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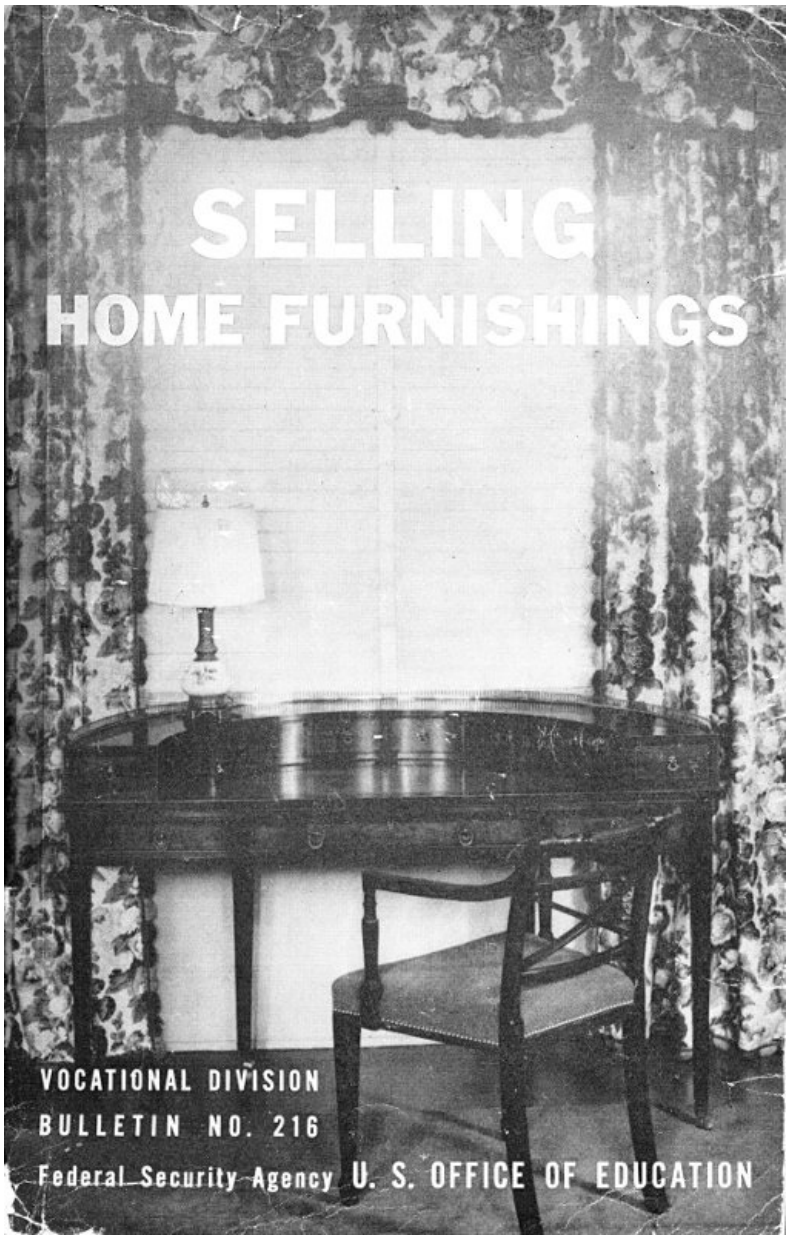

SELLING HOME FURNISHINGS

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Federal Security Agency U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Bulletin No. 216

Business Education
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SELLING HOME FURNISHINGS

A Training Program

Prepared by

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U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION
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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This bulletin has been prepared for use by those who seek self-improvement as members of a group engaged in the study of home furnishings and how to sell them agreeably, intelligently, and competitively.

More than $2,500,000,000 is expended annually in this country for home furnishings. Under present conditions the layman cannot become an expert on the multitude of things he has to buy, and he must purchase many articles more or less blindly. Since much structural detail is hidden from view, the integrity of the dealer is more than merely an advantage—it is a necessity. There are hundreds of interesting and vital facts concerning home furnishings which consumers may learn from retail dealers and members of their sales organizations and which, if they become generally known, will result in greater discrimination and economy in buying and will be reflected in more charming, suitable, and comfortable furnishings in the home.

This bulletin presents at once *opportunity* and *challenge* to those who sell home furnishings:

Opportunity to those who see furniture as a symbol of achievement and distinction. These hear the call to bring beauty out of drab surroundings, and to shape the visible garments of life, and even life itself, making it finer, richer, and a thing of greater worth.

Challenge to those who in selling home furnishings must be conscious of the wide extension of education in the home furnishing art, the rapid improvement in the general taste and specific knowledge of the customer, the tendency to shop in the large centers, the increasing number of small decorators, and the trend to furnished rooms and apartments.

For the convenience of users of this bulletin, the subject matter has been arranged in the form of units, each of which is intended to be made the basis for a minimum of 2 hours discussion and study. With each unit is a set of stimulating questions and a brief reading list. A more detailed reading list will be found in the appendix. This bulletin, hence, may serve as a short unit course for those who can spare time for no more than 8 or 10 group meetings. Certain groups may prefer not to follow the units in the order suggested and to concentrate for a longer time on such important topics as period furniture, interior decoration, the furniture woods, or various room arrangements. For these, selected material may be used for short unit courses in specialized fields. For instance, the last five units, taken together, may serve many salesmen of home furnishings as a basic course in the art of interior decoration.

Attention also is called to the grouping of subject matter to accommodate those who may wish to use this bulletin for reference purposes and in sales meetings called by the management. The individual salesman who uses this material in such a manner will be aided in building up a body of related and organized knowledge which may have application any day in his work with his customers.

At times the text makes generous use of the personal pronoun. This has been done deliberately with the thought that there should be present in every meeting of a group a feeling of comradeship and personal loyalty to a common cause. Hence, at times the text employs the pronouns "we," "our," "you," and "yours," to replace the more formal terms, "the salesperson," the "retailer," or "the representative of the store."

Especial acknowledgment is due Rosalie Flank, style authority and a former director of advertising and public relations for the American Furniture Mart, for many contributions to, and much valuable criticism of, the last five units, which deal with problems of interior decoration. Most of unit XI, which discusses "Accessories and Facts That Mean 'Plus' Sales," and section D of unit III, "Hidden Factors That Increase Sales," were prepared by her. To Frier McCollister, representing the National Association of Bedding Manufacturers, credit is due for much of the material in unit VI, "Selling Sleep Equipment." The authors also have consulted freely Clark B. Kelsey's "Furniture—Its Selection and Use," National Committee on Wood Utilization, United States Department of Commerce, and "The Road to Higher Earnings" issued by the National Retail Furniture Association.

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This Bulletin has been prepared at the direction, and under the supervision of B. Frank Kyker, Chief of the Business Education Service, U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency.

J. C. WRIGHT,
Assistant U. S. Commissioner for Vocational Education.

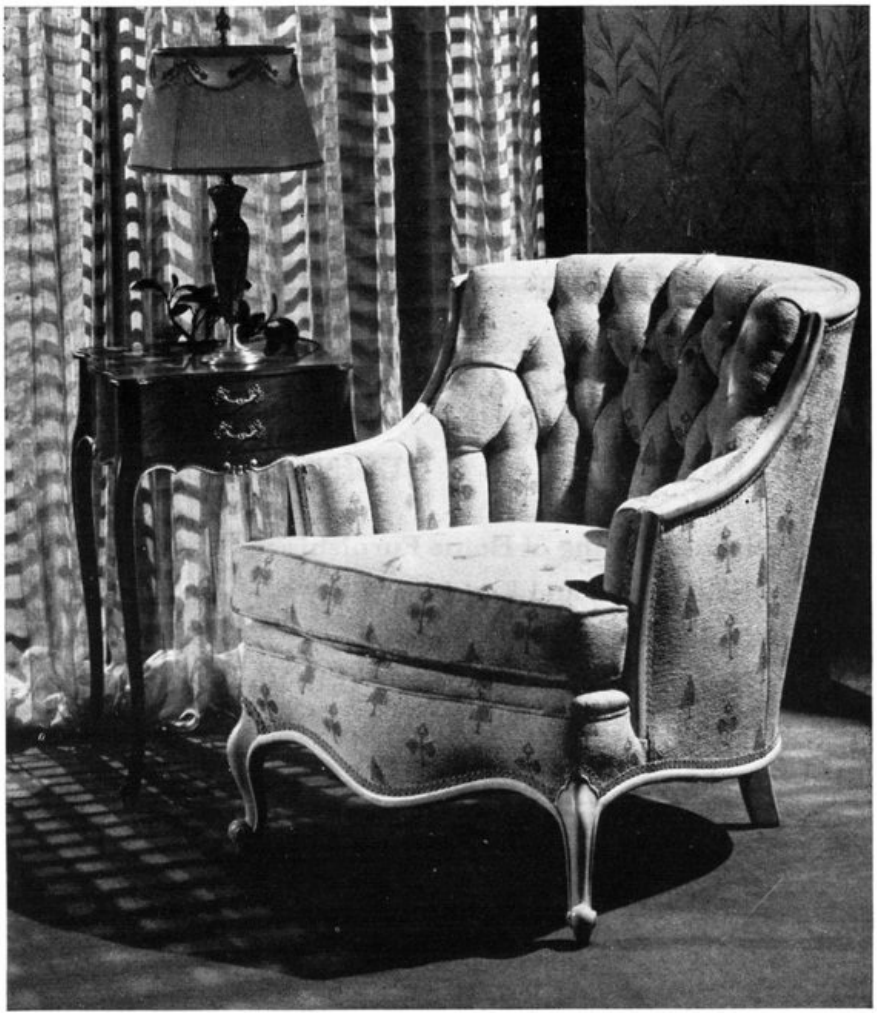
Unit I
THE SALESMAN AS A BUSINESS BUILDER

Specialized Selling of Home Furnishings as a Career

Increasing Sales and Earnings

Fundamentals for Good Selling

The Daily Check-up—A Perpetual Inventory



Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 1.—Contemporary French grouping is expressed in this attractive chair with natural finished wood frame, tufted back, and rust figured beige damask upholstery. The combined lamp stand and plant table is a modern favorite.

SELLING HOME FURNISHINGS

Unit I.—THE SALESMAN AS A BUSINESS BUILDER

SPECIALIZED SELLING OF HOME FURNISHINGS AS A CAREER

Selling home furnishings at retail is one of the most pleasant and fascinating of occupations. It is clean work, physically agreeable, mentally stimulating, and free from deadening routine. Moreover, it is a growing field with limitless possibilities. True, there always will be malcontents who proclaim that the people of America are losing interest in their homes, that restless excitement is their god. Facts indicate, however, that our people are turning their thoughts and aspirations, in increasing measure, to the enduring satisfactions of the home.

MODERN METHODS ARE DESIGNED TO MEET CHANGING CONDITIONS

All available data on buying habits indicate that selling methods should be revised to meet the buyer's interest as it shifts from what furniture is to what furniture will do. This is a logical development. For many years American women have been influenced by the cleverest advertising in the world to desire and to buy finished products on the basis of performance and with little or no concern as to how they are made. To these women, rugs, chairs, tables, and lamps are parts whose interest depends chiefly on how they are combined with other parts to form harmonious wholes. According to a number of comprehensive surveys, three out of every five women who are interested in furniture are concerned chiefly with its effect in making their homes more attractive. If this is true, those who sell home furnishings must have a sound knowledge not only of their merchandise but also of the art of arranging and combining that merchandise to insure comfort and beauty in completely furnished rooms.

This specialized selling of home furnishings as a career, therefore, means mastery of the art of interior decoration. If interior decoration be defined as the sum of the processes by which a home is made beautiful to look at and comfortable to live in, then all who sell home furnishings must understand style, design, materials, and construction. Every furniture salesman who consistently maintains a high sales volume as a result of his own skill will be found to employ the methods of the interior decorator whether he adopts the professional title or not.

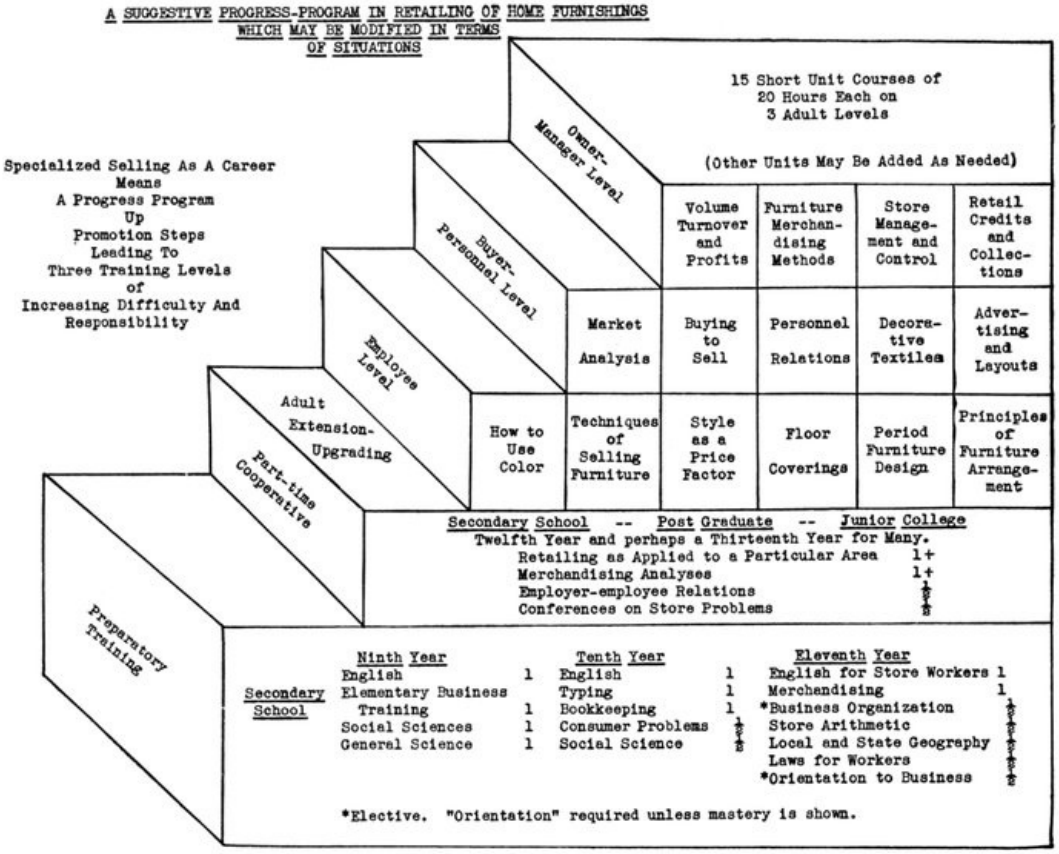


Figure 2.—A suggestive progress-program for those who sell home furnishings which may be modified in terms of situations. Promotion steps are shown on five training levels of increasing difficulty and responsibility.

The fighter who carries a punch in one hand only will lose a good many bouts. The carpenter uses a ripsaw for one operation and a crosscut for another. The salesman is in precisely the same situation. He always can make some sales merely by showing furniture and quoting prices. He always can make more sales by a skillful presentation of style, design, materials, and construction. But in order to build a personal following and to sell to the highest possible percentage of his customers the largest possible amount of merchandise, he must become a competent adviser in the creative processes of home furnishings.

Figure 2 is a diagram of an educational program which, starting with preparatory training in the early years of the secondary school, continues through a period of cooperative part-time training which combines education in the school and on the job, until full-time employment assures continued opportunity to study progressively on three training levels of increasing difficulty and responsibility. Mastery in ability to sell home furnishings implies adequate understanding of materials and selling techniques acquired at each of these training levels.

INCREASING SALES AND EARNINGS

There are three ways by which one can increase his sales and earnings:

1. Increase the daily average number of customers waited on.
2. Increase the average percentage of customers sold.

3. Increase the average volume of each sale.

INCREASE THE DAILY AVERAGE NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS

In order to increase your daily average of people waited on, you must *(a)* arrange to secure customers for the otherwise idle hours of the day; and *(b)* develop the ability to speed up the selling process, which will enable you to sell to more people during the active hours.

(a) To secure customers for the otherwise idle hours of the day, begin with the "lookers" and your "call trade." The woman who has been planning what is to her an important purchase frequently will want to consult her husband or a friend in whose judgment she has confidence. If you have been successful in creating real interest in your merchandise, it will not be difficult to make an evening appointment, obviously as a means of saving the time of the husband or the friend.

When you suggest an early or late appointment you may readily promise exceptional service. You will be assured of the individual attention of your group under conditions removed from the confusion of regular store traffic. If the appointment is during the early morning hours or during evening hours, it will be easy to group the pieces as they are to be used and thus show them as they might actually look in the home.

Then, too, you always will have some sales under way or coming up with old customers, and in many cases you can, by acting in advance, arrange appointments which will occupy otherwise empty time, thus leaving the more active periods of the business day open for routine selling. Time which cannot be spent with customers should be devoted to developmental work.

(b) Among many ways to speed up the selling process are the following:

1. Get down to business, and stay there. Much time is wasted both before the sale is made and afterward in purely extraneous talk, not calculated in any way to advance the sale or build confidence. Within the limits imposed by courtesy, confine the conversation to the business in hand. And don't yield to the easy temptation to talk about yourself.
2. So far as is possible, eliminate the element of guesswork in showing merchandise. Find out enough about your customer's room and what is in it, and about her tastes and plans, to enable you to avoid confusion and resistance, and to cut down the amount of time spent in showing goods there is no chance to sell.
3. Be sure that your appearance, manner, and language are such as to inspire quick confidence. This will make it unnecessary to spend too much time in demonstrating the fitness and value of your merchandise. Alertness, faultless courtesy, and unfeigned interest in the customer's comfort and convenience are vital.
4. Know your stock, including the small occasional pieces whose location is often shifted, so thoroughly that you can go directly to any piece you want to show. In a sale involving several articles, particularly if they must be shown on different floors, plan and route the selling process to eliminate unnecessary movement, and if the display is made during regular store hours, try to close the sale somewhere above the first floor, with its noise, confusion, and beckoning suggestion of the open door.

INCREASE THE AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF CUSTOMERS SOLD

Much of our study will be directed toward discussing methods for increasing the percentage of sales made to customers waited on. Everything is important, and every improvement in equipment will help. Doubtless what is most needed is more knowledge, which we can acquire; more patience, which we can force ourselves by a sheer effort of the will to summon and employ; and more energy, which we can and will develop in the degree that we recognize and desire its rewards.

INCREASE THE AVERAGE VOLUME OF EACH SALE

Trade Up Consistently.

The first requirement of one who would increase the size of individual sales is that he shall trade up consistently. Obviously, this does not mean that the salesmen should disregard prudence and common sense and try to sell a $100 article to the buyer who can afford to spend only $50 or $75, nor does it mean use of high-pressure selling methods. It does mean that he should develop the ability to estimate the buyer's tastes, means, and real needs, and to present elements of value in his merchandise other than price.

Ten years ago a woman who made a shopping tour through 12 department and furniture stores reported that 8 out of 10 salesmen quoted the price of every article immediately, with strong emphasis upon its low price. A number of salesmen mentioned the wood and finish of the article, quoted the price with the usual comments, and stopped—their entire stock of ideas apparently exhausted by this effort. This same kind of selling is still too prevalent. Today's emphasis upon service for specific needs rather than upon low price to build sales volume has given us an ever-increasing number of salespersons who understand that it is foolish to start a sale from the

bottom, foolish to assume that no one desires or can afford to buy good things, and not only foolish but dishonest to discuss furniture of poor quality and low price in terms which fairly could be applied only to better quality and higher price.

Suggest Related Merchandise.

A second and extremely important way to increase the size of your average sale is by the skillful suggestion of related merchandise.

A great many persons buy home furnishings only when they need them as a physical utility. Quite naturally, they get along with the minimum number of pieces and buy for the lowest prices consistent with their ideas of desirable quality.

To be prepared for this type of emergency or "suggestion selling" each salesman should work out for himself, with the help of other salesmen, and by wide reading of trade journals, magazines, newspaper articles, and books in his field, a list of articles in the home-furnishings field which naturally belong together. These lists of "naturals" should be memorized for ready recall at any moment.

"Specials," modern accessories, new designs in small occasional pieces, when advertised to the public, lend themselves to a suggestion-selling program used in connection with a carefully selected call list. In suggestion selling, emphasis should be upon the quality of charm or fitness to be added to a particular room, with the furnishings of which the salesman already is familiar.

Sell More Than Utility and Price.

Those who buy furniture for satisfactions other than utility naturally buy—insofar as their means will permit—whatever pieces they believe to be necessary in order to insure those satisfactions. It is clear that salesmen in order to sell to this type of customer must be able to arouse the interest of these utility and price buyers in other satisfactions.

To do this, they must be able to sell something more than furniture. They must sell on the basis of the enticement of comfort and cushioned ease, the lure of beauty, the appeal of smartness and style. They must sell distinction, the acclaim of friends and guests, the pride and pleasure of the children, and the joy of living in an attractive home.

Does this tend to provoke a skeptical smile from those who have been selling furniture for years? Well, let those smile whose earnings have been wholly satisfactory. As for the others, let them remember that in diminished volume is told the story of those who consistently have attempted to sell furniture as nothing more than furniture and who have stolidly ignored the power of imagination and sentiment in quickening interest and deepening desire.

FUNDAMENTALS FOR GOOD SELLING

Sales experts are agreed that it is impossible to formulate a selling plan that will apply to all salespersons. There are no magic words to be spoken in the presence of potential buyers that will cause them to call loudly for an order blank and reach for a fountain pen. There are certain fundamentals which will help a man to become a better salesman.

BE TACTFUL

Webster defines tact as "a nice discernment of delicate skill in saying and doing what is expedient or suitable in given circumstances." Tact is one of the most valuable assets in salesmanship and must be exercised at all times. Many sales of home furnishings have been lost in discussions with a prospect who was inclined to be belligerent. Under no circumstances enter into an argument. You have heard the well-known axiom, "Win an argument and lose a sale." The fact that you have sound sales arguments to use in presenting your sales story does not mean that you must argue with the prospect to prove your point. Explain tactfully your side of the story and, if your statement is questioned, try to prove it. But rather than enter into an argument about it, pass on to another point, and, if necessary, refer later to the point in question from a different angle.

DON'T INTERRUPT AND DON'T EXAGGERATE

Some salesmen are so anxious to tell all they know about their product that unquestionably they develop a habit of interrupting a prospect every time he speaks. This reflects adversely on the salesman; often it prevents the prospect from telling of the features particularly liked or the real objection to the proposition. When your prospective customer starts to speak, listen, and above all, when answering a question, don't exaggerate. Many a sad failure in selling has resulted from an exaggeration of facts to the point where the prospect will not believe anything the salesman has said.

BE SINCERE

Sincerity breeds conviction and if you are convinced of the statement you make, your attitude will go a long way in making your prospective customer believe your story. Know your product and its

advantages; be sincere and enthusiastic when you are presenting them. Be natural. It will pay.

DON'T TALK TOO MUCH

All have known salesmen who have talked themselves out of sales. This is a fault common to many. Some types evidently believe that if they talk fast enough, do not permit the prospect to bring up objections or say anything, and put the pen in the prospect's fingers and get him to sign on the dotted line, a good sale has been made. The day for this kind of selling is gone. Today's buyer wants information and she wants a chance to think about that information after she gets it. Make your statement about your product and let your customer think about it. Be careful not to bury one important sales feature by showering several more on top of it before the customer has had time to decide on the merits of the first. Give your customer an opportunity to ask questions and express her opinion. Often, if allowed to talk, the prospect will sell herself.

BE READY TO ANSWER OBJECTIONS

An objection or reason for not buying may be real or it may be merely an excuse. In any event, the salesman must be able to answer it effectively in order to close the sale. If the customer raises an objection, be sure you understand it. Don't jump at conclusions as to what the objection is going to be. After you understand it clearly, repeat it. Sometimes when an objection is repeated the customer immediately can see for herself that it is not a valid objection.

POINTS TO REMEMBER IN SELLING

Salesmen interested in fundamentals will do well to remember four points of value in selling:

1. Talk to your customer as though she knows about the product but explain everything as though she knew nothing about it.
2. Treat your customer with unfailing courtesy.
3. Assume that she is able financially to buy anything on the floor even if her general appearance leaves room for some doubt. When basic facts are established, suggest justifiable time-payment plans as an arrangement she might prefer—but do this tactfully since many women are sensitive about money and credit ratings.
4. Make your sales story complete. Tell it simply, directly, earnestly, and honestly.

THE DAILY CHECK-UP—A PERPETUAL INVENTORY

Elementary fundamentals should be brought up time and again. You may know you are beyond the stage where you need to be told to keep the ears clean, the hair combed, the shoes polished, and suits pressed, but there are some angles on this matter of keeping a perpetual personal inventory which may be reviewed profitably many times. Consider the advantages of a daily check-up.

Some women are inclined to trust to first impressions of appearance and manner. A salesman may find it difficult and sometimes impossible to win their confidence if there is anything in his appearance, manner, language, or actions to detract attention or arouse prejudice. If these important personal matters are neglected, it means reduced income through the loss of some sales and an unnecessary loss of time in many others.

One of the best ways to guard against these losses is to work out a sort of perpetual inventory of your own good and bad points, and to keep this inventory up to date, making a systematic check-up.

Certain principles as to proper dress for men in home-furnishing stores of dignity have been established. One metropolitan store insists that salesmen wear dark suits; black shoes always; white collars either attached or detached, not necessarily starched; neckties, dark preferably, and in harmony with the suit. This store never permits removal of coat or vest even in summer. Many stores, however, permit vests off in summer and supply uniform coats to all salesmen—dark palm beach or similar material. Arbitrary rules without reason are worse than none. The store mentioned above feels that the factors listed as important simply conform to the laws of good taste in reflecting the store to its clientele. No store can afford to tolerate slovenly attire, shoddy language, or indifferent effort.

If, in good faith, interested salesmen will run through the following list of questions before they go to work each morning for 2 or 3 months, they will find the results in increased sales unexpectedly profitable.

APPEARANCE

Have I had the food, sleep, and exercise necessary to enable me to meet all customers, even on the longest and busiest day, with energy and enthusiasm?

Do I feel and look fit, alert, competent, and prosperous?

Is there anything to attract unpleasant attention to my hair, fingernails, teeth, tie, or shoes?

MANNER

Do I meet all customers without reference to age, sex, or dress, as if I were genuinely glad to see them and sincerely interested in serving them intelligently and well?

Am I businesslike without being brusque? dignified without being stiff? unvaryingly polite but never oily or servile?

Do I treat all customers with real courtesy, and none with cheap or offensive familiarity?

Do I ever permit myself to look or act bored, tired, indifferent, or sullen?

LANGUAGE

Is my voice pleasant?

Do I talk enough, or too much?

Do I talk carefully and well, without grammatical blunders or slang, and with an adequate command of words, or do I stumble, use poorly chosen words, and repeat myself until my customers are bored or repelled?

ACTION

Do I slouch, or get into awkward and ungraceful postures, or sit on the arms of chairs or sofas?

Do I play with a pencil, watch chain, or sales book, or jingle keys or money in my pocket?

Do I ever show merchandise carelessly, as if it were of no value or importance?

Do I ever get into an argument with a customer when there is the slightest possibility of giving offense?

Whatever your present earning power may be, wide experience warrants the belief that you can raise it appreciably by improving your present rating in these factors which together give outward expression to your personality as your customers see it.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think a salesman can be sincere and use "high pressure" methods at the same time?

2. Do you feel you are doing a customer a favor or imposing on her in urging her to come to a decision, particularly when grading-up?

3. A customer says: "I like this suite, but the price is a little more then I'd counted on paying." What is the best way of handling this customer to close a sale?

4. A customer says: "I've just about decided on this one, but I'd like my husband to see it." What is the right way to handle this situation? Should an attempt be made to close the sale then and there? What has been your experience?

5. A customer is sold on a modern suite, and has her mother with her. Her mother is not sold on modern furniture. How would you handle this situation?

6. A customer wants an Early American bedroom, is apparently satisfied with the suite, which happens to be birch, and asks: "Is it solid maple?" How do you answer?

7. If the president of the First National Bank and his wife came in at 5:30 to look at a dining-room suite, how would you handle the first 5 minutes of the conversation?

8. Select a bedroom suite from the floor selling for $99 and one selling at $179, and demonstrate the points of superiority in the more costly set?

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Unit II
TECHNIQUE OF SALESMANSHIP

Sale Objectives

Starting the Simple Sale

The All-Important Interview

Three General Considerations for Closing Sales

Meeting the Customer

Figure 3A.—A block front Chippendale secretary. The pulls are all pierced chased brass. The broken pediment is ornamented by the unusual addition of a hand-carved leaf carving. The ribband back chair has the cabriole ball and claw and leaf carving on the knees and is upholstered in a hand-blocked tapestry.

Figure 3B.—This copy of a Sheraton corner stand has tambour sliding front drawers and a copper-lined plant container at the back. The chair at the side is a Sheraton decorated armchair, in black with gold decoration. The upholstery is green and ivory striped satin.

Unit II.—TECHNIQUE OF SALESMANSHIP

SALE OBJECTIVES

When you start toward the display floor with a customer who has asked for a particular article, you have—or should have—five objectives:

1. To close a sale, if possible, for an article of the best quality warranted by the customer's needs and means.
2. To sell any additional merchandise in which you can arouse an interest.
3. To make the sale in such a way that the merchandise will stay sold, and the customer will become a loyal business friend.
4. To secure and record any information as to the customer's home and tastes that may lead to possible future sales.
5. To do these things without wasting time so that you may get another customer and repeat the process.

In order to attain these objectives you must gain the confidence of the buyer, and here your success will depend upon what happens in the first 5 minutes. It is during these crucial minutes that the customer forms the impressions which so often lead her either to bestow her confidence or withhold it.

STARTING THE SIMPLE SALE

The experienced salesman is accustomed to form a quick judgment of the customer and to base his opening procedure on that judgment. The technique presented here is designed particularly to help this salesman make large sales or handle small sales which may be expected to produce future business.

Let us assume that your customer has not asked for an advertised chair, and that there is nothing in her appearance or manner to enable you to make a close guess as to her tastes and means. All you know is that she is interested in an easy chair. Since she has not told you exactly what kind of chair she wants, it is safe to assume that she doesn't know. On the other hand, you may be certain she wants a chair to serve some particular purpose of her own. The chances are that she has only a vague idea as to the particular type of chair which will best serve this purpose; you as yet have no idea whatever. Accordingly, you must choose one of three methods for starting the sale.

THE HAPHAZARD METHOD

The first is to lead her through your stock in the hope that she will see a chair that pleases her and buy it. This sometimes will happen, and there are some customers—though few—who can be sold in no other way. However, this method wastes so much time, and results in such a heavy percentage of lost sales, that it should be your last resort. It is open to three serious objections:

First, it will not help you win the customer's confidence. By relinquishing all control of the interview, you forfeit her respect for you as a competent adviser in the processes of home furnishing, and become merely an order taker. If she happens to like your merchandise, you are fortunate; but you can do nothing to influence her toward liking it.

Second, no one can look at a great many different things, however interesting and beautiful, without becoming confused and losing the power of discriminating judgment. The woman who is shown furniture by this undirected method is likely to become tired and certain to become confused, and may be expected to decide to "think it over," "look around," or "bring her husband."

Moreover, you cannot show many chairs, even by this method, without making some comments about them. If you are like many salespersons you will fall into the habit of describing half the pieces shown either as the most beautiful, the smartest, the most comfortable, the latest, or the best bargain. If this happens, any normally intelligent person will suspect that you are either insincere or incompetent.

Third, if a sale results, it is likely to be at an unnecessarily low-price level unless the question of credit limit is involved; and in any event there will be no sale of additional merchandise, no information of future value, no loyal business friendship.

THE HIGH-PRESSURE METHOD

You may decide to make a persistent and, if necessary, a high-pressure effort to "sell" her something. This method, like the first, will work with a limited number of buyers. However, it results in much wasted time by reason of the high percentage of returns for credit or exchange, and in ill-feeling and impaired confidence which over a period of years make it difficult for the salesman to build up a personal following among the buyers of his community.

As a matter of cold fact, this method of selling home furnishings has caused the retailers an immense loss in public confidence, as well as in money. Because of wrong selling methods, multitudes of women now stay out of certain stores except on those rare occasions when they are forced by actual needs to enter. Although these women want to buy, they are afraid of being sold.

More accurately, they are afraid of being sold the wrong thing. Most of the women who ask to see a chair or rug or other home-furnishings merchandise really want something much more important to themselves, although they do not tell us about it. They want beauty, comfort, distinction, or social prestige. In other words, they want to buy furniture as a means of making their homes more attractive; but their past experience, or the experience of their friends, often leads them to believe that the salesman will not really help them. To overcome their hesitancy, they must be made to feel at the beginning of the interview that no one is trying to sell them, or even to let them buy, but rather that the desire of the salesman is to help them buy.

