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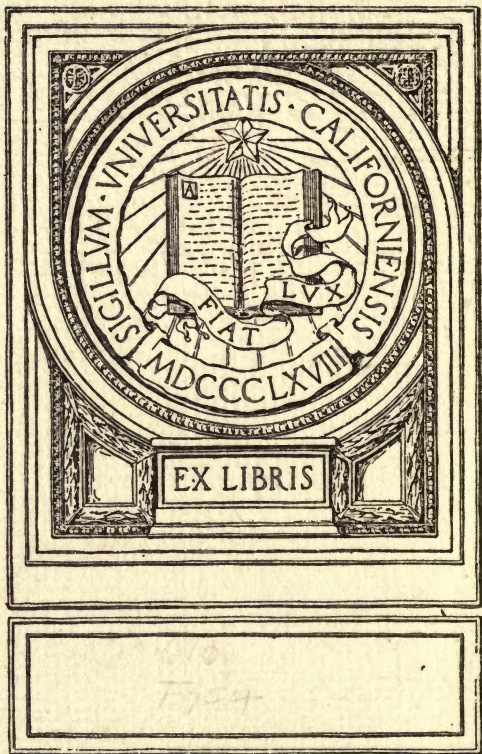


MAKING CURTAINS AND HANGINGS



AGNES FOSTER



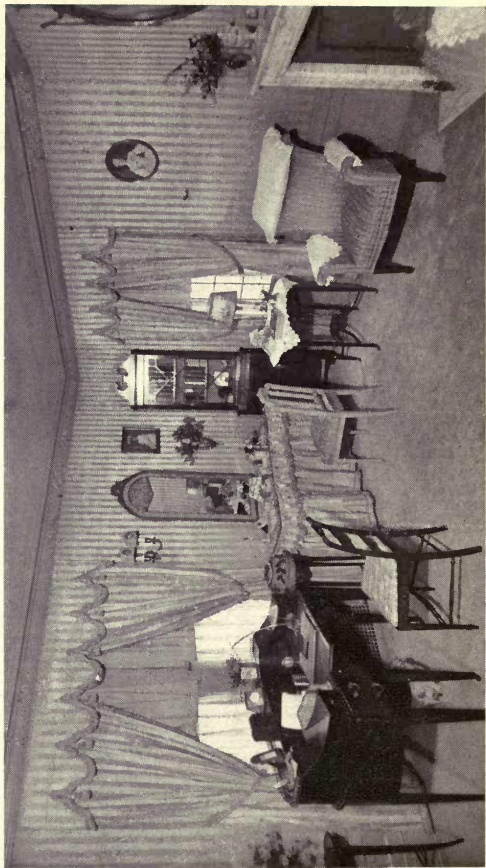


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This boudoir is curtained with the same material as the walls are hung with, but the severity is relieved by the use of a handsome edging

Making Curtains and Hangings

By

AGNES FOSTER

Wright



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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EX- POSURE, LOCALITY AND ARCHI- TECTURE — UNIFORMITY OUT- DOORS AND INDOORS—GENERAL WEAR	5
II SELECTION — DURABILITY, TEX- TURE, COLOR AND DESIGN . . .	15
III THE KINDS OF CURTAINS FOR THE KINDS OF WINDOWS—FRENCH WINDOWS, CASEMENTS, PLAIN OR SASH WINDOWS, TRANSOMS	24
IV MEASURING	36
V VALANCES AND EDGINGS . . .	46
VI COLOR SUGGESTIONS AND REFUR- BISHING	56
VII PORTIÈRES	61

328322

THE ILLUSTRATIONS

BOUDOIR CURTAINED WITH SAME MATERIAL AS THE WALLS ARE HUNG WITH .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
JAPANESE TOWELING SUITABLE FOR DIN- ING ROOM	6
LINEN FLOWERED CURTAINS BRINGING CHEERINESS INDOORS	12
A SHAPED VALANCE OF FIGURED LINEN	20
EFFECT THAT COULD HAVE BEEN IM- PROVED	26
THIN UNDER-CURTAINS AT THE LOWER SASH ONLY	32
FIGURED CURTAINS BOUND WITH A PLAIN EDGE	40
EFFECTIVE WINDOW TREATMENT WITH- OUT A VALANCE	58

Making Curtains and Hangings

I

THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EXPOSURE, LOCALITY AND AR- CHITECTURE — UNIFORMITY OUTDOORS AND INDOORS — GENERAL WEAR

WE come to the treatment of windows with more enthusiasm than to any other part of house furnishing. The background carefully decided upon, the question of the sturdy-legged table passed, we arrive at the delectable affairs of curtaining.

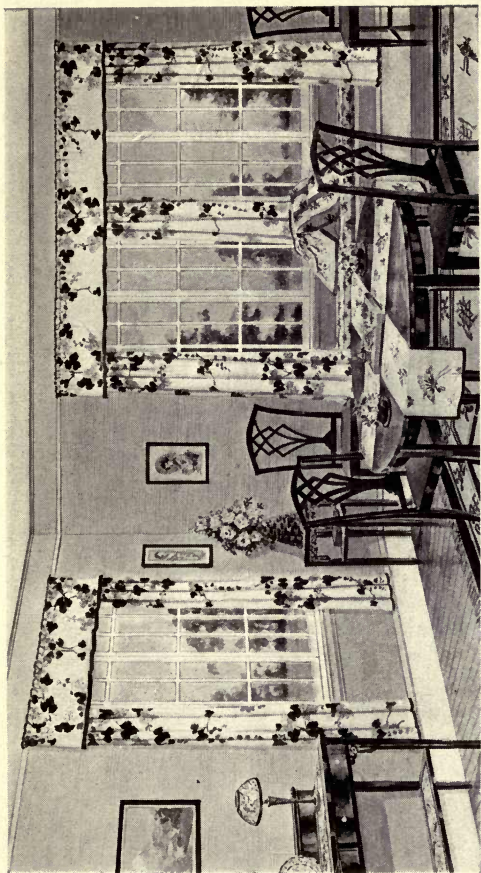
There are several general principles to be observed: exposure, style of architecture, and locality, i.e., in town or country houses.

6 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

For windows with a southern exposure it were best to use against the glass a semi-transparent material as the full glare is unpleasant and this fabric distributes the light more evenly over the room. The quality of the material must be durable since the sun not only fades it but tends to rot as well.

Curtains of thin material placed against the glass are called outside or sash curtains, the heavier curtains are called inside hangings or over-draperies.

The semi-transparent material protects the real window drapery, acting as a buffer against glare and heat. It were also well to line curtains put at a southern exposure, as this is a further protection, and the lining may be easily renewed, thereby adding years of service to the drapery. Soft mellow tones may be selected as the sunlight itself adds brilliancy. Within the past few years there have been put on the market many sunfast materials which give satisfaction and service. The fabric is cotton and comes in various weights and textures. Dyers have not been able to produce a sunfast silk, a quality in silk not taking to sunfast



Japanese toweling bound with blue, suitable for dining room, harmonizing with blue and white china

General Principles of Exposure 7

Rayons

dye. However, many of the cotton fabrics are so cleverly mercerized that they both look and feel like silk. There is something about foreign dyed materials that will withstand the sun far better than domestic goods. In selecting materials, choose an imported cotton or linen fabric, for though the initial expense may be greater, the durability as to color and texture, to say nothing of the superior design, is well worth the outlay.

For the northern exposure warm tones of yellow, orange and brown are the best choice. We must counteract the full blast of our bleak northern skies. We must obliterate any sense of gloom, and light filtering through a warm-toned curtain may work miracles in the darkest corner. We covet this effect of cheeriness. In the northern exposure we do not have to consider the problem of fading, but, curiously enough, the most fadable color — violet — is the last color we should choose for a northern exposure.

For the east and west windows we may run the gamut as to color and fabric.

