

The Laws of Decoration

BEFORE proceeding to describe in detail a scheme of decoration for Farm and Dairy house plan No. 3, a word, once again, as to the underlying principles of house decoration. There are two sets of these, one dealing with form and the other with color.

The time to settle the matter of form satisfactorily is while the house is still on paper and before the builder has committed himself to any particular style of house. Then he should take an inventory of his belongings and see if they fit into the type of house he has in mind. That house should be chosen which provides comfortable looking places for his most important pieces of furniture. If, however, he starts out in the enterprise of house building unburdened with furniture he should select the house that pleases him and then buy the furniture to fit it.

In the matter of color there is one invariable rule based on nature, that the floor is the darkest portion, the wall lighter, and the ceiling lightest. The Rayne Adams, a successful American architect, has explained the reason for this rule very cleverly by means of illustrations in a little booklet on decoration prepared for The DeLinger magazine. One illustration is a very pleasant scene showing land, water, distant hills and sky. The foreground of the picture is dark, the hills grey and the sky white, and the whole effect is pleasant and cheerful in the extreme. In the second illustration the sky is made darker than the foreground of the distant hills, and the scene immediately becomes suggestive of sadness and gloom. Applying this rule of color to a room then, in order to have it cheerful the color should grade from the floor up. The colors in white rooms are to be decorated should be settled before the building is contracted for, in order to secure the best results, as the woodwork must be finished to correspond. The choice of the color will be influenced by the direction and number of the windows and the character of the furniture the owner possesses or intends to use in each room. It is usually safe laying down hard and fast rules and saying things should be done thus and so, for what seems good to us to-day may offend our more developed taste a year hence. Yet there are certain things which the fitness of things seems to prohibit. One of these is the use of heavy mission furniture with light painted or enamelled woodwork or the use of golden oak in a room with white enamel finish.

Generally speaking, mission or golden oak furniture is at its best in a room in which the woodwork is a medium or very dark brown and finished with a dull flat varnish, which dries without a gloss. The owner of mahogany furniture, on the other hand, must stain his woodwork silver grey or enamel it cream white to bring out the full beauty of the wood. Again, one would not think of using light cream, green, buff or pink walls with mission furniture. It seems to require something more tangible to keep it company. Tan, golden brown or olive green are better. Willow furniture, on the other hand, can be used with almost equally good results in light or dark rooms by varying its color to harmonize with its environment. But it would be impossible to lay down rules to meet all emergencies, and the owner of the home will have to use her own sense of suitability upon many occasions.

Let us suppose that the builder of house No. 3 is possessed of a parlor suite of mahogany furniture covered with plush or horsehair, as indeed

many house builders are. She is recommended to finish the woodwork in the parlor and the bedroom opening off it in ivory or white enamel, and have the walls tinted a soft creamy buff. The exact color can only be produced by mixing two or more shades of certain wall tints, but the result is something between gold and fawn and is very delightful to live with. The writer is speaking from experience. A plain brown carpet should be used in this room or one with a graceful rose and green border.

The windows should have inside curtains of rich cream scrim and over-curtains of cretonne which has much green and old rose on a buff ground.

The chairs and settee should be covered over with the same cretonne that is used for the curtains or one that harmonizes with it in color. The room at this stage will have begun to take on a habitable expression, but there is still quite a little to be done before it is a finished product ready for the light. The settee should be placed over against the wall between the window and corner and nearly facing the door from the hall and the table drawn up beside it, with a plain green or brass reading lamp and a few books. Before the double windows there should be a tall stand holding a fine fern or a handsome geranium or petunia. If there is a piano or organ it should be placed across the corner next the bedroom. But the room will still be bare and unfinished. It needs a plain rose and green linen cushion or two and some pictures. These pictures should not be photographs, enlarged or otherwise, or calendars, but copies of great works of art. Colored prints can be purchased at the rate of eight for a dollar and sepia ones at five cents each.

The bedroom opening off the living-room should have a brown or green carpet, a white enamel bed and chair and a mahogany dresser. The hall and the dining-room should have very dark brown woodwork and a deep tan wall, with a fumed oak dining suite in the latter room, and perhaps a substantial fumed oak rocker and easy chair before the fireplace. A well filled bookcase along the staircase wall will help greatly in the furnishing of the room.

All of the bedrooms upstairs should have white enamel woodwork, and the walls tinted in some pale color.

A New Aspect

TWO old men were discussing the war. "It'll be an awful long job, Bill," said one. "Right 'yare, mate," replied the other.

"You see, these Germans is takin' thousands and thousands of Russian prisoners, and the Russians is takin' thousands and thousands of German prisoners. If it keeps on, the Russians will be in Germany and all the Germans in Russia, and you'll see they will start fresh over again, fightin' to get back to their own homes."

Quite a Difference

THE teacher asked the class where in lay the difference in meaning between the words "sufficient" and "enough."

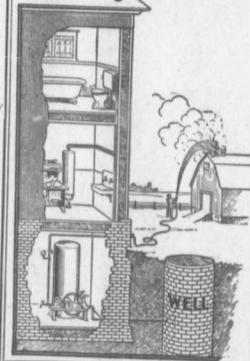
"Sufficient!" answered Tommy, "is when mother thins 't's time for me to stop eatin' pudding; 'enough' is when I think it is."

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