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

The third possible course of action is based upon a study of the customer's needs. The salesman will seek to discover the customer's purpose in looking at easy chairs and then to show her the particular pieces in stock which are best adapted to serve that purpose. He will need information about the size, style, and coloring of the chair required, and the amount that the buyer is able or willing to pay for it. Do not, at the outset, ask for this information.

In selling home furnishings avoid questions which will force the buyer to make definite commitments in advance as to her tastes or the amount of money she is prepared to spend. In the first place, it is probable that if she had fixed ideas on these subjects she would have told you exactly what she wanted at once. If you force her by direct questions to make a statement, she may feel impelled to abide by it later; you thereby have placed yourself and your stock under an unnecessary handicap.

In the second place you run the risk of annoying her, since few women welcome a direct question at the beginning of a sales interview as to how much they are prepared to spend. Finally, such questions may be so clumsy and amateurish in technique as to under-mine a customer's confidence in your ability. Your questions at the outset should be directed toward determining her needs. If such questions are skillfully put, she will welcome them as evidence that you are trying to help her buy economically and intelligently.

THE ALL-IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

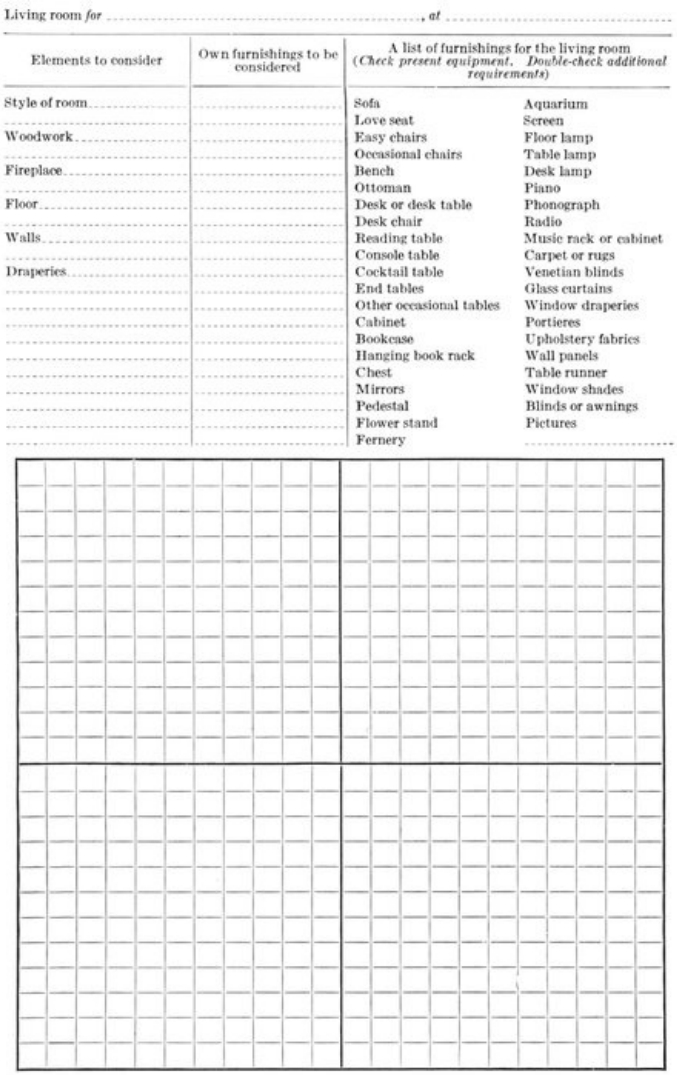
Upon leaving the elevator take your customer directly to an easy chair which you know to be good-looking and comfortable, conservative both in design and coloring, and neither your cheapest nor your most costly quality. By choosing a conservative rather than an extreme style you run no risk of impairing her confidence in your taste and judgment, and by picking a piece in the middle price range you run no risk of offending her if she is in the market for a costly chair, or of alarming her if she is a buyer for a cheap chair. Moreover, you are in the safe position of being able to shift ground in either direction without loss of prestige. Don't ask her how she likes this chair, and don't make any flattering comments on it. Merely say, in effect: "I don't know how close this particular chair comes to what you have in mind; but at least it is attractive and comfortable. If you care to sit down in it for a moment, and to tell me a little about your requirements, or about your room, perhaps I can save you the time and trouble of looking at a

great number of unsuitable pieces. Is the chair for your living room?" If the answer is "Yes," proceed: "Then it will of course have to fit in with your other things in that room."

At this point you may wish to draw up a small table and lay the living-room floor plan[1] on it with the first page so placed that the customer can easily see it. Then draw up a chair for yourself. It is important to move with a poise and assurance which will cause the buyer to know you are following the usual procedure. By the time you are seated she will likely have read enough of the first page to be interested and awaiting your next move.

OPENING THE INTERVIEW

In many simple sales it will be unnecessary to ask many questions, or to enter the answers on the plan. Since you cannot know this at the start of the interview, however, it is usually wise to show the plan, even if you make no actual use of it. The effect of this procedure catches interest, places the transaction on a more professional basis, and helps create confidence in yourself and your store as skillful and competent advisers in the selection of furniture.



Living room *for* ....., *at* .....

Elements to consider	Own furnishings to be considered	A list of furnishings for the living room (*Check present equipment. Double-check additional requirements*)	
Style of room		Sofa	Aquarium
		Love seat	Screen
Woodwork		Easy chairs	Floor lamp
		Occasional chairs	Table lamp
Fireplace		Bench	Desk lamp
		Ottoman	Piano
Floor		Desk or desk table	Phonograph
		Desk chair	Radio
Walls		Reading table	Music rack or cabinet
		Console table	Carpet or rugs
Draperies		Cocktail table	Venetian blinds
		End tables	Glass curtains
		Other occasional tables	Window draperies
		Cabinet	Portieres
		Bookcase	Upholstery fabrics
		Hanging book rack	Wall panels
		Chest	Table runner
		Mirrors	Window shades
		Pedestal	Blinds or awnings
		Flower stand	Pictures
		Fernery	.....

Figure 4.—Room arrangement plan

NOTE TO SALESPERSON.—If you do not have a floor plan and have not seen the room in question, take blank paper and pencil. Block in window and door openings and location of "other" furniture. Then proceed as suggested, recommending nothing that will not enhance the attractiveness of the room for its particular use. Always date your sketch; place upon it the name of your customer, and file for later reference.

If you decide to use the plan, spread it on the table, and say, in effect: "This device helps us to serve our patrons who are interested in buying furniture that will add to the comfort and beauty of their homes. In your own case, for example, we have scores of chairs that are good looking and that are good values. Yet, if you were to look at all of them you would undoubtedly find that some are too large or too small and that the great majority will not harmonize perfectly in design, style, or coloring with the other things in your own particular room. By using this device you can give me a clear picture of your room as you want it to look. Then I can show you only such pieces as promise to meet your requirements, and you in turn may select the one chair that seems most

suitable. Do you have a guest chair in mind, or one for the special use of a member of the family? If for a member of the family, the sex, size, and individual preference must be taken into account; if for guests, the general decorative character of the room only.

"The new chair will be seen against the background of the walls and the floor coverings, and as a part of the group to which it belongs. Hence, we must be sure it will harmonize with these other elements. Your rug, for example, is——?" Enter important information which is given on the floor plan under the heading "Floor covering." Information needed includes the type of rug (which may give you an idea of the buyer's price level); coloring; and type of design (which will indicate to you the characteristic features of the new chair necessary to insure harmony). Then proceed in the same way with the walls, woodwork, draperies, and principal upholstery fabrics.

If by this time your customer shows signs of impatience, you may wish to say in effect that you can show her several chairs that will fill the requirements admirably. Then go to work.

UTILIZING THE CUSTOMER'S ANSWERS

If, on the other hand, the buyer clearly is interested, ask for the size of her room and for the description and location of her other furniture, and block in the information on the floor plan, using the method shown in the typical floor plan, page 21. Here the best procedure is to start from the point of intersection of the 2 heavy lines, or axes, and count in 4 directions, using the scale of ¼-inch square for each foot. For example, if the room is 16 × 24 feet, count 12 squares from the center in both directions to locate the end walls, and 8 squares in both directions to locate the side walls. When this information is recorded you will get an idea as to the correct size and proper location for the new chair. Be sure to locate windows and doors accurately and indicate the exposure of the room with reference to the compass points.

These preliminaries when completed will give a clear picture of the room, a fair idea of your customer's price range, and a good start toward her confidence. Thank her and introduce yourself simply by saying, "I am Mr. Smith. If you are pleased by what I have shown you today, I shall hope to see you again as other living-room needs arise. May I fill in your name and address, so that this plan may be filed for use when you are next in the store?"

USE JUDGMENT IN SHOWING MERCHANDISE

You must be guided by your best judgment. If you have reason to think the customer has confidence in you, show first the particular chair that you honestly believe is best for her purpose, introducing it with a brief, pointed, and purely impersonal comment on its beauty, style, and peculiar fitness for her own purpose. Don't use superlatives. She may not like this piece well enough to buy it immediately, in which case you will be seriously handicapped in trying to interest her in another one. If, on the contrary, you do not feel assured of her complete confidence, probably it will be wiser to show your second or third best piece first, holding the best in reserve.

As soon as you detect signs of real interest in a chair, build up a little group based on the principles of harmony which are stated and illustrated in unit VII, page 142. In some cases a small table will be enough; but usually it will be better to use a larger table, a lamp, and often a small rug and a length or two of drapery fabrics, if you stock them. The purpose of this procedure is to help the customer see your chair as an integral part of her own room and to emphasize its desirability as a means of making that room more attractive. If she already has the pieces necessary to form a complete group when the chair is added, select pieces as nearly like her own as possible. If not, select pieces that harmonize perfectly with the chair. Don't tell her that she ought to have these pieces. Merely show them without comment, and defer any attempt to sell anything more than an easy chair until after the chair has been sold.

THREE GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CLOSING SALES

BE PREPARED TO CLOSE A SALE AT ANY POINT

Some salesmen make the serious and costly mistake of assuming that every customer will be exacting and hard to sell, and that a large percentage of them enter the store with no real intention of buying. The really able salesman knows that this is not true. Under present conditions the woman who enters a furniture store or department may be presumed to have an active interest in furniture. When you have found her real needs and offered her something that satisfies them, there in an excellent chance that she will be ready to buy. If so, take the order at once. Don't make the tactical blunder of showing additional merchandise, or of completing all the steps necessary to close a difficult sale. Many salesmen talk themselves out of a sale by suggesting unnecessary alternatives. In other words, prepare carefully and intelligently for the order, expect it, and take it at the first opportunity.

PROCEED WITH CAUTION UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER'S BUYING MOTIVES

At the start of a sale it is safe to assume that the buyer is thinking in terms of her own interests. Don't tell her that a given chair is in the latest or most popular style until you know that she is interested in the latest rather than the best style for her particular room. Don't tell her that it is

your best-selling number; or that Mrs. Jones just bought a piece like it; or that you think, or the buyer thinks, or the head of the house thinks it "wonderful."

DON'T QUOTE A PRICE—UNLESS YOU ARE ASKED FOR IT

As a general, but by no means invariable, rule, don't quote a price—unless you are asked for it—until you see definite signs of interest in the piece under consideration; and even then not until you have prepared for it by a brief but convincing statement as to quality or desirability. However, when you are asked the price of an article, give it immediately and without apology or comment.

MEETING THE CUSTOMER

All first impressions and most sales start at the front door of your store or department. For any lack of promptness and courtesy at this point there will be a penalty.

Anyone who enters the store should be met immediately. If it happens to be a customer, whether man or woman, a long delay for any reason will be resented, and even a moment's pause to finish a conversation may be regarded as an affront. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this matter, both to yourself and to your house. In a competitive market few persons will buy from the man who treats them discourteously, nor will they return to the store where they have met with discourtesy if another store with better methods is accessible. Moreover, one offended customer can do more damage through word-of-mouth advertising than a thousand lines of newspaper space can repair.

The visitor should be greeted with a smile, a bow, and the words "Good morning" or "Good afternoon." Test both your smile and your bow before a mirror and improve them if any improvement is possible. A genuine infectious smile is literally a priceless asset. After this greeting usually you will be told what is wanted. If not, after a slight pause, ask: "May I show you something?" or "What may I show you?" *Don't* ask: "Can I help you?" "Are you interested in furniture?" "What can I do for you?" or "Anything, today?"

For the purpose of illustration, suppose the customer is a woman who asks to see a sofa bed. Don't ask her how much she wants to pay, or even what sort of sofa bed she wants. If the stock is on another floor it will be enough to say: "We will take the elevator, please," and indicate the direction. Do not precede her. Walk abreast, and, if the aisle is crowded, drop behind. If she is carrying a parcel of burdensome size ask her if you may have it.

Although many successful salesmen begin at once to draw out information as to the customer's requirements, it is better practice to defer such questions until you are in the presence of your merchandise and beyond the possibility of noise and confusion. Whether it is wise to try a few impersonal remarks, or to keep still, from the front door to the sales floor, will depend upon your judgment of the individual customer.

QUESTIONS

1. This unit discussed three methods of starting the sale. How would you proceed to sell furnishings for the new clubhouse at the community center?

2. What would you do to correct a wrong attitude toward use of certain types of furniture in a living room?

3. A woman tells you that she cannot afford costly furnishings. What steps would you take to show her that good taste is not necessarily expensive?

4. Of what advantage is the study of advertising to the young man who expects to become a furniture salesman?

5. What use should be made of dealers' aids furnished by the manufacturer of products you are to sell?

6. Give five sources of information regarding prospects which a retail furniture salesman may use.

7. What should a good furniture salesman know about the history of his firm?

8. Why is the excessive use of superlatives an indication of ignorance of the article being sold?

9. (a) Of what value is a knowledge of competing goods? (b) How should such knowledge be used?

SUGGESTED READING LIST

(Most libraries will have other excellent books discussing retail salesmanship and these should be consulted freely.)

ROLLING, CUNLIFFE L. *Retail Salesmanship.* Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., London and Pitman Publishing Co., New York, N. Y. 1930.

Studying the Customers, VII, pp. 89-107.
Receiving the Customers, VIII, pp. 107-131.
Sales Persuasion, IX, pp. 131-152.
Methods of Increasing Sales, XI, pp. 165-186.

DE SCHWEINITZ, DOROTHEA. *Occupations in Retail Stores.* International Text Book Co., Scranton, Pa. 1937. (Study sponsored by National Vocational Guidance Association and the U. S. Employment Service).

Hiring, Training, Promotion, IV, pp. 41-65.
Hours, Vacations, Earnings, V, pp. 65-93.

JACKSON, ALICE *and* BETTINA. *The Study of Interior Decoration.* Doubleday Doran & Co., Inc., Garden City, N. Y.

Furnishing the Home, XVI, pp. 351-388.

PELZ, V. H., *Selling At Retail.* McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, N. Y. 1926.

The Psychology of the Retail Sale, III, pp. 19-31.
Studying the Merchandise, VI, VII, pp. 81-119.
Customer Types and Characteristics, X, pp. 159-185.
How to Meet Objectives, XIV, pp. 235-259.
Substitution Sale, XV, pp. 259-265.

RICHERT, G. HENRY. *Retailing Principles and Practices.* Gregg Publishing Co., New York, N. Y. 1938.

The Retail Sales Process, XI, pp. 219-245.
Customer Service, XIV, pp. 295-311.

SIMMONS, HARRY. *How to Get the Order.* Harper & Bros., New York, N. Y. 1937.

The Futility of Price Appeal, XI, pp. 97-106.
Buyer Slants on Selling, XIV, pp. 121-128.

WHITEHEAD, HAROLD. *The Business of Selling.* American Book Co., New York, N. Y. 1923.

The Buyer's Motives, VII, pp. 61-74.
The Customer, XIV, pp. 153-173.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Suitable floor-plan diagrams to aid in making unit sales are available for any room in the house.

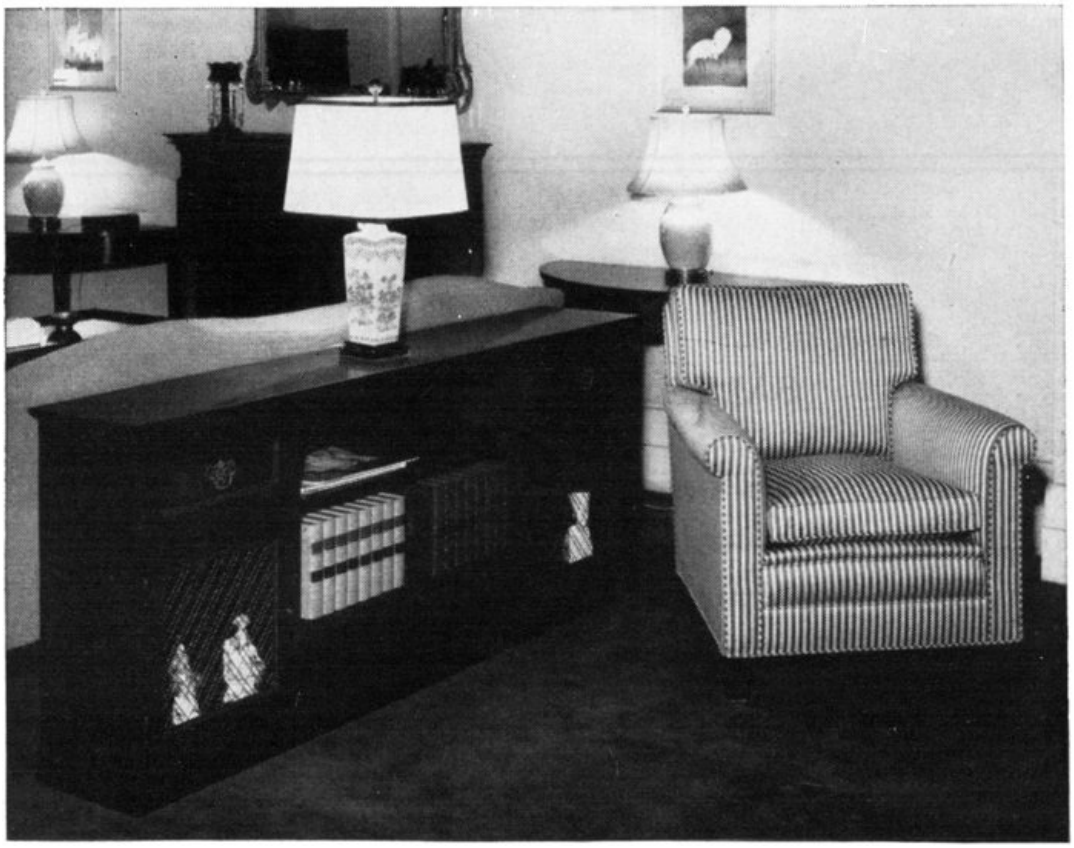
Unit III
SALESMANSHIP APPLIED

How To Demonstrate Values

Contrast in Buying Methods of Women and Men

Enriching Your Vocabulary

Hidden Factors That Increase Sales



Courtesy of Merchandise Mart News Bureau.

Figure 5.—Useful because it can be placed behind a divan or against a wall is this low eighteenth century cabinet for books, radio, magazines, or bric-a-brac. Beside the cabinet is an eighteenth century lounge chair, upholstered in rose and white striped satin.

Unit III.—SALESMANSHIP APPLIED

HOW TO DEMONSTRATE VALUES

Old or young, rich or poor, we are much alike. What interests us is what touches ourselves. When we make our choices we do not always accept or reject things because of their intrinsic worth but because they appeal strongly to the group of instincts, emotions, and habits which just then is motivating the inner life and influencing decisions.

The salesman who is clever enough to present his merchandise in the ways that appeal most directly and powerfully to these inner controls enjoys a great advantage over one who lacks this ability.

KNOWLEDGE OF MERCHANDISE MUST COME FIRST

It goes without saying that this ability presupposes thorough knowledge of the merchandise. This is fundamental.

A given rug which enters our stock from the receiving room may have 30 points of possible interest to buyers, but not all these points will appeal to all buyers. Carefulness and system will enable us to pick and emphasize the strongest points for each buyer *provided we know the entire*

30. But if we know 20 only, or 15, or 10, no amount of skill can save us from losing some sales.

Under present conditions it is extremely difficult to acquire full and accurate knowledge of the merchandise we are called upon to sell, but we can get this information now if we want it badly enough; we must get it if we seriously desire to increase our earning power.

All possible information is important, because any part of it may be necessary, in a given situation, in order to make a sale. We must get this information wherever we can find it. In the case of a newly arrived easy chair, for example, it may come from three sources:

1. *From personal inspection.*—A cursory inspection will tell us that the chair is a medium-size piece, slenderly and gracefully proportioned; with open padded arms; loose cushion seat; a back of pronounced rake; cabriole front legs with carved claw feet; covered in a small-figure reseda green damask; and priced at $85. We should be able to identify its style, and the tag may indicate the name of the manufacturer.[2]

   A more careful inspection will tell us that the exposed wood is solid mahogany, finely finished; the front legs skillfully carved; all legs with a degree of curvature that eliminates danger of breaking under strain; frame corner-blocked; seat springs set on webbing, or steel frame, with a dustproof bottom of cambric; loose cushion of spring construction; and the covering a close-woven, wear-resisting fabric with silk warp and cotton waft.

2. *From the buyer or manager.*—

   a. Name of manufacturer, in order that we may be governed in making statements about this chair by our general knowledge of his line, as to quality of materials, skill of workmen, and inspection standards, and also in order to use the name in cases where we believe that it will have prestige value.

   b. Details of concealed construction, including frame; method of springing; build-up of seat, back, and arms; stuffers used; strength of fiber and color in the covering.

   c. Information as to whether the piece can be duplicated, and if so, at what price and in what time; also as to whether it can be supplied in other colors, or in other materials, and if so, location of samples, method of figuring price, and time required for delivery.

   d. Historic source of the design, and any interesting information as to its fashion value, gained by the buyer at the markets.

3. *From books and magazines.*—

   a. The historical background of the style to which the chair belongs, and the most effective methods of developing its style appeal.

   b. Types of rooms and color schemes with which it can be used harmoniously.

   Equally comprehensive information is necessary for all other items in your stock. Without it the percentage of purchasers that we can be sure of reaching with a key appeal will be reduced, and our earning power correspondingly limited.

SELLING MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

Assuming that we have acquired adequate knowledge of the materials and construction of our merchandise, how are we going to use it effectively. We suggest a few general principles as guides to sound practice:

Both materials and construction normally are factors to be employed in closing a sale, but not in opening it.—If you went into a store and asked to see a pair of shoes and the salesman, seizing the first model at hand, assured you that it was made of tanned box calf, with waterproof soles, cork filling, and tacked insoles, by a process involving more than 150 separate operations, all of which made it a wonderful value at $8.50, would you tell him to wrap up a pair? Hardly.

Neither materials nor construction would interest you until you were comfortably fitted with a shoe that satisfied your ideas of style and color, and at a price within your buying limit.

When a customer asks for an advertised article and seems pleased with its appearance, the demonstration of its value can start at once. In any other situation it must wait until you find something with which she is pleased.

There are those who appear to believe that selling is a game in which the object is to beat down the customer's opposition and make her buy. In dealing with customers of any type above the most unenlightened, this idea always has proved a boomerang.

In talking materials and construction, preserve a sense of relative values.—When we say about a $35 chair everything that properly could be said about one priced at $65, our customer either believes or disbelieves us. If she disbelieves, the sale is lost. If she believes, our chance to get more than $35 of her money is lost. Even if we leave out of account the basically important

matter of business honesty, it is unwise to overstate the values of any article. In a well-managed furniture store every article possesses points of merit sufficient to sell it on the basis of what can be fairly claimed for it. To claim more, whether intentionally or through ignorance of the facts, is to deceive our customers, and—inevitably—to cut down our sales volume.

Demonstrate the value of all merchandise under serious consideration whether you believe it to be necessary or not.—Many sales of advertised articles or merchandise chosen on the basis of its decorative appeal can be closed without discussion of materials or construction. As a safety-first measure, these factors should be mentioned somewhat carefully after the order has been booked. Sometimes a customer will buy an article in complete good faith, and yet within the next half hour will start shopping in other stores to see whether or not she has bought wisely. Even more important is the fact that in every case the new purchase, when delivered, is subject to inspection and criticism not only by members of the family but also by neighbors and friends. Some of this criticism is bound to be adverse, and unless we have taken the precaution to build up an unshakable confidence in the excellence and value of our merchandise there may be a telephone order to come and get it, or at least a loss of goodwill and future patronage.

These precautionary build-ups can of course be brief. For example, if you have sold a bedroom suite on the basis of appearance only, it will be enough to say in substance: "You have bought this suite because of its beauty and style, which will continue to delight you always. But before you leave I want you to realize that these fine qualities rest on a foundation of sturdy construction. This dresser, for example, is * * *."

Contacting the "I'll-buy-later" prospect.—There is always the chance that the sale can be closed. A woman's statement that she is not yet ready to buy is in many cases merely a "defense mechanism"—a psychological device to serve as an excuse to leave if she senses that high-pressure selling effort is being applied. It is possible that if we answer, in effect, "Please don't think of yourself as a customer, but rather as a valued guest of the store. This is not a busy hour for me, and while you are here I hope you will let me show you some more of the new things, which are particularly interesting this season," we may be able to develop the confidence and desire necessary to effect a sale.

If we fail to do this, we can at least see to it that the customer leaves with a clear impression of the value of the pieces she has been considering. If this impression is sufficiently clear and deep she may come back. Otherwise, in all likelihood, she will not.

The shopper in a hurry.—Many of us habitually make little or no effort with the customer who enters with the warning "I am in a great hurry," or "I have just a moment to look around today, and will come back later when I have more time." This is a mistake. Such statements may or may not be entirely true. In many cases they are another form of defense mechanism—a way out, prepared in advance. In other cases, they are merely a form of exhibitionism—a native desire to appear important. Such customers, properly handled, often can be held indefinitely, with the average chance to make a sale.

Price important in judging value.—Those who sell are rightfully apt to think of value as the total sum of a number of costs. While this method of evaluation is not fundamental economically, nevertheless our opinions often crystallize when we view the cost records. Our customer, however, is dually interested in what it costs to make and distribute what we sell her and in what our product means to her through its uses in her home. The merchant's, and hence the salesman's obligation, is to satisfy her that the price she pays is in strict conformity with the actual reasonable costs of making and delivering the goods. Simultaneously, however, we must teach her how our product will fit into her home, the satisfaction it will give her, the use it will stand through the years, in order that she may correctly weigh her satisfaction against her cost and reach a final conclusion as to her purchase.

This does not mean, of course, that the price should be stated first, but simply that it must be stated at the time it becomes important in the mind of the buyer. Assuming a skillfully conducted preliminary talk, this will normally be *after* an article has been tentatively accepted on the basis of appearance, and fitness, but *before* the beginning of a serious effort to close the sale.

Avoid resistance, and answer unspoken objections.—Use of the "How do you like this?" type of question sets up unnecessary hazards of resistance and should be avoided. The same is true of positive assertions not susceptible of immediate proof, and also of statements which tend to suggest inner doubts.

If you say of a certain sheen-type rug, "This rug, in pattern and coloring reproducing one of the celebrated Isphans of seventeenth century Persia, is woven of a special brand of imported oriental wools, by methods which give to its deep, close pile almost unlimited durability, plus this rich, velvet-like softness and luster," you add to its value without setting up a possible source of resistance to unspoken objections. But if you say, "The construction of this rug makes it the best value on the market," you cannot prove your statement, which may serve to remind the buyer that other stores are offering special values, or that her friend is enthusiastic about a rug bought recently at Blank's.

Unproved assertions destroy confidence.—Suppose you are trying to sell a table with mahogany-veneer top and red gum legs. To call it a mahogany table will lose the sale immediately, if the customer knows woods. To say that it has a mahogany-veneer top and mahogany finish gum legs may suggest to the buyer that a veneer is a poor substitute for solid wood, and that gum cannot be desirable if it must be finished to look like something else. To ignore the whole matter of materials and construction and to try to sell the table on its beauty and fitness alone may cause

the customer to wonder just what you are trying to conceal, which will mean loss of confidence in yourself and your merchandise.

The wise course is to tell the entire truth about the piece in a perfectly matter-of-fact way designed to avoid any invidious comparisons of woods or processes. For example: "This table whose design and coloring you so much admire is as sturdy as it is good looking. Following the practice of some old eighteenth century cabinetmakers, the maker of this piece has combined several woods. Those used in the top are built into the modern five-ply construction, which brings out the full beauty of grain of the mahogany upper ply, ensures freedom from any danger of warping or splitting, and provides the strength of steel. For the legs he has used the beautiful straight-grained red gum of the South."

It is a costly folly to try to sell one material or process by condemning another. We show a table, for example, and speak of "solid American walnut" as if no other wood or construction were worthy of consideration; and 5 minutes later, finding that we have misjudged her price level, we stammer and stumble over an attempt to convince her that plywood is an acceptable substitute.

These are the dangerous devices of mental laziness. When a customer asks us if mahogany is better than birch, or Axminster carpets better than velvets, or solid construction better than veneer, a positive answer is misleading. We certainly should know that mahogany, like birch, varies in excellence according to the individual board; that some Axminsters are better than some velvets, and vice versa; and that the construction is best which best meets the particular requirements of design and purpose, in furniture precisely as in shoes or ships.

The fact is that everything used in making home furnishings of worthy quality has stood the test of time, and therefore is interesting and desirable in its own right. If we cannot make it seem so to customers, we have not learned enough about it.

In selling materials and construction, repetition is needed.—We must be governed by the results of our preliminary talk in picking out for emphasis the particular points which promise to be of interest to each customer. Having made these points, we sometimes need to repeat them, in varying language and in different parts of our sales talk. Moreover, we must never forget that many things which are as familiar to us as the multiplication table are strange to our customers, and therefore difficult to remember.

We know, for example, that concealed differences in construction may make one easy chair worth twice as much as another of identical appearance; that in sliced walnut veneers, figured woods may cost 5 or 10 times as much as plain; but most buyers do not know such things. Accordingly, if we merely state such facts, but fail to groove a memory channel by one or more repetitions, there is an excellent chance that even the customer who wants and can afford good things will look elsewhere, completely forget what we have told her, and buy a cheaper article in the honest belief that she is getting something equally good. *What too often happens is that in building up the value of our merchandise we fail to fix the facts in the customer's mind.*

Treat merchandise carefully, and show it under the most favorable conditions.—It is self evident that valuable merchandise must be so handled as to imply that it is of distinguished excellence.

Respect in handling inspires respect.—A woman will not buy an article unless and until she has identified it with herself—conceived of it as belonging to herself, and in her own home. Suppose that we are showing her a length of drapery fabric. If we crush it, or handle it as if it were calico or cheesecloth, or chance to step on it *before* she makes this unconscious identification with herself, she will think less of it; if *after*, she will think less of us. Either reaction will be harmful.

In departments using rug racks, often it is necessary to remove a rug and show it on the floor before the sale can be closed. If we do this in a way that permits the piece to fall in a wrinkled heap on the floor we will not damage the rug, but we will hurt the buyer's opinion of it. A shrewd salesman will ask his customer to walk on the rug; but he will not walk on it himself.

The same care applies to showing furniture. It is folly to jerk a drawer violently, or pound a table or dresser top, or thump the seat of an easy chair, or sit on the arm of a sofa. Such actions reveal an awkwardness and lack of poise which one does not associate with good homes and their furnishings. Then, too, your customer, if she is seriously considering a purchase, thinks of you subconsciously as pounding her table or sitting on the arm of her sofa.

Similar care should be given to the language with which you characterize or describe your merchandise. Many an automobile salesman has lost a live prospect because he insisted on calling a beautiful car a "job." "This stuff," or even "these goods," may lose the sale of a fine damask. Wrong inflection in phrases like "It is veneered," "This is a cretonne," often is fatal.

CONTRAST IN BUYING METHODS OF WOMEN AND MEN

WHO BUYS THE HOME FURNISHINGS?

In this bulletin the buyer of home furnishings is referred to as "she." This is done partly for simplicity, and partly because most buyers are women.

As a matter of fact, men do play an extremely important part in the purchase of home furnishings, and they are likely to be the determining factor in large sales. This is so much the case that clever salesmen and decorators frequently try to get the man involved even in the earlier stages of a large sale, while many highly successful oriental-rug men make no serious effort on a sale of any importance until the man is actively interested.

Accurate percentages impossible.—Such data as we have indicate that, in the purchase by average-income families of the kinds of merchandise carried by furniture stores, 5 percent or less of the buying is done by men alone, 50 percent or more by women alone, and the remaining 40 percent by men and women together.