In the country house, freshness is the requisite for curtaining. Linen or cre-

8 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

tonne hangings are most appropriate, as they can be easily laundered and therefore kept fresh. They bring indoors their gay flowers and gayer birds and act as a transition between the outside garden and the indoor rooms. Fresh muslin is attractive for the upstairs rooms. They are a little too fussy and lack a certain dignified formality that one looks for in the rooms downstairs. For, however simple one's mode of living, there should be a feeling of reserve and formality in the rooms where the formal affairs of life are carried on. The design and color of curtains to be used in the country home may be startling, ultra-modern and most vivid. The brilliancy of everything about helps to carry out successfully a striking hanging. They enliven and refresh us, and in some cases, especially, with the designs and colors of the new Austrian and French materials, they most surely amuse us. They are grotesque, but with a naïveté that saves them from the ridiculous. The colors are wonderfully though fearfully blended; they are never muggy or confused; one color is simply and directly laid to the next.

General Principles of Exposure 9

For country cottage use, curtains may be made of unbleached cotton with a two and one-half inch ruffle down the inside and at the bottom, and hung on rods at the top and bottom sash. This makes four at each window. When the panes are of small squares, the effect is charming. They are used in place of shades. Rather narrow over-curtains of plain colored material hung in straight folds add color. Plants put on the window ledge with these ruffled curtains and overhangings give just the right cottage touch reminiscent of Kent and Surrey. The same idea can be applied to camps and bungalows. Shade fixtures rust and get out of order during the severe winter weather. Also they become frayed, and dampness takes out the stiffness. Therefore the little cotton washable curtains with or without ruffles are most serviceable. For overhangings in a camp, if one wants a bit of color, turkey red stripes are effective and durable.

Washable materials are best for the country house as each season the hangings may be carefully laundered and put away in large boxes, ready for the next season's use. Almost all cotton curtains shrink.

10 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

Before laundering rip the hems and after washing rehem them.

For winter hangings for the city house, there are many points to be considered. The curtains are usually more pretentious and costly. They have less buffeting at open windows, but they have more smoke and city grime. They also actually serve to keep out the cold that filters in through the window cracks. Damask, velours, taf-feta, woolen rep and handsome linen are most appropriate for winter city use. They must be made with a formality as to heading, valance and edging. This is true of living, drawing and dining rooms. Cretonne curtains are always pretty and advisable for bedrooms; if one wants a more elaborate and therefore a more expensive hanging, linens are best. The vogue for linen hangings throughout the house is a practical and attractive fashion. It permits more frequent renewing, and is a gratifying change after the voluminously enveloped window hangings of the Victorian period, which were heavy and unhealthy, their mission seeming to be to crowd out the least breath of fresh air that squeezed in through the window.

Befringed, betasseled, be-roped and valanced to the utmost, they acted as a dragon to the fresh wandering little breeze. If you have them still on hand, take them down and upholster a set of furniture with them, and put in their place something fresh, sanitary and simply made.

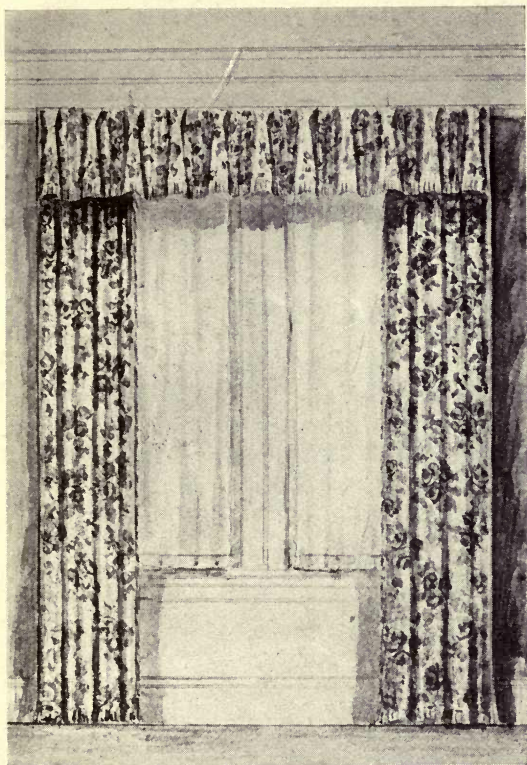
Viewed from the outside, the incongruity of a formal house of Italian style of architecture with white Swiss muslin curtains and those beruffled, is impossible. As far as is consistent, the curtains should be uniform both as to shape and general style. It is distracting to see half a dozen shapes of hangings on one façade. The quality and color must necessarily differ in the various rooms, but much toward the desired uniformity may be attained by using thin cream curtains against the glass throughout the house. The style of curtain should suit the architecture of the house, more especially perhaps from the outside, since curtains lend so much of the personal to a house.

Viewed from the inside of the house the curtains should have a certain amount of uniformity. If rooms open into one another with large openings the curtains

12 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

should be of the same material or well blended as to color and material. Thus, if the living room curtains are linen with a pattern of rose, dull green and old blue, have the dining room curtains of old blue stripes or plain dull green. If the same material is used in both rooms, introduce variation by binding the living-room curtains with plain green and the dining room blue or whatever color one wishes accented in the room. Linen curtains used in one room and taffeta of a similar shade make a well blended scheme for adjoining rooms. Mulberry and sage green are two contrasting colors that may be used successfully in this way. They produce a uniformity in feeling, because the contrasting colors are so harmonious.

An excellent material to give a house uniformity is casement cloth. In a stucco house with oak inside woodwork this material is extremely good. Casement cloth comes in various colors — tans, golden brown, cream, green and dull orange. The warp is wool and the over-weave silk. It hangs well, wears well and cleans well. It is particularly appropriate in houses of an English style of architecture, but



Country house. Linen flowered curtains bringing cheeriness indoors

may be used in any room without offense. One good weave has a tiny herring-bone effect in silk on the wool. Casement cloth can be used where scrim could be used. It has a closer, thicker texture and should be hung on rods with rings and pulled back and forth at will. It is not transparent.

Uniformity in the bedrooms may be obtained by using scrim or even the best quality cheesecloth and putting an inch binding on the edges. The binding being the same width but of various colors, and the curtains of the same cloth, a uniform appearance is seen from the outside. The binding may be in whatever color is used in each room, thus carrying out the various color schemes, but from the outside this detail of color is not noticed. The overhangings may be in any color and design of chintz.

Beautiful curtains of Brussels net with real lace may be used in the downstairs rooms, and simpler, plainer nets, with or without lace insertions and edges, may be used upstairs. For the formal city house this is preferable to any window treatment, but it is a matter of much expense. The

14 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

over-draperies must be of a consistent richness in texture, and formal as to hanging and arrangement.

II

SELECTION — DURABILITY, TEXTURE, COLOR AND DESIGN

IN purchasing curtain materials we must consider their durability, texture, color and design. Sometimes the cost of the fabric itself is not large, but the trouble and expense of making up warrants getting a substantial material.

With thin materials to be used against the glass, do not get too coarse a mesh. It will shrink so much at the first washing as to be useless. Get an even weave, else the curtain will be difficult to hem and will not hang straight. To use with linen overhangings, buy a weave similar to the weave of the linen. A hard thread evenly woven will give the best service. If the material is to be used with linen, a scrim is preferable to a net or marquisette, as the texture of the weave is a better match. With overhangings of silk, a fine soft cream

16 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

scrim is best. The scrim should have the texture consistent with a rich material. With velour and damask, an excellent quality of net should be used, preferably with a lace edging.

In over-draperies there are several things to be considered. Never hang two thin materials at the same window. If the undercurtains are thin, the texture of the over-draperies must not be transparent. If we want to hang thin, transparent, colored curtains at the windows, it is best not to put anything else at the same window. Often one pair of curtains, thin and colored, are sufficient, particularly in a bedroom. Two pairs would be enveloping.

