

The Partnership *of* Paint

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to express our indebtedness to Mrs. Eda A. Oliver, of New York City, for the pages on Interiors. Her suggestions are based upon her wide professional experience and may well be considered the last word in correctness and good taste.

JOHN W. MASURY & SON.

Paint Our Partner

PAINT as our partner in all the affairs of life may be a new thought, but it is an old established fact nevertheless. In reality paint is so interwoven with every turn of the wheel, that it is forever at our side, like our Siamese Twin.

Suppose we were to wake up some morning to find that paint in every form had been eliminated from the world, from our lives! What consternation, surprise, indignation, and havoc would reign everywhere! Whether for better or worse, for good or evil, it is part of the very warp and woof of our every-day existence, and what a pal and benefactor it really is. Think of our morning train, our motors, our boats, our houses, as *paintless*! What a queer jumble life would be. But here stands our partner—paint—ready to jump into any breach, and make life full of comfort and happiness and cheer, from the building of a new house, where the painting of every wall, every bit of trim, has to be carefully planned and decided upon, to the many small things about the house that can be transformed by the “Magic Touch” of paint.

The dear old home that has stood in rain, and wind, and snow, for years, and begins to show its many battles, seems to implore us to brighten up its faithful face. And so we do. We paint it a soft old ivory white with fresh green shutters, and it seems to expand with joy and happiness, and smiles back at us a radiant smile of thanks; and as we regard it with warm affection, we suddenly realize anew how much we love it and owe to it, and a feeling of most tender warmth fills us, and fills our day, and Life takes on a fresh

beginning. We return at night with a new glow of well-being in our hearts. It passes on to our friends, to whom our radiant newly dressed house also gives joy. It permeates the very air, and indirectly works its way into unknown channels for good; for nothing we ever do can remain unto us alone. Every act, however small, has its immediate reaction, like the circles made by a pebble, spreading ever wider, far beyond our vision. The whole community is cheered because of our freshly painted house.

Take the practical side. Suppose you have a house you want to sell. It is shabby, down at the heel, forlorn and sad. If you will put it in condition and paint it inside and out (give it the “Magic Touch”), your chances for selling it are ten to one in your favor. You present your house at its best, at its highest possibilities. Everything depends upon the way a thing is presented. A purchaser immediately sees what it really looks like. One out of a hundred prospective purchasers has the imagination to see it in his mind’s eye and realize its possibilities, if he first beholds it in its downtrodden state. Besides, he isn’t buying possibilities, he wants to see what he is buying. He sees it, he likes it, he buys it. The “Magic Touch” has brought it fresh, beautiful, and living to his recognition. In his mind’s eye he sees his family installed, happy and cozy, within its cheerful walls. The deed is done. The house is sold. Then the joy that paint brings into our lives, the radiance, the color. We all love color, color that Nature first taught us to love. How can we bring it into our midst, with its gay vibrant song? By paint, and only by paint. And so again our debt to paint grows greater with our realization of all that it can mean.

Paint is so clean. Almost any condition of grubbiness can be made sanitary and wholesome by paint, and it keeps out and prevents illness and disorders.

The use of paint is as old as history. We find it on the mummy cases of Egypt, on the shores of the leaden, swinging Nile, though the medium used then was wax mixed with the pigment. The medium has changed, but it has gone down the ages, steadily at our sides, varying, growing, developing, never standing still, active, ready for any call of life. It went into the Service, holding off the iron rain of shell on the painted dust-colored helmets of our boys, thus eliminating the target they would otherwise have made; camouflaging our ships, our trains, our tanks, and our trucks. It helped in all the campaigns. What would we have done without the posters, the banners, the inspiration offered by paint on every hand? We couldn't have done anything without it, without its magic. It is part of life and a very serious part of it. It transforms; it brings joy and gladness in its train. It is sanitary, it is practical, it is most constructive; only good follows in its wake.

Paint is historical, and teaches us much. Take the characteristic painting of the Norse countries. The furniture used in the peasants' houses is painted in flat, hard, brilliant colors, expressive of the climate. It is a record of what people see and feel, and so translate into their lives and surroundings. The subtle, inscrutable, complicated civilization of the East is expressed in the Oriental painting of every description, meticulous as it is, detailed, and filled with most exquisite color of every possible nuance, the most delicate shades and tones.