The percentages, which are of approximate accuracy only, vary widely with different classifications of merchandise. Women probably buy from 75 to 85 percent of all curtains, draperies, mattresses, and pillows; men alone buy considerably more than 5 percent of lamps, refrigerators, and small electric appliances; and men and women together buy from 60 to 70 percent of room-size rugs and the more important items of furniture.

WHY FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE VITAL

These figures indicate that women have some part in considerably more than 50 percent of all sales in our business. There is reason to believe that they initiate fully 85 percent of all sales. This means, among other things—

1. That we must expect and be set for competition and delayed sales in the majority of cases, because three women out of every four shop in more than one store before buying furniture.
2. That we must conduct every interview with a woman shopper in a way calculated to influence her to return in case an immediate sale cannot be made. This will demand—
    - *a.* Prompt and skillful service, with every effort to save her time; because women of the intelligent classes in recent years have come to attach great value to their shopping time and to resent any waste of it as a result of inefficient salesmanship or store service.
    - *b.* Careful attention to those elements of salesmanship discussed under "The daily check-up," unit I, p. 10, because women are strongly influenced by first impressions, and in a competitive market rarely return to the salesperson who made an unpleasant first impression.
    - *c.* Belief that "high-pressure" selling is a mark of inadequacy both in the salesman and the firm he represents. The customer of today is rightfully resentful of it, although it is true that some seem to react positively to it. Intelligent selling is marked by efficiency in fitting merchandise to a customer's desire and need, coupled with an understanding of her capacity to purchase without financial strain, and readiness to offer the best value commensurate with these limitations.
    - *d.* Convincing demonstration of the value of merchandise under consideration, even in cases where we are morally certain that there will be no immediate sale; because in the absence of such demonstration there will assuredly be no later sale. This is a point at which many consistently fail, with an enormous total loss in sales as an inevitable result.
3. That salesmen and merchants alike discard any smug conviction that "our old customers will always come back to us when new purchases are under consideration," and must turn to the development of an efficient follow-up system. The repeat purchases of old customers are not as a rule sufficient to assure the continued success of any retail business. Surveys in 1940 show that 60 percent of the home furnishings customers of the country shift to another store for their "next" purchase. This does not mean that they never return to the original establishment. It does show the need for salesmen and merchants to keep in touch with those whose confidence they have once developed. Properly handled, the customer likes the friendly follow-up and unquestionably it affects her shopping habits.

DEALING WITH WOMEN CUSTOMERS

While generalizations on human motives and thought patterns always are dangerous, a few observations are set down here for consideration.

As buyers of home furnishings, women are in general more conservative in matters of price than men. Women's traditional role has been that of the conserver, rather than of the earner. Her attitude in the furniture store is due partly to this fact, partly to the fact that under present conditions she feels that a larger measure of personal and social satisfaction is to be gained by expenditure in fields other than home furnishings. Her capacity as family purchasing agent compels her to keep constantly in mind a wide range of immediate and future needs, and to plan the division of her dollar on that basis.

Women are more interested in details than men; more inclined to postpone decisions; more indirect in their thinking; more responsive to appeals based upon instinctive and emotional

reactions; less attentive; and less responsive to complete-explanation sales talk.

Women respond more strongly than men to appeals based upon time saving, efficiency, durability, quality, and the guaranty of performance, and far less strongly than men to appeals based upon family affection or sympathy. Appeals to elegance or modernity make a stronger appeal to men than to women.

Women respond more quickly to appeals made to their dislikes than to their likes, but with men the case is reversed. This fact, coupled with woman's habit of indirect thinking and her reluctance to go on record, makes questionable the use of the "yes-channel" method of selling which is often successful in dealing with men. The theory is that by asking questions to which the logical answer will be "yes" in the earlier stages of the sale, you groove the way for a final "yes." It is good theory, but fails with women buyers.

For the same reason the habit of repeating the question "How do you like this piece?" or "Isn't this beautiful, desirable, etc.?" is dangerous. Women do not like to be cross-questioned, or forced to declare themselves. Their inner response to a "don't you like" question is likely to be destructively negative, no matter what they may choose to say out loud.

Women respond more directly and strongly to the appeal of color than do men, and less strongly to the appeal of line and form. They often have strong prejudices against certain colors, certain types in texture, pattern, and proportion. These the salesman must uncover skillfully and avoid in showing merchandise.

The buying psychology of a woman naturally is influenced by her age, social position, experience, and income. On the upper levels of intelligence and income women buy much as men do. They are interested in "reason why" talk; their thinking is direct and their decision prompt. On the low levels we find women who, however shrewd in buying foodstuffs or clothing, have had little experience in the purchase of furniture and floor coverings. Lacking both taste and knowledge, these women often are childishly credulous. They buy on the basis of easy terms and what is to them eye-appeal, and have little or no concern with what would constitute value in the upper levels.

RECENT SURVEY REVEALS NEW VIEWPOINTS OF VITAL INTEREST[3]

Seeking to eliminate guesswork in designing a 1940 line, the Kroehler Manufacturing Co. conducted a Nation-wide survey on consumer furniture-buying habits. In 49 cities 1,817 families of all classes and age groups were interviewed in their homes. By virtue of scientific statistical sampling and complete coast-to-coast geographic coverage the survey should correctly represent the typical viewpoint of no fewer than 26 million people and more than 6½ million families. Since the Bureau of the Census shows that 51.2 percent of our families own their own homes, approximately one-half of these interviewed in the survey must have been home owners. Because three-fourths of our people live in one-family dwellings, about three-fourths of those interviewed must have been thus housed, and one-fourth lived in apartments conforming likewise to census specifications.

The summary of the survey's results provides a basis for analyzing buying habits and style preferences. But more important to us here, the study developed certain inescapable conclusions for all those who actually sell home furnishings.

Fewer than one-third had bought their last furniture at the same store from which their last previous purchase had been made. Two-thirds went elsewhere.

Why this huge turn-over?

Is it because furniture stores and departments, as a whole, fail to do constructive selling?

Is it the result of dissatisfaction with previous purchases?

Thirty-three months elapse between major furniture purchases of the average family.—A lapse of nearly 3 years between large furniture purchases is astonishing. The Chicago Automobile Trade Association says the average family buys an automobile every 2 years—not because the car is worn out, but because of model changes. To increase furniture purchases dealers must put more emphasis on style changes through better display, better advertising, and better merchandising.

Over one-half of all furniture buyers shopped more than one store or department.—Better selection, better floor display, and better selling might have converted many shoppers into buyers in the first store. What happened there?

Fewer than 10 percent of actual buyers simply bought to replace out-of-style furniture.—Furniture lined up in ranks along aisles like wooden soldiers, and advertising which shouts nothing but price, will not motivate purchases.

Six out of ten customers wait until they are in the store before they choose a style.

Floor displays that confuse will not help.
Drab window displays will repel.
Doubting words will not highlight lovely furnishings.

ENRICHING YOUR VOCABULARY

Ability to talk well is an invaluable asset to the salesman of home furnishings. It will not take the place of a winning personality, or of energy, enthusiasm, and knowledge; but it will raise any or all of these factors to a higher power, and make them vastly more productive. An unpleasant voice, stumbling and hesitant utterance, faulty grammar, and a narrowly limited vocabulary are serious handicaps.

Even in small and ordinary transactions, and in dealing with customers whom you might not suppose to be observant, careful choice of words is highly important. Avoid slang, bad grammar, and careless habits of expression because these will not help you with any customer, while with many they will arouse a sort of intellectual contempt likely to result in sales resistance. How often do we meet with salespersons whose only descriptive words seem to be: Nice, swell, smart, grand, slick, gorgeous, elegant, stunning, pretty, and lovely.

It is particularly important to avoid the easy habit of using the same few words over and over again for description or characterization. Many of us, without the least realization of what we are doing or its probable effect will assure the same customer that 10 pieces in succession are beautiful. That certainly will not increase her desire to buy; but it may well diminish her confidence in us as intelligent and discriminating guides to such a purchase. A varied vocabulary is a wonderful asset in selling.

Training to use a wider range of words.—It is easy to form the habit of using a wider range of words since we know the words already, and nothing is required but practice in employing them. And it is highly important, because in order to make sales of any importance, we must first sell ourselves, and *language* is a close third, at least, to *appearance* and *manner* as a means to customer confidence. With many buyers it comes first. A few lists of words are set down here in the hope that they may prove of some value:

An *article* may be beautiful, handsome, good looking, lovely; or of charming, pleasing, delightful, satisfying, smart, modish, stylish, or fashionable appearance; of flawless, superb, appealing, moving, striking, notable, gorgeous, picturesque, distinguished, colorful, or exquisite beauty.

Its *design* may be sturdy, staunch, vigorous, structurally sound or adequate, impressive, stately, dignified, chaste, delicate, dainty, refined, simple or of a charming simplicity; ornate, ornamental, elaborate, highly decorative; with trim, smart, or graceful lines, in good, rare, or perfect taste; of great, unusual, or rare distinction.

Its *surface* may be ornamented, embellished, adorned, decorated, garnished, arrayed, or beautified with ornament that is intricate, gem-like, jewel-like, or of exquisite, or finely wrought detail.

Its *lines* may be straight, direct, strong, vigorous, virile, incisive, clean, forceful, masculine; curved, soft, luxurious, graceful, gracious, suave, sinuous, yielding, flowing, or feminine.

Its *colors* may be rich, vivid, brilliant, gorgeous, glowing, gay, stimulating, inspiring, exhilarating, cheerful, flushed, clear, unfaded; soft, sober, mellow, softly blended, quiet, restrained; polychromatic, many colored, a rich mosaic of color; its color scheme, smart, in today's mode, direct from Fifth Avenue; popular, intriguing, refreshing, satisfying, or delightful.

Its *texture* may be fine, smooth, satiny or satin-like, velvety or velvet-like, lustrous, glossy, caressing; vigorous, open, or rough.

It may be comfortable, comfort-giving, restful, reposeful, soothing, inviting; give an impression of ease, easy comfort, cushioned ease; invite rest, repose, or relaxation.

These words will be especially useful in the process of "high-lighting" or introducing a piece with a brief characterization designed to enhance its value before the serious work of selling it is undertaken, as in the phrase, "Here is an armchair of *flawless beauty*," employed in introducing the Chippendale chair.

Technical terms, provided you explain them almost immediately, are effective. To speak of the cabriole or the term leg, the Spanish or the bun foot, the saltire or the silhouette stretcher, or of marquetry, *vernis martin* (pronounced, roughly, ver-nee mar-tang) *bombe* fronts or *varquenos* will not harm you with any customers, while with many it will serve to intrigue interest, deepen appreciation of the importance of furniture, and add to your own prestige as a man who knows the details of his business.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BUILDING YOUR VOCABULARY

Any salesperson in the home furnishings field will find it convenient to adopt some simple plan of acquiring the expanding vocabulary which always is an asset:

1. Purchase a book of synonyms. Take an article you are to offer for sale, for instance, an armchair. Try, first, to use correctly a dozen different descriptive words which apply to this particular armchair. Then take the idea of *design* or *texture* or *surface* of this armchair and add a list of 10 to 20 adjectives which might well be used in discussing this chair with a customer. You may depend upon it—she will prefer, "Here is an armchair of flawless beauty" to "Here's another pretty

number."

2. *Read* descriptions of latest offerings shown at the furniture markets; *study* closely the choice of words in presenting illustrations of special thumb-tuft carpeting, a drop-leaf table, wing chairs, any simply styled grouping; *use* these newly found friends exactly, confidently, and constantly in your own selling procedures. Practice! Practice!
3. Give close attention to the diction of others who have achieved vocabulary masteries beyond your own. Seek ever to acquire a facility in expression which will impose no handicap to you at any step in your sales procedure.
4. Subscribe to one or more trade journals in the home furnishings field and cultivate the habit of selecting for study those articles which will add something to your steadily growing vocabulary, and enhance your appreciation of the power of words.

HIDDEN FACTORS THAT INCREASE SALES

Since ancient times, the sense of touch and the sensation of feel have been important factors in the buying and selling of practically all commodities. To see a piece of smooth satin partially sells a prospective customer, but to feel its soft texture in her fingers makes the luxury of the fabric a reality, something to own and cherish which will enhance her loveliness, and this hidden value, expressed in the sense of touch, is usually the factor which makes the customer buy better merchandise than she might have considered and which climaxes the sale.

In selling home furnishings, the hidden value revealed by touching the piece under consideration is extremely important. Fine furniture which has been hand rubbed has a luxurious feeling which is as soft as satin. Only by rubbing your fingers over a lovely finish can you appreciate, to the fullest extent, the exquisite fineness of a hand-rubbed finish. Feeling the smooth pull of a drawer which slides properly on its guides, tracing the design of inlaid marquetry with the fingertips, searching for rough spots in drawer interiors with sensitive fingers and caressing soft-textured upholstery fabrics with the fingers all vividly bring to the attention of the customer the quality and true hidden beauty of the piece under consideration, which may not have been discernible to the naked eye. The sensation of feel should be made to augment the sense of touch whenever possible, but salespersons should bear in mind that a woman's hand is extremely sensitive and the sense of touch should first be brought into action before the sense of feel; for example, let us suppose a woman is considering a rug, which has a particularly fine texture. Invite her first to feel the texture of the rug beneath her fingers; have her compare this feeling with a less expensive rug so that she may mentally compare the difference; then ask her to step on the rug. Get her to feel the luxury of it under her foot; bring to her attention the spring of the wool, the comfort of stepping into the deep pile and other factors which excite the sensation of feel. You will find these powerful factors not only in helping her decide upon a better rug but in assuring her that she is getting quality for her investment.

Courtesy Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Co.

Figure 6.—The feminine touch.

When selling upholstered pieces, always have the customer sit in the chair or on the sofa. Ask specifically if it is small enough, or if she thinks it will be large enough, for her husband or whoever is to use the chair. Stress the comfort angle; notice if she can sit gracefully in the piece and whether or not she has difficulty in getting up, once seated. As she touches the fabric bring out facts about the texture and the weave. (See fig. 6.) As she experiences the various reactions she is silently selling herself and only suggestions on your part which help her to recognize the various sensations of touch and feel are necessary.

Bear in mind in all phases of selling home furnishing, whether the customer is considering a chest of drawers, a chair, rug, lamp, or cigarette box, getting her to touch it to get the "feel" of the article and to try it for comfort, luxury, restfulness, or other sensations are potent hidden factors in better selling.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. How will a knowledge of the processes of manufacturing of an article enable the salesman to explain its wearing qualities, its price, its sanitary qualities, its fitness for a particular location within a room, and its appearance?

2. What types of information may a home furnishings salesman get from a public library?

3. What sources of merchandise information are available to you and how familiar are you with them?

4. What five kinds of special information are needed by retail salesmen?

5. What steps do you take systematically to acquaint yourself with the correct descriptive words and phrases currently used with newly arrived merchandise?

6. There is a vocabulary of suitable words and phrases for use when showing furniture to all types of customers. The same words are not equally effective with all customers. What plan or device do you use in making a wise selection of these descriptive words and phrases?

7. Make a list of words which under any ordinary selling situation you would never use.

8. Why is the excessive use of superlatives an indication of ignorance of the article being sold?

9. For each of the following make a statement which involves the opinion of a recognized authority:

Reading lamp.
Glowing colors.
Floor coverings.
Glass curtains.
Telephone stand.
Wallpaper.
Armchair.
Pictures.

10. In the light of the discussions in this unit, what profitable work may a retail salesman attend to when not actually waiting on customers?

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The Colonel's Lady and Judy O'Grady, II, p. 8.
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FOOTNOTES:

[2] This is a matter of store policy. Some stores believe that they gain more than they lose by suppressing the name of manufacturer.

[3] This summary prepared with permission of Delmar Kroehler, president of the Kroehler Manufacturing Co., Naperville, Ill., and Henri, Hurst, and McDonald. Inc., 520 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. (1939).

Unit IV
STYLE AS A SELLING FACTOR

Significance of Style

Period Styles from Renaissance to Early Colonial

American Styles

Using Style Appeal in Selling

American Furniture Mart Photograph by Grignon

Figure 7.—A directoire piece in lacquer and gold, upholstered in a rich gold and green brocade fashion, this interesting stool. An ideal hall piece, the ornate stool lends itself to an interesting setting when used with the lovely Duncan Phyfe mirror and mirrored glass wall sconces. The mirror has a dull green panel across the top—the lyre and laurel branches appearing in a deep green and gold. The arabesque Axminster rug has a tracery leaf design in sculptone effect. It is a greyed green tone.

Unit IV.—STYLE AS A SELLING FACTOR

SIGNIFICANCE OF STYLE

Salespersons frequently find it necessary to deepen a customer's appreciation of the fitness and beauty of a piece by the presentation of one or more additional selling features, of which the most important are construction or technical excellence, attractiveness of materials or finish, and beauty of design or style.

This should do two things:

1. Enhance the value of your merchandise.
2. Enable you to reveal technical or artistic knowledge which will increase the customer's respect.

There is no fixed or logical order for the presentation of these various selling features. Many salesmen begin with construction, but this often is a mistake. There is reason to believe that more women are interested in materials than in construction, and more in style than in materials.

What style means to you.—Style is a powerful buying motive of great and growing importance in furniture. Most of us attempt to use the style appeal only in connection with period furniture. Most women, on the other hand, identify style with fashion. They think of style in decoration as substantially the same thing as style in dress; that is, as something smartly harmonious and in the accepted mode.

Unquestionably we must develop the power to capitalize on style as our customers understand it.

The successful salesman also must be able to exploit style in the historic or period sense. The history of furniture is a selling tool of immense value, whether we are trading upon high, medium, or low levels.

The sections which discuss the more important period styles contain a mass of highly condensed information. All of this information and much more will be necessary to the man who wants to reach the higher levels of his profession, but just how much of it you will need to remember and organize for your present work is a matter to be determined by yourself. The first thing to do is to read it through carefully two or three times in order to get the broad outlines of the subject. After that study more carefully those parts of the section on "Period styles from Renaissance to early colonial," page 50, and "The American style," page 70, that can be related to your own merchandise. Make use of the suggested reading list at the end of the unit, page 79.

Glossary and reading list.—Many terms used in the section on "Period styles from Renaissance to early colonial" are uncommon and not widely understood in the furniture trade, although they are freely used in books and magazines which deal with the home furnishing art. These terms are defined in the glossary included in the appendix, pages 247 to 249.

PERIOD STYLES FROM RENAISSANCE TO EARLY COLONIAL

Furniture is and always has been a utility and an expression of human ideals. In order to understand period furniture and to talk about it with convincing enthusiasm we must be able to see beyond it to the people who created and used it.

For our purpose, we confine this summary to the historic period beginning about 500 years ago, which covers the development of furniture as we know and use it today. Speaking broadly, the social trends during this period were from insecurity to security; from despotism to political liberty; from austerity to luxury; and from simplicity and few wants to sophistication and multiplied wants.

Accompanying and expressing these social changes we find corresponding changes in architecture and decoration. The trends are from homes of fortress-like construction to homes easily accessible and amply lighted by low windows; from immense rooms with high ceilings to small rooms with low ceilings; from massive, heavy forms and thick proportions to small, light forms and slender proportions; from the austerity and virility of straight lines to the softness and femininity of curved lines; from strong dark colors to soft light colors; from vigorous, open textures to smooth, close textures; and from a few types of furniture to the extraordinary variety of today.

Most period furniture was designed for the rich and powerful.—We must remember that most of the historic styles were expressions of the life of the court and the aristocracy. Period furniture was made by great artists, and often was elaborately ornate, sumptuous, and enormously costly. The metal mounts alone on the cabinets made for the mistresses of Louis XV, for example, cost far more than the ground, building, and complete furnishings of an ordinary American home.

The essence of these styles is to be found in their line, proportion, color, and texture. We can adapt them to machine production and mass distribution. We sell these reproductions or adaptions for what they cost in a machine age. But we can add to their desirability by explaining their aristocratic ancestry. Thousands of customers enjoy the sentimental satisfaction that comes with the knowledge of style and period sources and even the anecdote plays its part in giving merchandise its full measure of value in use.

Europe before the Renaissance.—When the Roman power was broken in the fifth century of our era, Western Europe was given over to anarchy and darkness. In the beginning of the feudal period, the great barons with their families, retainers, and dogs, lived in bare fortresses or one-room castles. The floors were of dirt. The lord and his lady had a great bed, two chairs of state,[4] and a few hutches.[5] The retainers had stools on which to sit, and ate at a great table made by laying hewn planks on trestles.

By the time of the Norman conquest of England in 1066 a measure of civilization had been achieved. A great love of color developed with the age of chivalry. The period of the Crusades (seven attempts during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries to recover Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the infidels) brought the knights of Western Europe into contact with the

developed arts of Sicily and the far more luxurious life of their Saracen enemies, and the returning crusaders brought back great quantities of the rich and colorful fabrics of the East.

That tremendous out-flowering of the human spirit which we call the Renaissance (French for rebirth) started in Italy in the fourteenth century; it grew there in full vigor in the fifteenth, attained to its maturest powers in the sixteenth, and sank to its decline in the seventeenth. The whole era was a time of great achievement. The New World was discovered and explored, learning was revived and extended, international trade was developed, and masterpieces were created in the arts, which still stand among the greatest monuments of human genius.

The ideas and decorative practice of the Italian Renaissance quickly spread to the west, where they overcame or fused with the existing Gothic, resulted in the Renaissance styles of Spain, France, Flanders, Holland, and England, and started the long course of development which has created the immensely rich heritage possessed by lovers of furniture today. In studying the decoration of this first period, we must remember that the construction of rooms adapted to the comfort, privacy, and intimacy of modern life was an eighteenth century development. Life was lived in the public eye and in rooms of state. The apartments of the palaces were large, the ceilings high, and the furniture sparse and designed for its decorative value rather than for use and comfort.

THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

It is customary to divide this era into three periods; the Early Renaissance, characterized by a rich simplicity and a dignity almost austere; the High Renaissance, by a showy but restrained magnificence; and the Late Renaissance, by a baroque magnificence over-ornate and unrestrained.

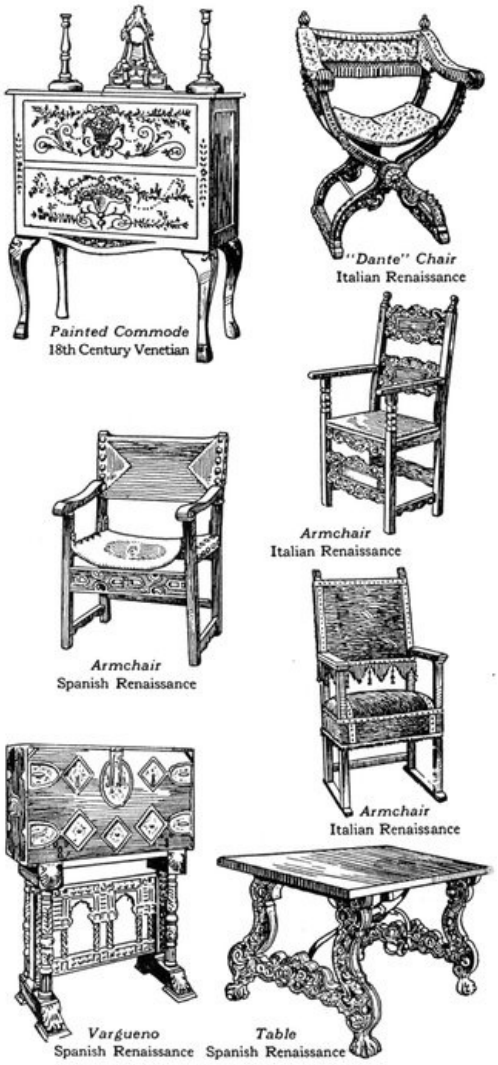
During the first period, walls were chiefly in rough plaster, bare save for tapestries or panels of damask or brocade, or finished with a smooth coat decorated with colored frescoes; ceilings were largely in dark woods, cross-beamed, and with the heavy beams and corbels ornamented in color; and floors were of stone, tile, and marble. There was some use of oriental rugs, and a free use of rich decorative textiles.

During the high or middle period (about 1500-1550) many of the rooms were rich with pattern and color. Walls were in colored marbles, or covered with frescoes and gilding, or with gorgeous brocades, Genoese velvets and tooled and gilded leather; ceilings frescoed and gilded; floors paved with many-colored patterns in gleaming marble.

Furniture of the period was straight-lined, rectangular, and of dark woods. Carving, in low relief and in the round, always was employed with a fine sense of the value of contrast with plain spaces. Gesso ornament, gilding, and painting were much employed, and the panels of chests and other pieces often were decorated by the greatest artists.

Chairs of the period were of *(a)* the rectangular type, with or without arms, with high or low back, and with or without upholstery; *(b)* the curule, a sort of four-legged camp stool with back, sometimes of metal and with fabric seat; and the **X**-type, adapted from ancient Greece and Rome, called in Italy Dante and Savonarola chairs. These chairs of wood or metal often were made to fold, and later became popular in England.

Tables included the single-slab refectory type; draw tables of the same construction used today; pedestal tables with round, square, hexagonal, and octagonal tops; and a variety of writing tables with a front box or drawer section which could be lifted for writing. The larger tables were supported by heavy turned legs with stretchers near the floor, or by trussed or columned end supports connected by a stretcher, often arcaded.



Painted Commode
18th Century Venetian

"Dante" Chair
Italian Renaissance

Armchair
Italian Renaissance

Armchair
Spanish Renaissance

Armchair
Italian Renaissance

Vargueno
Spanish Renaissance

Table
Spanish Renaissance

Figure 8.—Italian and Spanish styles (1400-1759).

Beds, which were usually set on a dais or low platform and always richly embellished, included the heavy four-poster with canopy; the four-poster with low posts and no tester, with or without footboard; and the paneled type with head and foot board and no posts.

Chests, chiefly bridal chests (Italian: Cassone or cassoni in plural), were a most conspicuous feature of Italian decoration.

Credenzas, which served either as buffet or console, were wall pieces about 4 feet high and of varying length. Other forms included the armadio (French armoire, a large cupboard or cabinet for linens), small cupboards, chests or drawers, desk, benches, and stools.

Renaissance ornament was enormously rich. The forms, taken chiefly from classical antiquity, included the acanthus leaf, human and chimerical figures, cherubs, scrolls, foliage, flowers, swags, rosettes, and drapery festoons. Velvets were used largely for upholstery, with brocades,

brocatelles, damasks, needlepoint, and leather, and strong rich colors were used throughout as would be expected of so vigorous an age. Strong reds, blues, and greens, set off by gold, were the favorite hues.

Although a long period of decadence followed the High Renaissance much beautiful work was done in eighteenth century Italy. Furniture was chiefly of walnut, mahogany, and many highly figured woods, with carving, painting, bone inlay, pietra dura, marble tops and ornamental metal mounts the favorite methods of embellishment. The painted furniture, particularly that made in Venice, is of interest to us today, and is used in suites for bedroom and breakfast room, and as occasional pieces in other rooms. In using this furniture today it is unimportant to attempt to reproduce the historic backgrounds.

THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE

Spanish interiors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries differed sharply from contemporary rooms in Italy, France, and England, chiefly by reason of old Moorish art and custom, which the incoming wave of the Renaissance was not strong enough to wash away.

Old Spanish decoration is characterized by a severe dignity, relieved by concentrated masses of strong colors and by a wide variety of ornamental forms. Furniture of the period was straight-lined and rectangular and chiefly of walnut, mahogany, chestnut, oak, and pine. Carving, straight and spiral turning, inlay of ivory, bone, ebony, colored woods, tortoise shell, silver, and bronze, often with outlines in black and vermillion, and ornamental iron work were the principal means of embellishment. Elaborate and beautiful mounts of iron and brass were common.

Chairs, though not common, included both the curule and rectangular types, the latter with or without arms and with or without upholstery. Other varieties included carved and straight spiral turned legs; Spanish scroll, bell, ball and bun feet; carved, splat, and arcaded backs; and wood, flat upholstered, and squab-cushioned seats. Beds were large, and mostly of the arcaded headboard type. Tables were mostly of large size and rectangular.

THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE (FRANCIS I, 1515-47; HENRY II, 1547-59)

French Gothic art early began to give way before the constantly widening flood of Renaissance art which flowed in from Italy. The transition was practically complete when Francis I was crowned, and less than 50 years later, under Henry II and his Italian wife Catherine de Medici, the richly ornate yet restrained style of the French Renaissance was fully formed. The style is too palatial for adaptation to American homes.

The French Styles.

1. Louis XIV (Louis Quatorze[6]), 1643-1715.

Louis XIV surrounded himself with the airs and trappings of majesty. Furniture of the period was formal and dignified, and for the most part, massive. It retained the straight lines characteristic of the earlier styles, but with less of angular harshness.

Walnut was chiefly used for exposed parts together with oak, chestnut, ebony, pine, and sycamore. Many exotic woods were used for veneers and inlay. Caning was common for seats and backs. Every known form of embellishment was employed, including carving, chiefly in the acanthus leaf, shell, cartouche, cupid, ram's head, and other classic motives.

Louis XIV Furniture.

Chairs of the most characteristic type were rectangular, with high broad backs having a top straight or slightly rounded at the corners, back and seat solidly upholstered; legs term-shaped (term: A four-sided pillar, usually tapering toward the bottom), carved, and under-braced by Gothic or saltire cross stretchers; arms as long as seat, and usually straight and upholstered. Other seating included the *sofa* or *canapé*,[7] the *chaise longue*, and the *bench*, *tabouret*, and *stool*.

Upholstery fabrics were exceedingly rich and gorgeous, Gobelin and Aubusson tapestries, silk velvets, damasks, and brocades being chiefly used. Furniture was upholstered *en suite*, a common arrangement including one sofa, two arm chairs, and nine stools or *tabourets*. Etiquette prescribed the use of *stools* by most members of the court, and prudence demanded it of the ladies, who at this time wore hoop-skirts, so enormous that they couldn't sit in an arm chair. All furniture was placed against the wall, with the center of the room left clear.

The old-fashioned four-poster bed with drapery belongs here. Most fashionable was the *lit d'ange* (bed of the angel), canopied but without posts, which was of enormous size and always richly carved and embellished.

While tables were of many kinds and sizes, the rectangular shape with term legs was most characteristic. *Screens*, either one-panel or folding, were used in most rooms, and *mirrors*, *pedestals*, and *tall clocks* became common, in addition to such older forms as *armoires*, *commodes*, *cabinets*, and *desks*.

The colors of the period were fairly dark and strong, with crimson, green, and gold still favorites;

some new and lighter colors became popular; among them aurora—the yellowish pink hue of the dawn—flame, flesh, and amaranth.

2. Louis XV (Louis Quinze)[8] *1715-74.*

Great-grandson of the old king, Louis XV was but 5 years old when the latter died, and for 8 years Philippe of Orleans governed as regent. Louis XV was too young to continue the constant round of formal receptions, and state functions. Court life turned from the great salons to the smaller apartment and the boudoir. Furniture became smaller and more dainty; the hard and virile straight line gave place to the soft and feminine curved line; and dark colors to light and delicate tones. Pale tints of rose, blue, green, and yellow were the favorite colors.

An extraordinary variety of cabinet woods was used—among them walnut, mahogany, oak, rosewood, cherry, violet, and tulipwood. Embellishment included carving; ornamental veneers; marquetry; plaques of porcelain; painting in ivory, soft yellow, gray, or sea green with fine lines of white, gold, or color; and lacquer, which became immensely popular.

Louis XV Furniture.

The chairs, all curvilinear, with and without arms, upholstered or caned, include the *fauteuil*[9] or *large armchair*; the *bergere*, a *smaller armchair* with solidly upholstered arms and often with loose cushions; the *causeuse* (the word means talkative, chatty), an easy arm chair; the "*confessional*," large winged chair, often with a high seat matching a large tabouret and put together to form a *chaise longue*, and many others.

Table
French Renaissance

Armchair
Louis XIV

Writing Desk
Louis XV

Armchair
Louis XV

Armoire
Louis XIV

Commode
Louis XV

Figure 9.—Early French styles (1500-1750).

Beds were as varied as the chairs. Alcove and *sofa* or *boudoir beds* were favorites, the latter having headboard, footboard, and back. *Four-poster canopy beds* were common, and were sometimes made of iron, draped. Another fashionable favorite was the *day bed*, often with a fabric-covered headboard, and placed with either head or side against the wall.

Among the multitude of tables were many of elliptical and other curvilinear shapes; the *crescent* or *kidney writing table*; the *powder table*, which we have lately revived after more than 150 years; and the *ladies' work table*. The *chiffonier*, a small piece with drawers, came into use about 1750, as did the *corner cabinet* and the *wall shelves*, now known as hanging *book racks*.

Present-Day Practice.

Louis XV furniture is used often in the drawing room or dining room of important American houses, where a suitable background will be ensured by the architecture.

Most of us, however, have occasion to sell it only for bedroom use.

