

### THE MASTER PAINTER AS AN EDUCATOR OF ORIGINAL DECORATIONS. \*

It is conceded that the decorators of a country are its instructors in art and decoration, although sometimes questions of finance may compel them to suggest and adopt a scheme of decoration which could not be considered of the highest artistic merit. In general, the people are beginning to realize that a little knowledge of decoration is quite as dangerous as a little knowledge of other things, and there is an effort to get away from the cheap and vulgar devices which have been distasteful and an eyesore so long, and to be guided in these matters by the decorator. This is very noticeable in our city where there is certainly a desire on the part of the public for something better in the matter of decorations.

The situation to-day requires on the part of the decorator a man bold enough to suggest the best treatment for the apartment he has in hand to decorate, not being afraid to ask a reasonable price for his work. A popular treatment from which results both pleasing and decorative can be obtained in the wall paper with a crown frieze, yet a large number of decorators object to them, giving as a reason that they cannot get a fair price for this class of work. I do not think this is the case, for I have found with very few exceptions the public is willing to pay the price when you can show them they are receiving value for the money expended.

The subject of adorning a house requires a special study of the various styles and colors so as to obtain a pleasing and appropriate harmony. The main aim of decorating and furnishing is the production of perfect repose. Such repose is produced by the mutual harmony in the decorating of walls and ceilings and whatever the room contains. Colour bears, perhaps, the largest part in the production of perfect repose in a room, and the decorator should keep in mind how essential it is that a proper colour treatment should be

used so that the room when completed will not be spoiled with colours that do not harmonize one with the other.

Getting down to the root of the subject we must admit that there are no laws of interior decoration, other than those of good taste, which must be intuitive to be appreciated. A true feeling for the artistic is a gift not in the possession of all, yet it is possible to give such suggestions and advice to the average man or woman in the way of selecting decorations so as to make the home pleasant and artistic also. The proper way to decorate a room is first to decide upon the design and general scheme of colour. The colours of an apartment should not be chosen arbitrarily, but with definite reason.

The following are a few of the general principles upon which colour schemes are founded and chosen: We will first consider light and size. The amount of light and size of the room are, perhaps, the chief factors in determining its color. In rooms facing the north, the north light, whitish to bluish in color, require to be decorated in luminous tints, ranging from orange yellow to warm red. On the other hand, rooms with a southern exposure should be decorated in tints ranging from greenish yellow to blue, because the south light has yellow and purple in it. Rooms facing east and west are most effective when decorated in yellow tones, as east and west lights have yellow and purple in them.

We will next consider the character of the room. The character of the rooms themselves often determines their colourings. For example, we may consider the various rooms of the house, beginning with the hall. This to the house bears the same relation as the trunk of a tree to its radiating branches. The hall, therefore, should be decorated in strong, dark colours; while the other rooms may range from strong tones for the library and dining-room to the lighter tints for bedrooms and dressing-rooms. Pompeian red, dull

\* Paper read before the Toronto Master Painters' Association by W. J. Holus.

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