

Commencement Thesis
Subject:- Art in Household Furnishing
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Art In Household Furnishing

The house in which we live does not constitute the home, but can we not say class it as the second most important factor which go to make a home happy and cheerful? On the good taste displayed in furnishing the different departments depends the air of comfort, beauty and elegance, they will wear and the sensations of pleasure or unrest that will be felt by the inmates. An able artist has said, "It is a large part of the art of decoration to know what not to have in a house."

Beauty of decoration does not consist so much in the costliness of the material which composes it as on the taste displayed in its designs, and its appropriateness of its position. In order to arrange the furnishing, painting etc. of the several departments we must look at the general effect.

After the house which is supposed to be just as artistic and comfortable as it can be, is built the next consideration is to take up the different ways and means of furnishing it.

In painting the inside woodwork great varieties of color may be used, it is a rule that the door should be painted darker than the walls and the window sashes some lighter shade.

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Paint may also be used on the ceiling and walls, different purposes of the room require different shades. A dark red, mahogany, dark green, or some solid color is best for the library and dining room while lighter shades may be used to an advantage in the parlor and other rooms, it has been found that red colors remain stationary, yellow bring things nearer, and blue makes the ceiling appear farther away.

The wall paper used should either harmonize or contrast with the painting and carpet. Small patterns are better for the living rooms, while large patterns may be used for halls and stairways. The brightest colored paper should be placed on or near the ceilings. Light blue is most appropriate for the ceilings because it appears to heighten it.

The carpet is one of the most important furnishings of a room, it is to the room what the background is to a picture, and like it, a carpet should be such that one forgets to notice it. therefore we should avoid gaudy colors such as bright green, red or blue, as they are not pleasant to the senses, and do not wear as well as others. The carpet should be a neat pattern, it should never

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have natural imitations of fruit, flowers and shells, it should be a shade darker than the wall paper and should present the main body tint from which the rest of the room should be a shade lighter; contrasting rather than blending shades are desired.

Curtains may be of many different kinds as regards material and color. Light material is admissible for the parlor and bedroom but for the dining room and library, heavier curtains are more desirable as they are more in keeping with the place.

The art of decoration and furnishing comprises something more than the mere knowledge of styles, furnishing takes genius and tact or rather taste and unless this is brought to bear upon it, the handsomest furniture a room can have might as well be a few old chairs and table for all the real harmony of effect and delight of home produced. One of the most important aids in furnishing is a good knowledge of colors, complimentary contrast, and those which harmonize, a person makes a mistake when he thinks that all the costumes of a room should harmonize to give a good effect chairs, carpets;

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curtains, woodwork, and wall paper. This gives a stiff rigid appearance to the room. It is generally admitted that furniture looks better on a light dark background and pictures look better on a light one. To do this a dado, two or three feet high may be painted some dark color, such as dark brown, bronze, green, rich maroon or deep wine color. While the walls should be some light shade. This gradation of color from deep to light is borrowed from the great architect nature. Take for an example the tree, the roots and trunk are dark and substantial giving the evidence of strength and durability. The branches covered with green leafy foliage are of a lighter shade and the blossoms with their brilliant hues are confined to the top.

All rooms on one floor should correspond in idea and color, and should not be furnished in a medley of styles, and there should not be too violent a change in the color.

Let us now consider the house in detail giving a few hints about each department. The first place then to furnish will be the hall. The slightest glance within the hall should give a character of cordiality and hospitality, and

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this character can be shown as well by the decoration and furnishing, as if the host stood there in person with out stretched hands to welcome the guests, the idea of the hall should impress the mind upon entrance, with the idea of shelter, shadow and rest. It must be apparent that it is the doorway of the home. The guest may come from the outside warm and many, cold or wet but the minute he steps within the hall, all his fatigue and cold vanishes, because he knows he has found a place of shelter, and a place to rest. The right furnishing can make it just such a place, the tint of the walls should be rather dark while the woodwork, doors staircase, and mantel should be dark or stained, the doors should be dark either plain or paneled, above this the smooth wall surface should be papered in a subdued tone, the ceiling if frescoed, should be frescoed with some formality not with any loose decorative fancy. and should be somewhat lighter in color than the wall. The floor of the hall should be of hard wood in various shades of geometrical designs and should not be dazzling, with a few rugs laid here and there, it presents a much more cheery appearance than a carpet.

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The stairsteps should be covered with some rich color harmonizing with the other furnishing. The door of the hall should have the windows stained or some deep creamy curtains draped so as to break the light, giving the room a soft and shady appearance. The furniture of the hall proper should consist of a hat and coat rack, an umbrella stand in one corner, a seat and a looking glass, and a table below the looking glass. Beside the glass may be hung a round flat pin cushion, a whisk broom holder, and a little rack for holding letters. If the hall is large moderate size pictures add great beauty. Chromes will give a great deal of pleasure colored pictures are also quite desirable, but good taste, should seek out the pictures best suited to the place.