Paint is pigment, or color, and a medium, whether it be oil or wax, or something else by which it is applied, but it has its own far reaching psychology. It is inspirational, and really spiritual in its reaction on mankind. We may paint a house for the most practical of reasons, to preserve it from the weather, but we are carried, in

spite of ourselves, beyond the point of hard fact, to a certain positive feeling of pleasure and satisfaction and joy it gives us.

Back of all seeming hard, cold facts lies the truth of Life: it is Inspiration. For that reason our debt to Paint mounts higher and higher, as we think about it and realize that it is in very close association with everything about us, a very vital part of our human existence, and that we could not, at the present stage of our development, possibly be comfortable, or clean, or happy without the “Magic Touch,” the Miracle of the wonderful “Partnership of Paint.”

Nature and Color

NATURE is unerring in her choice and use of color. She is the mistress of color, always in good taste and the greatest respecter of the fitness of things. In the main, her dress is green and brown and grey in a frame of blue and white. To relieve the monotony, she punctuates her work with spots of brightness that stand out in harmonious contrasts.

From earliest Spring days she operates a kaleidoscope which brings changes to the eye and keeps it interested and unwearied of the transitions which gain in attractiveness as she touches time with her wand and carries us unwittingly through a maze of hueful glory.

In her scheme of things, she uses gold and pink, lilac and amethyst, crimson and green, blue and purple, yellow and brown, orange, buff and neutral silvers and drab. Go where you will in the flower months and you cannot get away from her combinations of colors.

In March she brings the trailing arbutus into blossom with its delicate pink flowers nestling in a bed of green. April comes with her lap filled with wild honeysuckle, with its red spurs that seem to be a reception committee to balmy days and renewed life. So it goes as the season advances. Nature is never violent in her selections of color. From the departure of snow to the turning of the leaves in Autumn, she teaches us the use of color, and never once going wrong. With May comes the beautiful wild lady's slipper, followed in June by the grass-pink. The spring season is a

pink and green season, and with the warmer days, meadow and roadside, woods and swamps become dotted with stronger colors until in September the golden-rod and Jo Pye weed vie with each other in the carnival of beauty.

So, if we would put harmony in the surroundings which make home, we will do well to follow the order and the skill of this scheme of universal decoration.

Let us consider, if you please, the spirit of home-making as nature herself and the home and the rooms within it as nature and the seasons passing in review. It is the purpose of this book to treat of the home in its entirety and of all the elements that go to make it. For inasmuch as all things are relative, it becomes imperative to consider the details as well as the project of general requirements.

Let us picture and see the home from the outside and the inside points of view. Let us see the physical structure and its uses. Let us not only make walls but a place to live, ready for its owner to walk into, sink into an easy-chair and meet eye rest and mental satisfaction, called comfort.

Choosing the Site

LET us assume that this home is to be built in the country, or at least in a suburb where there is still enough of nature's garb to give proper setting. There is nothing so good for a background as nature-made landscape; and if we cannot dwell in a home that is a part of it, we can choose a spot where some of its elements have been spared the axe of over-zealous man.

See to it that your site has trees that may be permitted to remain if this is possible. And see to it too that their roots are not mutilated in the business of building. The next matter of importance is room at the front for a flower garden, however small it may be. For a front garden is like the opening chapter of a book. It gives an idea of what to expect as one proceeds up the path to the presentation of an idea. The more green with which you can surround your home, the prettier it will be; the more inviting from the outside, the more restful within. A man who spent his working hours in the city once said that he wouldn't take a thousand dollars a morning for the view which he had with his breakfast and the green he saw from his easy-chair on his porch.

The home should be a part of the landscape. It should not be a violent spot either in design or color. It should look as if it grew in its surroundings with the flowers and shrubs and trees. It should be designed by a good architect. It is no part of this little book to create rules. It is rather a suggestion or series of suggestions which may or may not be fully accepted as your taste may prompt.

