

The Furnishing

and

Decoration

of a

Dining-room.

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## Outline

## Plan of Room

- 1- General Arrangement
- 2- Location of Room
- 3- Color Scheme best suited
- 4- Manner of Heating and Lighting
- 5- Floor and Standing Wood-work
  - a- Material
  - b- Finish
  - c- Style
- 6- Walls
  - a- Treatment
  - b- Design
  - c- Window and Door Space
- 7- Furnishings
  - A- Carpet
  - B- Draperies
  - C- Furniture
    - a- Material
    - b- Style
    - c- Finish
  - D- China
  - E- Linens
  - F- Silver-ware
  - G- Pictures



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"More than any other spot in the home should the dining-room express comfort, hospitality and good cheer." Since it is the one place where each day the average husband and father is permitted to enjoy the company of his family, it should by all means suggest shelter, warmth, and snugness. "If this feeling of indoor housing is emphasized, the view from the dining-room window becomes of less account than elsewhere." However this latter statement does not lessen the importance of choosing a suitable situation for the dining-room.

The ideal location for any room is on the south and east but as all rooms cannot be southeast rooms this corner must be reserved for the one most in need of it- the living room. With the exception of the bedrooms, the living room requires more sunshine than any other part of the house for it is here that the greater part of the family indoor life is spent.

But if instead of imagining one undivided room complete in itself, we consider the house as a whole and the relation of one room to another, a desirable location for the dining-room is on the north and east. The morning sun streaming through the east windows makes it a most pleasant breakfast-room, while in the summer during the hottest part of the day and in the evening it is shaded and cool.

As a rule the exposure indicates the color scheme to be carried out in a room. The golden browns and the pure golds, the yellow tans and reds help to give an effect of sunshine. Just as the cool blues and greens are more satisfactory in the sunny room making it appear very much pleasanter, the warm browns and reds are more suitable for the dark and shadowy room



on the north where only a limited amount of sunshine enters. Especially in the dining-room is it suitable to have one prevailing color used in different degrees of strength. Thus the design of wall, curtain, or carpet is very effective if carried out in shades darker than the background. Or a suggestion of any harmonizing color serves to relieve the monotony or sameness of things.

The heating of the dining room is not a difficult problem. For cool days especially when the amount of heat required is just enough to take the chill off the room, a fireplace is most convenient. And more than this it imparts to the room a feeling of home shelter and domestic privacy which nothing else can give. But other means of heating must be provided for more general use.

Since the efficiency of the furnace depends upon the shortness and directness of communication between the furnace and the register it is servicable only for a small house. But for a medium sized dwelling hot water seems to be preferable. Although the temperature cannot be raised quickly, when once started the hot water is capable of more perfect regulation than is steam. As the water circulates through the pipes regardless of its temperature the heat of the register may be varied as desired making it possible to keep some heat in the room over night by means of a low fire.

With steam heat this is impossible as the steam is not formed and so of course cannot circulate, until the water reaches 212°F. Because of this the temperature of the radiator can be varied only within very narrow limits. If powerful enough to



heat the room satisfactorily on a real cold day, it is too powerful for the room in warmer weather. And in order to lower the temperature of the room at night the windows must be raised and a large amount of heat lost. Thus the great disadvantage of steam as a means of heating the dwelling.

As regards the artificial lighting of the room, especial consideration is due the shading of the light, this being of the utmost importance in any room. The green light is perhaps best but the frosted glass globe because of the soft light it casts over the room, is more desirable here. It not only produces a pleasing effect but affords comfort to the eyes as well. In the dining room the light should hang from the ceiling. If placed elsewhere it is very inconvenient. Either the brass or oxidized copper chandelier is suitable but because of the former tarnishing so easily the latter is preferable. Comparatively few may have gas but electricity if desired may be had by nearly all. It gives the ideal light, producing only a slight amount of heat, consuming no oxygen and giving off no products of combustion.

The dining room is not the place for the fluffy and dainty, but rather for that which suggests strength and dignity. Thus for the floor which in order to maintain the proper balance of things, must be darker than either walls or ceiling, quarter sawed oak gives a richness very appropriate to a dining-room. Because of the intrinsic beauty of its well matched boards and its perfect harmony with the many shades of brown it is a most desirable wood for both floor and standing wood-work.

