

WALL PAPER AND DECORATIONS.

ON SELECTING WALL PAPER.



It may appear that any influence of color or pattern of wall paper can have but a very minor bearing upon general health, yet the question is worthy of consideration, and in selecting a wall paper it is well to remember that there are colors which must be distinctly regarded as conducing to health, and other tints which are unhealthy. Among the former should be included those hues which are most abundant in nature, in the blue of the sky, light green of sea water, and the dark green of vegetation. Light blues to greys, and pale greens, with occasional use of bright gold and yellow, flesh color and pink, are allowable, and for nurseries, children's play-rooms and living-rooms, those tints should predominate; whites and creams should be avoided, for they are fatiguing to the eyes, while dense blue and dark reds are depressing to the nervous system.

These questions of colors of wall papers are even more important in town houses than in the suburbs and country. In crowded districts, where so many conditions tend to make our homes sombre and dark anything which will add brightness and light aids directly in inducing cheerfulness in the inmates, and reacts upon the general health of each member of the family.

In the matter of designs of wall papers, they also may act injuriously upon the mental, and so, indirectly, upon the physical, health. Badly defined patterns, which give rise to different visual impressions, according to the distance at which they are viewed, and from which all kinds of fantastic pictures are often conjured up in the active brains of children, are wearisome to all, and markedly irritating to those of nervous temperament. Papers, also, in which the pattern is small, distinctly outlined, and often repeated, are very trying to the eyes, and sometimes produce distressing mental effects which react upon the whole system. Such papers should, therefore, be avoided.—Wall Paper News.

SIZING A WALL PAPER : PREPARATION FOR VARNISHING.

It frequently happens that a customer will want a varnished paper on a room intended for a nursery or for some other purpose where the walls are apt to become soiled with finger marks or the like, and where it is hence desirable that they may be washed at intervals. Now, while washable papers are made by many manufacturers, they

usually come only in a certain class of designs, more especially intended for bath rooms or narrow passages, and your customer may not want this sort of a pattern. Or it may chance that your customer does not decide that a varnished paper is essential until after the paper has been hung on the wall. One of the subscribers of *Painting and Decorating* had this experience recently, and Robert N. Hunter, the well-known Brooklyn decorator, comes to his relief with the following directions :

The wall paper should be given two coats of sizing, and then varnished one coat or more. The second coat of sizing is applied in order to make sure that the surface of the wall paper is entirely covered, as it is a common fault for the workman to make what are called misses. That is, owing to the fact that, the sizing being colorless, it is impossible in some lights to tell whether the surface is entirely covered, or whether bare spots have been left. The second coat, therefore, usually makes a sure thing of it.

The proportion for mixing varies according to the quality of glue used. Taking it for granted that the best white glue is used, we would advise a quarter pound of glue to one gallon of water, mixed as follows : Place the dry glue in a vessel and cover it with water. When the glue has become soft and pulpy, take it up in the hands and squeeze the water out of it and then boil it over the fire, by placing the vessel containing the glue into a larger vessel containing hot water ; the idea being not to burn the glue or size by placing it directly over the fire.

After the glue is thus melted it is mixed with one gallon of boiling water, which, after being allowed to cool, is ready for applying to the wall.

The varnish used is known as damar varnish, or light enamel varnish. If the above directions are followed, a good job will result.

Caution.—If, in applying the size, it is found that the colors in the paper rub up, the first coat of size will have to be sprayed on instead of brushed. This spraying is accomplished by using an artist's atomizer or a toilet atomizer, purchasable at any drug store.—*Painting and Decorating*.

A CANADIAN MURAL COVERING.

A new kind of wall and ceiling covering made of Canadian asbestos is now being used in England a good deal, especially for public buildings, etc. It is fire proof and has the effect of plaster moulding at less cost. Its weight is not great and it can be repainted.

THE USE OF GOLD IN DECORATION.

Rich mediums, such as gold or other metals, whether used on reliefs, such as stamped leather, flock paper, or the many other decorative materials at our disposal, enable us to secure a brilliancy not otherwise attainable on large surfaces, such as walls or ceilings. The cove and cornice, though in softer tones than the walls, call for the addition of gilding, as the chief factor for giving value to the coloring, and as producing a quality of light not to be obtained by the most brilliant colors. No failure can be more complete than that arising from inexperience in handling the useful metal. It is not an uncommon practice in hatching enrichments to follow the entire lines of the details, which, to my mind, invariably results in a tawdry exhibition ; whereas, with less gold and, what is of greater value, less of our workmen's time, the leading features can be defined with advantage to the ornamentation, and with greater effect in association with the other tints. In solid gilding, the parts to be dealt with should be previously treated with color the tone of gold. This is not recommended merely from a desire to economize, although that should not be forgotten, but to help the effect of the metal, for when applied without this precaution it will be found that the undercutting, instead of reflecting light, will show a heaviness of shadow.

In some instances solid gilding applied all over in an enriched ceiling has been executed with splendid effect. Of course, such a process requires to be carried out in an apartment of palatial dimensions. One instance I would cite: the Audience Chamber in the Doge's palace at Venice. It is not improbable that the suggestion to gild that ceiling was made by the great painter, Paul Veronese, who decorated the walls. When gold is applied to plain moldings it always looks best in contact with delicate Wedgewood tints. In other words, when its presence as gold—in the strictest sense—is lost. Gold bronze is, for some purposes, more effective than leaf, though not permanent. It can be used on enriched moldings without producing harshness. The leaf when lacquered is a valuable medium for broken surfaces, relief leathers being prepared in this way. Metal leaf or powders can be employed over broad surfaces, but undoubtedly the leaf is best, as there is much character suggested by the irregularity of the laying of the metal and its varying shades. This surface, treated with stencil or hand-painted ornament, is finished with varnish to protect it. For this purpose I prefer flat varnish, as it gives a quality quite away from the waxcloth appearance which is a defect in some of the manufactured materials of the present day.