It may be that you have already built your home, but these suggestions are quite as applicable as to a new home. To meet entirely your specific needs it would be necessary to consult an interior decorator of good repute. These pages are intended to apply in a general way, though details are discussed at some length. To return to the structure: There are no better examples of domestic architecture than many of the simple homes of New England. These are almost invariably white with green trim. Their interiors were designed for comfort. Their gardens are literally festivals of color from early Spring until late Autumn. They are restrained in character, refreshingly free of “ornament,” dignified, restful and pleasant. They come nearer fulfilling the true conception of “Home” than any type of building which has since been evolved.

The one important reason why this character of home is successful in most sections of the country is that it is built from wood—the best medium for artistic expression, in the opinion of many. If you have doubts of the lasting qualities of wood, you have only to remember that the models in question have stood in many instances for more than a century, kept young and useful by an occasional coat of your partner, paint.

Of course, there are other media of architectural expression. The stucco house is favored by many, especially when it is used in conjunction with half timber effect—borrowed from our English cousins who use it structurally and sincerely, while the general run of homes in America in this transplanted style are built from the motif of appearance alone. In some cases, the supposed timbers have been fashioned from galvanized iron, untruthful in purpose and useless as a part of the building. Even when wood is used it is in fanciful patterns created for the eye alone, from ordinary boards.

The wooden home is essentially American in spirit and design. In the early days wood was used because it was the only available material, quarrying not having been introduced and bricks being imported from England and Holland at great expense. Besides, it was only necessary to cut and artifice a material growing on every hand for adequate shelter against all weathers. The material of necessity proved so lasting, so easy to work and so low in cost that the consideration of other materials was superfluous.

Now, as then, bricks and stone are almost prohibitive in cost even to the well-to-do, while wood is not only the cheapest but the most natural elemental building material. It is the easiest worked, costs the least from the standpoint of labor charges, and can be changed in color at will to meet a desire for a new effect.

So let us consider first the wooden home and discuss the details of the exterior from the point of view of beauty, brought about by a wise choice of color.

White is the preferred color for exterior painting; that is, for the broad surfaces. The blinds, window-trim, porch columns and in many cases the cornices may be one of numerous color tones. The picture which we must consider is one which nature would approve, so restraint is in order, whatever our selections may be. Following is a presentation of a variety of combinations, all of which will blend with any landscape and become a part of it.

As there are so many different shades of each color, we mention the technical trade names, by which the intended color is known.

COMBINATION NUMBER ONE: Broad surfaces, White; window casings, Warm W Grey; sashes, Brown G Stone; shutters, Woodbine Green; porch, cornices and mouldings, same Warm W

Grey as used on casings; doors, White; casings, Warm W Grey; porch floors, Green Stone Medium; roof, Woodbine Green.

COMBINATION NUMBER TWO: Broad surfaces, Cream D Color; casings, Fern Green; sashes, White; shutters, Fern Green; porch, Cream D Color; cornices and mouldings, Cream D Color; doors, White; casings, Fern Green; porch floors, Blue E Grey; roof, Fern Green.

COMBINATION NUMBER THREE: Broad surfaces, Pearl Grey; window casings, Warm Drab; Shutters, Oxide Red; cornices and mouldings, Pearl Grey; doors, White; porch, Pearl Grey; porch floors, Oxide Red; roof, Oxide Red.

COMBINATION NUMBER FOUR: Broad surfaces, Yellow M Buff; casings, Walnut Brown; sashes, White; shutters, Walnut Brown; porch, Yellow M Buff; cornices and mouldings, Yellow M Buff; doors, White; casings, Walnut Brown; cornices, Walnut Brown; other mouldings, Yellow M Buff; porch floors, Siennese Drab; roof, Walnut Brown.

COMBINATION NUMBER FIVE: Broad surfaces, White; casings, Palm Green; sashes, White; shutters, Pea Green, porch, White; cornices, Pea Green; other mouldings, White; doors, White; casings, Pea Green; porch floor, Palm Green; roof, Palm Green.

COMBINATION NUMBER SIX: Broad surfaces, White; casings, Brown G Stone; sashes, Warm W Grey; shutters, Brown G Stone; porch, White; cornices and other mouldings, Brown G Stone; doors, White; porch floor, Brown G Stone; roof, Woodbine Green.

COMBINATION NUMBER SEVEN: Broad surfaces, Grey T Stone; casings, White; sashes, Tobacco Brown; shutters, White; porch,

Grey T Stone; cornices and mouldings, Grey T Stone; doors, Tobacco Brown; casings, White; porch floor, Tobacco Brown; roof, Fern Green.