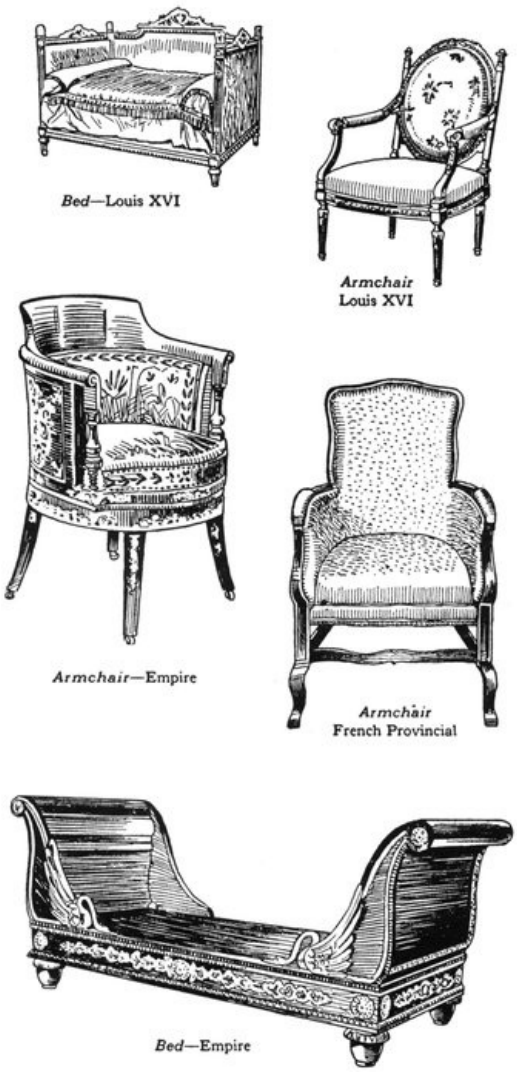
3. Louis XVI (Louis Seize[10]) 1774-94.

Louis XVI, grandson of Louis XV, was married at 15 to Marie Antoinette of Austria. He was popular for some time, but was swept aside by the French Revolution in 1789 and was killed on the guillotine.

The style which bears his name (sometimes known as the style of Marie Antoinette) was in reality fully formed before his accession to the throne. It resulted directly from a wave of enthusiasm for the delicate type of classic ornament revealed by the excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum, which were discovered early in the eighteenth century. The Adam style in England came from the same source.

The furniture of the period returned to straight lines and rectangular shapes, with curved lines freely employed but not dominant.

A great variety of cabinet woods was used, fashionable favorites, including mahogany, walnut, sycamore, and satinwood. Carving, architectural moldings, marquetry, figured veneers, lacquer, painting, and porcelain inlays were the usual methods of embellishment. Much furniture was painted.



***Bed*—Louis XVI**

Armchair
Louis XVI

***Armchair*—Empire**

Armchair
French Provincial

***Bed*—Empire**

Figure 10.—Later French styles (1750-1815).

New Types of Furniture.

Among the new chairs was the *voyeuse* (vwä-yûz), a lyre-back armless chair with the top rail upholstered as an elbow rest, and used by dandies who bestrode it backward in order not to crush the tails of their coats. Favorite beds included the *sofa*, usually upholstered with damask or brocade, and supporting at the four corners a light open frame bearing a small canopy; and the *day bed* with or without back.

During the period the *tea table*, *breakfast table*, and *extension dining table*, with four, six, or eight legs, came into common use.

The Directoire[11] (1795-1804) and Empire (1804-15) Styles.

After France had rid itself of royalty and aristocracy through the Revolution, under the direction of the painter David a new style was created; it was "made and molded of things past." Inspired by the classic Roman decoration, it was known at the time as the "antique" style and today is known as the Directoire. (See fig. 7.)

The Directorate was succeeded in 1799 by the Consulate, with Napoleon as First Consul, and the Consulate in 1804 by the coronation of Napoleon as Emperor. Style trends were continuous; for our purpose it is enough to discuss briefly the style known as the Empire *(l'Empire)*.

It is of interest because of its influence upon American furniture of the Federal period.

Furniture was for the most part rectangular, massive, and architectural in design, but curvilinear

in Roman and gondola chairs, and in many beds and sofas. Legs included the straight term form; round, either plain or carved; rectangular and turned outward at both front and back as in the chair illustrated (p. 59); flat truss supports and winged chimerical figures for tables and beds. Feet included the paw, ball, scroll, often with leaf shoe.

Mahogany was the favorite wood, with some use of rosewood, walnut, oak, and yew, and with a wide variety of materials for inlay. Carving, veneer, paint, turning, and gilding on metal or carved wood were usual methods of embellishment. Tapestry, damask, satin, brocade, velvet, and worsted damask were used for upholstery, with fringes and gimps common.

The French Provincial Styles.

"French Provincial" refers to furniture made in the French provinces, by local craftsmen and usually of local woods, in close reproduction of the styles dominant at the court. The styles which were widely copied, and which resulted in the most graceful and charming pieces, were those of Louis XV and Louis XVI. (See fig. 1.)

THE ENGLISH STYLES

Because England was ruled by four dynasties—English, Scotch, Dutch, and German—English furniture reveals the effects of a series of strong foreign influences.

The Elizabethan Style.

With the accession of Elizabeth (1558) the English Renaissance was firmly established. Rooms of the period were paneled in oak with small rectangular panels, plain or carved, and usually carried to the ceiling; ceilings in ornamental plaster (parge), or in beamed-wood or open-timber construction; and windows large, with leaded casements separated by mullion. Most important rooms had oak-plank flooring; there was considerable use of oriental rugs, then known as "Turkey carpets." Many rooms still had dirt floors strewn with rushes, which were changed but twice a year, with such results that the Englishman of the period called his floor the "marsh," and kept his feet off it when possible by use of chairs and tables with low, solid stretchers.

Oak was the dominant furniture wood, with some use of elm, beech, yew, pine, and Scotch fir, which was called "deal," and valued highly. Carving, mouldings, and paneling were used for ornament, with marquetry for panels in walnut, ebony, rosewood, pear wood, cherry, yew, and holly.

Furniture was massive, architectural in character, straight-lined, and rectangular.

The beds, which were used only by the great, were the most important article of furniture. They were of great size with a high headboard supporting a very heavy cornice, the other end of which was borne by posts set at the lower corners and often detached from the bottom of the bed.

The Jacobean Style (1625-1685).

This style evolved directly from the Elizabethan, with the development of new forms of furniture and increased use of upholstery. When, at the Restoration in 1660, Charles II returned from France, he brought back something of the French taste and the French desire for luxury.

Draw-top Table
Elizabethan

Armchair
Elizabethan

Armchair
Late Jacobean

Chair
Late Jacobean

Gate-leg Table
Jacobean

Figure 11.—English styles (1560-1690).

Oak remained the principal furniture wood, with walnut fashionable after 1660. Furniture design, strongly influenced by Flemish practice, tended to increasing slenderness and grace. The melon and acorn bulb legs remained in favor for several decades; were superseded during the Commonwealth by spiral turning; and in turn gave way to the scroll, or Flemish legs characteristic of Charles II furniture. Chair backs became high and narrow, and were of the ladder type or caned, carved, or upholstered. Chair backs were raked, and later in the period the back legs of chairs—at first perpendicular to the floor as in Elizabethan practice, were bent outward to counterbalance the rake of the back. Stretchers continued to follow frame line, but were gradually made lighter, set a little higher, and turned. Toward the end of the century the front stretching was raised, widened, and carved with a cresting and **C**-scrolls, as were many of the chair backs.

Gate-leg tables and *day beds* appeared early in the period—the latter usually caned, and with a sloping head and without footboard or back. The *couch* took the place of the settee, and was made first with the squab seat, and after the Restoration with the same construction and ornament as the arm chair. *Sofas* were made like the high-back upholstered chairs, with arms solidly upholstered. *Tall clocks* and *wall clocks* appeared, and many *small stands*.

The Style of William and Mary (1689-1702).

James II, last of the Stuart kings of England, was followed by the Dutchman William of Orange and his wife Mary. These names stand for a rich but confused style which marks the transition between Old English practice and the Dutch style, fully developed a few years later in the reign of Queen Anne. Architectural backgrounds were lighter and richer, and the walls were often covered with velvets, damasks, and brocades in large baroque patterns, or with papers in Chinese designs.

Walnut was the fashionable wood, but oak, elm, pine, chestnut, pearwood, cedar, and painted beech were used, with marquetry of many woods, plus bone and ivory. Furniture was rectangular in outline, with a free use of curves. Carving was used for the legs and backs of many chairs, but flat panels were embellished with veneers, marquetry, and lacquer. Furniture legs were mostly turned, of trumpet shape and with bun feet, though the Dutch cabriole legs, with pad feet and a single shell carved on the knees, were not uncommon.

William and Mary brought from Holland the vogue for Chinese ornament. Everyone collected porcelain and drank tea; new types of cabinets, small chairs, and occasional tables appeared in profusion.

The Style of Queen Anne (1702-14).

The style of Queen Anne persisted, with unimportant changes, throughout the reign of George I. It was less magnificent and impressive than preceding styles, but lighter, more graceful, and more comfortable.

The walls were often paneled, but in deal rather than oak, either in the natural color or painted, and panels were frequently embellished with high-relief carving. For un-paneled walls, cheap printed cotton fabrics largely replaced the sumptuous materials of the previous style, while many walls were covered with wallpapers in landscape or mythological subjects, or in imitation of veined marble or wood wainscots. Ceilings were painted as in the Stuart period. Windows were increased in size, and hung with figured velvets, satins, damasks, and chintzes.

Lacquer continued to be vogue, and was used on *cabinets*, *screens*, *occasional tables*, and *chairs*. Carving and painting—in black and gold, red, blue, and green with gilding—were favorite methods of embellishment. Caning was common. For upholstery needlepoint, figured and plain velvet, and damask were chiefly employed.

In this style curved lines supplanted straight lines for the first time in England. Cabriole legs were almost universal; chair backs were high and narrow, with open framing and a fiddle splat, usually plain but sometimes simply carved or pierced. Chair-back crests and the legs of most furniture were ornamented with a carved shell which reached England from Italy by way of Holland. High curved stretchers, connecting front and back legs only and tied at the middle by a single cross stretcher, were in general use but sometimes omitted.

The *love seat* became an important piece of furniture at this time, and was usually made with a double chair back, six legs, and upholstered seat. *Dining tables* were of the *gate-leg* type, usually of elliptical shape. *Tallboys* became common, and contained from six to nine drawers.

The Georgian Era.

Georgian England produced the decorative style created by Robert Adam, and the individual furniture styles of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

EARLY GEORGIAN FURNITURE

The development of English furniture between 1715 and 1727 is of little interest save to the expert. The period was a time of lowered taste. Mahogany, introduced from the West Indies as a curiosity about 1710, became within two or three decades the dominant cabinet wood.

THE CHIPPENDALE FURNITURE STYLE

There were three Chippendales, all cabinetmakers. The second, Thomas Chippendale (born 1710; died 1779), came to London with his father in 1727 to open a shop. By 1735 the firm was prospering, and 15 years later Thomas Chippendale was a great success. As is usual with men of genius, however, he was undervalued by his contemporaries; and it was not until a hundred years later that he came to be recognized as the greatest furniture designer of his race.

Settee
William and Mary

Armchair
Chippendale

Chair
Late Queen Anne

Armchair
Chippendale

Wing Chair
Queen Anne

Armchair
Chippendale

Cabinet
William and Mary

Figure 12.—English styles (1690-1760).

Chippendale served the world of fashion, observed and followed style trends closely, and successively developed the Dutch, Rococo, Chinese, and Gothic styles. He lost popular favor when the classic revival, led by Robert Adam, became the dominating influence about 1762, and much of his time thereafter was spent in executing work for Adam, who designed furniture for houses but did not make it. Taking the period from 1727 to 1765, Chippendale's career as a designer took the following course:

1725 Dutch mode, with early Georgian heaviness. The chairs had bandy legs, ball and claw feet, broad seats and fiddle backs, carved and sometimes pierced. Gradually the proportions were refined, a shorter and squarer back with rounded corners was developed, and the splat was replaced by a richly carved member.

1735 Dutch influence yields and blends with the French styles of the Regency and Louis XV, resulting in more slender and graceful proportions and a free use of

Rococo ornament.

1745 French influence predominant, with floral and Chinese lattice detail gradually introduced and the Chinese influence growing stronger. Lightness of effect sought after, and achieved by means of pierced work.

1755 Chinese influence stronger, waning after 1760. Between 1750 and 1760 he developed the Gothic style, sometimes blending it with Chinese motives.

For ornament Chippendale used mahogany and depended upon carving, of which he was a great master, set off by gilding, japanning, and lacquer. He made furniture for every purpose, including *mirror* and *picture frames*, *girandoles*, *pier tables* and *brackets*, and *china shelves* and *cabinets* (see fig. 3.) Doubtless his *chairs* are his most significant creations. His chair backs fall into three classes:

1. "Splat" or upright center bar, passing from plaint splat to jar shape pierced and carved with scrolls and foliage, and culminating in the elaborate ribbon back.
2. "All-over" patterns, covering in equal fashion the whole of the back, and characteristic of his Chinese and Gothic designs.
3. Ladder-back or horizontal rails.

Chippendale made a free use of colorful textiles for both squab seat and upholstered pieces, employing tapestries, worsted damask, Spanish tooled leather, and close-stitch embroidery.

THE ADAM STYLE

The classic revival, discussed under the French style of Louis XVI, was initiated in England by the Scotch architect, Robert Adam. He was appointed architect to the King in 1762; designed many important homes for private owners; and with his brother James, under the firm name of The Adelphi (Greek for brothers), carried out an extensive program of fine residence construction in London. Robert Adam died in 1792.

Adam designed everything that went into his houses, including the *fire grates*, *girandoles*, *upholstery*, *carpets*, and *furniture*.—He was not a cabinetmaker, but the furniture made to his designs by other men—including Chippendale and Hepplewhite—was called Adam furniture.

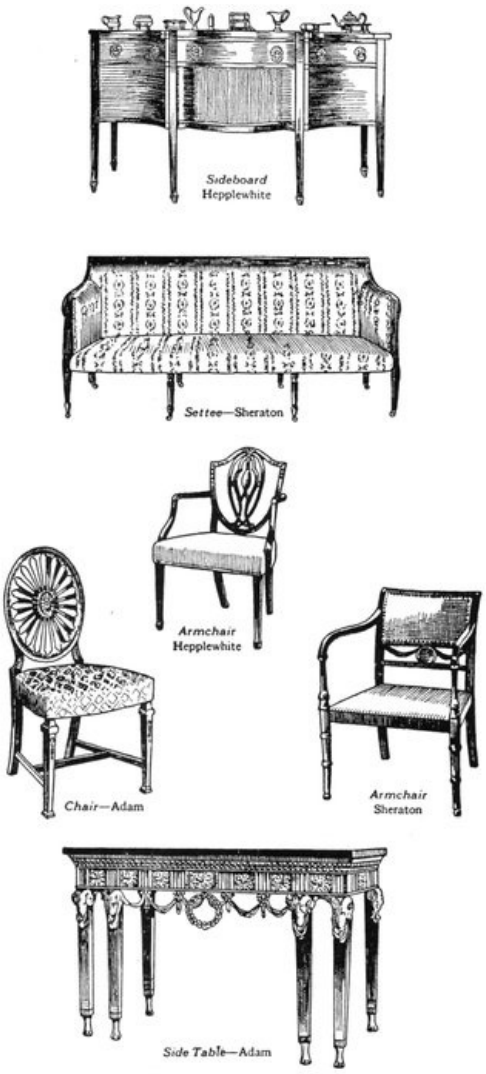
The Adam style perfectly reveals the classic qualities of fine proportions and symmetrical balance, combined with a delicacy strongly influenced by Pompeian decoration. Walls were paneled and painted, with paneling and cornice enriched by painted compo ornament. Ceilings were in relief, designed from a center to fit the room with the motives repeated in the floor coverings.

Adam furniture was in mahogany, satinwood, and painted wood. This was embellished with low relief carving, narrow moldings, inlays of exceptional delicacy and beauty, and painted decoration. Forms were basically rectangular, but softened by a free use of curves. Chair legs were straight and tapering, square or round, and plain, fluted, reeded, or carved. Chair backs were square, round, elliptical or shield-shaped, upholstered or filled with carved wheel, lyre, urn, or other ornament. *Console tables* and *cabinets* were often of semielliptical shape, and *sideboards* frequently were formed of two pedestal cabinets, surmounted by *knife urns*, and connected by a *shelf table*.

THE HEPPLEWHITE FURNITURE STYLE

George Hepplewhite (or Heppelwhite—both spellings are used) was a designer and cabinetmaker whose proclaimed purpose was to unite elegance and utility in furniture. His work was in the neoclassic style; was very strongly influenced by Louis XV and Louis XVI decoration, and by the work of Robert Adam; and enjoyed a great popularity from 1785 to 1795. Hepplewhite died almost at the beginning of his vogue, and his business was carried on by his widow, Alice, under the firm name of A. Hepplewhite & Co.

Hepplewhite's furniture was distinguished by lightness, refinement, and elegance. It was chiefly in mahogany or satinwood, with cheaper woods employed as a base for painting or japanning. Carving and marquetry were employed for embellishment, with the ornament drawn from the same sources as that of Louis XVI and Adam, but with special emphasis upon wheat ear, garrya husk, and three-feather Prince of Wales' plume.



Sideboard
Hepplewhite

***Settee*—Sheraton**

Armchair
Hepplewhite

***Chair*—Adam**

Armchair
Sheraton

***Side Table*—Adam**

Figure 13.—English styles (1760-1800).

Except for his furniture which used the cabriole legs and Rococo ornament of Louis XV, Hepplewhite employed the straight tapering leg, square or round, and plain-fluted or reeded, with straight, collard, or spade feet. Chair backs were most characteristically of shield shape, filled with carved styling, urns, the feather back, or the interlocking heart form. These backs were supported by a construction of the back legs, and were not attached to the seats. Front legs (except in the case of the cabrioles) were perpendicular to the floor, while back legs curved outward to balance the rake of the back. Console cabinets were often semielliptical, and sideboards were rectangular except for concave curves near the ends.

For covering, Hepplewhite insisted upon silks and satins, and he was especially fond of narrow stripes. He often designed or selected the draperies used with his furniture and chose the narrow stripes of plain lines and serpentine pattern of the French styles, as well as designs of ribbons, festoons and tassels, shields, circles, and garrya husks.

THE SHERATON FURNITURE STYLE

Thomas Sheraton (born 1751; died 1806) was the last of the great English furniture designers. He was strongly influenced by Louis XVI and Adam designs.

Sheraton was not a money maker, although, in addition to cabinetmaking, he worked as a

drawing master, preacher, author, and publisher. However, he was a great cabinetmaker and a great designer, unsurpassed and probably unequaled by any man of his race in the making of *cabinets*, *secretaries*, *sideboards*, *dressers*, and *tables*. (See fig. *3a*, p. 16.)

He used mahogany for dining-room, library, and bedroom furniture; and rosewood, satinwood, and painted furniture for the drawing room. Inlay was his favorite method of embellishment, with turning, some carving, ornamental veneering, and painting. His ornaments included swags, the star, cockleshell, fan, and disk.

Notwithstanding its apparent delicacy, Sheraton's furniture was structurally sound. The legs were very slender, usually round but sometimes square, tapered, and often reeded. Some of his later pieces have spiral-turned legs. The feet were inconspicuous, usually spade or straight and collard. Chair backs were characteristically square, with a central panel rising slightly above the top rail, and the lower rail kept the back well up from the seat.

For upholstery Sheraton used plain, striped, and flowered silks, and gold and silver brocades. He was especially fond of blue as a color, three of his favorite schemes being in blue and white, blue and black, and very pale blue and yellow.

The Hepplewhite and Sheraton styles are similar and cannot always be distinguished without careful study. Sheraton used more underbracing, and his sideboards have convex instead of concave corners. Beside the characteristic difference in chair backs, Hepplewhite pulled his seat covers well over the apron, while Sheraton permitted a part of the seat frame to show.

AMERICAN STYLES

The early colonists came from England to Virginia, New England, and parts of Pennsylvania; from Holland to the Hudson River country and Delaware; and from Germany to parts of Pennsylvania. The little furniture brought with them, as well as the ideas upon which they proceeded to build and furnish their homes in the New World, were representative of the common houses of the small towns and countryside of their native lands. (See fig. 45, see page 212.)

The interest in Early American art is now so widespread, and the sales of Colonial furniture so great, that every salesman should have sound working knowledge of the subject. Many books are available, a few of which are mentioned in the reading list. One of the most useful is *A Handbook of the American Wing* of the Metropolitan Museum[12]—a book every furniture store can well afford to own.

THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

The earliest New England houses were solid but simple and primitive. Walls were of whitewashed rough plaster or of wide molded boards, which were used vertically to form partitions; ceilings of wood, with exposed joists resting upon heavy supporting beams; and floors of plank.

Furniture was of Jacobean type, some of it brought from England, but for the most part made here from oak, pine, maple, and other native woods. The forms were few and simple and included *cupboards*, *chests*, *trestle tables*, and *chairs* of the turned or wainscot types. Most furniture was left unfinished. Later there came the *chest of drawers*, and chairs of the Cromwellian and Carolean types, often with spiral turned legs and scroll feet, and either caned or with seats and backs upholstered in needlework.

Near the beginning of the eighteenth century the open-construction rooms began to give way to complete interior finish, with paneled walls. The American form of the *Windsor chair* which reached its highest development at about this time, was mostly of hickory because of the adaptability of that wood for bows and spindles.

Courtesy Merchandise Mart News Bureau.

Figure 14.—Harmony in periods in rugs and furniture is shown by this figured Axminster, accurate reproduction of an old floral hooked rug shown with Early American. The design is red, rust, and green on wood tones, harmonizing with the green of the ivy in the wallpaper pattern, and the rust of the draperies.

THE LATE COLONIAL PERIOD

By 1750 the production of good furniture was well under way, with designs based upon Early Georgian models, and 10 years later, in the period of the strongest Chippendale influence, the fine homes of the Colonies were filled with very distinguished furniture of American design, of which the *highboy* is a perfect example.

The Adam influence appeared here shortly before the Revolution.

Sheraton and Directoire models were adapted and combined by Duncan Phyfe of New York, who shares with William Savery of Philadelphia the distinction of creating some of the finest American furniture.

THE FEDERAL PERIOD

The work of Duncan Phyfe belongs to this period, and it is supposed that the White House was first furnished by Thomas Jefferson with furniture of that style. Destroyed by the British in 1814, the White House was rebuilt and furnished by James Monroe in 1817 with Empire originals imported from France. This style, as modified in the United States, with its heavy, classic ornament, and gilt mountings, remained dominant until it was replaced by the ungraceful and ugly adaptations of the style of Louis XV which appeared in Victorian England and were copied here.

THE MODERN STYLE (L'ART MODERNE)

"Modern art" is a term used to include aspects of present-day practice which depart widely from traditional or conventional models. It regards period styles as survivals of a past, dead and gone. Avoiding mere prettiness, it seeks dominant simplicity through elimination of ornament on structural forms, and an adaptation of design to function as complete as that revealed by today's

motor car or skyscraper. Literally, it is streamlined for comfort and beauty in the modern way.

Broadly speaking there are two modern developments in functional furniture:

1. There is a *classic-modern* development deeply rooted in tradition but adapted to the needs of today.
2. There is a *functional-modern* development which, forsaking the past, is giving us a fresh, practical angle in furniture design.

Both developments seek comfort, simplicity, and beauty in all ways.

The simplicity features of functional furniture are triumphs in finish and in structure. Surfaces are flat and smooth without applied ornament. The completed pieces are sharp and vigorous in outline, perfection in finish, with long continuous curves replacing the old sharp angles. In the new metal furniture it is not uncommon to note that the entire frame of a chair, settee, or table has been made from a single length of metal tubing. Grace and lightness are natural attributes of these flowing lines.

This contemporary furniture also achieves a sincerity which marks a new high. Without ornamental features which characterize the classic-modern development it is impossible to hide flaws in workmanship. Construction accordingly is emphasized rather than concealed. There are no "fake antique" effects about this functional furniture. No one is trying to make these materials look like something else. Metal is called metal; maple is maple; and neither, sparkling under a brown graining, pretends to be walnut. Finishing processes continue to be used but they aim at developing the individual grain, color, and texture of each species. The following statement quoted from the April 1940, Bulletin of the National Retail Dry Goods Association, is a forcible expression of this viewpoint:

> The majority of consumers interpret such expressions as "all mahogany" or "genuine Honduras mahogany" or "all maple" or "all walnut" literally, i. e., that furniture so described is made wholly of mahogany or maple or walnut according to the wood named. The National Better Business Bureau recommends that such terms be applied only to those articles of furniture in which all the exposed parts are made wholly of the wood named. If the exposed parts are composed of more than one kind of wood such article should be described by the names of the principal woods used, viz, "mahogany and gumwood," "walnut and gumwood," not by such description as "combination mahogany," and "combination walnut." Also it is recommended that furniture employing veneered construction be frankly described in advertising as "veneered."

To achieve the finish and structural beauty of functional furniture the modern craftsman works with various materials. The whole world is bringing to the markets choice cabinet woods to be used in producing hitherto undreamed-of effects. Magnolia, amboyna, bubinga, macassar, satinwood, narra, makore, padouk, and thuya—these are familiar names. Glass—clear, white, and colored—has won acceptance as a structural material. Aluminum, stainless steel, and chromium plate are popular. Cork veneer with its velvety texture and warm coloring is excellent surface finish for wood furniture. Metal frames with veneer tops often are shown in designs suitable for use as kitchen, sunroom, porch, and even living-room furniture. Linoleum tops for tables and desks afford variety in color. Various synthetic products are converted into tops which have been proofed against heat and liquid stains, thus popularizing them for cocktail and coffee tables. Colored lacquers reminiscent of the orient have been appropriately used. Textile designs which are largely depended upon to supply the necessary ornament for rooms, employ the straight lines, acute angles, and whirling curves of the futurists as well as natural forms drawn with little or no attempt to representation. The end is not yet predictable, but there is much to be learned now.

USING STYLE APPEAL IN SELLING

We may use style appeal in selling furniture of any quality except the poorest to customers of any level of taste except the lowest. The salesperson should have some appreciation of the importance and dignity of furniture, and a fair working knowledge of the forms, materials, and ornament of the several period styles.

HOW FURNITURE KNOWLEDGE IS SPREADING

We must remember three things:

1. All furniture is derived, however remotely, from earlier forms and therefore can be identified with a style appeal.
2. American women have become style-conscious in matters of decoration.
3. The home-furnishing art is studied in colleges and secondary schools; books dealing with it are widely read; at least 25 million persons read national magazines which devote space to it; hundreds of newspapers publicize it; powerful agencies are actively engaged in widening popular knowledge of it.

WHAT SUCCESSFUL STYLE SELLING INVOLVES

In order to enhance the desirability of an article through an appeal to beauty of design or style, we must cause the customer to see in it something desirable which she has failed to see for herself. To do this we must be able to notice this "extra something" ourselves, and to convey a clear and interesting picture of our observations.

Many never see more than a part of the sales possibilities of what we have to sell. Our merchandise is as common to us as an old shoe. We are prone to forget that its forms are the result of age-long processes of development, its ornament the heritage from an immemorial past. Often we forget its romance, its quickening appeal to the imagination, its promise as a way to richer and more stimulating life. To us a chair is a chair, and a rug is just another rug.

You will sometimes find it effective in building up appreciation of a fine machine-made rug to tell how much time would have been required for weaving alone had it been made by hand. Count the number of tufts per square inch; multiply by 144 to get the number per square foot; then by the number of square feet in the rug, divide the total by 2,500—the average number of knots tied by a Persian weaver in a full day's work—to arrive at the number of working days. Make a few of these calculations based on rugs of standard weave and size at your leisure, and remember the results for use when required.

To equip yourself to emphasize style in furniture, first go through your stock carefully, and identify the style of all pieces that are accurately reproduced or closely adapted from historic designs. It may surprise you to learn how many pieces can be definitely assigned to one of the historic styles.

The ideal way, of course, would be to have each piece styled and marked by the manufacturer; this may come in time. Another way would be to have the style names agreed upon by the entire sales force, after discussion, and marked on the tags, so that everybody will be telling the same story. But if no definite plan is used, study the stock by yourself. After all, the man who wants to travel ahead of the crowd must expect to do some pioneering, and you will be the one to profit.

Every clever oriental-rug man realizes the sales value of an identifying name. He knows that women particularly like to know the name or weave of a rug and any facts connected with its design, because these things make them feel more assured in buying and give them something to talk about pridefully to their friends.

In presenting your furniture under its historical names, be careful not to make claims you cannot establish. They will expose you to the ridicule of a well-informed buyer, of whom there are many.

Never say that a piece is a reproduction unless really it is. Say that it is "in the style of" or "inspired by," or "derived or adapted from," or "a present-day adaptation of," or "a twentieth century interpretation of" the style to which you have assigned it. Having said this, proceed at once to give it whatever additional importance or value you can draw from your knowledge of the history, personalities, or practice of the period. Do not lecture but try to dramatize your merchandise.

The highest use of language is pure self-expression. Only your choice of words and expression can give your customer kinship with what you feel. An encyclopedia of information is not of itself complete customer service when you are dealing with style, period, color, harmony, and satisfaction.

DRAMATIZE YOUR MERCHANDISE

Suppose, for example, that you want to sell an ordinary loose-cushion sofa in blue velvet, with machine-carved cabriole legs, rolled arms, and straight-lined back with curved ends.

It is easy to say, "Here is a handsome, well-made sofa in blue velvet. Just the right thing for your room; the price is $95."

But it is almost as easy, and in many cases far more effective, to say, in substance: "This, as I understand it, is what you may have in mind. There is nothing striking or extreme about the design. Notice the graceful curves of the cabriole or f scroll legs, which are completely adequate to hold up the heavy body; note how those same curves are echoed in the arms and suggested in the back, so that the whole piece reveals harmonious lines. This sofa expresses the quality of repose which makes it so important in the properly furnished modern home." Or, suppose you have a reproduction of a Chippendale ladder-back chair. With 9 possible buyers out of 10, it would be foolish to try to sell such a piece through the bald statement that it is a beautiful Chippendale chair.

A better approach would be as follows: "Here is an armchair reproduced from one of Chippendale's masterpieces. If you will set it off by itself you will see its extraordinary grace and harmony of line. In this piece we have Chippendale's conception of the ladder back—a very old form of chair expressed in flowing curves which descend rhythmically from top rail to floor. As a chair it is perfect—staunch, thoroughly comfortable, and enduring; it is even more desirable as a work of art. Anyone may well be proud to own it."

This language is not intended to be "stilted." If delivered casually, with no thought of reciting a memorized paragraph, or of delivering a set speech, these ideas will be effective in sustaining interest while, informally, you direct attention to other features. "High-lighting" or dramatizing your merchandise is as difficult as it is necessary when one must guard against failure by enhancing the desirability of the merchandise.

STYLE APPEALS BASED ON PERIOD DECORATION

Your description should not be left to chance or to the inspiration of the moment. Think them out at home or in your free time in the store, and plan just how and when you will use them.

These "high lights" may be based upon history, beauty, and sentiment. To illustrate:

Bedroom Suite Adapted From the Style of Louis XVI.

History.—"In this suite we have a reflection of the last of the great decorative styles developed in France under the Bourbon Kings. Louis the Sixteenth was king of France when our forefathers signed the Declaration of Independence. There was great gratitude and admiration for France in those days, which inspired the importation of a good deal of furniture of this style for the statelier homes of America. Washington bought some of it for Mount Vernon, and Jefferson for Monticello."

Sentiment.—"This suite called Louis XVI, named for an era made brilliant by the later courts of France, is reminiscent of the days of Marie Antoinette. Lovers of style and beauty the world over have for decades, even centuries now, looked back to the days of the last lavish escapades of the French courts whenever there is a resurge of the human appetite for the ornate, gilded opulence of color and design that you see characterized in these pieces."

Beauty.—"In this suite we find the slender proportions, fine lines, chaste ornamental forms and delicate grace of the style of Louis Seize. See how skillfully the strength and dignity of these pieces is insured by the straight vertical lines of the frames, and their effect of soft and luxurious ease by the curves of the top rails and mirrors."

Cabinet, Chest, or Dining Suite Adapted From Style of the Italian Renaissance.

History.—"This piece was certainly made in America, and it may have been made within the past 2 months—it is new in our stock. Yet in every line and detail it recalls to us the great age of the Italian Renaissance, when the New World was being discovered and explored, and the Old World made over for the development of modern life."