Attractive, thin, sunfast materials in various weaves and in beautiful colors make up into excellent hangings. They are semi-transparent and thus give a pretty glow of color in the room, and they are decorative as well. The finish is mercerized, giving an appearance of fineness, and the colors are well toned and refined. Certain of these sunfast materials are finished with a soft cottony fuzz which makes up badly, as it clings. The same objection is found against madras. Brushed aside,

it sticks in an untidy fold. Sometimes this may be avoided by adding a row of tiny weights in the hem; the curtains then fall in straight folds. However, with the windows open and the curtains blowing, the weights thrash about noisily and give hard wear to the curtains. A flat fold of wool may be stitched in the hem to give the desired weight and thus overcome somewhat the clinging quality. It were best, however, not to purchase such material.

Another important feature to avoid in thin materials is a weave with a black warp. In the hand it is pretty enough, but with the light through it, it is dingy, and if the colors fade you have nothing more than a grayish thin covering at your window, which is distinctly homely.

Cretonnes are always an attractive window hanging. These may be used with or without under-curtains. The background colors should match the colors of the scrim. If the cretonne is white with flowers, the scrim should be white; if tan, or any other color, an ecru or beige-colored scrim is advisable. Cretonne is best unlined, as the texture allows the light to come through, leaving the pattern distinct and giving the

18 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

color full value. In most linens or loosely woven fabrics it is the reverse, and they require lining. The light coming through obliterates the pattern and we see only the texture and indistinct masses of color. When the light does not show through, as at night, we get, of course, the flat pattern of the material in all its color and design. The cretonne or chintzes of foreign make have the best texture. It is finely and evenly woven, and therefore takes and retains the dye color. The design is often historical and the colors are carried out true to the tradition of the best design. Foreign chintzes, therefore, are preferable to those made in America.

It is well to choose a vari-colored pattern, as we may select one color from it and form our color scheme for the room around that. The next season, select another. For instance, with a chintz having rose and green, blue and mauve, we may make our room rose to blend with the curtains, repeating in the upholstery and small accessories the rose tones. Another year we may have tired of the rose room, or the plain rose may not have worn well; we still have our perfectly good chintz draper-

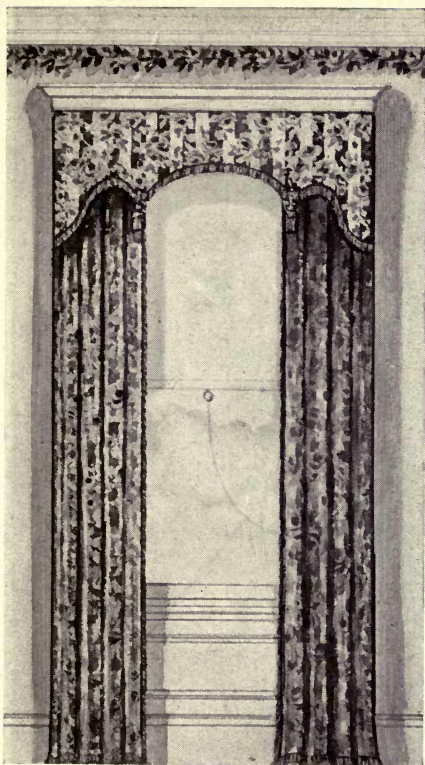
ies and from them can select the green shades and repeat in our furniture the green tones, thus transforming the entire room. Even the curtains themselves will seem changed, since by the use of the plain colors we accent or bring out the same color in the chintz or linen. If the curtains have been rather costly of imported chintz or linen we may be glad to make use of this transforming color scheme.

Plain, broad-striped curtains have come into vogue. They are restful and dignified, but they miss the engagingness of flowers and birds and lattice and boughs. They serve to make the window openings appear high and narrow, whereas the effect usually desired is breadth. Also one gets the effect, if there are many doors and window openings, of a picket fence, a continuous succession of lines marching round and around the room. This may be somewhat counteracted by using a valance with the stripes going across. If the valance is plain fitted, the effect is that of too sharp a cutting off. If gathered, the lines serve to further the upright appearance. Broken stripes cut by geometrical or floral designs are preferable.

20 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

Particularly charming are the stripes combined with vines and trellis, which give the appearance of lightness and avoid the mussiness of an all-over design.

The objection often held against linen curtains is that they crush. However, curtains are not so placed that they have much opportunity to be crushed. The texture is richer than cretonne and linen always outwears cotton. They are more expensive per yard, but the colors and designs are superior. As the better linens come 50 inches wide they permit of a more striking design with the repeat farther apart. If the repeat, for instance, is a yard apart, you can get a most stunning effect when the curtains are hung. This is conspicuously true when the design has large birds, branches and foliage, and also with the matchless Chinese designs where the community life of an entire village is so enchantingly depicted. In dyeing linen the plain background surface is always unevenly dyed, adding much to the depth and the texture of the cloth. Were it a perfectly flat, even color, the surface would lack interest. This rough texture renders the outlines uneven and thus softens and



A shaped valance of figured linen, concealing the trim and topped by a simple cornice

enriches the design. A hard unbroken line is always trying.

There come several 50-inch cotton materials which permit the same design as the linen. The weight of the goods is heavier and they give excellent service.

There is an endless variety of plain materials for window hangings. One excellent, inexpensive material is cotton Jaspé, which has a smooth, agreeable texture and comes in various colors broken by tiny uneven lines. It can be had guaranteed sun-fast.

Rep, cotton or woolen, give good service and the plain color may be relieved by a colored guimpe or cord at the edge. Rep hangs well, and for an inexpensive material is the best on the market for plain curtains. It is apt to show spots readily, so it is better for hangings than upholstery.

It is remarkable what richness is immediately given by the use of velvet or velour. The texture has a glow and depth of richness. For the city house, velour curtains are a wise choice. Used with deep cream under-draperies, the windows have an effect of elegance that woolen or

22 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

linen curtains fail to give. They require careful making and lining and they crease and mark easily, but by careful brushing they may be kept in perfect condition. Velvet curtains also need brushing, as they gather lint. The latest striped velvets are a revived fashion. They are both inexpensive and striking, especially when used with deep toned paint.

Velvets suitable for curtains come in all grades and prices. Some are cut, some brocaded. When we reach the point of this initial expense we should turn over the making of our hangings to a professional curtain maker. The same is true of damasks and brocades. Taffeta curtains, while the material is costly, may be made by the amateur. The quality of the trimming must be of the best, as well as the workmanship. The stripes are as varied as they are enchanting. Taffeta curtains are appropriate for bedrooms as well as dining and drawing rooms.

With this gamut of curtain materials before us we have only to choose that one which will give us the best service and make our rooms most attractive.

The problem of how to cut and how

to hang is before us, and in that also much choice lies. Luckily, elaborately festooned and trimmed curtains have long since been relegated to the dust heap — and that without regret on the part of every sensible decorator and housewife.

III

THE KINDS OF CURTAINS FOR THE KINDS OF WINDOWS — FRENCH WINDOWS, CASE- MENTS, PLAIN OR SASH WINDOWS, TRANSOMS

THERE are several kinds of windows, and each must, of necessity, be differently treated. Always see to it that the curtains do not prevent the window being readily and easily opened. Curtains that have to be pushed, hauled and shoved aside every time we want a breath of air are an unforgivable nuisance. They should be hung far enough back on the trim, not to allow a shaft of light to show between the curtain and the casing. They should protect from prying eyes, mitigate cold draughts, and last of all be an adornment. Curtains properly made and hung should fulfil all these requirements.

There are French windows, casement windows, sash or hung windows; and transom windows combined with all three.