The glossy, shiny finish commonly applied to wood of



any kind is very objectionable in that it tends to produce a glare. But the dull flat finish is much softer in effect and creates a quiet restful feeling. The fact that it can be easily cleaned with clear water and made fresh and new by thoroughly rubbing into it boiled linseed oil is, though inferior to the first, a decided advantage in its favor.

The simplicity of the room and its furnishings is to be noted. At one time it was thought the more elaborate and fancy a thing the more beautiful. Thus houses were planned and constructed according to this view, comparatively little consideration being given to what we now call the sanitation of the home.

But this is no longer true. To-day both beauty and good taste demand simplicity, and sanitation the paramount requisite of the home is impossible without it. Hence we no longer care for the elaborate carving at our doorways and windows or on our furniture, nor the over decorated wall and crowded room. Time has brought us better and more desirable things. And while we would not discard the beautiful yet we would see it in the more practical. Thus modern wood-work with its plain smooth surface, rounded edges and curved corners cannot help but appeal to us as a great improvement over the old style.

Also is this true as regards the treatment of the walls. Wall-paper soon fades and becomes very shabby. Some of it contains poisonous colors and all of it must be put on with flour paste which in time petrifies. But the newer tinted wall overcomes all these disadvantages and is more satis-



factory especially where a plain wall is desired, the stencil design at the top furnishing sufficient decoration.

Since in this particular dining-room, the buffet occupies the lower portion of the wall on the north, only the panel arrangement of windows is possible but this is very desirable.

The extension too is effective. Not only does it provide more room but it permits of more light entering the room by making possible a window on the west and an extra one on the east.

In the dining-room the object is not to have all spaces filled, but rather to place here just what is necessary and fitting. Whether there shall be one large rug or several small ones is merely a matter of choice, though small ones tend to give more the appearance of bareness. Since here the walls and floor are very quiet and without elaboration there must be some decoration to relieve the plainness. It is therefore very important that some pattern be carried out in the rug and draperies. The dining-room rug, though heavy enough to lie flat on the floor should be of comparatively shallow pile. One of very great thickness is objectionable because of the crumbs it retains. The ecru curtains at the windows hang in straight folds and by only partially covering the windows admit of more light.

For many reasons but principally because it is especially harmonious in this particular dining room, the oak furniture is used. Although plain in design, as regards construction it possesses the two essential characteristics of all good furniture namely serviceableness and durability.



The side-board is the feature of the room. Though it fills considerable space it is quite low and plain. But little "gimcrackery" is usually the safest choice and a low one is not objectionable if large enough to contain roomy drawers and cupboards.

Since the dining-room table is the center of interest the choosing of the china, linen, and silverware to be used upon it is of the utmost importance. The pure white table is always beautiful, and too, it is economical. The plain white haviland is easily replaced and with it any harmonizing odd pieces of china may be used effectively.

Most of the table linen should be neatly hemmed but one or more of the patterned cloths with napkins to match are very nice to have. Linen should never be fringed as the fringe wears out quickly and also makes extra work in laundering. When the plain centered cloth is not wanted it is well to choose some standard patterns as the snow-drop and fleur de lis as these can be matched almost any place.

The silver need not all be solid. Knives, forks, and table-spoons of good plated ware are very satisfactory, but those pieces used in carrying food to the mouth, such as tea-spoons, are better if solid. For silver some neat simple pattern is preferable. Elaborate patterns are hard to keep clean and soon go out of style.

In the choosing of pictures for the dining-room no hard fast rule can be laid down. What looks well in one room is likely to be entirely inappropriate for another. The style, size, situation and environment of the house as well



as the taste of the occupants are to be considered. As a rule cheerful subjects are best suited to this room and all scenes of confusion should be avoided. The place for fruit and game is said to be on the table and only exceptional pictures of this kind may be appropriately hung on the dining-room wall.

Some one has said "There is a place for individuality as well as originality in choosing what should hang in the room where the family meet three times a day and if the two qualifications are governed by good taste the result cannot fail to be satisfactory. But the trinity of individuality, originality and good taste should not be separated if an harmonious result is desired."



























