

WALL PAPER AND DECORATIONS.

NEW AND ECONOMICAL INTERIORS.

IN this day of elaboration in every direction there is only an embarrassment of riches if one attempts to select models in decoration. That is, if one's means are not definitely limited, and the desire is only to reach beauty at any cost.

But for the decorator who is expected to arrive at nearly the same goal guided by a meagre amount of expenditure the case is quite different. For the benefit of such, whether it is as householder or artizan, we have collected a few random hints of unique effects which may be attained at very moderate cost.

We will take an ordinary sized house, with the usual arrangement of rooms found in the new homes of a simple class, and consider the interior decoration of the various apartments in the order in which they generally appear in the plan.

Beginning with the hall, it is wise to consider this as one of the popular, square, or nearly square, entrances to the other apartments. If it is inclined to be dark, as many of these halls are, an attempt must be made to brighten it, for it should not be forgotten that a hall, or corridor, gives the first and most decided impression of a building. If real mahogany is considered too expensive for the woodwork, here a good imitation may, it is said, be obtained by the use of ground red sandal wood soaked in wood alcohol or some other volatile oil. It may take several rapid coats—it dries quickly—before a good mahogany color is secured.

With this woodwork a dark leaf-green cartridge paper is very effective. There might be a cornice and picture rail of the "mahogany" woodwork; the plain space between being more or less in shadow will look somewhat darker than the lower wall and answer every purpose of a frieze. Unless there is a high wainscoting of the wood, then the upper wall may be treated by using the paper already suggested, with—according to a new fad—vertical lines of brass-headed tacks running along the line where the breadths join, as though the paper were tacked to the wall very closely. With this heavier effect a medium width moulding of the mahogany would answer for a cornice.

If the hallway is small and light, with not much woodwork in evidence, a rich effect is acquired by painting the wood ebony—unglossed, of course—with a warm wall paper in dark green, red, or old blue. The upper half of the door here would appropriately be of leaded glass, which, set in the ebonized wooden frames, makes an important feature in a really beautiful scheme of decoration,

though, of course, the black paint would prove too funeral unless the room was really light and bright.

The parlor opening off of this front hall may happily be finished in the green stain, now so high in popular favor. This is made of Prussian blue and yellow mixed in alcohol to the desired dark rich shade. Used with dark red wall hangings of painted burlaps, the artistic matting, cartridge paper, or, if it can be afforded, silk damask, a most charming room is the sure result. The French effect is heightened by the use of gilt in a cornice and on all the high lights, but this is not at all obligatory; and, indeed, for many tastes the quiet dignity of the simpler arrangements is more satisfactory.

If the dining-room adjoins the parlors, as it does in most of the newer houses, it is well to have the same color scheme in green continued there, though with so much variation as to give no hint of that monotony which is a fault of much modern interior decoration of the humbler sort. Here the woodwork may be of one of the cheaper, light-colored natural woods, highly polished, with—if the parlor walls are of dark red, as suggested—a dark green cartridge paper of the same shade as the woodwork in the parlor. For the ceiling here a handsome novelty would be the use of an applied decoration which was popular in Italy during the Renaissance, and which has lately been acquiring some considerable favor in England. This is sgraffito, which we will cursorily describe for the benefit of those who may not have tried it as yet. For the dining-room under discussion, the ceiling should be covered with a coat of dark green plaster of the usual thickness, and then laid over with a very thin coat of pale green plaster in which, while it is still soft, a design is drawn. The light plaster is removed in parts, either from the design or from the interspaces, as may be preferred.

In the family living-room a pretty change in the treatment of the woodwork is secured by the means of a silver-gray enamel paint. This should be thoroughly rubbed down with pumice stone and oil until it is as smooth as satin, but altogether free from gloss. The wall paper may be quite inexpensive if the color and design are good; a delicate, but strong, blue background, with an all-over floral pattern in pink, or the familiar blue forget-me-nots alternating with small pink roses on a gray surface instead of the blue. Or this room may have light natural wood, highly polished, used with stiffened burlaps, in its natural color on the side walls. Or, again, the burlaps may be relieved by an all-over stenciled design of medium-sized trefoils in a good shade of

quite dark yellowish brown. Burlaps, for all coverings, is in the highest favor just at present, and fortunately it is one of those substantial fabrics, with such great artistic possibilities, as a background for pictures and attractive furniture, that one is not so likely to be quickly satiated with it as with some of the more ornate favorites of passing fashions.

For bedrooms which are to be used merely as such nothing is more permanently satisfactory than an insistence upon a fresh, clean, fairly burnished appearance, which is most satisfactorily accomplished by a dazzling unrelieved white; merely white enameled woodwork, with calsomined walls and ceiling to correspond. But when the sleeping apartment is also to be used, more or less, as a sitting room, it must have a warmer end, as it were, more genial treatment. Then the walls are happily covered with one of the charming blue-and-white papers with the same woodwork, or a delicately gay Dresden pattern of paper, or even, if the room should happen to be a north one, a rich red-and-white paper-white striped with vertical, conventional lines in red, or, still better, red-and-white awning cloth may be resorted to.

One important thing to be borne in mind in the decoration of private houses particularly is the situation and lighting of the various rooms. Those that will have considerable sun and light may take possession fearlessly of the darker and cooler arrangements; those that are prone to gloom, in the matter of situation and construction, must have their shortcomings made up to them in a brightness and warmth of treatment. The use also for which the rooms are designed must never, for one instant, be lost sight of when they are receiving the decorations which are to make an artistic, striking interior, or one that is merely insipid or inharmonious. It is altogether a matter of taste, not money, whether a new house is to be charming inside as well as out.

If one has ambition to excel as a decorator, and to ensure the patronage that always follows that which is unique as well as beautiful of its kind—always providing that the price is moderate, particularly in the country, where anything out of the usual rut in this line is rather difficult to obtain—the suggestion occurs that during the slack seasons in work it would be wise to take up the study of some of those nicer forms of the art that do not come so directly in the way of every house painter and paper hanger. Such are "fire etching" and working in wrought iron.

Full outfits and books of information for these two important features of modish decoration may be obtained at moderate cost, and, while the pursuit of the studies would