We must remember that harmonious contrast is in order, and there are greens and greens, greys and greys, browns and browns. In incompetent hands, the best color scheme ever planned may be rendered hideous. Home should not be a paint-maker's color card, and cannot be successful unless your own taste and individuality are reflected in its dress, inside or out.

Assuming that you live on a street containing representative American homes, we must plan the color treatment of your own so that it will not appear violent in comparison with that of your neighbor's. You have no doubt seen the deplorable result of a variance of preference when one side of a semi-detached residence has been painted white and the other half done in green. The straight, sharp line of demarcation showed that each neighbor cared nothing about what the other thought of it—and less about the neighborhood spirit.

We have assumed in our seven suggestions that the house is one of board construction. If it be of brick, it must be considered from a somewhat different point of view. Brick and stone are elemental in character and are better unpainted. The little exterior wood trim should generally be done in very light colors, white and buff being in order with shutters white, buff or bright green. Sashes may be dark if one chooses. There is much less choice of colors to use with brick because there is so little variation in the tones of the brick itself. The same is practically true of stucco, save that it may be colored to suit almost any fancy. The general use of grey is prevalent, and inasmuch as grey harmonizes with nearly all other

colors, the same treatments of trim as mentioned in our previous suggestions may be applied to stucco buildings.

Shingle houses offer less variety of choice as far as color is concerned, but there are good and substantial reasons why shingles should be painted, rather than left to the weather. In the first place, there never has been a shingle roof which has not required patching at more or less frequent intervals. The patch, usually a fresh, uncolored shingle, becomes startlingly conspicuous when set among its older, weather-stained neighbors. When the shingles are painted, repairs can be made as often as necessary, and a coat of paint on the new pieces preserves the harmony of color and does not flaunt their newness.

Painted shingles have a far greater resistance to fire than unpainted shingles. While it is true that the oil in paint is inflammable, it is equally true that, after drying, the surface is practically metallic and to a high degree fire-resisting. Painted shingles do not warp, with the result that they do not form pockets in which a burning cinder or spark could settle. Furthermore, actual experience proves that painted shingles are rain-proof and remain so as long as the paint endures.

Painted shingles of a color in harmony with the rest of the house, are, first of all, a good investment; second, good protection; and third, pleasing and attractive to look at.

The secret of successful house-painting is in the maintenance of a neutral effect, with enough of color to give relief to the eye. Monotony is as offensive as too much variety. So our task is to establish a medium that shall be happy and tasteful.

Let us not forget that the renewal of paint at stated intervals is quite necessary and should be made at least once every four years. Only a good master painter should be employed—one who believes in the use of good paint and good craftsmen. Given paint of first quality, two workmen may produce entirely different results. From the work of one may follow long wear and weather resistance, and from the other a coating that will prove short-lived and inferior, with peeling and blistering of the surface.

The time to paint depends more upon the weather than upon the season. In many parts of the country the cool clear days of Fall afford as good and sometimes better working conditions than the Spring. The season is inconsequential. Dry weather is the most important consideration.

As to Interior Furnishings

COLOR and arrangement are the two most important factors in developing a sympathetic and attractive interior. *Color*—first, last and always. The importance of color is only just beginning to be recognized. The reaction psychologically is very powerful—and very subtle.

How often, on entering a room or a house, one has felt an overpowering sense of gloom and depression—strong enough to make conversation almost impossible, so heavy were one's spirits! If analyzed, the cause of this could almost invariably be traced to color.

A charming old country house, lovely in line and type, had, when purchased, an entrance hall about 25 feet square, running through the width of the house at that point, with a Dutch door and two windows opening onto a garden at the rear. This hall had a fireplace and a finely proportioned long low mantel. A wonderful possibility! But—the walls were covered with deep red paper of an enormous pattern, with yellow grained varnish on the trim—gloomy, repellent and most hideous.

The paper was removed, likewise the yellow grained varnish; the walls were panelled; and walls, trim and ceiling were all done in soft, creamy, flat-tone paint.

A long box under a group of windows, built in with mouldings and panelling like the walls to the left of the door as one entered, was covered with a cushion of a small patterned velvet in dull gold.

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