Sentiment.—"Women, of course, counted greatly during the Italian Renaissance; but they did not dominate the design of furniture as they do today. Note the virility of this design—its straight, vigorous lines, its solidity and strength, its unyielding angles, and its simple, sparse ornament."

Beauty.—"There are times and places when delicacy and daintiness fail to please. For the room that has such a place nothing could be more appropriate and satisfying than this cabinet, designed in the virile spirit of the Italian Renaissance. There is a beauty in straight lines, in strong and noble proportion, in rich dark coloring."

These tabloid statements are of course to be regarded as suggestions, not as models. Make up your own, couched in your own language, and based upon your own merchandise and your own customers. But do not assume that this sort of thing cannot be done in your store and with your customers, or that it is old-fashioned, and of no value. It must be done at certain times if we want to sell furniture in volume and on other bases than utility and price.

TWO CLASSES OF EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMERS

In making a style appeal based upon period decoration you will occasionally encounter customers who belong to either of two classes, both small, but important enough to merit brief mention—

1. Those who express contempt for modern machine-made furniture.
2. Those who have no use for period design and often for the whole matter of style.

Nothing will be accomplished by argument. But the one who scorns style probably does not carry that idea over into his purchase of clothing for himself or of the automobile he drives. In dealing with this type of customer it may be worth while to point out that the machine at least has enabled us to reproduce the truly beautiful pieces of the old masters with their full beauty preserved and to make them available to people of ordinary means. Certainly society could not support the immense number of craftsmen that would be necessary to make good furniture by hand.

Nor is it a question of paying more for style. When one chooses well-styled furniture it is true that he pays for materials and labor, but he gets in addition the distinction that comes from rich historical associations, and aristocratic lineage.

QUESTIONS

1. How would you make a style appeal based upon period decoration to a customer who professed contempt for modern machine-made furniture?

2. What steps would you take in selling a reproduction of the Chippendale splat-back chair?

3. What are the characteristics of the four outstanding furniture periods known as the French, Early English, Georgian, and American? (Consider each period from the viewpoint of historic date, lines, proportions, woods, upholstering fabrics, and modern use).

4. Why may Sheraton, Hepplewhite, and Duncan Phyfe furniture be used together?

5. What is meant by the following: "Modern arises from the fact that its designers are neither bound by traditions of the past nor wedded to the present, but move alertly up and down the centuries—combining the old and the new—with a refreshing disregard of dynasties and dates?"

6. To what extent is streamlining, now an accepted feature of kitchen equipment, appearing in metal and wood furniture?

7. Contemporary furniture finds expression in honest construction. Construction is emphasized rather than concealed. In what ways would you say sincerity *was the most revolutionary characteristic of contemporary furniture?*

8. What has been contributed in domestic comfort by the idea of interchangeable unit furniture?

9. What unusual service features are afforded by the sectional sofa? Is this trend likely to become "fixed" as a furniture emphasis or is it merely seasonal?

10. Where are the great furniture manufacturing centers in the United States? Where and when are our big furniture style shows held? By whom?

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FOOTNOTES:

[4] For thousands of years the chair was a symbol of state and dignity, and not an article for ordinary use. Common people were not permitted to sit on chairs, and few of the great lords were permitted to sit on chairs in the presence of the king. The chair did not become common until the sixteenth century; before that, chests, benches, and stools were used.

[5] These hutches, or small chests, held the clothing, personal belongings, and materials for the mass when the baron was en route from one castle to another, and were carried on the backs of pack mules. From this rudimentary beginning all modern forms of case goods have evolved.

[6] The French "qu" or final "que" as in "baroque," is pronounced like "k." The accent is always on the final syllable.

[7] The French "e" and "et" are pronounced like "a."

[8] Pronounced Kănz.

[9] Pronounced fo-tuh-ye, the "uh" having almost an "r" sound as in "burn," the final "e" practically silent.

[10] Pronounced "sehz," practically the English word "says."

[11] Pronounced dē'rĕk-twär.

[12] A Handbook of the American Wing; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N. Y., 1928. Price $1.

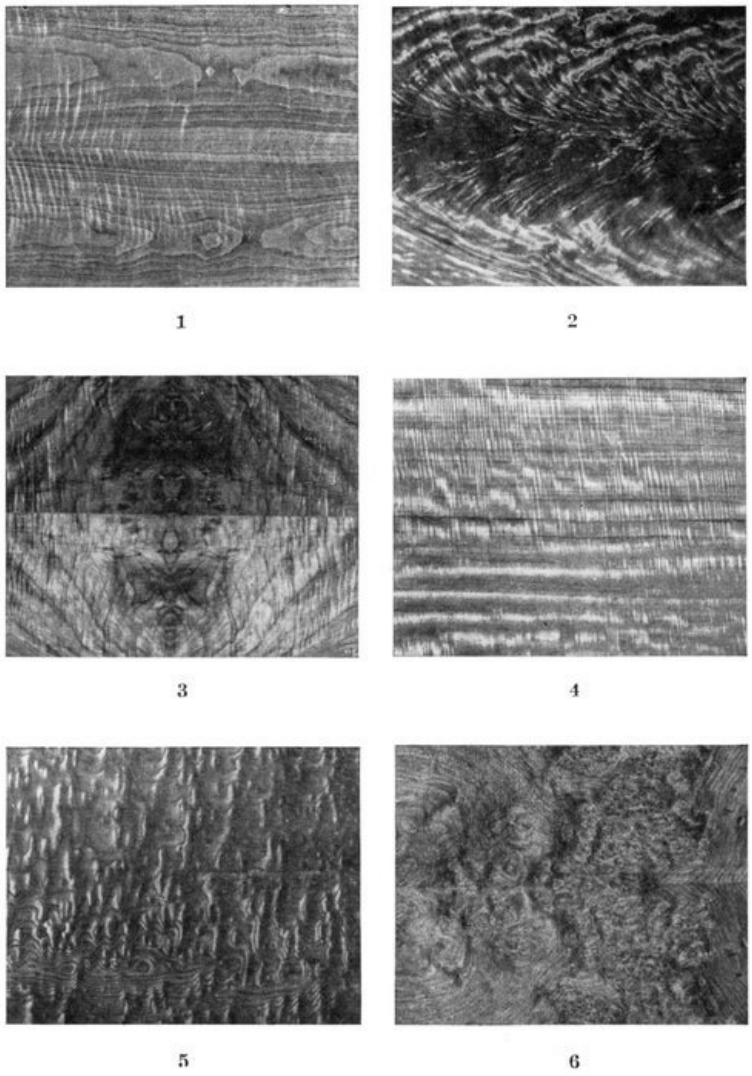
Unit V
FURNITURE WOODS—THEIR ORIGIN AND USE

Value and Price in Relation to Home Furnishings.

Principal Furniture Woods.

Making the Most of Wood Structure and Its Appeal to the Eye.

Importance of Craftsmanship.



Courtesy the Veneer Association.

Figure 15.—Variety in Veneer Slicing.

1. Flat cut—American walnut, two-piece matched.

2. Crotch—Avodire.

3. Stump-wood—American walnut, four-piece matched.

4. Quarter—African mahogany, mottled and fiddleback.

5. Rotary—Ash (Tamo).

6. Burl—Maidou, two-piece matched.

Unit V.—FURNITURE WOODS—THEIR ORIGIN AND USE

VALUE AND PRICE IN RELATION TO HOME FURNISHINGS

The materials in a piece of furniture, and the way those materials are put together, affect not only its appearance, but also its durability and behavior in service. Appearance and durability

both help to determine value. They are factors which usually influence a customer toward or against a purchase. But the customer, unaided, cannot be expected to see and appreciate these factors at their true importance. Therefore a sound knowledge of materials and construction, plus ability to use that knowledge effectively, is essential to the salesperson who wants to take the road to higher earnings.

Every sale is a process of weighing one satisfaction against another. Those who buy from sheer necessity compare price against price, or price against terms. Those who buy for any other reason weigh price against value.

Do not forget that price and value are by no means the same thing. A low price does not automatically constitute, from the customer's viewpoint, a high value. The *price* of an article is fixed by the dealer. The *value* of that article is fixed by the buyer, since it depends, not upon what the article costs to make or what is asked for it, but upon what it is worth to her.

Except for the confirmed bargain hunter, no buyer will buy anything, at any price, unless she believes that it will add to her satisfactions. On the other hand, few persons will buy anything, however satisfactory, unless they believe it to be worth the price. It follows, as a fundamental rule of salesmanship that *price is almost never the first consideration in the mind of the buyer, but that it is almost always the second consideration*. For this reason, few sales can be completed without a demonstration of value.

YOUR OWN BUYING HABITS

Study your own buying habits, and you will see that you seldom make a purchase on the basis of *price* alone. Always you consider *value*. Consciously or otherwise, you compare the satisfaction you hope to gain against the price you are asked to pay. You like a bargain, but you recognize that low price, by itself, does not constitute a bargain.

TWO STAGES IN SELLING

The buying habits of the great majority of your customers are no different than your own. People generally will not buy a piece of furniture at any price unless they first believe, of their own initiative or as the result of your efforts, that it will afford them satisfaction, for their own use. Having found such a piece, they still will refuse to buy it until they also become convinced that *its value measured in terms of their own satisfactions, equals or exceeds the price*.

Thus the average sale consists of two stages:

First, helping the customer find the merchandise that meets her needs and satisfies her tastes, at the price she can afford to pay (not, necessarily, the price she desires, expects, or has expressed a willingness, to pay).

Second, convincing her that the article is a good value for the price.

A prevalent fault among even experienced furniture salespersons is the failure to deal adequately with the first stage—that of finding out what the customer wants. With interior decorators and many drapery salespersons the second stage—demonstration of value—is more often neglected. Moreover, much business is lost by men who reverse the logical process, and begin their demonstration of the value of an article before their customer has tentatively accepted it as adapted to her own needs and tastes.

On the other hand, innumerable sales are sacrificed through reliance upon mere assertion of value, or upon discounts or marked-down prices, with a consequent failure to deliver, at the end, a convincing demonstration of value. In such a demonstration construction and materials will occupy the spotlight.

CONSTRUCTION LESS INTERESTING TO WOMEN THAN MATERIALS

American women are not too much interested, as a rule, in the construction of the articles they buy. This is not because they regard sound construction as unimportant, but because they have been taught to take it more or less for granted. Their chief concern in any product lies in what it will do for them, and they do not care a great deal about how that result is insured. An analysis of magazine advertising will reveal the fact that construction is rarely used as an advertising appeal; a count of several current issues indicates about 1 case in 20.

There is a much wider interest in materials, including furniture woods and the floor covering, drapery, and upholstery fabrics; though even here the primary concern of the great majority of buyers is with the effect of these materials upon their homes and themselves rather than with the materials as such. According to an industry survey, 6 women out of 100 have no interest in furniture; 61 are interested in it primarily as a means of making their homes more attractive; 16 are chiefly interested in furniture woods; 14 in style or appearance; and 3 in construction.

HOW THIS ATTITUDE OF MIND AFFECTS OUR INTERESTS

The widespread disposition of women to take construction and materials for granted tends to reduce emphasis upon quality, forces prices toward unnecessarily low levels, and cuts down volume and profits. It encourages the production of poor merchandise, thereby undermining public confidence in furniture and furniture dealers.

A sound knowledge both of materials and of construction will help demonstrate the superior value of more costly merchandise when such merchandise lies within the customer's buying power. This knowledge, properly used, will of course enable sales to be speeded up, a larger number of customers to be waited on, and a larger percentage of sales to be made. Even when the salesman is emphasizing woods and fabrics, the materials of which home furnishings are made, he must win the customer's confidence in the quality of construction, the craftsmanship with which these materials are put together, if he would effectively minimize what to him is price resistance.

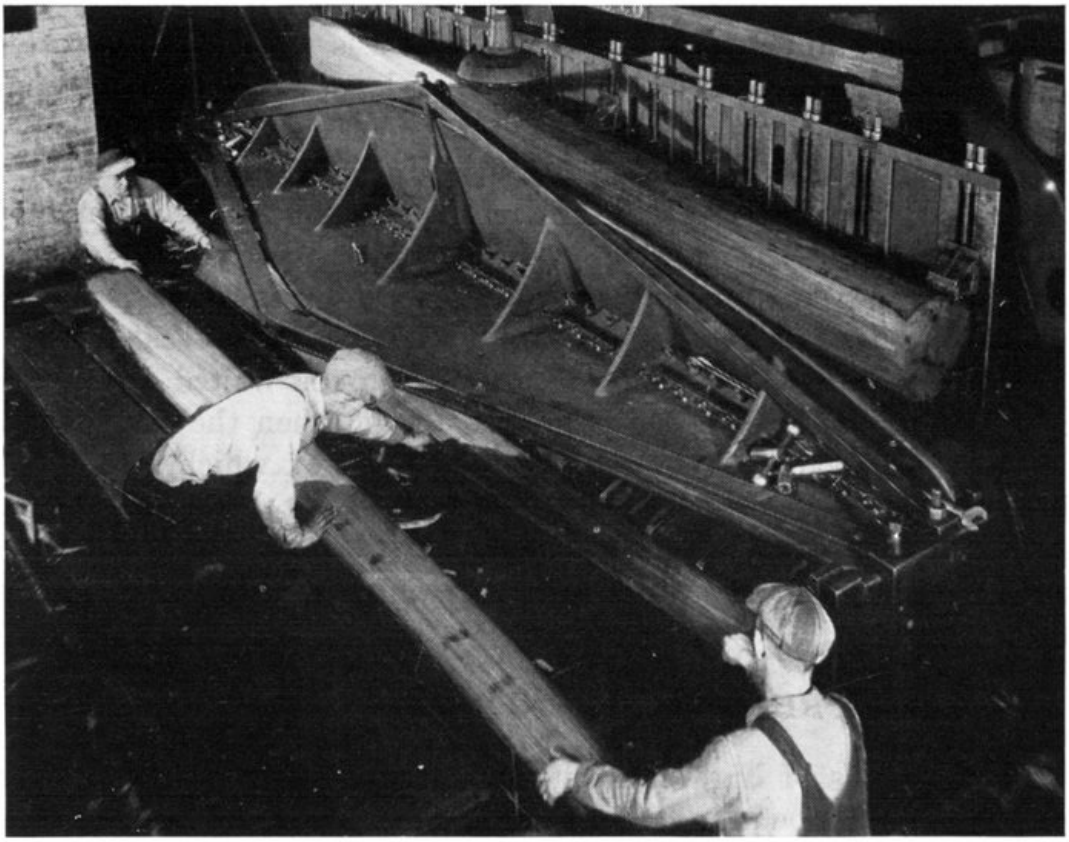
PRINCIPAL FURNITURE WOODS

In all periods of high civilization men have felt a deep interest in the furniture woods. The sheer beauty of these woods, their association in sentiment and legend with the noble trees of many lands, their never-ending, never-repeating variations of figure and shading, the romantic stories of their journeyings by ship or caravan from the far ends of the earth—these things always have delighted men and women of taste.

Undoubtedly they who sell furniture know too little about the furniture woods, talk too little about them, make far too little use of their powerful appeal to the eye and the emotions. If they can learn to know them intimately, and to regard them, not as merchandise merely, but as something fine and nobly beautiful, they cannot fail to inspire widespread admiration and desire for ownership.

A LIST OF THE LEADING FURNITURE WOODS

In appendix D, page 255, will be found a brief account of leading furniture woods. Most of these woods are used today, and many of them will be found in your stock. Ours is an age which takes great delight in colorful and beautifully figured woods. An astonishing variety of new species has come into comparatively recent use as the result of exploration in Africa, Australia, and the more remote and difficult areas of Central and South America. Salespersons are strongly urged, through this and other sources, to become familiar with the leading furniture woods in order to possess the background necessary to arouse appreciation of the beauty, distinction, and rarity of the woods used in furniture manufacture and to convey an adequate sense of the time, skill, and expense necessary to make these lovely woods available in strong and enduring form for the modern home.



Courtesy the Veneer Association.

Figure 16.—Veneer slicer: Note the finished slices in the middle foreground and the tremendous length of the log—the full length of the slicer (16 feet). Working with amazing speed, this slicer frequently requires the attendance of three operators at the same time.

MAKING THE MOST OF WOOD STRUCTURE AND ITS APPEAL TO THE EYE

As is well known, trees grow in diameter by the addition of new layers of wood, one of which forms just under the bark each year during the life of the tree. If growth is rapid, these layers, which are known as *annual rings*, will be relatively thick; if slow, they will be thin. In warm climates the growth of many trees is almost continuous, the fiber relatively uniform, and the annual rings very slightly marked. In cold climates growth is rapid in spring and summer, but almost ceases in winter, and the annual rings are sharply marked. The wood produced first in each year is frequently different from that produced later in the year, so that a distinction is drawn between the early springwood and the later summerwood. In such cases a cross section of the tree trunk will show a number of concentric annual rings whose number is equal to the age of the region of trunk cut. In certain kinds of trees, for instance, species of pines and leaf-shedding oaks, after the wood has attained a certain age, it darkens in color, so that when a crosscut of a 100-year-old part of the trunk is taken, the darker older central wood contrasts as *heartwood* with the surrounding pale *sapwood*.

All hardwoods contain a multitude of long continuous water-conducting tubes termed *wood vessels*; in cross section they are often visible to the naked eye as *pores*. In woods like oak and ash these pores are easily visible in cross section as minute holes, and in longitudinal section as fine grooves, which are often accentuated by furniture makers through treatment with a dark filler. In woods like maple and gum the pores are too small to be seen without a microscope.

Oak, chestnut, ash, and elm are conspicuous members of the ring-porous group of hardwoods, so called because one or more rows of large pores are formed at the beginning of each annual ring. Walnut and mahogany are diffuse-porous because the pores, though plainly visible, are more nearly uniform in size throughout the annual rings.

In addition to the annual rings and pores, traversing the wood at right angles to the fibers are thin stringlike structures that run from the outside of the wood radially inward toward the pith. In some woods these rays are too minute to play a part in the visible figure of the wood, while in others, notably the oak, they are conspicuous, and in quarter-sawed boards produce the effect known as silver grain or flake. These are the *medullary rays*. For more detailed information about wood structure, consult any reliable encyclopedia.

These variations in structure, plus variations in coloring, constitute the physical basis for the innumerable charming effects which expert wood workers are able to create for the furniture lover. *Some of these effects can be produced in solid wood; others in veneer only.* They result from four general methods of cutting:

Plain sawing, or cutting more or less with the grain at right angles to the rays.

Quarter-sawing, or cutting across the grain, parallel to the rays.

Transverse sawing, or cutting in a direction neither flat nor quarter, but between them.

Rotary slicing, in which the knife or the veneer lathe follows the lines of annual growth, but cuts across them irregularly to yield a striking effect of wavy lines and parabolas.

The interest of furniture buyers lies in the beauty, durability, romantic appeal and prestige value of the various woods, and not in the technical processes by which their individuality and fine qualities are brought out. However, a few facts concerning the various types of figures are here set down for possible emergency use.

VENEER AND PLYWOOD

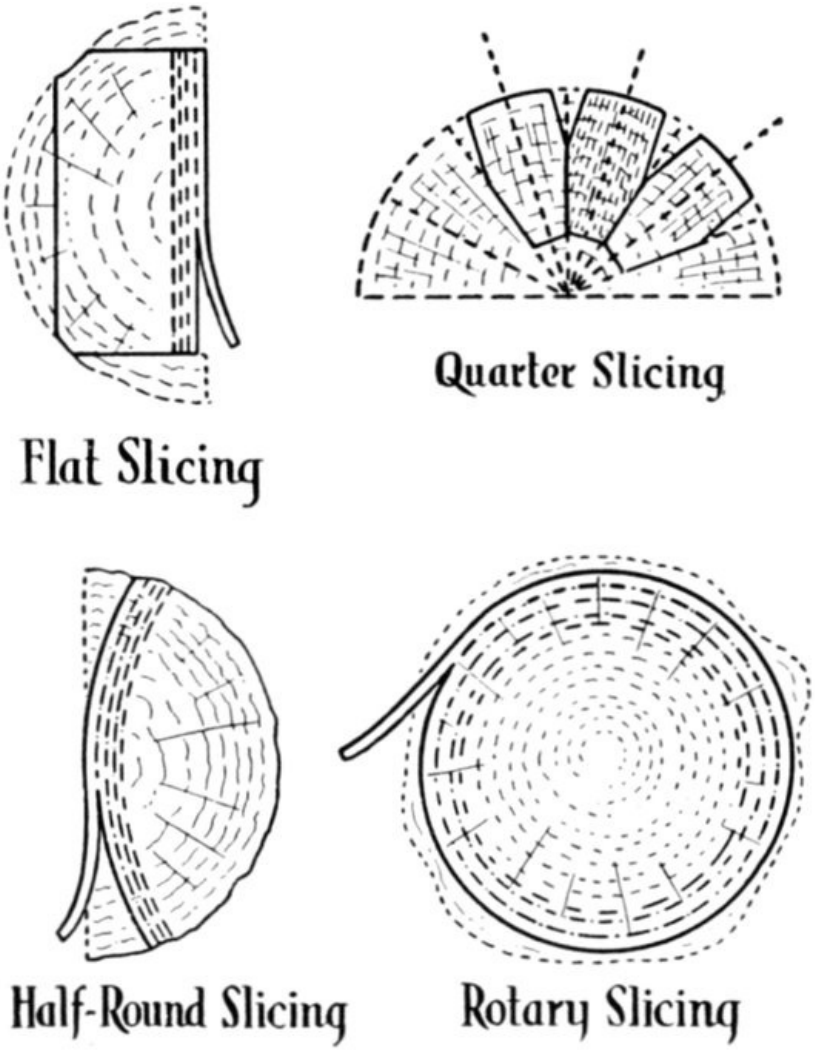
"The art of producing and using veneers dates back to the earliest days of civilization," says the Encyclopedia Britannica.[13]

Although we do not know when and where the art of veneering was invented, there is no doubt that it had reached a high development in Egypt 3,500 years ago. It was practiced by the ancient Babylonians and Assyrians, by the Greeks, and particularly by the Romans, who used it not only in furniture-making but also in door frames and panels. There is a record that Cicero, celebrated Roman orator, paid for a veneered table of citrus wood a sum equivalent to $20,000 in gold.

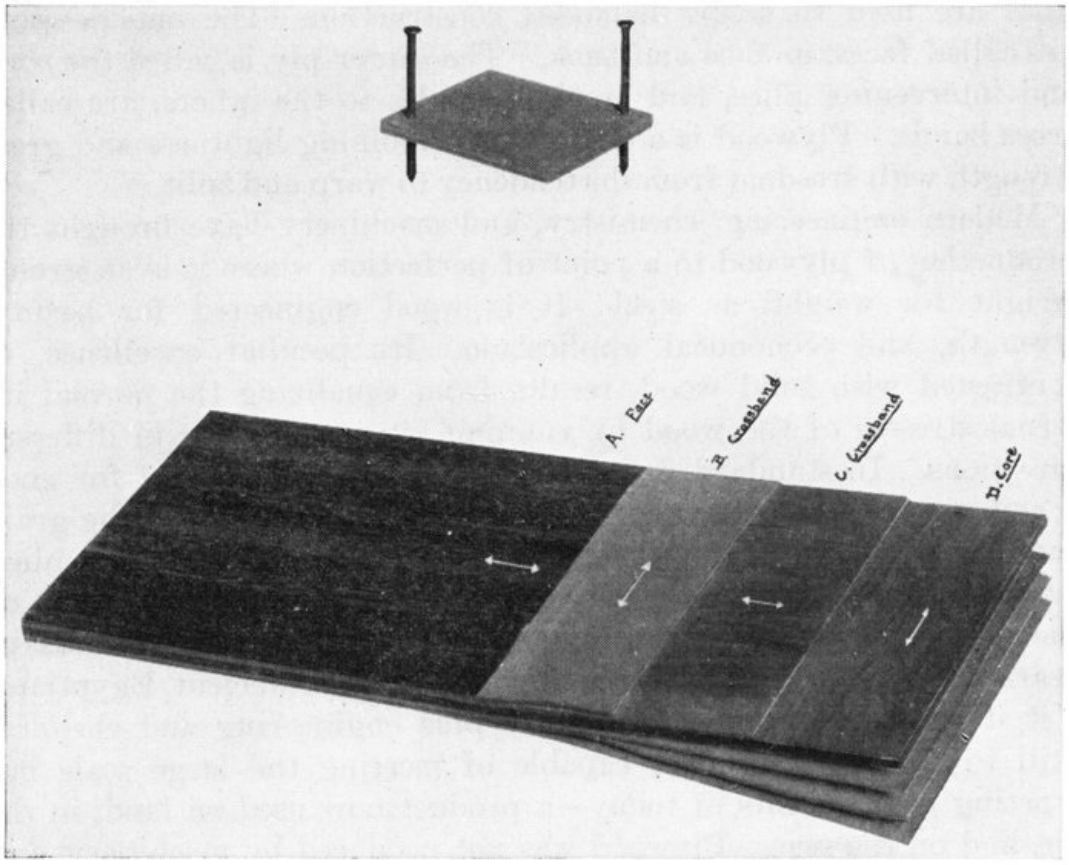
When the ancient European civilization gave way to the Dark Ages, the art of veneering was temporarily lost, only to be revived in the form of inlays during the Renaissance. True veneering did not become common in Europe until after the middle of the seventeenth century, when a new type of saw was invented which would divide a plank into thin sheets. As an early result of the discovery of the New World and the sea route to India and the East, many rare and exotic woods were carried to Spain, Holland, France, and England and used as veneers and inlays in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—among them mahogany, satinwood, amboyna, kingwood, rosewood, tulipwood, amaranth, harewood, and vermillion. The art of veneering reached the point of technical perfection during the reign of Louis XIV, and ever since that time it has been practiced by most of the great cabinetmakers in all countries; except of course, in the case of the carvers, of whom Chippendale is the outstanding example. Most of the magnificent furniture of France, that of the Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and Adam styles in England, and the really distinguished furniture of the late Colonial and Federal periods in America, made a free use of veneers.

The whole process of making veneers, from the selection of a tree in some far corner of the globe to the finished plywood, is a

long and exacting one which demands the technical knowledge of scientists, engineers, and chemists as well as the taste of the artist.



Flat Slicing
Quarter Slicing
Half-Round Slicing
Rotary Slicing
Figure 17.—Slicing illustrated.



Courtesy The Veneer Association

Figure 18.—Showing the construction of seven-ply plywood. The grain of each layer is at right angles to that of the adjacent ply.

Briefly, we can say that the logs must be transported, studied carefully in order to determine just how to secure the most beautiful effects from the wood, usually soaked or conditioned to soften the fiber, and sliced or sawed into sheets of veneer, which are afterward dried carefully. This is a work for specialists, and is usually done at established veneer mills. At the furniture factory the sheets must again be carefully studied, matched, clipped, taped, glued, and built under a pressure of 200 to 300 pounds into the finished plyboards.

A single tree may yield 500 board feet of lumber or the same number of surface feet 1 inch thick. Cut into thin face veneers this same tree would yield 10,000 square feet or 20 times as much in terms of surface area.[14]

ADVANTAGES OF PLYWOOD

Technically, plywood is the product resulting from three or more layers of veneers joined with glue, and usually laid with the grain of adjoining plies at right angles. Almost always an odd number of plies are used to secure balanced construction. The outside plies are called faces, or face and back. The center ply is called the core, and intervening plies, laid at right angles to the others, are called cross bands. Plywood is a device for combining lightness and great strength with freedom from the tendency to warp and split.

Modern engineering, chemistry, and machinery have brought the production of plywood to a point of perfection where it is as strong, weight for weight, as steel. It is wood engineered for beauty, strength, and economical application. Its peculiar excellence, as contrasted with solid wood, results from equalizing the normal internal stresses of the wood by running alternate layers in different directions. In standard five-ply construction, widely used for good furniture, the two outer and the middle ply, or core, have the grain running in the same direction, while the second and fourth plies, or cross bands, have the grain running at right angles to that of the others. Plywood was produced by the Chinese thousands of years ago, and is found in the furniture of the ancient Egyptians. Yet it has taken modern ingenuity plus engineering and chemical skill to develop a product capable of meeting the large scale but exacting requirements of today—a product now used on land, in the air, and on the seas. Plywood was not produced by machinery, and in commercial quantities, until about 50 years ago, when plywood factories were started in Russia. Ninety percent of all wood furniture manufactured today is of veneer and plywood construction. It is used in the interest of economy, strength, flatness, and beauty, not only in cabinet and furniture making but also in residence and office building, coach-building and various engineering industries, including aviation. Plywood offers maximum strength in all directions combined with minimum weight.

BOTH SOLID AND VENEER AVAILABLE IN WOOD FURNITURE

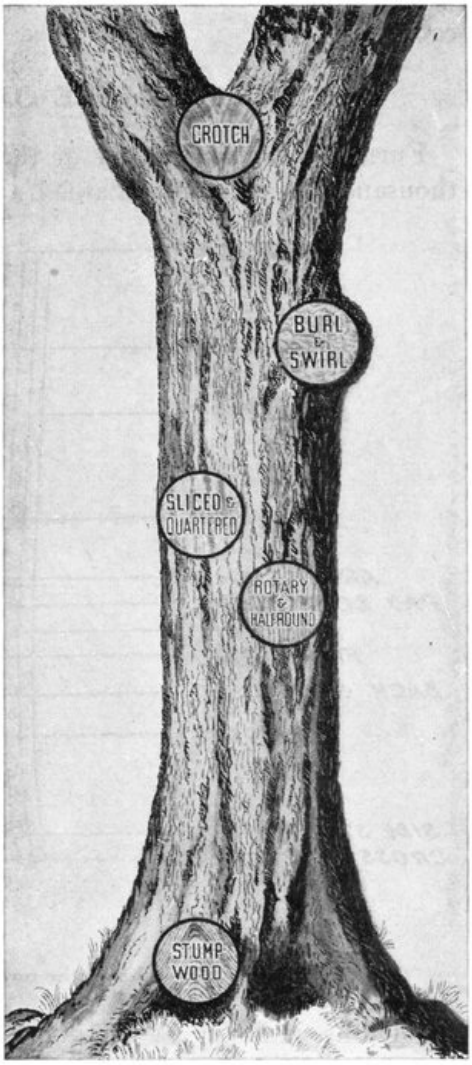
Some persons adamantly insist that to be truly good quality, furniture must be solid, built wholly of one wood. While many experts insist that this view is untenable, those who insist upon it should, of course, buy solid pieces. To do so will frequently involve denying themselves the full beauty of the fine graining which normally can be had only in veneer. The salesman and the industry should jointly educate the customer that good veneer is not only with us to stay, but is used in some of the best furniture made anywhere in the world and that good American veneer has lasting qualities in addition to its value in bringing to the average home graining and finish that can never be obtained in furniture made from solid wood.

SELLING VENEERS WITHIN PRICE RANGES

The price range of veneer varies directly with the ready availability of the species, its color and figure, and its working and finishing qualities. Some veneers cost 20 times as much as others, and certain of the rarest and most beautifully figured sheets are literally worth their weight in silver. Well known commonly used species may be either high priced or inexpensive, depending upon the desirability and current demands for that figure.

To illustrate, American walnut may vary exceedingly in price. Taking the cost of the finest burl as 100 percent, crotch walnut might cost 57 percent as much; stump wood and figured long wood, 30 percent; and plain long wood approximately 5 percent. These percentages represent only the finest of each of these particular figures.

Therefore, instead of calling a suite "walnut" as if that is all there is to be said, it would be wise to point out that it is made of a particularly desirable piece of walnut, both rare and costly because of its fine figure and color. The same type of reasoning may be used in speaking of mahogany, maple, oak, and other beautifully figured cabinet woods.



Courtesy American Walnut Manufacturers Association.

Figure 19.—Location of cuttings in tree body. Not every tree has a stump that can be cut into beautiful stumpwood. Fine crotches are much rarer and burls so precious that the choicest burl veneers, when mounted and matched for use in furniture, are worth more than their own weight in sterling silver. All other figure types are cut, by varying methods, from the long trunk.

IMPORTANCE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

Furniture making is one of the oldest of human industries. For thousands of years it remained a craft industry. The transition to a machine industry began about 100 years ago. Since then, and especially within recent years, the use of machinery has been developed to a point of extraordinary efficiency. It is this fact alone which makes good furniture so low in price today. Indeed, were it not for the machine, most persons would have little furniture, and that of the crudest kind.

