



[THIS DEPARTMENT IS DESIGNED TO FURNISH INFORMATION SUITED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BUILDING TRADES. READERS ARE INVITED TO ASSIST IN MAKING IT AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE BY CONTRIBUTING OF THEIR EXPERIENCE, AND BY ASKING FOR PARTICULAR INFORMATION WHICH THEY MAY AT ANY TIME REQUIRE.]

Plastering and  
Decorating.

PLASTERERS often make a mistake when repairing badly cracked ceilings or walls by using plain lime putty, or mortar containing but a small percentage of plaster of Paris. Instead of using so much lime, in either stopping up cracks or patching, it would be much better if he would use plaster of Paris, with a little whiting added and mixed with glue water. This would allow him ample time to make a good job of work, and there would be no danger of the new work breaking away from the old. If there is color to be laid on the patched plastering, it may be taken for granted that there will be several shades of the same color if the ceilings or walls are old and dirty, or if they have been kalsomined or whitewashed, they must first be made clean by scraping and sandpapering. After this is done thoroughly, the whole should receive a light coat of white shellac; the walls should then stand a day or two, after which the colors or decorations may be applied. It must be remembered that the shellac must be applied to the new patching and stopping, as well as to the old work, otherwise the coloring will change and look faded and flat where the new mortar has been applied, and each crack will show a faded line. The cost of plaster of Paris, whiting and glue, is not more than double that of "fine stuff," and it is worked easier, and the results are much more satisfactory, so that in the end it pays better to use the superior materials.

While on the subject of plastered walls and ceilings, it may not be amiss to offer some suggestions to our rural readers as to the colors that may be employed in the decoration of same. Of course these suggestions are intended only for plain country or suburban residences, such as are occupied by well-to-do farmers, merchants, physicians, lawyers, etc., etc., the decoration of which the ordinary painter will be able to execute satisfactorily. In treating a sitting room, make the body of the ceiling a warm gray, then about two feet from the wall run a twelve-inch band painted in pale turquoise blue, and edged by two inch stripes of rich orange yellow. The stripes and band may be edged or separated by narrow pencillings of black. Do not make a square field with this band work, but continue the band and stripes from wall to wall, letting them cross each other at right angles. Where the room is large, it will be as well to paint in the centre piece harmonizing with the general design, having the bands crossing each other the same as the outer band. The centre piece may be square but set in the ceiling diagonally, or it may be diamond shaped. If the room is large, say 16 x 30 feet, a good effect may be obtained by running an extra band design across each end of the room at

about ten feet from the end walls and omitting the centre pieces. These extra bands should be treated the same as the ones on the ends of the room.

In treating the walls, excellent effects are obtained by making them a light sage green. Run a band of pale olive around the room about thirty inches wide, having narrow bands of terra cotta color on upper and lower edges, with dividing lines of venetian red. This band should be up from the base about two feet, which would make the upper edge of it about four feet six inches from the top of the base; this will leave a strip of sage green between base and band, and between band and ceiling. Of course the width of band and its height from base may be changed to suit conditions. The above proportions are suited to a room where the ceiling is ten feet high. The woodwork should be painted in light cheerful colors: perhaps a medium green, with grooves and chambers picked in with black and touched up here and there with bright vermilion, would suit most tastes. At any rate these colors properly proportioned would have a very pleasing effect when taken in with the walls and ceiling. Of course the colors for walls and ceiling may be varied to any extent without varying the design. Buff for the walls, with pale blue band and dark brown stripes give a good effect, while the ceiling may be done in cream, with robin-egg blue band and Indian red edgings separated by dark blue lines, with the woodwork finished in maroon and a light shade of Indian red.

The library may be finished in the same design, though it should be in darker colors and subdued in tone. A clear gray-blue should be used on the ceiling, with a band of Pompeian red, edged with medium green and striped with vermilion. Color the walls with a deep buff, with a chocolate band edged with dull Indian red, in similar design to sitting room. The woodwork may be ebonized and picked in with bronze and buff, but care must be taken not to overdo the picking in. If it is desired to separate ceilings and walls, it may be done by running an edged band just below and touching the ceiling. All the painting, whether on woodwork or walls, should be in egg-shell finish made by a composition of two-thirds raw oil to one of turpentine, and the ground-work should be well prepared by being well and smoothly sandpapered. All holes or indentations in the woodwork should be well stopped with hard drying putty, and the whole should be fair and even on the face. Other rooms in the house may be finished in like design, adopting colors to suit the taste. Where there is a hall, there may be some deviation from the design, and a frieze may be added, or stencil designs may be run all round just under the ceiling. A little more