Rejuvenating Our Homes

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PRING is here and with its arrival we turn our thoughts to housecleaning and the addition of some of the accessories in the home. Don't you feel good when you get a new suit, hat, gloves and shoes? So it is with the home when we change our old things for new ones. Furniture, rugs, drapes, pillows, lamps and table runners change in style just as our clothes do, and a change in them will make the home more attractive and cozy.

It is as easy to express individuality in the home furnishings as in the costume and for one who is handy with the needle and the paint brush, there are no end of things that can be done to beautify the home at a small cost.

The living room is the place where guests are entertained and where the family gathers to spend leisure hours, so we want it to be a bright, cheerful place where we can enjoy ourselves. It would of course be too expensive to change all of the furnishings at one time, but there are some things like drapes, pillows, lamps and table runners that we can change frequently to give the room a different atmosphere.

It is a wise plan to begin with the drapes and then the other accessories around them, thus making them all seem to belong together. The style of drapes will depend somewhat on the size and type of the windows and the room, but it can be done in a simple way. In a large formal type of house we could use the more formal drapes, while in a simpler type.

Cretone comes in such lovely designs and colors that it is almost difficult to work out an attractive window. Theatrical gauze is a new type of material that is being used for glass curtains and it can be worked up with cretonne. It dyes beautifully and in this way the color scheme desired can be worked out.

Pongee is a very popular material that is being used for the summer drapes. It is easily laundered and thus can be made to appear fresh by an occasional remoistening. Terry cloth, voile and Orlinka Sunfast curtain material make inexpensive attractive drapes.

Pillows add a great deal to the coziness of a room. They should, however, have a purpose and be placed in the room where they will be used. It is no longer good taste to have pillows in corners and spaces where they are unnecessary. There are many novelty shapes for pillows, but these are not so good as the ordinary rectangle, angular and bolster pillows. The round pillow that has been so popular in the past is losing favor and the other shapes are taking their place.

For pillows it is wise to use materials that will wear well and those that can be easily cleaned. The color will depend upon the type of harmony desired. If the drapes are of a figured fabric, the pillows might be made of a plain color—the repetition of one color found in the drapes, while if the drapes are of a plain material, the pillows of a contrasting color or figured material would add interest to the room.

The pillows may be made up by the use of braids, tassels, applique designs, embroidery and the combination of plain and figured materials. A living room usually has a table of some sort in it and of course we want it to be attractive, and for this we want a good looking runner. In the past linen trimmed with lace has been used to a great extent, but there are many other things available that add a distinctive air to the room. Santitto makes a table runner that is different from the average type. It can be obtained in either black or white and can be decorated with yarn or painted in various designs. Then there is the runner that can be made of velvet and trimmed with tapestry material and braid that will match the upholstery of the furniture. This type of runner is quite expensive when purchased ready-made, but the price comes down considerably when the materials are purchased and made up. A pillow to match the table runner is often used.

There is nothing that adds so much to the cheerfulness of a room as a beautiful lamp shade. In choosing it we must consider first the size of the room and decide what type will be best suited to the room—that is, is the room large enough for a floor lamp or a table lamp or for both—then we must decide on the color. Lamphashes are quite expensive when purchased made, but the cost is considerably less when one can make them. After the type and shape have been chosen, the next thing to consider is the color scheme. Color alone would not be enough because when the light is turned on the effect produced is often a great deal different than the color shown by daylight. Oftentimes the effect is not pleasing on the other furnishings in the room. The lamphashde, of course, should harmonize with the other things in the room, but the effect produced when the light is turned on is an important thing to consider. For instance, a room might have blue drapes and blue rug, and it might seem the logical thing to use a blue lampshade. This might be very pleasing during the daytime, but when the light was turned on the effect would be so cold we would feel as if we were in an ice box. Blue, is a very desirable color to use in combination with other colors, but used alone is likely to make one feel depressed.

There are certain colors that absorb the rays of light and do not give enough light to permit the use of them in reading or sewing. Blue, grey, purple and lavender absorb the light and are not desirable colors to use as the main color for a lampshade. Purple and lavender also fade or the color seems to be absorbed by the rays of light in the bulb, so if these colors are used a different color should be chosen to keep the shade from fading. Any of the above colors may be used in combination with other colors or as a means of decoration for the shade with the desired effect.

Yellow gives a cheerful light, but in choosing this color it is wise to be sure there is not much green in it, or a greenish effect will be produced on the furnishings. Yellow that is nearer an orange color or has some red in it is preferable. Rose and red are colorful for use for shades and give a warm light. The colors are abundant to use for decorating a shade and in combination with other colors.

After we have decided on the color then we must select the material to be used. There are so many materials available that can be used for shades, it is sometimes difficult to decide.

China silk has been popular for some time and still continues to be in favor. It can be had in a great many types of material it can be decorated with shirring, pleating, braid or fringe and two or more colors may be used together. Chiffon shades are also very attractive and a delightful color effect can be obtained by using several colors. Blue lined with red and then yellow will appear blue in daylight, but when the light is turned on the shade gives a lavender effect. Rainbow colors can be sewed together and a pleasing shade obtained. By a little experimenting with colors the desired combination may be found.

Batik and tied and dyed silk make attractive lampshades. These fabrics may be trimmed with fringe, braid or lace that is on the market at a small cost. The parchment shade is growing in popularity. It is also possible to make this type of shade at a much lower cost than the commercial shades. Such good imitations of parchment are made at present that it is often difficult to tell whether or not a shade is true parchment. Shades may be decorated with the silhouettes in black or with a design in colors.

Batik and tied and dyed silk make individual shades, but in these we must be careful of the colors we use, for the rays of light be of the proper color to absorb them.

There are other accessories besides the above mentioned ones that we may use in the living room, but in choosing them we must be sure that everything we put into the room is useful and seems to fit into place with the other furnishings.