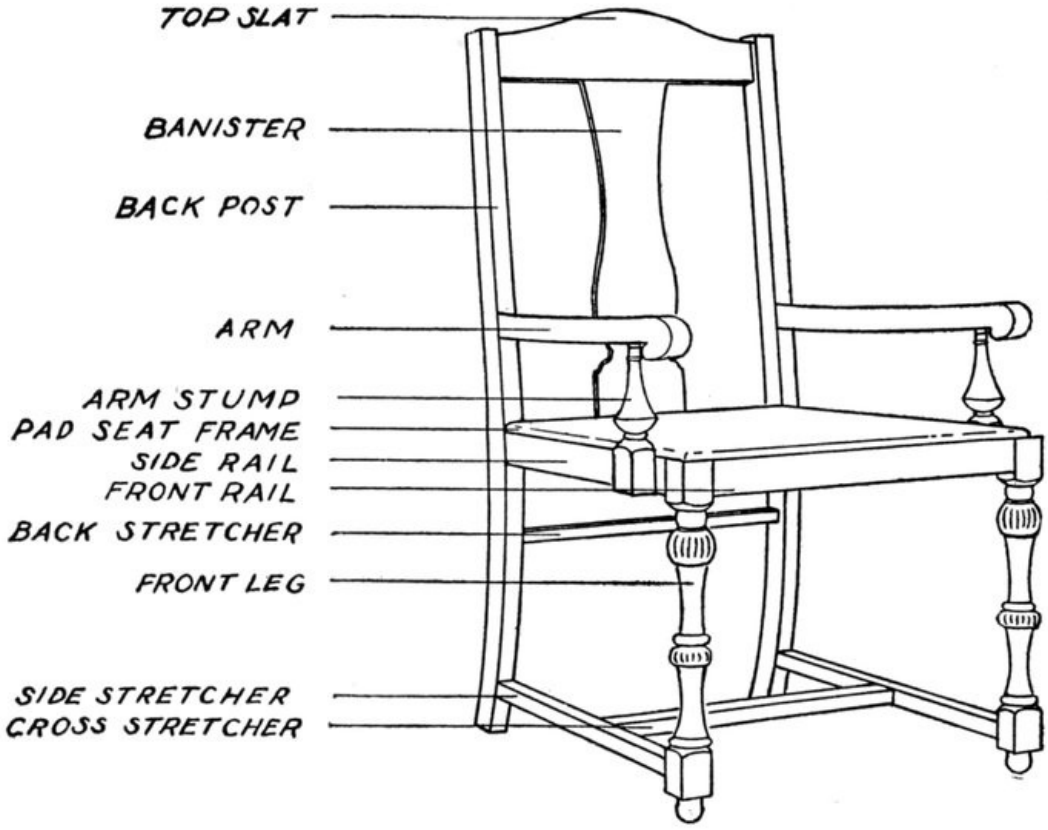


Figure 20.—Shows the names of the parts of a chair.

And yet it would be inaccurate to think of furniture as an impersonal, machine-made product; craftsmanship is still basically important in furniture making, and will remain so always. From 50 to 60 different and highly specialized machines are used in a modern factory making desks, chairs, and tables, and these machines perform all purely mechanical operations with amazing speed and more than human accuracy. Yet at every stage, from the selection of the woods to the final touches in the finishing room, the taste and accumulated skill of expert craftsmen are imperative. In the making of upholstered and reed furniture, machinery plays a subordinate part, and the skill of the craftsman is and always will be the dominant factor.

QUALITY OFTEN CONCEALED

Furniture making employs many materials and many processes. In every one of these materials and processes there are wide differences in excellence between the worst and the best. All of these differences are accurately known only to the manufacturer because they are concealed in the finished product. Many of them are known to the expert salesman. Few are known to the consumer who buys furniture too infrequently to become informed on concealed values, and naturally is disposed to base a judgment of value on the two obvious factors—eye appeal and price. As a result sales volume, to say nothing of public appreciation of furniture, is unnecessarily low.

MODERN FACTORIES BUILD CONCEALED VALUES INTO MANY PRODUCTS

It is obvious that all the operations of preparing wood, routing it through the factory, synchronizing the many processes, and eliminating waste can be performed most efficiently and economically in a modern plant and under the control of scientific knowledge and engineering skill. Factories so operated, therefore, may build into their product concealed or special values which are passed to the consumer in the form of lower price, quality for quality. These concealed values actually may take several forms; they may be concerned with materials and processes, or with construction and design. Although their service value is readily understood, their actual presence in any particular piece of furniture is not so easily determined by the inexperienced salesperson or the infrequent purchaser.

USE OF WOOD FREE FROM DEFECTS

When wood reaches the factory from the sawmill in the form of dimension lumber it contains some imperfections, among them rotted or discolored heartwood, stained sapwood, season checks, splits, knots, worm and grub holes, and decayed tissue. The more or less complete rejection of all defective lumber naturally affects production costs, and the use of perfect lumber in the unexposed parts of a piece of furniture constitutes a concealed value.

USE OF WOOD WITH CORRECT MOISTURE CONTENT

In wet lumber, wood cells will contain moisture in amounts ranging from 30 to 100 percent of the weight of the woody fiber itself. If a considerable percentage of this moisture is permitted to remain in the pieces which are used for building furniture, a disastrous shrinkage will result. Kiln drying the wood to secure the ideal moisture content and to free it from internal stresses requires time, expense, and great skill. Construction cost can be reduced by slighting the process. Accordingly, perfectly conditioned wood constitutes a highly important concealed value in good furniture.

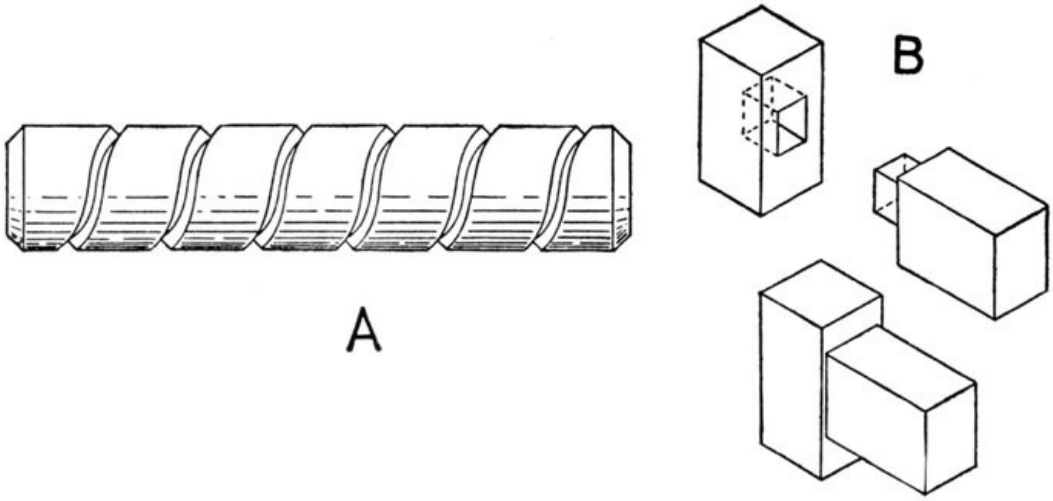


Figure 21.—A shows a dowel. The spiral and longitudinal grooves permit the escape of air, and prevent air pockets in the glue. B shows the mortise and tenon, another method by which wood parts may be joined together with a fair measure of security. In both dowel and mortise and tenon construction the use of good glue is essential. The glue is applied to the portion which is inserted in the socket.

CHAIRS, TABLES, AND CASE GOODS HAVE CONCEALED VALUES

The points of concealed value in chair and table construction include, among others:

1. Choice of wood.
2. Method of shaping legs.
3. Method of building solid seats and tops (joinery; character of glue; and time spent in the clamps).
4. Character of joints (boring; mortise and tenon; kind, number, and position of dowels).
5. Use of corner blocks, braces, and stretchers.
6. Character of veneers, inlay, carving, or other ornament.
7. Technical skill of the machine operators and assemblers.
8. Care in sanding to ensure fine finishing.

Important points concerning the legs, tops, and end panels of cases are substantially the same as for chairs and tables. Standard five-ply for the tops of cases and standard three-ply for the end panels is the usual but not the universal practice. Other points include:

9. Construction of corner posts—solid wood to the floor, or with the turned legs separately made and doweled to the bottom of the posts, which cheapens but weakens construction.

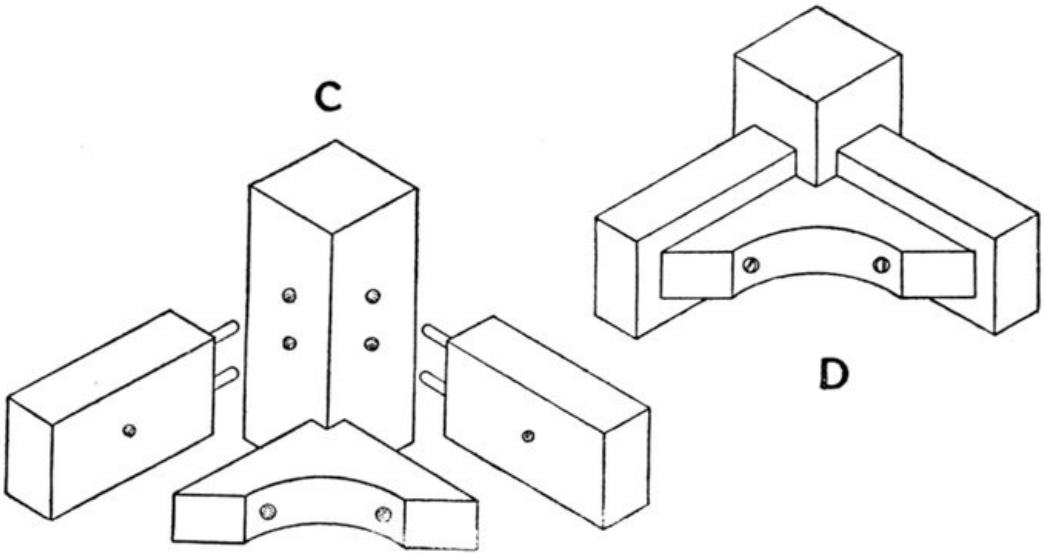


Figure 21a.—C shows how a chair post is joined to the chair rails. Central figure is the chair leg; beneath it is a corner block; at either side are the rails with holes bored in them, as well as in the leg, to hold the dowels. The holes in the corner block are for screws. D shows how the joint looks when assembled. The pieces fit snugly and are braced to prevent pulling apart, the corner block augmenting the dowel joint.

10. Method of framing—solid framework above, between and below the drawers, with tongue and groove joints and three-ply veneer panel dust bottoms, or some cheaper method; frames "dadoed" (rigidly recessed) into the ends, and end panels dadoed into the legs, or some cheaper construction; shelves dadoed into end panels and also doweled into legs, and back doweled into legs, or some cheaper method, as nails or screws.
11. Drawer construction, including type of plywood; type of joint-dovetailed joints front and back, which is the best construction; lock joint (cheaper, but not nailed); nailed joint, still cheaper; butt joint (also requiring nails, the cheapest and poorest joint); drawer bottom dadoed into sides and ends, and supported by triangular rubbed-in blocks, or some cheaper method; center slides; perfect or less than perfect fitting.

UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

Here the construction is almost completely concealed. The customer sees only the exposed portion of the frame and the covering and, except in the case of advertised goods, knows no more about the construction and concealed values of a piece than is told her by the salesperson.

Years ago much upholstered furniture was imported from a famous factory in London. It was costly, but vastly comfortable and of great durability. Yet when a piece was "taken down" it was found to contain far fewer springs, tied with fewer knots, than was the case with American goods of the same general price range. This indicates the folly, in the case of upholstered furniture, of setting up measures of excellence based upon exactly standardized practice. What applies to plywood or dowel joints does not necessarily apply to spring construction.

CONCEALED VALUES IN UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

In general, the points of concealed value in upholstered furniture include:

1. The frame, which in the best construction is of clear, tough, dry hardwood, with properly glued and doweled joints, and necessary reinforcing blocks.
2. The springing, including foundation for the springs; number and character of springs; type of twine and number of knots per coil; skill of operator and speed at which he is compelled to work; presence or absence of spring edge.
3. Spring covering, including weight of burlap; method of attaching it to the frame and to the springs.
4. Stuffing: Double or single method; use of excelsior, tow, fiber, moss, cotton, or curled hair, alone or in combination.
5. Springing of back and arms.
6. Loose cushions; spring or down construction.
7. Skill and care of the workman; inspection standards for materials and labor.

REED FURNITURE

In the book *Tropical Nature*, A. R. Wallace, after describing the great trees of the tropical forest, says: "Next to the trees themselves the most conspicuous feature of the tropical forests is the profusion of woody creepers and climbers that everywhere meet the eye * * *. They twist in great serpentine coils or lie entangled in masses on the ground."

In such a forest grows Calamus, the rattan palm, whose slender stem often attains the enormous length of 600 feet. From Calamus is obtained the basic material employed in making reed furniture. It comes from the tropical forests of the East Indies after it has been passed through several primitive processes by native workers. In this country it is prepared in the forms of cane, rattan, and reed for weaving; maple frames are designed and built; the weaving is done by American craftsmen.

Points of excellence include skillful preparation of the raw materials; sturdy construction of the frames, including bracing; and skill in weaving. Unhurried work means better construction but higher cost, and is thus an element of value.

THE APPEAL OF FINISH

The appeal of finish is so potent as to require little demonstration. Most customers are quite willing to accept wood finish, as they accept dyestuffs or rayon, as one of the mysteries of chemical science. The results speak for themselves. No one thinks the less of an old Cremona violin because the secret of its varnish is known.

The story of modern chemistry is in fact more romantic than all the tales of the Thousand and One Nights, yet people generally speaking cannot be stirred by it. Tell them how the old craftsmen of Gothic Europe, hundreds of years ago, stained oak planks a beautiful rich brown by burying them for weeks or months under manure and you will interest them deeply. Tell them how American craftsmen, a generation ago, got the same results with the fumes of ammonia and a leaden vault and you will barely hold their interest. Tell them how other craftsmen today squirt a preparation of coal tar and water from one spray gun, and a preparation of wood pulp or old rags from another to finish fine furniture, and they will probably cancel the order.

In the late sixteenth century, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and other cabinetmakers employed a process of staining, or rather of softly bleaching fine woods through the action of decomposing salts of chromium, followed by French polishing with oils and waxes. True varnish, a solution of resins in hot oils, was discovered in America in the middle nineteenth century, and achieved an immense popularity. Modern lacquer, which is totally unlike the Oriental lacquer, is a twentieth century discovery which combines gun cotton (nitrocellulose) with butyl alcohol, a byproduct in the manufacture of acetone.

WOOD FINISHING

The salesperson should learn that honest construction and careful finishing of a piece of furniture often count for more than the kind of wood used. Beautiful wood, however desirable it may be, is never the chief source of value. No piece of furniture is really completed until it has been given an appropriate and artistic finish.

What May Be Expected of a Finish.

There are at least three characteristics of a good wood finish.

1. *Appropriateness.*—The finish should be adapted to the needs which the piece is meant to serve. The polish of a piece of wood should not hide the beauty of the wood but should enhance it. Furniture should never make itself obtrusive. If furniture is noticeable, its artistic quality is usually to be questioned.
2. *Serviceability.*—The finish must protect the surface against the most common difficulties encountered in furniture finishing, such as bleeding, blistering, blooming, blushing, checking, caking, grain raising, bubbling, pitting, livering, and sweating.
3. *Beauty.*—Good finish should retain the characteristics of the wood rather than destroy their identity. Usually the natural wood needs to be softened and enriched to produce the most pleasing effects in keeping with its different nature and traits.

Beauty of finish depends to a great extent upon knowledge of how a surface should be prepared and the skill which is used in carrying out approved practices. The workman who understands the structure of wood, its mechanical and chemical properties, and has the right tools and equipment for preparing the surface, is not likely to use poor methods. He will understand that great care is required to produce a smooth surface on a piece of wood; that coarser defects of an improperly finished surface under the microscope reveal undreamed-of roughness on a carelessly scraped or inadequately sanded piece of wood. Also he will know that for permanence of finish and lasting qualities of construction, the wood must be properly seasoned and remain in a proper shop-dry condition during the entire construction and finishing periods.

Reasons for Staining.

Wood in its natural tones does not usually harmonize with textiles and wall colors.

The coloring often brings out unsuspected qualities and beauty in the wood itself, due to—

1. The reaction of the stain upon cells of the medullary rays;
2. Its effect upon the mass of wood fibers; and
3. Its greater absorption by the open pores or broken cell cavities.

Greater durability may be obtained through use of preservative stains.

Classification of Wood Stains.

There are four classes of stains, named according to the solvents used in making them:

1. Those soluble in water, sometimes called the acid stains.
2. Those soluble in spirits.
3. Those soluble in chemicals.
4. Those soluble in oils.

Two other classes of so-called stains are known as varnish stains and wax stains. These stains are not transparent as they obscure the grain and leave a layer of pigment on the surface.

These four classes of stains may be subdivided into two classes, acid and alkaline, depending upon their chemical reaction with other substances. Water-soluble stains, most largely used, are often made of coal tar dyes, which dissolve in water, and can be used in an acid bath. They are obtained from color substances having no body, such as walnut juice, logwood extract, turmeric, the juice of berries, and the bark of trees.

Stains are applied by brushing, wiping, spraying, and dipping, the latter on quantity production of cheaper grades. Because hardwoods absorb stains more slowly than softwoods, the advantages of the first three methods are apparent. Where this strong contrast between sapwood and heartwood exists, the salesperson should know the sapwood requires more stain than the remainder of the wood. A coat of stain may be applied to the light streaks and after it dries, the entire surface may be stained.

Aside from color there are "polished" and "dull" finishes. Varnish is the original finishing medium, serving as a protective agent and as a means of building up a high finish. For wood finishing the varnish is transparent, but for other uses is sometimes colored, as in black varnish or japan, or by the addition of dyestuffs, as in lacquers.

Lacquers permitting a polish finish are replacing gum varnish finishes to a great extent because lacquer dries in about one-tenth the time required for varnishes, and because lacquer finishes wear well under exposure or use. Chemical action ceases in lacquer films after they harden.

Fuming.

Fuming wood means subjecting the wood to the fumes of ammonia of full strength (specific gravity 880). The process really comes under the head of chemical staining. It is particularly well adapted to the treatment of oak for it brings out in varying shades of brown the rugged quality of this wood. It is penetrating; it does not fade. After the oak has been fumed, a coat of raw linseed oil will have a pleasant darkening effect upon the wood. Age only serves to darken and beautify the result.

Enameling.

Enameling differs from ordinary varnishing in that the material used is opaque. For this reason it is folly to use it over expensive woods. Enamel has the brittleness of a piano varnish and the brilliancy that is given by a hard resinous gum. Maple, birch, pine, and poplar are well adapted to this treatment, which if it has been applied carefully and in accordance with approved methods, will yield all the luster and softness of a high grade varnish. Manufacturers have met the demands for several surface effects or types of finish by producing enamels having high gloss, eggshell gloss, and flat or dull effects. The tinting of enamels is accomplished by mixing the proper amounts of colors which are ground either in japan, oil, or special enamel-varnish with the best process zinc-white. More recently other materials, such as lithopone (barium sulphate) and zinc oxide are used in many of the cheaper enamels. The decorative possibilities of stencils and transfers are almost unlimited when used upon common woods and metals finished with good enamel. This accounts for the rising demand for breakfast room furniture, sun parlor furniture, porch furniture, and many steel, plastic, and wooden novelties in bright designs using two or three colors.

BLOND FURNITURE WOODS

The so-called blond woods are of two types—bleached, consisting of normally brunette woods which have been artificially lightened, and the unbleached woods, which have a naturally light color. They run the gamut of shades and colors from white through eggshell, cream, straw, sand, beige, and yellow to tan and light brown.

Among the bleached woods, blond walnut and blond mahogany are probably the most used. This is true partially because of their wide acceptance as desirable cabinet woods, and partially because of a type of beauty of natural grains which is brought out effectively by the blond treatment.

The unbleached blond woods include not only maple, light oak, aspen, and birch, but also a wide variety of such exotic and unusual woods as satinwood, myrtle burl, zebrawood, lacewood, holly, harewood, and avodire, to mention only a few.

The blond treatment employs a transparent rubbed finish which is effective in bringing out the natural pattern of the grain. English harewood, one of the most distinctive, owes its beautiful silver grey to a dye which is used on the light yellow natural color of harewood (sycamore). Maple attains its warm reddish brown color also by staining. Some most striking and beautiful effects in today's furniture are achieved by using blond woods in combination with trimming of dark woods.

The use of blond treatment has resulted in the creation of light, airy effects which tend to brighten the room in which it is used. While the present trend is toward its widest acceptance for bedroom and boudoir use, it is being used for the living room, dining room, and occasional pieces.

Consult Reference Books Freely.

Volumes have been written about the furniture woods and wood-finishing. From the great fund of information available, selection has been made of material describing the most common process of wood finishing. Those who desire to make exhaustive or more searching study of this subject will do well to consult such books as have been listed on page 103 of the Suggested Reading List.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. What factors determine selection and use of any particular wood for a given purpose?

2. If a plain style table having a flat top and four legs were advertised as "Combination Mahogany" from what would you believe that table was made?

3. What are the essential differences between the Classic-Modern development and the Functional-Modern development?

4. How should you answer a customer who held the view that there was something shoddy and false about veneer?

5. What are the "concealed values" in a large upholstered chair? How may they best be discussed with your customer?

6. Explain the following:

Kiln drying.
Sapwood.
Hardwood.
Burls.
Quarter-sawing.
Moisture content.
Tenon.
Calamus.
Heartwood.
Plywood.

7. What are points of excellence in finishing?

8. Are you familiar with the important facts in connection with the manufacture of your furniture woods?

Location of the factories.
Sources of the principal furniture woods.
Reasons for use of each wood in certain situations.
Workmanship employed.
Inspection and testing methods.
Standards maintained.

9. What are the so-called real cabinet woods?

10. If your customer determines to use painted furniture for his living room set does it make any difference whether the manufacturer has used an inexpensive furniture wood?

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FOOTNOTES:

[13] Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th edition; vol. 23: Veneer.

[14] American-Hardwood Plywood, p. 2, Forest Products Division, U. S. Department of Commerce.

Unit VI
SELLING SLEEP EQUIPMENT

Sell Equipment To Meet Customer's Needs

Mattresses and Springs

Pillows

Studio Couches and Sofa Beds

A

B

Photographs by Grignon.

Figure 22.—A new studio divan (A) which can be used in a variety of decorative treatments to provide a luxurious lounge by day—comfortable twin beds at night (B) that open to bed height. Upholstered and finished on all four sides, this unique studio divan can be used at any angle in the room. Available in a variety of attractive color combinations, the number illustrated has a rich brown frame and ends, and is trimmed in beige moss fringe. The inner-spring mattress is upholstered in beige and fawn-colored striped tapestry. Important style notes are the two-height arms and the bolster-type single pillow. Both the base unit and the mattress are inner-spring filled and provide extra lounging and sleeping comfort.

Unit VI.—SELLING SLEEP EQUIPMENT

SELL EQUIPMENT TO MEET CUSTOMER'S NEEDS

The retail selling of sleeping equipment, in the opinion of many store executives, calls for more skill and study than almost any other line, but to the man who really knows his merchandise there is no easier line to sell and few which offer greater opportunities for increased earnings and personal satisfaction.

No other line of merchandise needs intelligent selling as much as does sleeping equipment. The consumer, through magazines and newspapers, is learning much about style, decoration, and periods in furniture. When shopping for a living room suite she needs the salesman's help, certainly, but she usually comes into the store with some idea of what she should have. Bedding, however, to most women is too often something to be selected through bargain advertising.

Because the mind of the prospective purchaser has been conditioned to expect bargains in mattresses, springs, pillows, studio couches, and sofa beds, it is necessary for you to use your intelligence and exert sincere effort to sell the sleeping equipment which the customer should have. The average customer is unfamiliar with standards by which bedding may be judged; so the responsibility of guiding her to a proper selection rests with you.

This is all the more important because sleep equipment has an actual effect upon one's health and rest. How well a person sleeps is a natural topic for conversation.

You may shirk this responsibility to the physical welfare of the customer by making quick sales of low-priced merchandise. However, if you want to build a clientele who will recommend you to their friends in an ever-widening circle, you will remember that you are selling sleeping comfort —something that the customer will be able to check every night of the year.

WHAT DOES THE CUSTOMER NEED?

The first step in the successful sale of proper bedding is to discover tactfully the preference of the customer and the type of sleeping equipment that is to be replaced. Find out if a cotton mattress or a curled hair one or an early inner-spring type has been used. This is important for two reasons. First, only through knowing what has been used can you make an honest recommendation of better equipment and, secondly, through this knowledge you will be able to understand better what the customer implies when she asks for a "firm" or a "soft" mattress.

The customer may have been sleeping on a curled hair or cotton felt mattress; for example, which she characterizes as "much too hard," and she is, therefore, asking for a very soft inner spring. Future complaints will be avoided in this instance if you will take the time to point out that after using an unusually firm mattress, the greater flexibility of an inner-spring mattress may be found uncomfortably soft. After a customer has used a very firm mattress, she will view as *soft* a new one which is actually medium firm.

Customers select their clothes and shoes to fit. They have ideas as to what they want in sleep equipment. But their descriptions of what they want and need may not tally with your trade terms. It is your duty to help them to select exactly the right type of mattress to fit their needs rather than to point out that what they term hard or soft is not what the industry feels about these mattresses. You are the expert. It is your problem to see that your customer finds exactly the right mattress, spring, or pillow for her individual sleeping needs. When a customer is selecting sleeping equipment for another person her attention should be called to the variance of individual taste, and wherever possible the requirements of the individual who is to use the equipment should be ascertained. To equip satisfactorily an entire family with full cognizance of the requirements of individuals indicates proficiency and expertness in the salesman.

STRESS OUTSTANDING FEATURES AND SELL BETTER BEDDING

As you show your merchandise, study your customer, learn as much as possible about her individual needs and preferences and discuss the importance of proper rest.

Unless your store has a definite and effective method of "trading up" you will make more sales of better equipment by starting at the top. There is a wide market for mattresses and springs at $19.75. Too many customers, however, who can afford and who should have better quality equipment, are buying at that price level because no salesperson has tried to sell them better merchandise. If a customer comes in asking to see the promotion mattress on which an advertisement has been run, she must be shown that mattress. However, from the head of your department, from the manufacturer's salesman, and from your own knowledge of the merchandise you should know in advance what additional value and extra service she will receive by buying the $29.50 or $39.50 mattress instead of the $14.95, or the $19.75 one. Because most mattresses look alike, you must build up her confidence in you and your recommendations by telling her and showing her facts. Use the cut-out samples intelligently. Point out in an understandable manner the various features and explain how they produce the comfort and the durability in which she is interested.

Discuss features in terms of what she is looking for in a mattress—springs, for instance, not as coils of 10- or 12-foot wire, but as the means of providing proper resilience and buoyancy. Her interest in the upholstery will not be in so many pounds of cotton linters, staple cotton, or curled

hair, but in what these things mean in terms of comfort and restful sleep. Know the technical construction of the bedding offered for sale, but discuss this construction only in language that is easily understood.

VAST REPLACEMENT MARKET

Bedding is, of course, a "must" in every new household as well as in every house and room where people sleep. Without losing sight of the constant and tremendous market that comes from newly created homes, a bedding specialist should always keep in mind the vast replacement possibilities in the countless families where bedding has outlived its useful span. This is a market which may have to be awakened, one in which natural complacency tends to dull the keen edge of spontaneous demand.

According to a survey conducted for the National Association of Bedding Manufacturers, nearly 20 percent of the mattresses owned by the housewives interviewed were over 16 years in use. By statistical reasoning this might indicate that 8 million mattresses in the country have had similar use and it is at least reasonable to presume that after 16 years' service, most mattresses are no longer providing complete comfort and rest.

The investigation also showed that 32 percent of the pillows in use by these families had been slept on for over 25 years. This may indicate that over 25 million pillows in the United States have been similarly used beyond the state of true comfort-giving usefulness. Twenty-seven percent of the bed springs were found to be more than 16 years old.

YOU MUST KNOW YOUR MERCHANDISE

The first step then in becoming an able salesman of sleeping equipment is to learn everything that you can about the mattresses, pillows, springs, studio couches, and sofa beds sold in your store. Because the consumer usually is not well informed, the salesman should know everything about the merchandise which he recommends.

Only after he knows his merchandise, its component parts, the quality of its manufacture, its life expectancy, resiliency, and its other characteristics in use, can he become a successful salesman capable of handling quality merchandise, rather than an order taker who is able to move only "bargain" promotions.

In the following pages you will find much general information about the various types of sleeping equipment. In a field, however, where each manufacturer is stressing individual and patented constructions and units, no one bulletin can provide all the information you need. You must continuously study the literature provided by the manufacturers of the goods on your floor. Furthermore, never lose an opportunity to talk to manufacturers' salesmen. They are specialists and can give you detailed information which will enable you to explain the qualities of their merchandise.

SELL THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD REST

You should also know something about the physiology of sleep. Talk to your store's physician, if there is one, or to your family doctor. The medical profession has in recent years discovered a great many new facts about sleep and it will help you to sell quality bedding to know them.

You should not try to pose as a medical authority, but you certainly should be able to discuss intelligently the effects of sleep on the mind and body, the need for proper rest, and the general results of insomnia. If your store has a book department, read the various volumes on rest and relaxation. Recent books of this type include *You Can Sleep Well*, by Edmund Jacobson, M. D., and *Sleep*, by Ray Giles.

As you learn more about sleep equipment, you will discover that the major improvements in bedding date back only a comparatively few years and that many of your customers do not appreciate how much scientific research and manufacturing care go into the production of the springs and mattresses which are now on your floor.

These and the other interesting facts that you will learn in your reading and conversation with manufacturers' salesmen will convince you that in sleeping equipment you are selling one of the most important items of merchandise the average family ever selects. It is now possible for you to conduct the bedding sale so that you impress on the customer (1) the importance of the purchase and (2) that she should buy the equipment that will give the sleeper the most comfortable rest.

HOW TO OVERCOME PRICE OBJECTIONS

Except in rare instances price will always be a factor in the sale of bedding. Retail advertising in too many communities is daily educating housewives to expect quality at low prices. Your best argument is to prove through your conversation about the importance of sleep and through an actual demonstration of cut-out samples that the customer will receive in bedding, as in everything else, exactly what she pays for. Sell comfort and rest, and show how the equipment you are recommending will provide both comfort and rest. There is no better way to anticipate the objection of price.

In the opinion of the best merchandising experts in the country the average consumer is not

looking for cheap bedding as such. Because of the constant price promotion of all types of sleeping equipment—mattresses, springs, pillows, studio couches, and sofa beds—comparative prices, however, are an important factor. You will make more sales, sell better merchandise, and build a permanent clientele quicker if you constantly keep in mind that you are selling sleep and rest, and not merely so many pounds of upholstery and steel to be bought only because the figure on the price tag has been "slashed 50 percent this week only."

Show that the first cost is relatively unimportant—that when measured in years of comfortable service even the best equipment costs but a few cents per night. Impress upon her the tangible benefits of receiving good sleep from proper equipment over a reasonable number of years' service. Whenever possible, use tactfully the experience of customers who are pleased with the quality items selected with your assistance. In no other merchandise or department will customer satisfaction bring you so much additional business.

As a result of conflicting comparative price advertising, women frequently shop in several stores for bedding. Recent studies show that 60 percent of specialty store customers seem to switch from one store to another each time they purchase. Regardless of your enthusiasm for quality equipment—regardless of your sincere desire to recommend only the right equipment—you will still hear that "Blank's have one just as good and $10 cheaper." Your best defense for this is to know what Blank's actually are offering. If it is a promotional item with cheap padding and fancy ticking, show the customer that you, too, have a mattress of similar quality but that the one you are recommending is superior and explain why it is a better value.

If, in spite of your best efforts, the customer walks out to shop in the bedding departments of your competitors, let her go gracefully. She is going to do it anyway in spite of what you say and if you impress upon her the strongest arguments for your goods as she leaves, a surprisingly large percentage will return—particularly if you have shown her you were recommending the equipment that satisfied her particular needs.

MATTRESSES AND SPRINGS

MATTRESSES

The bedding salesman is concerned principally with those articles of bedroom equipment which most directly determine the sleeping comfort of the user. These are mattresses, bedsprings, and pillows. In addition, the bedding department generally includes studio couches and sofa beds into which mattresses and springs have been built.

The mattress may be considered the department's basic item. Not only are more mattresses sold than any other article, but also a properly made mattress sale frequently leads to the sale of other pieces. Consequently, it is of utmost importance for the bedding salesman to be able to talk authoritatively about mattresses.

MATTRESSES AS OLD AS CIVILIZATION

The mattress dates back to early Egyptian civilization. The first mattress consisted of large bags stuffed with reeds, hay, and wool. "Feather beds" were used by the Vikings in northern Europe in the eighth century. Their mattresses, stuffed with feathers, were similar to those favored by our grandparent.