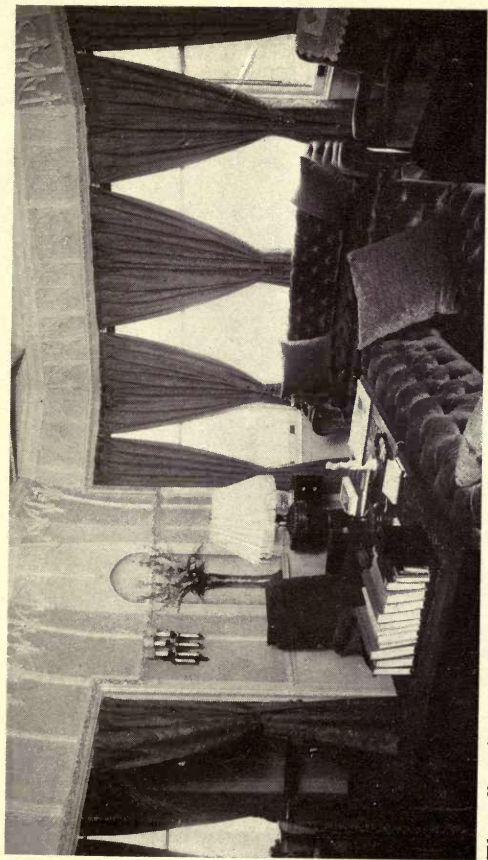
French windows are usually nothing more or less than doors, but should be curtained as windows if there are other kinds of windows in the room. If all the windows are French, they should be hung as doors are hung, i.e., the portières and hangings should match.

Over the glass some thin material should be stretched, attached to a rod top and bottom. An excellent rod to use is flat, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick and about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. This is better with thin curtaining than a round rod as it keeps the curtains close against the pane. The side edges should be very carefully adjusted else the edge will bulge. Always hem the edge, even if it is selvage, so that there will be a firm and secure edge to stretch. These thin curtains may or may not have a heading. They should not cover the trim of the window casing itself. The top panels may be left exposed, the curtain only reaching the bottom of the top pane. This is an informal treatment and permits more light into the room, at the same time protecting

26 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

us from the outside. Such curtains should never be permitted to hang loose, as they would flap each time the window was opened.

For over-draperies on French windows a heavy material is suitable. It should be hung on the outside trim on strong rods, as the pull is severe. Plain long hangings may be used wide enough to pull together at night. The hangings should be lined to give them body, also because the outside as well as the inside is seen. If a valance is hung between the curtains, the curtains must remain stationary. A fitted or French pleated valance, hung across the entire opening on a separate rod, permits the curtain being easily pulled back and forth. If the windows open out, either of these methods are adaptable: if they open in, with no depth to the casing, the doors would catch in the valance. Therefore, the only practical hanging is plain straight folds on either side placed well on to the casing at the top. If the window has a stationary transom above, a valance may be hung all the way across, or better still, one-third on each side, permitting the light to come through the cen-



The effect here would have been much improved had the curtains been less full, hung straight, with a valance between

ter of the transom and giving the decorative effect of a valance. The valance should be Shirred or made with a French pleated heading. The method of doing this is treated in a later chapter. The depth of the valance varies from one-third to one-half yard.

Casement windows allow of a variety of charming treatments. The Shirred thin curtains may be stretched across the window casing and attached firmly at top and bottom, otherwise when the casement window was thrown open, the curtains would flap in the wind. If the lights are small in casement windows, it is best to leave them uncovered. Pots of plants arranged on the window-sill give the necessary protection from the outside. Chintz or casement cloth curtains may be hung on the outside of the trim and should be made wide enough to come together when pulled. Hung with rings and rods adjusted to slip easily back and forth, these curtains may be pulled at night. If a valance is used it must be hung on a separate rod completely across the curtains. This window arrangement is extremely picturesque. When thin curtains are used against the

28 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

glass, the over-curtaining may be hung with a valance between, thus making them stationary. The former method, however, is preferable. Casement overhangings should not come to the floor but should end at the sill. As the sill usually stands out from the window trim, it is best not to have them come below the sill. A window seat below the casement should be upholstered in the same material as the hangings.

If the sill is broad, a good effect may be had by hanging the thin curtains directly under the heavier ones on the outside of the trim, that is, leaving the window pane itself uncovered, but softening and enriching the effect of the over-curtains by the soft thin ones directly underneath. These should be extended 6 inches or 8 inches beyond the heavier curtains. The color contrast should not be too sharp. For example, the casement window in the bedroom or dining room might be hung with yellow and green flowered chintz, and thin curtains could be of a soft muslin or madras with yellow dots or small figures. Such a treatment needs above all to be fresh and picturesque. Imagine at such

a window yellow daffodils or chrysanthemums! A large bowl of gold fish and on either side a box tree, pyramidal in shape — make a good window decoration for the winter.

Casement cloth is the traditional material for casement windows. The colors are rather somber and the texture very smooth and plain; therefore it were better to use in a living or dining room or hall, than a chamber. The curtains should be edged with a simple cut fringe of the same tone. Casement cloth always needs some finish in the way of fringe or guimpe. With equally good taste it may be hung as an under- or over-curtain at a casement window.

In a casement window in a library or living room, an unusual effect may be had by inserting one or three panes of stained decorative glass. The design must be excellent and the color good: otherwise the effect will be cheap and tawdry. These decorative panes give a note of interest and also may be very lovely with the light shining through them, laying splendid splotches of color on a polished floor. Be careful that the color does not fall on a

30 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

vari-colored rug or a piece of furniture, else half the effect will be lost.

A group of casement windows set in a deep embrasure gives opportunity for handsome and unusual effects. Each window may be hung with casement cloth, and at the entrance of the embrasure, heavy curtains reaching to the ground may be used. This creates an alcove. If, instead, we wish to make the embrasure part of the room itself, the thin under-hangings may be put directly against the windows and the heavy draperies hung at either end, connected with a valance over the entire group of windows. Or else, one heavy curtain may be hung between each window and at the end, valances hung between them. Any or all of these treatments will give an excellent effect, provided the curtains are well made and evenly hung.

With ordinary hung windows, which of themselves are not decorative, we should make a distinct decorative feature of the hangings. A large unbroken expanse of plate glass certainly needs some softening and surrounding decoration as to curtaining. The day has past for the draped and festooned and overruffled hanging.

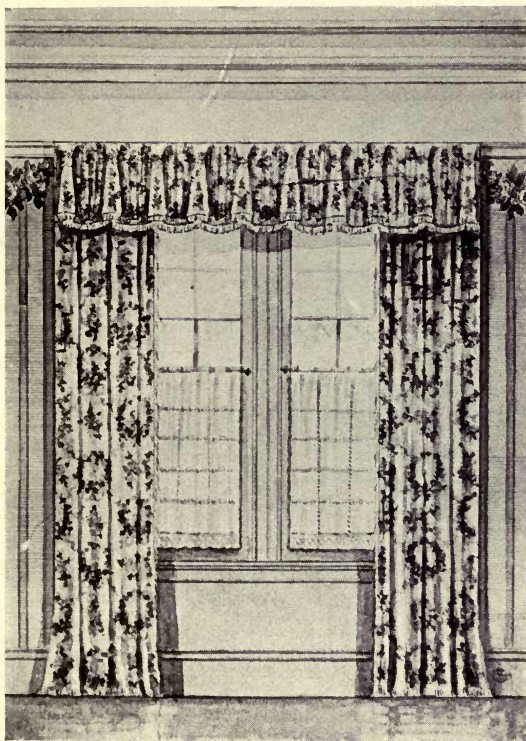
Once everything was done to disguise a window as such. Simpler methods have come to replace these offenses against simplicity and health.

Sash or under-curtains are made to be hung from the top of the upper window frame reaching to the sill. These are hung with rings and rods and are easily adjusted. The objection to them is that when the lower sash is opened the thin curtains fly out of the window, get dirty, and their fabric is impaired. Another method is to attach one pair of curtains at the top of the window casing. These reach the top of the lower window. A second pair are hung from the top of the lower casing and left free or attached at the bottom. This makes raising the window a little difficult, as the lower sash has to be raised up under the top curtain. A third method is to stretch a pair of curtains on the lower sash only. Thus we get a good share of light from the top uncovered glass, and at the same time we are protected from the outside by the lower sash. Any sort of a thin lace which, in the trade, includes nets, scrims, muslins and laces, answers the purpose.

