement so as to be conveniently out of the way when hanging the other curtains.

Inside curtains are necessary over the shades to give the air of cosiness and privacy from the street, but great care should be taken not to hang such curtains as will shut out the fresh air or make the room dark and dingy. Many materials may be utilized, such as silk, which is very beautiful and rich, especially the brocades, or velvet, which is also handsome, but exceedingly unsanitary, since it holds odors like wool and catches dust easily and is hard to clean. The most satisfactory materials are scrim and muslin. One who is clever at needle work can decorate scrim with simple edging and monogram, or make dainty ruffled muslin curtains which are both appropriate and sanitary, since a visit to the tub only improves their looks. Figured dimities or lawns in dainty designs to harmonize with the walls are appropriate for sleeping rooms if one so desires.

We should avoid elaborate lace curtains. They are not only inartistic, but vulgar as well, since they seem to thrust the luxury of one's private home upon the notice of the passers by on the street. We should also avoid double hangings at the windows, though in light materials and well chosen colors they often add to the richness and privacy of the room, particularly the living room and the library. Sash curtains may be hung at the kitchen and bath room windows if desired, but at all other windows the curtains should be simply hung from the top to the bottom of the sash with no lambrequin or flounce at the top.

The World a Stage.

Laugh and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone!
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air—
The echoes bound, to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go;
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all.
There are none to de-line your neighbor's wine,
But alone you drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the lands of pleasure,
For a large and lordly train;
But one by one we must all file
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

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