Thus it can be seen that for centuries there was little progress made in increasing mattress comfort. The development of inner springs and the felting of upholstery materials are of recent origin. The modern mattress is a twentieth century innovation.

THE INNER-SPRING MATTRESS

The inner-spring mattress derives most of its resilience and buoyancy from a unit of many coiled springs. Covering this unit on top and bottom are layers of upholstery. In most types there is a thin layer of protective insulation, often of sisal (a tough, white vegetable fiber), between the spring unit and the upholstery. This keeps the padding material from being forced down into and between the springs and prevents the springs from pushing through the upholstery.

In some models the spring unit is padded only lightly and the upholstery is encased in a separate pad for greater ease in handling.

The spring unit, naturally, is the heart of the inner-spring mattress, as it determines the sensitivity with which the mattress conforms to the sleeper's body. How it stands up under use largely determines the wearing age of the mattress. These factors are influenced by the quality, tempering, and size of the steel wire used and the way the coils are designed.

There are so many different types of inner-spring mattresses now manufactured that it is impossible to take up each individually. Mattress and steel companies have devoted a great amount of research to determining such small but important details as the shape of the spirals, the proper number of turns of wire that each spring should be given, how the coils should be fastened together and the temper and gage of the wire.

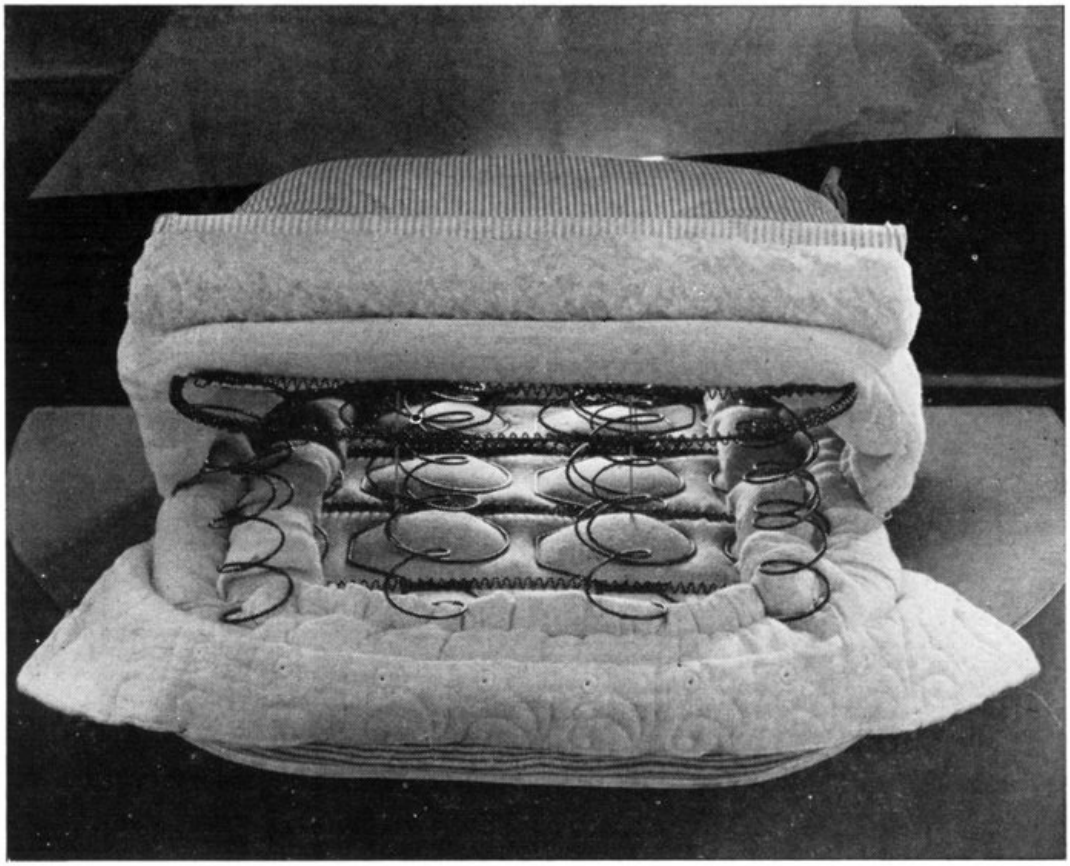

Figure 23.—Cut-out mattress sample showing wire-tied inner-spring unit.

This experimentation has produced the many different construction designs. These, of course, are protected by patents. The bedding salesman should familiarize himself thoroughly with the distinctive features of the mattresses in his store and be able to show the customer, through the use of cut-out samples, just what purposes they accomplish.

In this connection, it should be remembered that it is the independent action of the individual coils that gives support to the various parts of the body and allows the muscles and nerves to relax completely. The salesman's duty, therefore, is to show how his products give this support.

There are two general types of inner-spring mattresses; those in which the springs are tied together with metal, and those in which the individual springs are encased in cloth pockets.

METAL-TIED UNITS

In the metal-tied units the springs are held together by helical (small spiral) springs or metal clips. As a rule, there are fewer coils in this type of inner-spring unit, but they are usually larger and of heavier wire than the cloth-encased variety. The number of springs in this unit may vary from 180 to 360 or more (one model contains 1,000) in the full-size models. Essentially, however, comfort is determined by the quality of the construction and not necessarily by the number of coils.

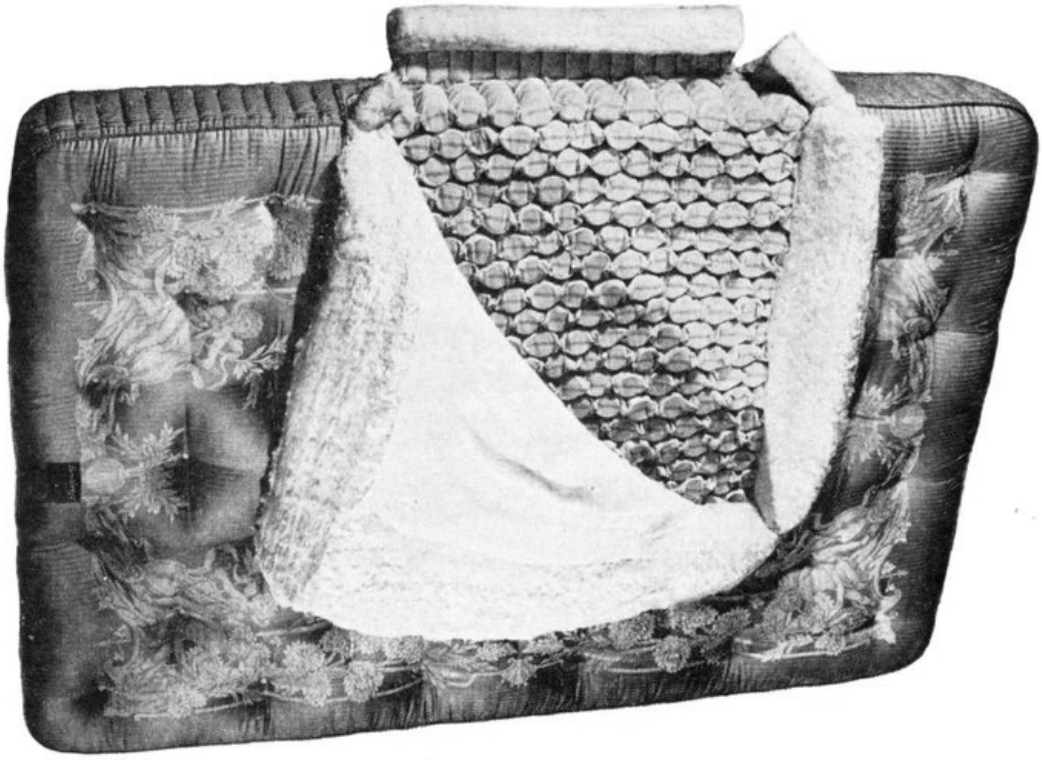

Figure 24.—Inner-spring mattress showing pocketed coil construction.

The shape of the coil varies, too. Some are like hourglasses, others like cylinders or barrels. Special merits are claimed for each design by its manufacturers. The salesman should be able to explain what these are.

CLOTH-POCKETED UNIT

The cloth-pocketed unit consists of many small, light coils, each of which is encased in muslin or burlap. Full-size units of this type usually contain more than 800 individual coils, although the number may vary. In this general classification are mattresses in which the individual coils are not completely encased but are secured at both ends by flat horizontal pockets. In some mattresses of the pocket type the coils are tied together; in others they are not.

CHARACTERIZATION OF A GOOD INNER SPRING

Regardless of its unit construction, an inner-spring mattress of good quality has certain characteristics which can be easily recognized and described. Chief among these are resilience and buoyancy. A mattress with the proper resiliency will give readily when pressure is applied and spring back to its original shape when this pressure is removed. Resilience may be thought of as "plenty of give." Buoyancy is the power to support and sustain the sleeper's weight. A mattress which is buoyant will cradle the body comfortably without letting it sink too deeply into the mattress.

UPHOLSTERY OF INNER-SPRING MATTRESSES

The upholstery used to pad the inner-spring unit and give it added comfort conforms in general to that used in solid-filled mattresses.

The most widely used upholstery material is felted cotton. In the better grade mattresses the cotton fiber is of good length, permitting easy felting. In those of lesser quality shorter-fibered cotton is used.

Curled hair makes an excellent but more expensive upholstery material. It is used alone, or in combination with cotton or lamb's wool. Lamb's wool alone or in combination with curled hair is used in the most expensive types. Some manufacturers use lamb's wool on one side for winter use and curled hair on the other for summer.

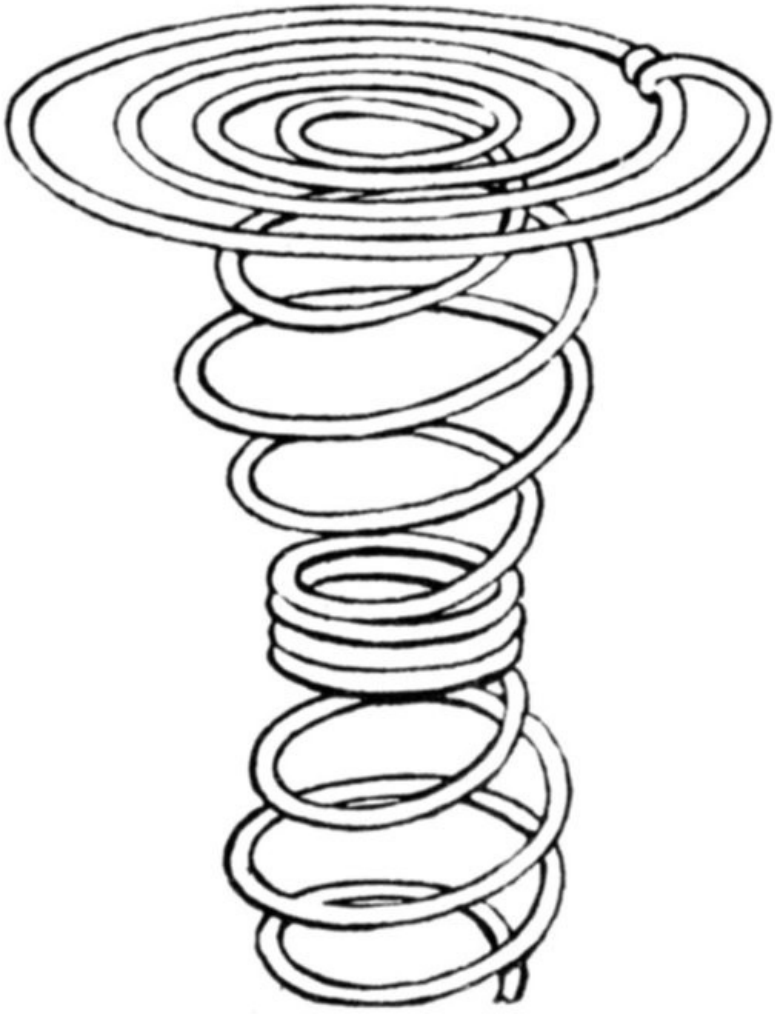

Figure 25.—Convolute coil designed for inner-spring mattress.

INDEPENDENCE OF ACTION

The purpose of an inner-spring mattress is to supply maximum resilience and buoyancy, plus independence and freedom of action which will enable the mattress to adjust itself immediately to the varying weights of the different parts of the body. Learn why the coils in the springs will not turn, will not push through the upholstery, will not collapse and entangle themselves one with another, and why they will give service for many years. Having learned these things yourself, study the art of making that clear to your customer.

Lasting comfort is dependent upon structural design, the quality of construction, the grade and tempering of the wire, and the strength of the materials used. The manufacturer has made certain service guarantees. Learn what these are. Be sure to make them clear.

THE SOLID MATTRESSES

All-Cotton Mattresses.

Eighty percent of solid mattresses are filled with cotton. These range from inexpensive models to ones which match inner spring styles in cost. Cotton mattresses come in three classifications—felted, loose, and combination felted and loose.

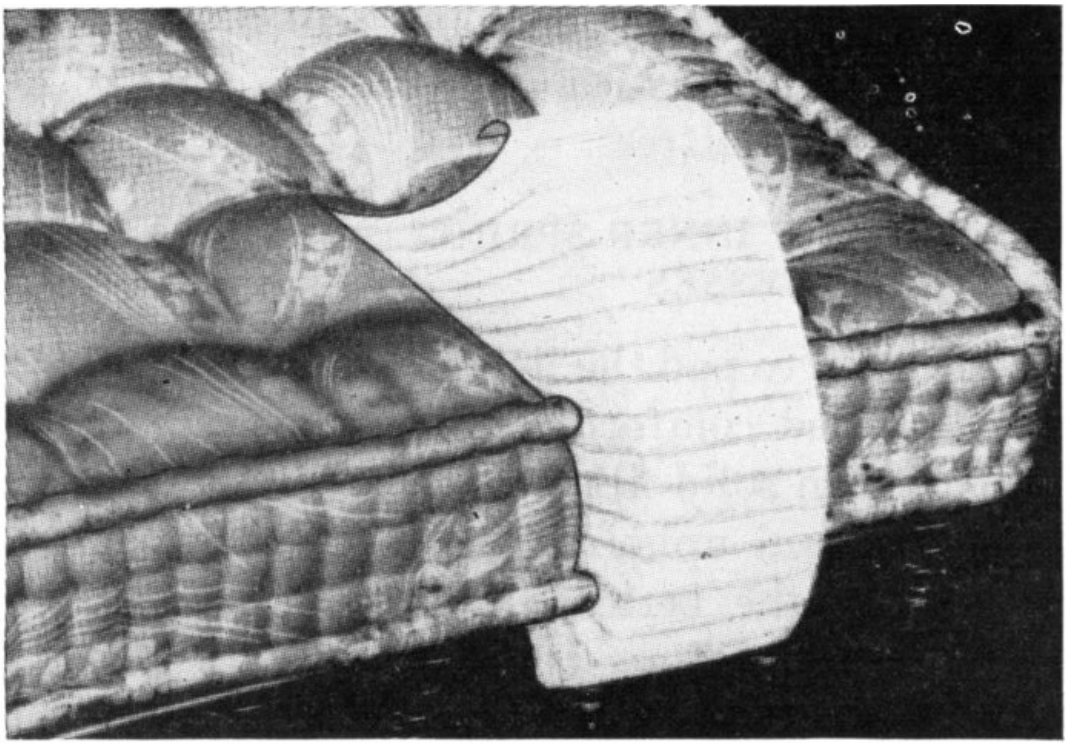

Figure 26.—All-cotton felted mattress.

The cheapest cotton mattress is that in which short-fibered cotton is blown into the ticking by air pressure. These "blown" cotton mattresses are an inexpensive product and generally recognized as such. They will give adequate service for a time, but eventually the cotton will pack down unevenly and form lumps. The salesman in fairness to his customer should refrain from making any claims for these mattresses other than that they will be comfortable for a limited period of time.

In the best grade of solid cotton mattresses a longer-fibered cotton is used. These fibers are picked apart and interlaced by a felting process into thin layers, which are placed one upon the other. This felting, plus tufting or quilting, keeps the upholstery in place and retards the tendency toward lumping. A good felted mattress will give service for many years, but constant use eventually will destroy its resilience and produce lumps.

Between the blown cotton and the felted cotton mattresses in price range is found a combination mattress consisting of top and bottom layers of felted cotton, with a center of loose cotton. As the description implies, it is better than an all-blown cotton mattress and inferior to an all-felted one.

Curled Hair Mattresses.

Before the advent of the inner-spring unit, the curled hair mattress was the aristocrat of the mattress field. It is still favored by many persons who prefer to sleep on a comparatively firm foundation.

Animal hair, when permanently curled, has considerable resilience, as each hair is turned into a tiny spring. Four types of hair are used for mattresses. In order of value, they are: Horse-tail hair, cattle-tail hair, horse-mane hair, and hog hair.

These types of hair frequently are mixed to produce mattress fillings of varying degrees of resilience and softness. They vary in price and quality according to the percentage of each type that is used.

An advantage of the curled hair mattress is that it can be opened whenever desired and rebuilt, restoring the original resilience. Some new hair is usually added with each rebuilding. To give satisfactory service a curled hair mattress should be rebuilt every 5 to 7 years.

Kapok Mattresses.

With the exception of cotton, the only vegetable fiber used in making mattresses is kapok, which comes from the pod of a tropical tree. Kapok mattresses are soft, are moisture and vermin proof, and are light and easy to handle. The fibers, however, have a tendency to pulverize and form lumps. This tendency may be retarded by sunning the mattress frequently. Packing the kapok into compartments adds to its durability. Long life, however, should not be emphasized in selling a kapok mattress.

Latex Mattresses.

The latex mattress was introduced to the general public in 1938. Latex is the milk of the rubber tree. It is whipped into a foam-like consistency and then vulcanized or heat cured into a mattress mold. Air is sometimes injected under pressure. The resultant mattress is honeycombed with

large cells which add to its resiliency. In its original form it was 3 or 4½ inches thick and more expensive than the better inner-spring models. Because of their comparative thinness, these latex mattresses usually are sold with special higher-than-average box springs. This type of mattress should be referred to as latex, not as rubber.

A later development was the introduction of inner-spring units with layers of latex used in place of the usual upholstering material.

THE COVERING MATERIAL

Most of the features that make a really good mattress are concealed from the customer's eye and must be explained by the salesperson. However, the buyer can actually see and judge the mattress cover. The pattern is important, because superficially it has most to do with attractive appearance. Mattress covers usually are identified either as ticking or damask.

Ticking.

Ticking, usually thought of as a strong, twill weave, may have a plain or sateen finish. The twill is made by weaving diagonal lines from right to left on the face of the fabric. The pattern may range from a traditional blue and white to novelties of many widths. Eight-ounce ticking is considered the standard of quality. It is so named because 2 yards of 32-inch width weigh 1 pound. Ticking also comes in 6-ounce and 4-ounce weights. These lesser weights may be adequate for certain uses but it is obvious that they will give service only in proportion to their strength. Tickings which are moisture and bacteria repellent are now being extensively advertised.

Damask.

Damask is woven on a jacquard loom in many different patterns. Mercerized cotton and rayon often are used to add effectiveness to the patterns. Damask in good grades will give satisfactory service though its wearing quality is not equal to 8-ounce ticking. That part of the mattress which covers the sides and joins the top and bottom mattress covers is known as the border. Borders should be strong and firm enough to keep the sides in shape and the edge straight. To accomplish this, borders are embroidered, quilted, and otherwise reinforced for added strength.

UPHOLSTERING AND TAILORING DETAILS

Prebuilt border is one in which the cover cloth, a layer of cotton felt, and a lining are stitched, embroidered, or otherwise sewed together, with eyelets or ventilators properly placed.

An inner-roll border frequently is used on the better type of mattress. A reinforcing roll of cotton felt is turned in, close against the padding of the inner-spring unit, both top and bottom, to give a neat, well-defined edge.

The outer-roll edge was the original method of finishing a mattress. It has a roll on the outside of the top and bottom of the mattress. This is not extra padding, but results from the outside stitching of the regular upholstery. It strengthens the edge of the mattress without giving it the smooth edge of the inner-roll. One disadvantage is that it is likely to catch more dust.

Tufting is the process of running twine or tape through the mattresses at various points, the outer end being secured with buttons or clips. These tufts serve to keep the inner materials in place and prevent shifting. The tufting material should be strong enough to last the lifetime of the mattress and the buttons should be firmly attached. Fasteners such as rubber, plastics, metal, and the like are usually employed instead of the cotton and leather tufts which were formerly used.

Tuft-less mattresses are those in which the upholstery is held in place by stitching or quilting the layers or by placing it in compartments or between muslin.

Ventilators, which range in size from eyelets to holes ¾ inch in diameter, are necessary to permit the passage of air through the interior of the mattress. The larger openings are screened. The borders in good mattresses are built so that the ventilators are left open.

BEDSPRINGS

The ancient Greeks are said to have been the first to discover that it is more comfortable to sleep on a foundation which "gives" with the sleeper's movements than on solid wood. They ran braided thongs of stout leather from one side of the bed to the other. These were the first bedsprings and were the only type known until about 80 years ago. This type of spring, with rope substituted for leather, was in general use in America until a few generations ago.

The metal bedspring as known today dates back to about the time of the War between the States. It was invented by James Liddy, of Watertown, N. Y., who so enjoyed a nap on a springed buggy seat that he purchased a supply of buggy springs and put them on his bed. The salesperson should remember that the bedspring is the foundation of the bed and shares with the mattress the job of supplying complete sleeping comfort. To function perfectly, springs and mattress should be matched carefully.

There are four general types of bedsprings: Metal-fabric, open-coil, platform-top or convolute-

coil, and box springs.

Metal-Fabric Springs.

The least expensive, and the least serviceable, are the fabric springs. They consist of a flat layer of crossed or meshed wires which are fastened to the frame with helical springs. As they are subjected to continuous downward pressure they will soon develop a sag. These should be used only with solid-filled mattresses. Another type of fabric springs consists of steel bands fastened to the ends of the frame by helical springs and to each other by short helical cross ties or wire locks. The higher priced models of this type provide a good foundation for an inner-spring mattress.

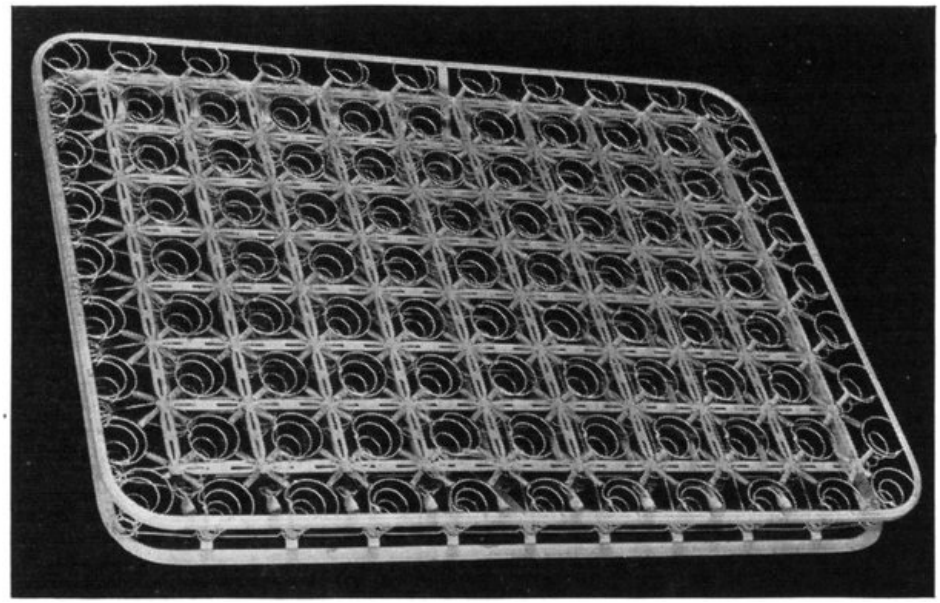

Figure 27.—(Upper view) Platform-top coil spring.

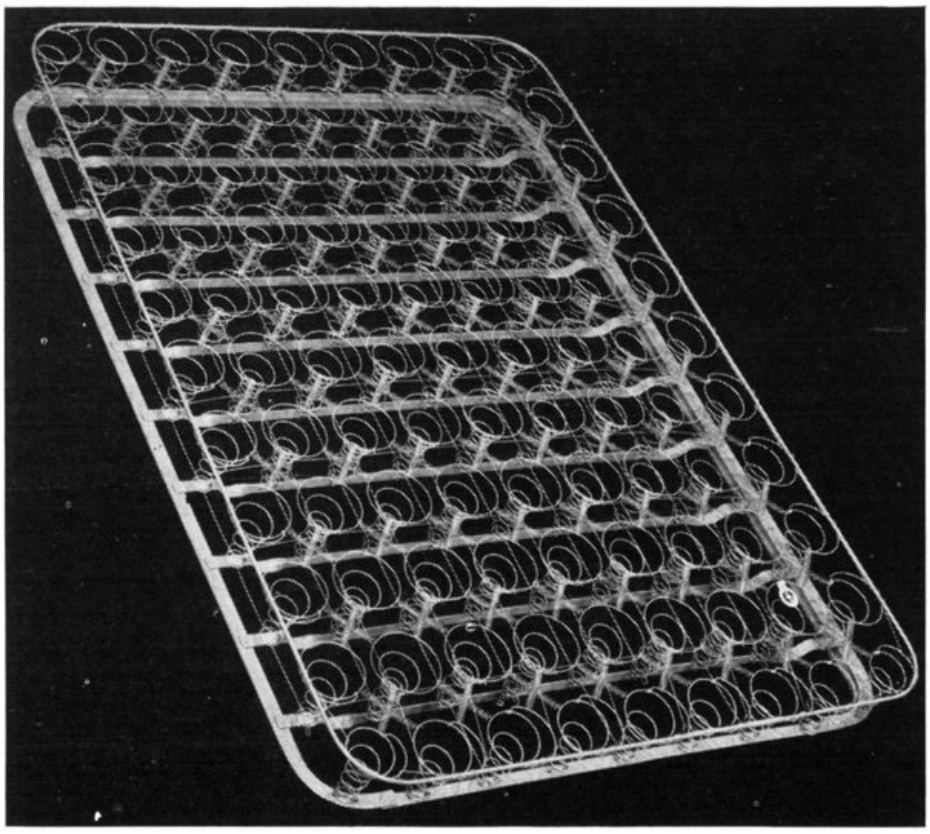

Figure 27a.—(Lower view) Open-coil spring to be used with solid mattress.

Open-Coil Springs.

The open-coil springs are built to provide flexibility and are particularly designed for use with solid-filled mattresses. They consist of spiral coils, larger and stronger than those used in inner-spring mattresses, set into a metal frame. Each coil usually is held to its neighbor by four small helical springs. The coils are supported at the bottom by metal strips running from one side of the frame to the other.

Platform-Top and Convolute-Coil Types.

The convolute-coil or platform-top springs are similar to the open-coil type except that additional features are added to provide a firmer resting surface for the mattress. In the platform type, the open spaces in the top of the spring are partly covered by flexible metal bands running both the length and breadth of the springs. The convolute coils have several extra turns of wire as each coil approaches the top of its spiral. When slightly compressed these turns flatten out in the same plane, providing a broader supporting area. The platform-top and convolute-coil springs are designed specifically as a foundation for inner-spring mattresses. If an inner-spring mattress is used with an ordinary open-coil spring the smaller springs of the mattress are likely to force their way down into or between the larger spring coils, with a resultant premature breakdown of the mattress. The platform-top and convolute-coil types close up the open spaces and eliminate this hazard.

Better grade springs, whether of open-or closed-coil type, usually are of double-deck construction. Between the top and bottom of the frame there is a center wire with supporting bands running both the length and breadth of the springs. This support makes possible the use of a longer coil, which acts as a double spring. The lower half of the coil is more tightly wound and is stiffer for the support of the sleeper's weight. The upper half then contributes the resilience. Another mark of a good spring is the use of two or more steel braces, known as stabilizers, which prevent sidesway and border sagging.

Box Springs.

Box springs consist of spiral springs attached to a foundation, usually of wood, and cushioned with a layer of upholstery. The coils are larger and heavier than the usual open-coil springs. The entire unit is enclosed in a box-like frame and covered with ticking. Box springs originally were designed to give much resiliency so that they could be used with solid-filled mattresses of hair or cotton. Most box springs today, however, are constructed with the firm tops which are necessary for use with inner-spring mattresses.

Each coil in the box spring is set into a slat of wood or steel. The coils are held upright by being tied one to another, to the border, and to the foundation. The borders usually are of wire or rattan. In the better types, the springs are hand-tied with a special twine. A wire-tied-spring unit is used in the cheaper models.

Box springs usually are sold with covers which match certain mattresses in the same price range. This permits the sale of mattress and box springs as a single unit.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SALESPERSON

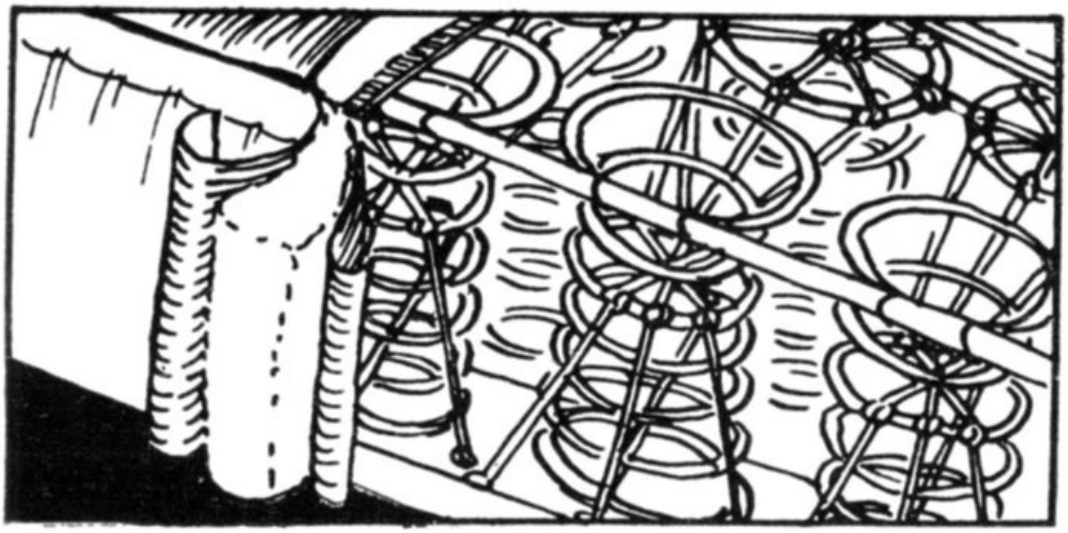

Figure 28.—Box-spring construction.

Let us suppose you have sufficiently impressed the customer with the importance of buying quality sleeping equipment and with your sincerity in recommending what she should have. You have shown her several mattresses and springs and, after eliminating those to which she voiced objections or paid little attention, you are now ready to concentrate on the one or two models in which she expressed interest.

Point out that the mattress will be used 8 hours every night and that for her satisfaction she should buy only the one carefully selected to give the comfort and wear that she desires. She should never consider bedding without having satisfied herself as to its qualities and its ability to serve her and her family correctly. She should be encouraged to make whatever test she likes and should be made aware of the store's policy permitting her to do so.

If she has become convinced that she should purchase one of your mattresses; if for instance you have sold her quality and comfort, you should show her how springs and pillows will complement

what she has already bought. If you fail to do this, much of the sales effort which you have invested will have been denied its opportunity to serve you in making a sale of these allied goods. The reason that persuaded your customer to buy a good mattress should lead her to seek complete sleeping equipment. It is almost impossible to sell a good mattress properly without discussing springs because the resiliency of the one depends considerably upon that of the other. A soft mattress on very soft springs may unduly emphasize this quality to the customer's ultimate dissatisfaction. Consequently, in showing various mattresses, you should explain the kind of bed springs to which each is adapted.

When the mattress has been selected, it is time for you to emphasize the importance of the springs. The beauty of matched units with box springs, designed specially to go with the mattress is something you should stress. But if the customer is not box spring conscious and many are not, show her the newer models of coil springs and explain their characteristics, their protection of the mattress against wear, their construction to avoid sidesway, and similar interesting features.

Often you will hear, "Our old springs will be satisfactory." With such a customer, to insure that the new mattress will give satisfaction, you must learn what type of old spring is going to be used. It will usually be a resilient open-coil spring, probably satisfactory when used with an all-cotton or all-hair mattress, but unsuitable as a foundation for an inner spring.

Avoid future complaints of premature mattress breakdown and uncomfortable sleep by showing how the small coils and the upholstery of the inner-spring mattress push down into the larger openings of old coil springs. Demonstrate the increased resiliency of springs designed for cotton mattresses and why inner-spring models need a fuller base.