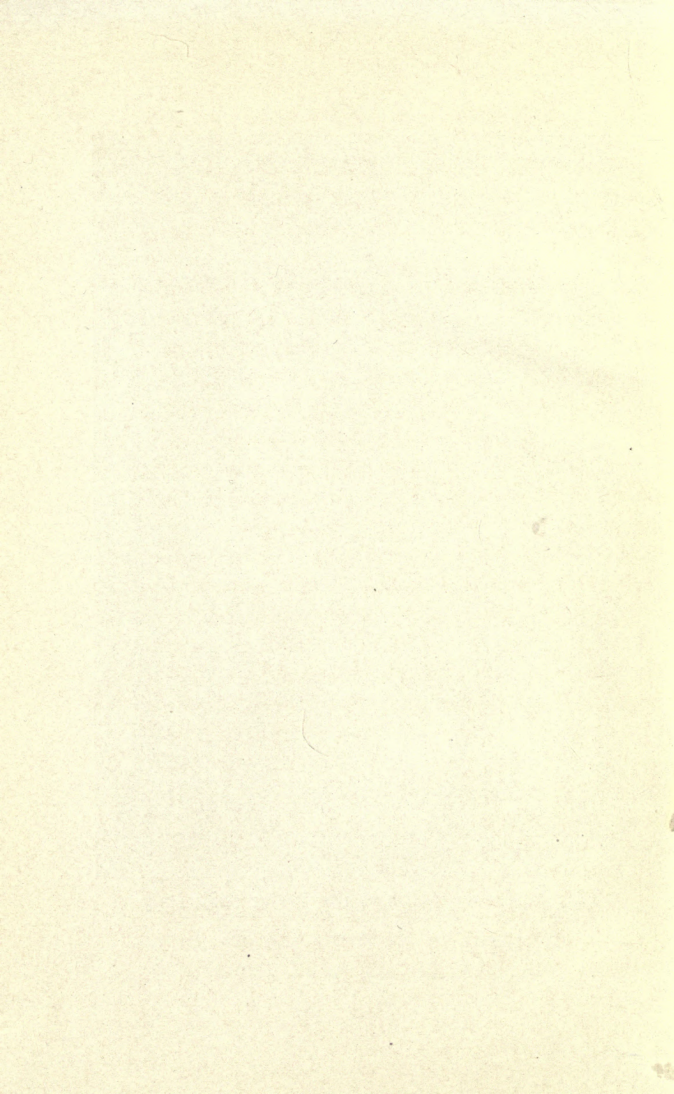
32 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

For over-draperies many suitable materials may be used. The curtains should be hung on the trim, exposing as much as is desired of the woodwork. This is more a matter of choice than taste. If the woodwork is very fine and tones in well with the sidewall, it is well to leave it exposed, as it makes an architectural feature of the window opening. On the other hand, if the casing is poor in construction and color, the over-draperies may be hung at the outside of the trim and as high up as possible, thus concealing the entire woodwork. In a room where the woodwork is white and the paper dark, the use of a lighter toned hanging effectually conceals the woodwork and avoids an effect which otherwise, on account of the too sharp contrast of woodwork and paper, would be disastrous.

If we wish to make a room appear higher, we can hang curtains at the top of the trim. If the curtains come to the floor, this tends to make the room look much higher. This forms a succession of vertical lines in a room. On the other hand, should we wish to make the room look lower, hang the curtains low on the



Thin under-curtains at the lower sash only



trim and almost the full width of it. If the trim is exposed at the top it must be exposed on the sides, but not in its entirety.

In some old houses, built in the period of solid mahogany doors and beautifully carved mantels, we find really exquisite window and door trims, finely proportioned cornices and side pilasters with hand carving which it would seem a pity to cover. To carry out their exquisite feeling use net curtains trimmed with real lace and repeating, if possible, something of the design of the woodwork. I have in mind one such treatment. The casings have in the side-panels roses and in the lace of the curtains the same motif is used. The curtains reach just to the perfectly proportioned paneling below the window. A valance is hung between each curtain and the color tones perfectly with that of the woodwork. It gives to this drawing room a lightness and refinement that suits the period in which the room was conceived.

It is always a question of dispute whether or not draperies should come to the sill or to the floor. If they come to

34 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

the floor they should be made to just clear. The weight of hanging will always tend to make them longer. For formal rooms, these long curtains are best. They add to formality and richness. Curtains planned to come only to the sill should better come to the bottom of the window casing. It is more consistent with the idea of outlining the entire window opening. Moreover if they just top the sill, there is nothing to hinder them from blowing out every time the window is opened, but coming below the sill helps to keep them inside. Such draperies may be hung as a pair of straight hangings or with a valance between, or with a full width valance.

A valance is preferable in every instance because it serves as a connection for outline and color. If the curtain, for instance, is rather dark and hangs in straight long folds, the room, with many openings, has the effect of a succession of dark divisions. If, on the other hand, the line and color is carried across by a valance, we have the horizontal line to break the continuous vertical effect. Also without it, there is usually an ugly empty

space at the top, disclosing a rod or two. The work and expense of a valance, particularly one hung between the curtains, is well worth the effect. The manner of cutting, making and applying valances will be taken up in a later chapter.

Any of these various types of windows may have a transom overhead. This may be treated as part of the window opening, as a distinct window, or as a group of windows. If the first is the case, it can be hung with a valance all the way across or part way across, pleated or shirred. The curtains themselves should start underneath at the top of the valance; in fact, the transom should be treated merely as an extra window casing. If a separate window or a group is made of it, thin curtains to match the under-curtains should be shirred and attached top and bottom. Heavy curtains may be hung at either end, the height of the transom, but this is rather an unfortunate arrangement. It were well either to have thin shirred curtains entirely covering the glass or else put a valance over the transom forming one unit with the window below.

IV

MEASURING

IN measuring for hangings one must be accurate. It is astonishing and sometimes heart-rending to see the havoc an inch too little or too much will make in a curtain when hung. Every measurement should be taken with a 3-foot rule,—not a tape measure, which stretches,—and carefully recorded. A good idea for the amateur is to have a blank book in which to set down the outside and inside measurements of each window trim, also a sketch.

Even if one is far from being an artist, sketch in a curtain scheme, being sure the window is drawn to scale. This is easily done. Use a measure divided into 12ths of an inch, count each 12th as an inch and you have at once the foot, and three feet make a yard. Thus 3 inches in

scale make one yard in reality. Your window may be $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 3 feet; you have $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3 inches to draw. Then sketch in your curtain. This sketching process is helpful when double or triple windows are used, with or without a transom. It is always a problem how to treat these, and if you have sketched the curtain in you have never to say, "Well, I might like it, but I cannot just picture how it will look."

Besides the sketch of the window put where the sash curtain is to be hung and the height and width finished, also mark with a dot where the rod is to be attached. Under RODS put how many rods of each length and how much thin material, allowing always 6 inches on each curtain for hems and headings, therefore the amount of the material will be greater than the added figure of the curtain finished. Put beside the amount of the material the width, the price, and the shop where purchased. Scrim, muslin and nets come in various widths; sometimes by using a wide width and splitting it you get better material at a lower price. A simple way for thin hangings is to run a flat tape through

38 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

the hem, allowing for a small heading. Shirr the curtain the width it is to cover and tack directly on to the window sash, or better, sew rings on the back and use a rod. Curtains of soft net, scrim or muslin are best shirred, but if the material is bulky and not pliable, they should be pleated. Always allow 2 inches for full length curtains at the top for possible shrinkage, and the coarser the weave the more shrinkage is to be considered.