Whatever of light airy elegance and beauty is within the power of the furnishing of the house it should be lavished on the drawing room or parlor as a soft and gay appearance is demanded for this room. The poets say "The dining room should present strong male color leaving the delicate tints for the more feminine character of the drawing room. In the use of delicate tints for the parlor, the dark

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hard wood finish seems out of place, the eating
 woods, the creamy polished maples and others
 of the kind serve the purpose best and give
 a lighter effect. The dado and wainscot look pro-
 per if represented in paper with a narrow skir-
 ting board round the floor. The carpet should
 be a little darker than the other furnishing and
 should present an unnoticable appearance.
 The walls should be papered with some light
 shade. The heavier curtains of the windows should
 correspond with the carpet, over hung with some
 dainty, cream or white curtains, giving the whole
 room a light appearance. The wall decoration
 should be complete with pictures and numerous
 other fanciful hangings hung in a pleasing
 manner. The furniture should consist of four
 or five small chairs, plush or leather cushion-
 ed with two or three rocking chairs, a sofa, piano
 or organ, a centre table, with various footstools
 making a pleasing effect. There is the place
 for an elaborate mantle piece, its ornaments
 few, but possessing dignity. It is not necessary
 that the fire place should be large. The parlor
 as a whole should present a beautiful light and
 comfortable appearance, a place of sunshine and happiness.

It seems expedient that most of the other rooms of the house should be furnished after the conventional system of society, not so with the sitting room. The furnishing in this room should possess both beauty and utility. Here then fabrics are to be chosen that will endure, the carpet should be of some rather dark pattern that will not soil easily, and it should not cover the entire room. The woodwork should be painted some dark color that will not fade and become grimy, the dado should be about 3 ft high, and the wall paper should be a shade or two lighter than this. The ceiling would be very pretty and neat painted some light shade and the top curtains should be of muslin easy washable. The furniture should consist of a low broad lounge not too good for little feet to kick, a large low table with the necessary books, papers, work basket and so on, a sewing machine, comfortable chairs and especially easy chairs for father and mother.

This is also a place for house plants and pictures of strong and beautiful appearance, nothing should be too fine for daily use. This room should be a pleasant.

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inviting room for the family, for it is here where the family gather, for the evening chats and it should be one of the coziest nooks because of its relation to the beautiful home.

We hold that a Library is essential to every home; yet how many homes do without them, Dary often the drawing room is given up in part to a library, but how much nicer it could be to have even a small library, where we can seek a place of rest and quiet, where we can pick up a book and enter into conversation with our book friends. Then the carpet should be dark and small figured, It is found best to have the shelves built into the walls making the floor more easy to carpet and then it gives a much more stately appearance. The shelves should be of some dark color. The windows should be large and curtained with some heavy rich material, the chairs should be large and comfortable, and the only wall decoration besides the paper, should be a few portraits of some poets or historians or some great author bust placed on the top of the shelves may add greatly to the appearance of the room. Besides the chairs there should be a large table or

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on which books can be placed and writing done.

The dining room ranges next to the sitting room as heart of the house, for it is in this room, in all ordinary households that the family assemble three times a day. The first impress there should be of a place of solid enjoyment and comfort. In this room there is to be no airy fanciful fabrics, the color must be substantial such as rich crimson, deep purple, and kindred tints. The mere suggestion of poverty should be avoided less in this room than in any other. The floor of this room should be of hard wood, painted and oiled the necessary color or colors. The walls of the dining room should possess a rich warm color, and great care should be taken in selecting it, if one may have gilding in the paper, it should come here. The dado and other woodwork including cupboards, are very nice painted a dark wine or brown. The dining room table should be heavy and substantial, and the chairs strong and comfortable with broad seats and high backs. The walls should be decorated with paintings of curious nature portraits

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are very much suited to the place. There should be one bay window in this room with shelves for house plants. The curtains should be dark in material hung so that they can be draped back to admit sunlight.

The first thing to be looked to in a bed room is a plentiful supply of fresh air. The windows should be large so that plenty of fresh air can be ushered in during the sleeping hours. The next requisite is to gain plenty of sunlight, while the next thing of importance is to pay the proper attention to the floor. It should be of hard wood painted around the edges so that the carpet can be removed & then and changed. The walls and ceilings should harmonize with the carpets and should be of some delicate tint with a splash of blue or pink. The woodwork should also be light and cheery. The curtains should be of some light washable material draped at the side. It is very pretty to have the bedroom suit to match. A broad long low bed with plenty of light covering and soft and hard pillows is the best to be had. Simplicity is the best ornamentation. Brass bedsteads are being used a great deal now.

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and are very handsome and substantial. The other furnishings of a bed room are a mirror, in a dressing or not, a wash stand with the necessary articles; a lounge is very appropriate and often spares the bed in the day time. A few pretty chairs are also necessary. In addition to all this, there must be a wardrobe for the clothes. As for the pictures in the bed room they will usually be those that have some especial value to us independently of their beauty.

Lastly we must say that although furnishing is largely left to women, it is really no trifling matter. Its study is important and is as much a study as our politics. The private home is at the foundation of the state, and the history of furnishing indeed involves the history of nations.

The art of furnishing comprises much more than arranging pictures, chairs, tables etc, in the best possible way, it comprises a large part of the art of making home attractive and pleasant to all. The builder of a house can help a great deal in beautiful decoration, because if a house is not built in the right way, without the nec

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cessary closets, cupboards, mantle pieces, small
rounds, halls, etc, it is impossible to give it the
beauty it might have had.

Furnishing also implies economy
coupled with taste. Some one has said. "Taste
after all as we have said is the offspring of
genius and tact and is a great secret of the
art of furnishing and although that is a
thing to be cultivated just as much as any
seedling that the gardener transfers from its
barbarous wildness to full beauty, yet no
rule can ever supply its original deficiency."

Reference Books,
Queens of Homes.
Art Decoration Applied to Furnishing
Beautiful Homes.

Gertrude Stamp.