For heavier hangings, the problem is quite the same. First we must decide what part of the trim they are to go on, then with the measurements of our sketch exact we can get the exact length of the curtains themselves. Put down the length finished.

Next we must decide on the style and width of heading. A plain gathered heading of 2 inches in cotton materials is a good proportion. A French heading takes from 3 inches to 4 inches. Curtains may be hemmed at the top and the rod run through, thus shirring them, or they may have a hem with a heading and the rod run through the hem. The width between the

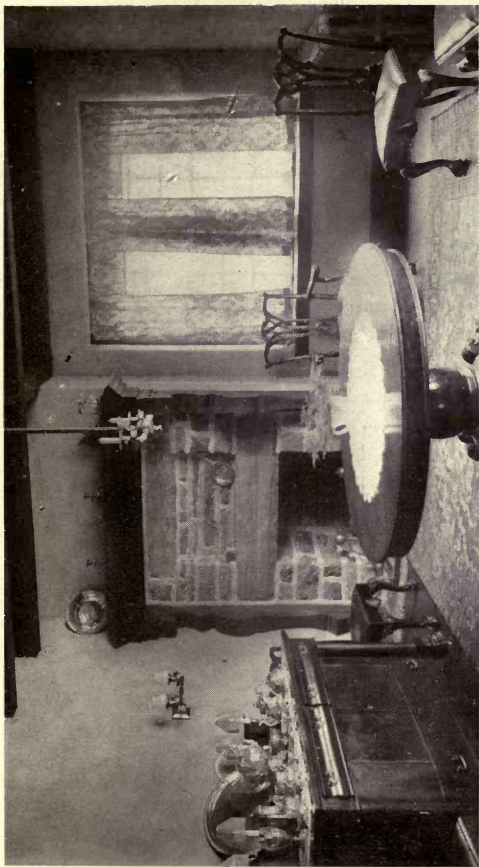
two stitchings should be a little less than twice the diameter of the rod. For example, for a 1-inch rod allow $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches between the stitchings — this allows for possible shrinkage.

Now, that the top methods and measurements have been disposed of, consider the hem. In thin materials, it should be 3 ply, as this adds firmness and weight sufficient to keep the curtain in place and to hang well. The prettiest finish for scrim is the hemstitch; this can be easily done and adds much to the otherwise common-placeness of the curtain. Such hem or hemstitching requires twice the width of the hem. For large windows and full length sash curtains, a good width for the hem is 3 inches, for shorter windows less. Sometimes the curtain is turned up on the right side and a fringe or guimpe is stitched on. Charming chintz edgings come, and if these are chosen to repeat the colors of the overhangings, the effect is very attractive. Never turn a wide hem and apply guimpe or fringe on the edge. The edging should act as a finish. It should be begun on the top of the inside length

40 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

of the curtain and brought down and around the bottom edge. It should not be carried around the outside edge or at the top. As this method requires less material than a hem allow at most an inch for turn-in in measuring.

The lined curtain comes next. If a curtain is lined we have no hem to consider. At the top, the material itself should form the heading, as the inside of the heading shows if it happens to turn over. The lining should start at the bottom of the heading and end one inch above the bottom of the curtain. It should not come down flush with the bottom. It should come within 1 inch or 2 inches of the sides. Therefore, in measuring for material for lined curtains, allow the width of the heading, the length of the curtain and 2 inches extra from the length at the bottom for turn up. In measuring the lining, allow the full length of the curtain minus the width of the heading and the 1 inch at the bottom, also 1 inch at each side. Sateen, which comes in 50-inch width at the upholstery counter, is a heavier, better quality lining than any found at regular lining departments.



These figured curtains are bound with a plain edge

We should now have in our measurement book the following: the length of the finished curtains, the amount of the material required for each curtain and also for the pair; the exact measurement of the lining when applied and finished, and also the amount required. For the edging we have the finished length and width, allowing 6 inches for the corner and turn-ins, and twice that for the pair. If there are several windows of the same measurements we have only to multiply the amounts required by the windows.

Materials come in two widths, 31 inches and 50 inches, perhaps varying an inch or so. We can use the full 31 inches or we may split the 50 inches. Provided the pattern lends itself to this division and the window openings are not too wide to allow for it, the 50-inch goods work to better advantage. It comes in more handsome designs and sometimes in superior material. The edges if possible should have an applied edging, not hemmed, for every inch of the 25 will be needed. Often with elaborate under-hangings all that is wanted is a straight fold of color to carry out a scheme in a room and the

42 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

25-inch curtains do this admirably. In the bedroom, where the 50-inch material is used as a bedcover, the same material split answers well for the curtains. Thus in measuring, using half width, you need just half as much material.

Thus far we have reckoned using curtains without valances. To measure for valances requires much time and thought, as they are as varied as the ingenuity of man or woman can make them. But since we are dealing with a simpler sort of curtain, that the ambitious householder may make for herself, we shall put aside for the professional the elaborate valance.

Of valances, there are gathered, pleated and stiff valances or lambrequins fitted over the window casing and covering over the sides as well. In measuring material for a pleated and shirred valance allow $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ extra of the width completed and from 12 inches depth in the bedroom to 18 inches for a more formal treatment. For instance, in a bedroom using a split 50-inch material for side curtains, the entire width may be used for a valance of 12 inches. This does not include a 2-inch

hem or the heading. Avoid making the valances too full, as they stick out, or too skimpy, as they look meager and economical. If a flat valance is used the amount of the material depends upon the width of the window. One width will probably do for this valance. If the valance is shaped and lined we must allow 2 inches for the top and bottom turn-in. Of course, in a shaped valance, the measurement must be taken from the widest part.

We must always allow in figured goods, for the repeat and the amount of goods wasted must be reckoned in the cost. Sometimes this material may be used in the valance.

In a large spread design it is surprising how little the general motif shows when the curtain is hung. If we are undecided about the necessity of matching up a design in a pair of curtains we can always gather up the material and pin it over the back of a chair or screen and see how important the strong motif appears when gathered. If it shows decidedly, match up the pairs perfectly; if not, we

44 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

can hang them as the cloth cuts and consider ourselves lucky.

Having the measurement of the material required for each pair of curtains and the valance, we have only to add up the amounts in the various windows, multiply this by the price per yard and we have the cost of the material. Add the cost of the lining and the edging and we have an estimate that should be accurate.

Damask, velours and such handsome materials require interlining of canton flannel. This is too big an undertaking for the amateur. The cost of the material warrants their being made up in a proficient manner.

In making curtains, use a large table which you can walk around. A bed usually answers the purpose but a table is better. Use a good sewing machine, baste carefully and cut by thread, with the exception of very cheap cretonnes. This is one reason why cheap cretonnes scarcely pay, as they cannot be cut by a thread, as the weave is too imperfect and when they are laundered this imperfection makes them skew. Sash curtains should always

be cut by a thread, as they must be laundered regularly. Scrim is preferable to muslin, as the weave is more even.

V

VALANCES AND EDGINGS

VALANCES which extend across the entire width of the window tend, by their horizontal lines, to make a room look lower. Long straight curtains without valances tend to make a room look higher. Both these methods of window treatments may be used to attain the desired effect in a room.

Fitted valances may be lined with a heavy cotton material similar to canvas: buckram is apt to crack and damp weather loosens the gum and the valance loses its shape. Heavy compo board is also used, but this requires a workshop and an experienced upholsterer.

If we are very ambitious and want to make a fitted valance we should go at it carefully. First cut a heavy paper pattern, the desired shape; do not make too

many curves, as it will make the process of applying the edging difficult. See that the pattern just fits the window top and comes over the side the depth of the trim so as to conceal the rod that supports the curtain. Then cut the heavy cotton lining. Put this on the goods, being careful on a figured goods that the middle design is well proportioned and well spaced. Cut the goods an inch larger than the cotton lining, pin it over and sew it down, taking care that the stitches do not show through. Then put on the edging, guimpe or fringe, as the case may be. Guimpe may be put on 1 inch or so from the edge, forming an insertion. With metal galloon this gives a good effect. With velvet or velour do not sew the galloon too tight, as it will sink below the nap. After the guimpe is sewed on, being particularly careful that neat corners are turned, lay on the sateen lining and blind-stitch it down, leaving a half inch margin. If the material permits pressing, press the valance and the guimpe, and then tack on to a thin board, 3 inches wide by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, and attach this board to the top trim. This allows for the free



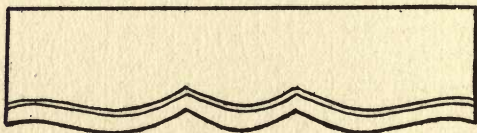
Gathered valance



Box-pleated valance



French headed valance



Shaped valance

play of the curtains hung on a separate rod underneath.

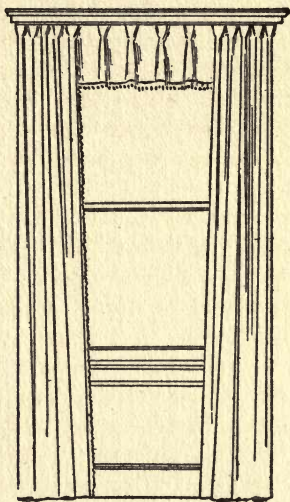
Valances of plain velvet are very handsome when combined with curtains of a harmonizing damask or brocade. Other valances may be made of plain toned linen, blending with the vari-colored linen curtains. This brings out the color desired accented in the curtains. Keep the valance dark in tone.

Velvet valances may be used with linen hangings, but the linen must be very handsome to warrant the combination; otherwise the contrast in the two textures cheapens the linen. With deep tones of mulberry and old blue this combination is strikingly successful.

The headings of valances are similar to those of curtains. They may be simply shirred or pleated, box-pleated or French headed. The latter consists of taking 3 small tucks about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch deep, depending upon the weight of the texture of the material, and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches or 3 inches from the top. The pleats should be sewed at the top and also at the point where the hook is attached. Long French hooks may be bought at 30 cents a dozen, and

50 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

these should be attached firmly at the top and bottom of the heading. The hook



A French headed valance hung between the curtains

then fastens into the ring attached to the rod.

Box-pleats should be as wide as the space between that which separates them. The pleats should be tacked top and bottom and then sewed on to the hook. A

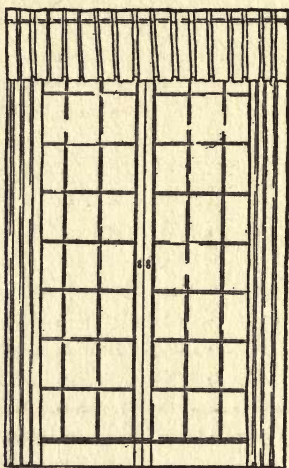
flat tape may be sewed on to the heading where the hook is attached to save wear in the goods itself. Pleats are more professional than shirrs or gathers, but they must be measured exactly, sewed firmly and pressed well. Fancy draping should be left to the professional curtain-maker or, better still, be dispensed with altogether.

There are many attractive ways to edge curtains. Straight 1-inch to 2-inch bindings of a plain material give a finished look and are rather in vogue. Silk ribbon bindings similar to that used on dress seams may be stitched on flat. This is easy, inexpensive, and washes well.

If the pattern of the cretonne has some black, the binding may be of black with a very *chic* effect. Thin cream curtains bound with color sunfast are very pretty. A little ruffle of taffeta ribbon gathered on to thin mercerized material is dainty. A sunfast, shading pink and silver, with a tiny taffeta ribbon ruffle, is a sweet idea for a child's room. The combination must always be in two tones of one color, or else very soft tones of contrasting colors, unless one goes in for such combination as

52 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

a thin orange material with a binding of black taffeta. The same edging effects may be had by using a taffeta ribbon

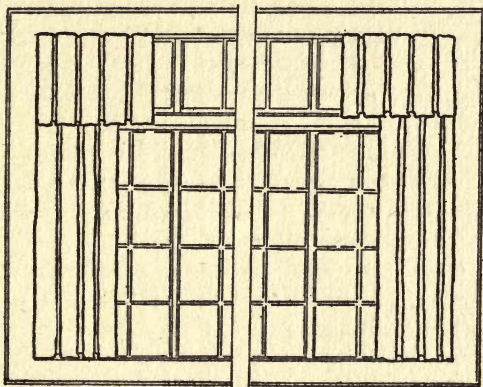


If the French doors open out, a French pleated valance may be used

about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches and gathering it on either edge and applying it to the curtain edge. This is more formal in effect and may be used on damask or taffeta.

Outlining a shaped valance, this makes a very complete and graceful finish.

Silver and gilt or both mixed make a good finish on certain materials. It is



Long valance

Shorter valance

a little stiff, however. New gilt galloon may be antiqued by dipping it into stale beer. Used with reproduction of an old damask the new gilt looks rather too tawdry. Wide gold bullion fringe makes a striking finish for the bottom of a silk

54 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

curtain. It is not wise to use it on the side edges.

Countless fascinating cotton edgings with or without fringe come for cotton hangings. If we feel that the colors in the material need strengthening a plain colored edging serves to bring out the colors. Imitations of netted fringes come, and they are as useful for bedspreads as curtains.

The valance may be trimmed with a wide guimpe or fringe, and the edge of the curtain left plain. This is an inexpensive and attractive treatment.

For thin silk under-curtains narrow edgings of silk come in stock colors. All colors and combinations may be made to order, but at considerable more cost.

It is always wise to keep the same textures with edgings, i.e., do not put a silk edging on a cotton material unless the cotton is mercerized to appear like silk.

Curtains should be left to hang straight and not loop back with cords or tassels. Sometimes, however, it is necessary, and then a simple band of the material or a suitable size simple cord is used. Old-fashioned glass and colored curtain

rosettes are coming back, to fasten the curtains on. They have a place, no doubt, but the straight folds of the curtains more than offsets any of their decorative charm.

VI

COLOR SUGGESTIONS AND REFURBISHING

A FEW general color schemes may be suggested. If the upholstery and wall are of plain color, good effect is had by using vari-colored hangings such as chintz; if, on the other hand, a room needs quieting down or if it has an overabundance of furniture, and many colors, one toned draperies will do much to counteract this effect. If the curtains are vari-colored, keep the portières one toned, selecting a tone found in the curtains.

Do not select a curtain to match a paper without first seeing the light through the fabric, as this may very distinctly alter the color. Good old historical designs generally give the best satisfaction. In a room with Colonial or mahogany furniture, hangings of a light

French design are especially pleasing, the vivacity of the French design and coloring relieving somewhat the austerity of the Colonial lines.

In a gray room, rose and mulberry or blue and green, or black and white touched with some brilliant colors make a combination of good value.

A tan or neutral background accepts any and almost every applied color scheme. Green-blue and dull orange, especially when used with oak or walnut furniture, are the finest colors according to the decorators. In a color scheme one may run the gamut of intensity and area of color. There is one rule that we may use in selection of curtains as well as anything else in our interior: intense colors must be used in small areas. The ultra modern schemes where an entire room is developed using full strength colors are so unlivable as to be quite out of the sphere of this practical handbook.

A yellow room takes well to green hangings or certain shades of violet. In a yellow room nothing is more effective than the use of a chintz covered with clear transparent colors of Spring. In the yel-

58 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

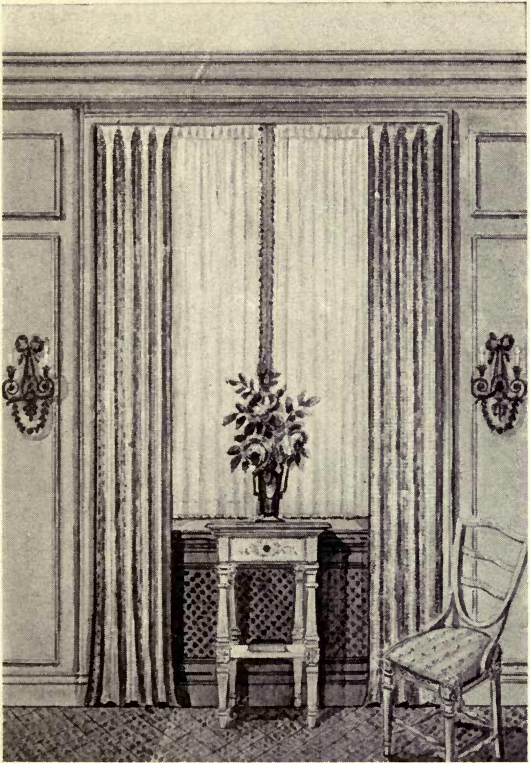
low room a light green-blue may be used but with great care and discretion. A breakfast room or porch carries this scheme well.

A pink room is best done with white or delicate blue and lavender.

Blue rooms, deep in tone, should keep to blue of varying degrees, relieved by dull yellow or green. If the room is a bedroom, white or green and blue look well at the windows.

The vogue of black and white is so popular, partly because it permits such a riot of colors and combinations. Black and white, mulberry, a touch of clear yellow, and some dull green — this sounds as though it were the recipe for a cake. And, seriously, rooms might be built up of such recipes. We select in our curtains just whatever color we wish to emphasize in our room. Such analysis might save us from many a pitfall.

Curtains may be kept up and hung in cotton bags during the summer — an unsightly procedure, but with a small store room and unskilled help, a good method. If the unwashable curtains are taken down, they should be carefully



An effective window treatment without a valance

brushed and thoroughly aired and packed away in large boxes. Never pack curtains tightly. It takes all the winter to get the creases out of them. Velour curtains may be sent to the cleaner to be steamed if they are badly crushed. With thin curtains, wash them in the spring and pack them away; in the fall when they are ready to be put up, dampen and iron them. Lace curtains should be washed and starched and pinned down flat to the bed, floor or frame, but never ironed.

Curtains that are faded, soiled or sunburnt at the bottom may be turned upside down, as the top, carefully pleated in, can be so arranged as not to show the shabby parts. Curtains never look as shabby up as they do in our hands, for which we may be duly thankful. Those that we thought quite impossible may be cut off, re-edged and will surprise us with their presentable appearances. Curtains may easily be reversed, the right hand side changed to the left. In that manner the outside edge which is faded and shabby is put next to the trim and tucked under as much as possible; the other edge being

60 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

comparatively fresh and unfaded since it has been protected by the trim.

Curtains may be dyed, but they do not keep their color. With heavy curtains like damask, they had better be sent to the regular dyer. Light silk curtains can readily be done at home and the expense is nominal.

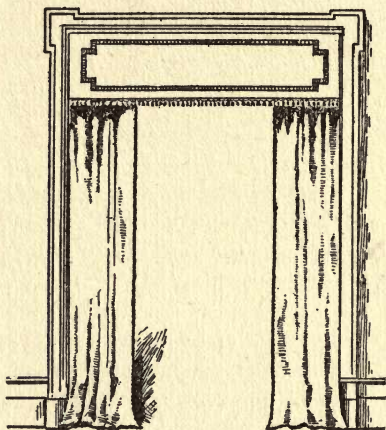
VII

PORTIÈRES

THE general rules and suggestions made for curtains serve also for door hangings. Plain portières are used with figured hangings. They should be as rich yet as unobtrusive as possible. Double-faced materials come in many varieties. Portières must be presentable from both sides. It does not look well to use a plain material on one side and figured of another texture on the opposite. Two colors of the same texture are always permissible, as the color schemes of connecting rooms are different. Portières should be hung with rings on rods from inside the trim, since the opening is an architectural feature and should be treated as such. Always see that the portière blends with the floor covering beneath it. Plain or

62 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

self-tone fabrics are preferable as stripes and much figured patterns serve to accentuate the opening. If we use a pat-



Portière with fitted valance

terned material, the design must match in each pair. Repps, velours, damasks and tapestries are the most suitable materials.

The edges of the portières may be hemmed down with a wide hem at the bottom. If a cord is applied be sure and do not pull the stitches too tightly, as that is

the main reason for the edge puckering. The nap of materials with a pile should run down. Lined portières are made in exactly the same way as curtains except that both material and lining come even at the edge, instead of being set back $\frac{1}{2}$ inch as in curtains. Portières may be made up as a bag, the two right sides being put together and stitched. If the material allows it, the portières should be pressed around all the edge and the cord applied at the edge and bottom. Galloon may be used as an insertion, but this should be applied before the curtains are stitched together.

Suitable edgings come with and without fringes, with a double heading. The material is slipped between the heading and this stitched on. No hem therefore is necessary, and the finish is as good on one side as on the other. If the valance is used, have it at least six feet from the floor.

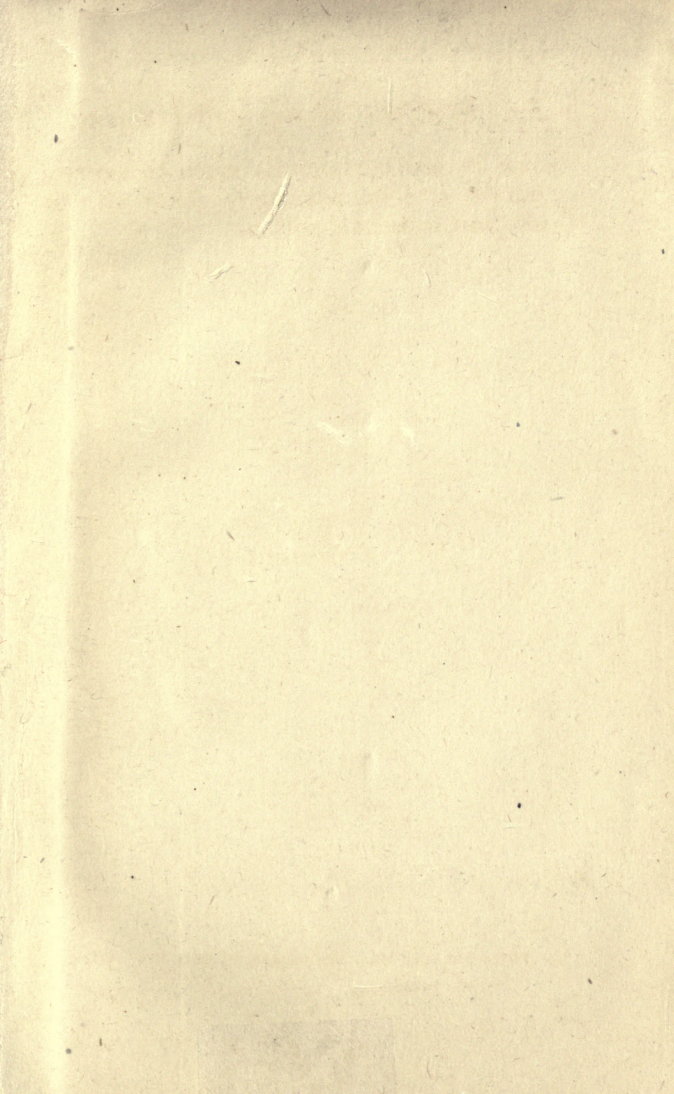
The selection, making and hanging of curtains and portières seems endless in its variety of choice. It were better so, else we should have less left to our personality to express, and, hackneyed as this expres-

64 *Making Curtains and Hangings*

sion is, our curtains do much to express ourselves to the passing neighbor without and our household within.

THE END

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