Thousands of spring sales have been neglected merely because the salesman was satisfied with the mattress order. Many customers, too, have become dissatisfied with their new mattresses solely because the salesman failed to explain the importance of springs. Take advantage of this attitude always to complete the sale by selling the right spring.

PILLOWS

Of all articles of bedding, pillows should be the easiest to present in the light of their distinctive features. They contain no coils or patented mechanism. Yet there is a tremendous difference between a poor pillow and a good one. Certainly many use pillows too old to have retained their resiliency and complete comfort. Good pillows are a part of beautiful and satisfactorily equipped bedding ensembles. Do not diminish your service by failing to speak of this. Many of your customers who are actually in the market for them do not realize that the furniture store sells pillows. Therefore, it is a distinct service to them and an added sale to you if you ask the privilege of showing your stock. Unless you know and can explain the value of quality pillows, many of your customers will surely buy less satisfactory ones.

One reason why pillows generally are used too long can be traced to the unfortunate belief of many housewives that good feathers are an heirloom to be handed down from one generation to another. In reality feathers are delicate and perishable. After years of constant use they lose resiliency and can no longer properly support the neck muscles.

TYPES OF PILLOWS

The best filling for pillows is the down and feathers of waterfowl. Less satisfactory are land-fowl feathers. The quality of the pillow depends upon the percentage of each kind of material that is used in the filling.

Down.

Natural down is a soft undercoating that grows on adult waterfowl. Its fibers are soft and fluffy and emanate from a center point. There is no quill shaft. Down-filled pillows are a luxury item and are the softest and lightest available. They are ideal for persons who prefer an extremely soft pillow.

Goose Feathers.

Goose feathers make the finest feather filling. They are resilient and have a curved quill which itself is buoyant. The feather fibers are full and fluffy. Contrary to common belief, there is no difference in the filling quality of grey and of white goose feathers. The white feathers, however, are in greater demand and are more expensive. Goose feathers vary considerably in quality. Domestic and European goose feathers are generally considered better than those from Eastern countries. A good grade of goose feather pillow is slightly firmer and more buoyant than a down pillow.

Duck Feathers.

Duck feathers rate next in quality to goose feathers. They are more slender and have weaker and less arched quills. They can be distinguished from goose feathers by their pointed tips and by the presence of fewer fluffy fibers at the base. A duck feather pillow is firmer and heavier than a goose feather pillow and is less resilient and buoyant.

Turkey Feathers.

Turkey feathers are inferior to waterfowl feathers but are somewhat more buoyant than chicken feathers. The quills are straight and the feather fibers are not as fluffy as those of the duck and the goose. The shafts must be artificially curled to give them springiness and this curl is lost after a few years' service.

Chicken Feathers.

Chicken feathers are the least expensive and make the poorest filling. Like the turkey feathers, they have straight shafts which must be artificially curled. Chicken and turkey feathers make pillows which are heavier and less resilient than waterfowl pillows. They are used in price merchandise and will not give long service. The salesperson should talk with manufacturers' salesmen and acquire facts necessary to explain convincingly the importance of the arch in the stem of goose and duck feathers as contrasted to the stiff straightness of the chicken or turkey feather.

Kapok.

Kapok, a vegetable fiber, sometimes is used as filling for pillows. When new it is soft and fluffy. It is not durable, as the fibers pulverize into hard lumps with wear. Frequent sunnings and airings will retard this pulverization.

Characteristics of a Good Pillow.

A good pillow can be judged by its lightness in comparison to its bulk. Pillows should be well filled in order to retain their resilience and plump appearance. A down-filled pillow of standard 21- by 27-inch size will weigh approximately 1½ pounds. The same pillow filled with goose feathers will weigh about 2½ pounds. If filled with chicken or turkey feathers this pillow will weigh about a pound more.

To test a pillow for resilience, lay the pillow flat and press down the center with your hand. The quicker and more completely it springs back to its original shape the better is the grade of feathers. Buoyancy also is important. If the pillow is properly buoyant, it will support weight so that the head is held comfortably without sinking too far into the pillow.

A good pillow should contain no dust, stiff feathers, or lumps. The presence of dust can be determined by pounding the pillow. Stiff quills and matted feathers can be detected by pressing the pillow between the hands. The selection of a pillow of the proper firmness depends entirely upon the preference of the user. Always mention the degree of firmness or softness in addition to the type of feather and quality of ticking in each pillow that you show.

Pillow sizes ordinarily refer to the dimensions of the finished product, not the cut size of the ticking. The most common sizes are 20 by 26 and 21 by 27. Increasingly popular is a 20- by 36-inch size.

The pillow case should be of tightly woven cotton which is feather-proof and down-proof. Eight-ounce blue-striped ticking is considered a standard of quality. Eight-ounce warp sateens also give good service. Lightweight, closely woven, linen-finished ticking is another popular fabric.

STUDIO COUCHES AND SOFA BEDS

The modern trend toward small houses and efficiency apartments has created a demand for furniture which can be converted from ordinary daytime uses into beds at night. By far the most popular in this field are studio couches and sofa beds. (See figs. 22A and 22B, page 106.)

THE STUDIO COUCH

The studio couch for many years has been a standard auxiliary bed. In its simplest form it consists of two parts, one on top of the other and each containing upholstered springs. These two parts when placed side by side make a full-sized bed. Modern studio couches are available in many period styles and are used to complement the decoration plan for the living room, library, recreation room, sunroom, bedroom, or even entrance hall.

SOFA BEDS

The sofa bed is a later development. It equals in beauty and quality of workmanship the articles of furniture from which it derives its name. Yet it contains an ingeniously concealed sleeping unit. Good sofa beds are made in authentic styles and are covered in rich satin, leather, and tapestry upholstery that make them as attractive as any piece of single-purpose furniture in the living room. When only occasional sleeping use will be required, the attractive appearance and seating comfort of the sofa bed should be stressed.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the first step in becoming a better bedding salesman?

2. Under what circumstances may cut-out samples be used to the best advantage?

3. What information do you need from the customer in order to recommend intelligently the right mattress and bedspring?

4. What reasons can you give the customer to convince her that she should buy quality sleeping equipment?

5. How do you overcome the customer's objection that competitors' stores are selling mattresses $10 cheaper?

6. Why should you stress the purchase of a new spring with each new mattress?

7. What are the best selling features of (a) box springs and (b) convolute and platform-top coil springs?

8. Why are waterfowl feathers superior to land fowl feathers in pillows?

9. How can you prove to a customer that her pillows should be replaced?

10. What features do you stress in selling sofa beds and studio couches?

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Unit VII
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ART OF INTERIOR DECORATION

Interior Decoration as a Selling Method

Emotional Values of Light, Color, Line, and Proportions

Color Management in Decoration

Principles of Furniture Arrangement

Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 29.—This fernery server, part of a new eighteenth century dining-room suite, gives the new interpretation to functional pieces in period design. The attractive server with compartment for glasses and a service shelf for plates, cups, and the like, is equipped with two metal plant containers. The rug is an all-over textured olive green Axminster.

Unit VII.—AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ART OF INTERIOR DECORATION

INTERIOR DECORATION AS A SELLING METHOD

The art of interior decoration is the skillful use of furnishings in keeping with the architectural factors of a room to create a harmonious setting adaptable to the social, economic, and personal use of the occupants.

A room may be said to be beautiful if it gracefully, effectively, and adequately fills the purpose for which it is intended and takes into consideration the habits of all members of the family using it.

The salesman who creates a room which adequately and harmoniously fills the purpose for which it is intended—taking into consideration all of the personal and architectural factors—may be satisfied that he has done a good job of interior decorating.

Comfort and beauty.—Comfort can be created through proper exercise of care and common sense. Everyone knows what comfort means, and is able to recognize it. But in the case of beauty, no one knows precisely what it means and many people are unable to recognize it.

The facts are that, although beauty is beyond definition, *it will appear in the presence of certain conditions*; that these conditions may be defined and controlled and discussed intelligently and

convincingly with customers. What these conditions are, and how their presence may be insured by means of the merchandise, will be set forth in this unit and in the four units which follow. For our present purpose it is enough to say that one of the conditions of beauty is harmony, and that any room will have a considerable measure of beauty if its furnishings are harmonious.

A well-furnished and decorated room will have colors, contours, and groupings that fit into the architectural background as though all were conceived and executed simultaneously. The salesperson should guard against the customer's rather natural feeling that there is inequity between cost and the characteristics and qualities which give harmony and beauty to home furnishings. In handling a sale at this point, the salesman will develop convincingly the idea that home decoration, although it is the distinguishing mark of all lovely homes, actually is not dependent on lavish expenditure. Personal comfort, reflection of individuality, dominant unity, and harmonious groupings result from careful planning and educated tastes rather than from loosening the strings of a heavy purse. After all, the basic consideration is suitability, not decoration.

The salesman who will assemble a harmonious grouping quickly and keep it within the customer's price range will accomplish two important things:

1. Focus attention upon beauty and satisfaction of harmonized groups instead of directing worry toward price and minor details.

2. Increase respect for his judgment and understanding of her problem.

Suitability means comfort first.—Every well planned sale of home furnishing materials starts with the assumption that *the buyer is always thinking in terms of her own interests*. She has little or no concern with the construction, design, style, prestige value, or price of any article unless she believes that her own interests will in some way be affected by it.

Suppose for instance she has read several of many articles which appear from month to month in magazines covering the home-furnishings field, and that she has attended lectures on home decoration. She may even have discussed particular problems intimately with several interior decorators. She understands that she should never buy just for the present with the idea of making replacements later. She long since has given over the idea of wondering what the neighbors will think of her selections. Before she faces the bewildering walk down aisles flanked with sofa beds, lighting fixtures, tables, chairs, beds, draperies, consoles, carpets, rugs, and chaise lounges, she has planned her room on paper and has visualized the picture in terms of color and often has decided on a color scheme. Furniture has been given a diagram placement on paper to conform to wall spaces and windows. Rugs, draperies, and accessories have been subjected to tests of suitability for the purposes for which they are to be used.

When the salesman finally faces her in the first vital moments of this sales effort he quickly will realize that she knows what things she wants to see, their styles, shapes, sizes, and even their colors. Without knowledge of at least elementary principles in the art of interior decoration he is certain to feel a sense of inadequacy, even of humiliation. Even with the requisite basic information, normally it will be a sheer waste of time to assure her that any article is handsome, finely made, fashionable, or even that it is a wonderful value until he is sure that she considers this piece adapted to her own situation and needs. Innumerable sales go on the rocks at this point.

Interior decoration as a selling method begins right here with the revelation of the customer's situation and needs. If she has ideas which are in the hazy, sketchy, and by no means certain stages, then the salesman must proceed to secure the information he must have in advance of any intelligent selling he may hope to do. Usually these customer situations and needs will depend on two factors, the one *personal* and the other *architectural*.

The personal factor involves such considerations as the age, sex, size, tastes, and habits of the members of the family; the amount and character of entertaining for which provision must be made; and the amount of money or credit available for new furnishings.

The architectural factor includes such details as the use, size, style, and situation of the room; its woodwork, floor, walls, ceiling, and lighting; its relationships with connecting rooms; and the size, style, and coloring of the furnishings already in use.

In employing this method, even in the simple sale involving the purchase of a single piece, the competent salesman will have three purposes in mind. The first is to insure that this new piece will fit the people who are to use it; the second, to insure that it will fit the room in which it is to be used; and the third, to insure that it will combine with everything else in the same room to form an agreeable harmony. In other words, he must use his merchandise to secure comfort through fitness or suitability to purpose and use, and to create beauty through harmony. Correct room arrangement is essential to both.

EMOTIONAL VALUES OF LIGHT, COLOR, LINE, AND PROPORTIONS

Everything used in furnishing a room may be resolved into its elements of light, color, line, and proportion. Psychologists have shown that colors influence the mood of an individual, and create emotional values which may be stated as follows:

LIGHT AND SHADE

To understand and correctly use light and shade, one must have a basic understanding of values and know how by using these values different effects may be achieved. Using as a key a scale of nine values (bearing in mind that the term *value* means degree of lightness or darkness without regard to any particular color) ranging from black to white, one finds that the grey tones toward the white end of the scale are *light values* and shade toward white; those toward the black end of the scale are *dark values* and shade toward black; in the center is a medium grey tone.

Using these values in terms of room colors, it has been established that *light values* are cheerful and gay because they reflect light. When used in pastel tones they are feminine and friendly. On the other hand, *dark values* are sombre, heavy, and masculine in feeling since they absorb light and have a darkening effect. The middle tones are a happy balance and combine essentials of both values. Thus, kitchens, breakfast rooms, nurseries, playrooms, and boudoirs should be done in *light values*; libraries, men's rooms, or lounges in *dark values* and living rooms and dining rooms in *medium values*, using both dark and light.

COLOR TERMS

Although there are many technical color terms used by advanced colorists to distinguish variations in colors, there are just a few basic facts to remember to help you understand and use color to the best advantage in interior decoration. *Hue* is the pure color neither mixed with white, black, nor a complementary color. A hue may be a primary color, secondary color, or tertiary color in its true value. When you mix a hue with white it becomes a *tint*; when mixed with black it becomes a *shade*; and when greyed with a complement it becomes a tone. Since walls should be lighter than the floor covering, walls are usually done in a tint; floor coverings in a shade or tone or a particular hue, and furnishings either in the pure hues in adjacent or complementary colors or in tones, tints, or shades of these hues.

Primary, secondary, and tertiary colors.—Primary colors are the three basic colors known to man which cannot be produced by combining any other colors, but which, when combined in proper proportion, can produce every color known to man. These colors are red, blue, and yellow.

Secondary colors are hues obtained by admixture of the primaries and consist of violet (red and blue); green (yellow and blue); and orange (red and yellow).

Tertiary colors.—These are hues obtained by admixture of the secondary colors with the primary colors and consist of red-violet or plum; blue-violet or a deep, marine-type blue; blue-green or aqua-marine; yellow-green or chartreuse; yellow-orange or tangerine, and red-yellow or a warm red or vermilion color.

Complementary and adjacent colors.—Complementary colors are the colors directly opposite each other on a color chart made up of the primary, secondary, and tertiary colors, and when used in pairs they intensify each other.

Adjacent colors are the colors which follow each other in a color chart made up of the primary, secondary, and tertiary colors and they may be used together with an accent of a complementary color.

Elementary color chart.—To properly understand these terms and imprint these color combinations in your mind make this simple color chart in color using the three primary colors. This chart also may be worked out in pencil in a few minutes time and referred to when making color suggestions:

Draw a circle 4 inches in diameter. Divide the circle into three equal parts by lines radiating from the center. Label these three lines, red, blue, and yellow; they are your primary colors. These lines represent the admixture of the primary colors and represent violet, green, and orange. (See chart.) Now fill in the tertiary colors. (See chart.) When doing these in colors you will see the colors change and blend into each other as they are applied.

From the above color chart you can make any harmonious room combination. For any true harmony all three of the primary colors should be present. It is not necessary, however, to have three colors; a secondary color (made by blending two primary colors) would use the third primary as a complement. Look at the chart; you will note that green (made by mixing blue and yellow) has red as its complement. A third color in the room might be yellow or blue, yellowish-green, or blue-green. This is termed a complementary color scheme.

When using an adjacent, or monochromatic color scheme, any series on the color chart may be followed; for example, green, blue-green, blue, blue-violet, and violet. The complement or accent to this color scheme would be the complementary colors, orange, yellow-orange, red-orange, etc.

Before applying these principles to room schemes, there is one more rule to bear in mind. All colors in which red or yellow predominate are known as *warm* colors and colors in which blue and green predominate are known as *cool colors*. Since warm colors are more intense and tend to be exciting, they must be offset by cool colors, usually in the ratio of two to one, since it often takes two cool colors to balance one warm color. It is also well to remember that deep colors "advance" and light colors "recede." An oblong room can be made to look more square by doing the short walls in a deep green, the long walls in a light green. Primary and secondary colors are more intense than tertiary colors—colors receding and lightening with the admixture of additional hues.

Building a room scheme.—Taking all of the above facts into consideration, it may be interesting to work

out a few simple color schemes for a living room. Assume that one wishes to do a "blue" room. The

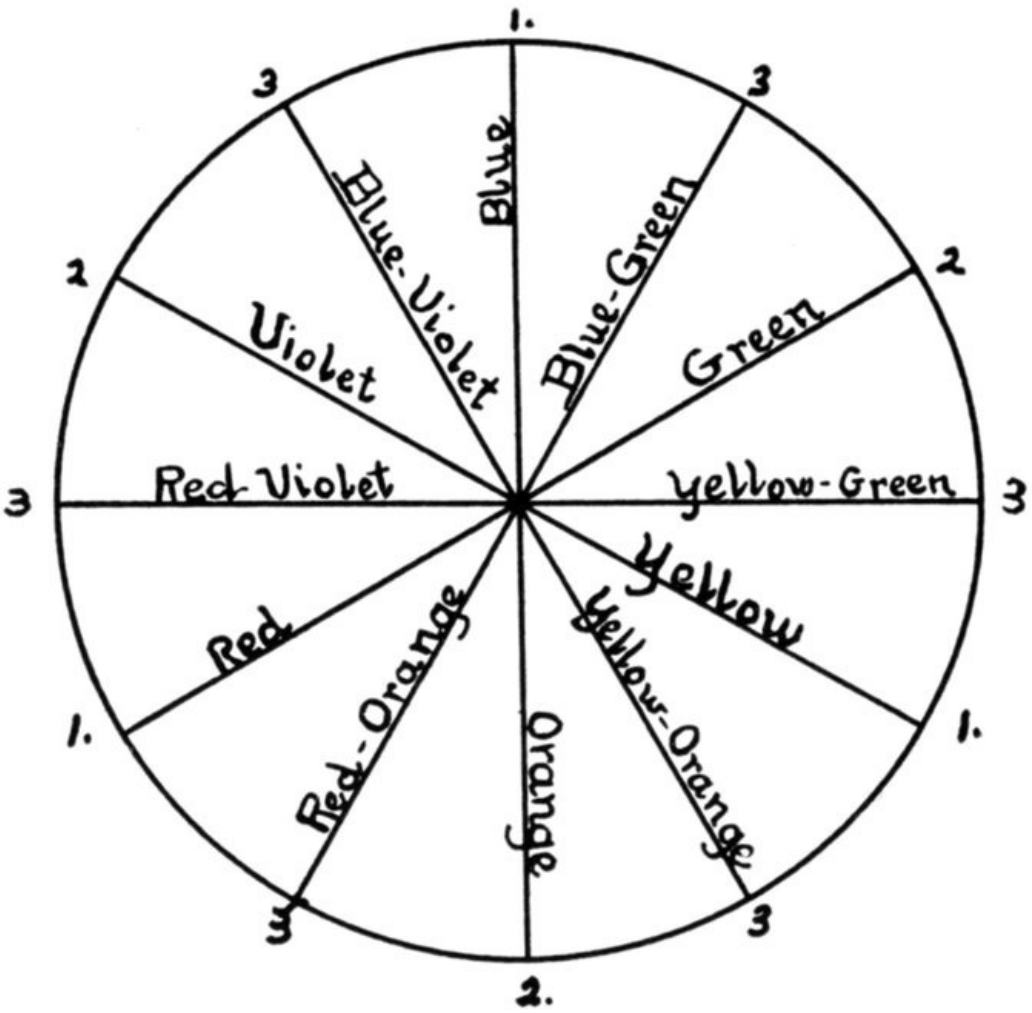


Figure 30.—Color chart. Numbers indicate: 1, primary colors. 2, secondary colors. 3, tertiary colors.

predominating color in the room will, of course, be blue. However, let us suppose we do not particularly care for a blue rug. Since the second largest piece in the room is the sofa, we have decided to use a blue sofa. We have two definite choices for a rug; it may be a greyed tone of red or wine color, or a greyed tone of yellow (beige or light brown). If we select the red-tone rug, we must think about our yellow tone for the complementary chair. Let us suppose we decide upon a tint of yellow or beige. A third chair now may be a secondary, or tertiary, of these three colors, and since our room is predominantly blue, we select a blue-red or violet color. Violet, you will notice, is a perfect complement to yellow. We might have used a shade of red or wine color as a complement but it would have given a red tone to the room.

For draperies we have several colors from which to choose but we must take into consideration the wallpaper. We may use a tint of the floor covering, or the sofa, or may bring in the third primary color. Let us suppose we had decided to use a tint of the floor covering or a soft pink tone. Our draperies now may be blue, blue-violet, or red-violet. Accents necessarily would then be red or orange. If wine-colored draperies were used, we would have practically an equal balance between red and blue, and our accessories would be yellow.

Another popular method of color coordination is to repeat the colors found in one piece with plain colors or novelty weaves emphasizing the colors of the figured fabric; for example, a room may have a blue sofa with a tiny pink figure worked into the tapestry. One of the chairs, then, could be pink in the same tone as the small figure; the other chair would then be one of the yellow tones, and could be either beige, or brown.

Some decorators repeat the floral colors of printed draperies in the room setting. Some combine the plain colors of the sofa and chair in a figured third chair which has a neutral background and picks up the colors of the other two pieces. It is well to mix the patterns in a room, a stripe combining nicely with a plain color, and a small figured mixture carrying out the third color and blending the striped and plain tones.

By referring to your chart you will discover many interesting color combinations. Just remember that adjacent colors take the opposite complement as accent. Complementary colors may be used with adjacent or with a third primary color, or with a combination of two primaries on a neutral background of the third color.

LINE AND FORM

Straight lines create an effect of strength, virility, and seriousness, and, if exclusively employed,

of austerity or hardness; while curved lines create an effect of flexibility and joyousness, and, if, exclusively employed, the effect is one of weakness.

Horizontal lines and shapes arouse a sense of calmness and repose; vertical lines and shapes, of activity and life; diagonal lines and shapes, of movement. Long straight lines create an effect of dignity. When two colors are used together a line is created and these lines have a distinct effect upon the room in which they are used.

PROPORTION

Proportion, which is simply the relation of one dimension to another, applies throughout the house to walls, floors, ceilings, doors, windows, chairs, bookcases, tables, and other furnishings. Good proportions are never top-heavy, squatty, or uninteresting. Large size and thick proportions suggest strength, weight, permanence, and dignity; small size and slender proportions arouse the idea of delicacy, lightness, and grace.

It is well for the furniture salesman to understand a few simple facts which every good interior decorator knows.

Walls and floors, plus ceilings, determine the proportions of a room as a whole. Suppose a badly proportioned room is too narrow for its length and height—something common, for instance, to halls and dining rooms.

The apparent width of this too narrow room may be increased by—

1. Hanging a mirror, or using a picture in which the perspective is such that the eye follows a stream or broad expanse into the distance.
2. Using scenery wallpapers.

In well-proportioned rooms the wall decorations are lighter than the floor and the ceiling decorations are lighter than those of the walls.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

There are many avenues of study available to anyone who seeks the real enjoyment which comes with planning his own environment. Fashion ever has been a keynote in the purchase of home furnishings. The key, however, still remains in the custody of the owner. When she intends to buy a new gown, coat, or hat, she reads magazines and newspapers, shops around, studies styles and trends, thinks of uses and requirements for the gowns or coats under consideration. Probably she needs to understand that she may use as much conscious discrimination with furniture as with coats if only she will use the same sources of inspiration and information. She should try any one or all of these:

1. Monthly magazines with their superb color features, illustrating articles of great diversity.
2. Books from the public or from a rental library.
3. Model rooms set up in department and furniture stores, and in furniture shows.
4. Museums containing replica rooms done in the historical periods.
5. Paintings, as guiding one's thoughts for color schemes.
6. Newspapers which record style trends in attractive merchandise priced to meet the family budget.

If these studies are good for the prospective customer, how much more valuable they are for the progressive salesman who seeks to understand customer needs and desires in terms of human satisfactions.

SUMMARY

The results of studies of emotional values may be summarized as follows:

1. Variations in light, color, line, shape, and size affect the mind in certain fairly definite ways. When these variations are understood and controlled a group or a room may be given atmosphere which not only adds to its beauty, but also greatly helps in arranging it to meet the needs of the people who use it.
2. These emotional values of light, color, line, shape, proportion, and texture must be employed in such a way that the effect of each is increased by the effects of all:

   Effects of restfulness and tranquillity result when—

   a. The amount and intensity of illumination are reduced.

   b. The tone of all colors is lowered.

   c. Horizontal lines are predominant.

   d. Large size is emphasized.

   Effects of animation and activity result when—

   a. The amount and brilliance of illumination are increased.

b. The tone of all colors is raised.

c. Vertical lines are predominant.

d. Small size is emphasized.

COLOR MANAGEMENT IN DECORATION

The moment anyone undertakes to furnish a home, that moment he begins to use color. Ross Crane, when conducting experiments in which color schemes for complete rooms were planned and executed step and step, determined that there are only four steps to take in building a color scheme.[15] These four steps are:

1. Decide on a dominant or controlling color.
2. Decide on the colors to go with it.
3. Bring these colors into the room in everything.
4. Accent the scheme by means of small objects (flower bowl and flowers, lamps, pictures, smoking trays) in high intensities of the leading color. These are the high lights that produce life and sparkle.

Another writer puts it this way:

> In deciding on a color scheme for a whole room, fix on some foundation color, and then introduce relief and contrast.[16]

PLANNED PROCEDURE FOR THE SALESPERSON

With this information well in mind the home furnishings salesman will do well to leave learned and scientific discussion of color management to the scientists and concentrate on a few principal facts which will be dominant throughout the sales procedure.

He may be assured that his customer's decisions to buy furnishings for a complete room, a few pieces only, or none at all, will be conditioned by her likes, by the family budget, by the size and use to be made of the room, and by the necessity to use "left-overs."

He certainly will profit by having a rather definite knowledge of chromatic scales, complementary colors, adjacent colors, nuances, and concentric circles as devices which he may use to show how we get the many varied colors. It is the opinion of leading experts that the average salesman will find it far easier and more satisfactory to talk convincingly of color management for any given room or combination of rooms by using a simple color story which starts with the six basic colors, and which may be understood easily by the customer. If a simple color chart is close at hand and ready for use at any time, the sales talk will deal with facts, not generalities.

He must be able to take an inventory, by personal inspection or through questions, of the color possibilities in the decoration problem presented by the customer. Such facts as room exposure, size and type, wall color, floor covering, furniture already in the room; use to be made of the room, number, sex, and characteristic traits of those who will live, eat, work, or sleep in the room; and approximate price ranges must be known if real help is to be given.

He must know the stock so thoroughly that within the given price range, the designation of the proper color schemes will be comparatively easy. He must use his knowledge of color through the furnishings, to interpret, as needed, two different sets of ideas:

1. One in which the color scheme is daring, with unusual combinations, startling, gay, and sophisticated.
2. The other, with a color scheme recognized as gentle, restful, and never monotonous.

If he has a feeling of intimacy with both and will use his knowledge consciously to produce definite emotional effects, in a progressive series, he will see sales come as a reward for his effort.

THE SALESPERSON AS INTERPRETER OF APPRECIATIONS

When next you find a room in the home of a friend, in a model house, or illustrated in a magazine that awakens a response of pleasure when you first see it, stay with it long enough to find out why. Study the handling of color in curtains, rugs, chair upholstery, lamps, and bits of pottery; ask yourself where the abiding interest of the room is centered. Seek to uncover the secret of the spell this room casts over your senses. Unconsciously, you thrill to the thought that you, yourself, would never tire of such a room. It is the ultimate in color management.

This glorious adventure must be experienced by you, yourself. To you is given a power to enrich your appreciation of lovely things, and in turn to convey similar appreciations to your customers.

The salesman who has learned to exercise this power is far from being an order taker or even an order solicitor. Literally, he is counselor and guide—an interpreter of the store services which exist to help the customer, and the one to show the store management the need for expert customer guidance in color management.

If once, you, the salesman, have experienced the personal satisfactions of studying a room which

has unmistakable distinction, which literally glows with the light of a personality reflected against a background of culture, understanding, and sympathy, you in turn will seek eagerly to share your adventures in color management with those who come to you seeking to express their desires and aspirations in terms of usable, lovely surroundings.

Difficult? The difficulty is in deciding to make the effort.

PRINCIPLES OF FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT

"Next in importance to the actual selection of furniture and accessories is a skillful and sensible arrangement of it all in a room. Every salesman should understand that in the placing of the furniture you may make a small room appear more spacious; a large barn-like one seem more cozy; express the idea of formality or informality; quiet restfulness or agitated confusion, sedateness or gayety, order or disorder."[17]

One secret of getting a homelike quality in the arrangement of furniture is to assemble it in small groups or units which suggest specific uses, as for instance a reading group, a writing or business nook, a rest corner, or a music section.

GET A CENTER OF INTEREST FIRST

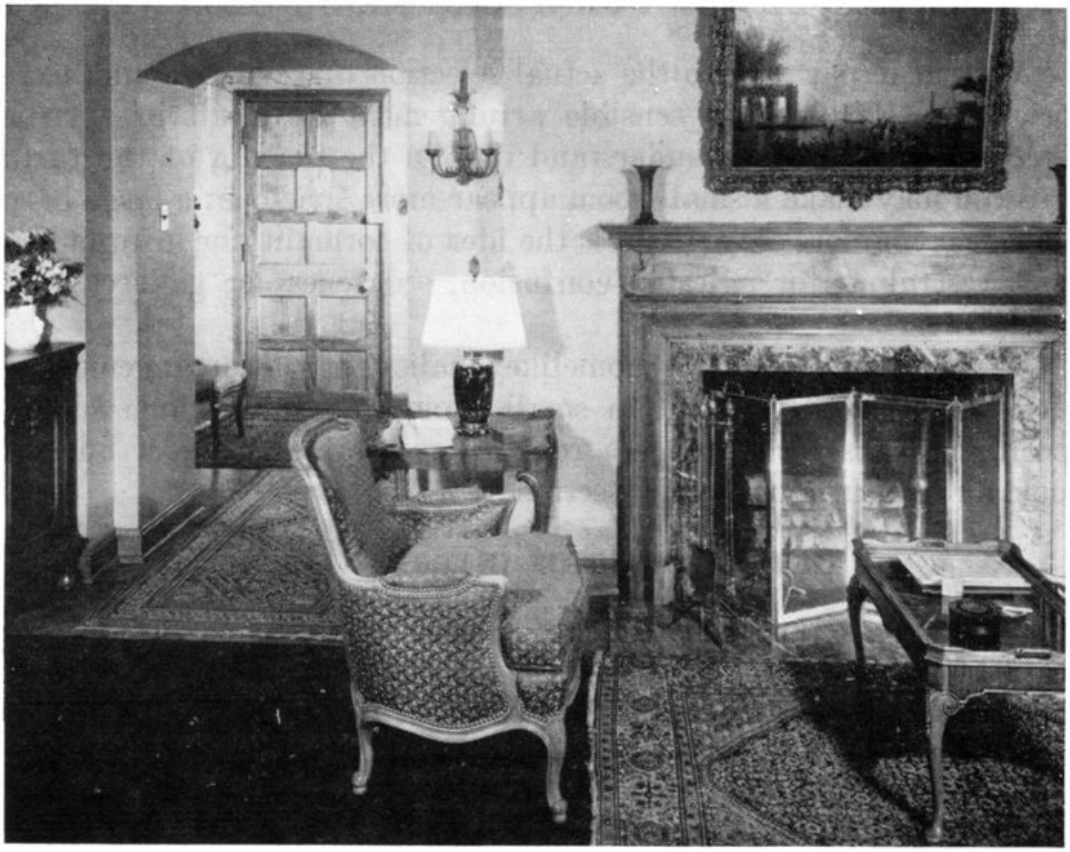
If you are arranging furniture in the living room, decide on a central interest. Often this is called a built-up composition—table, be grouped. A fireplace with its cheerful fire-glow may well be a natural center of interest. (See fig. 31.) A window or group of windows opening upon a lovely vista may serve equally well. If the family is musical, the grand piano may be so placed as to become the pivotal point of interest.

Secondary centers of interest naturally are created once the fireplace, a window, or the grand piano is assigned to the major role. There may well be more than one of these secondary centers, i. e., a writing corner, and a reading group.

Objects of central interest.—Every wall should have an object of central interest. Often this is called a built-up composition—table, desk, cabinet, or couch standing against the wall—with, in each case, a picture, mirror, hanging bookcase, or tapestry above. The focal point may be a single tall piece of furniture such as a secretary or highboy. The pictures, mirrors, or tapestry hangings tend to build up a kind of "skyline" and the furniture is united with these wall decorations to create the necessary feeling of orderly stability which proper balance and color harmony can give.

BALANCE AND COLOR HARMONY

An effect of balance in the arrangement of the furniture is as essential to the comfort of the occupants of the room as proper lighting, easy chairs, or unobtrusive orderliness. In fact, it is a species of order. It gives a feeling of repose.



Courtesy American Walnut Manufacturers Association.

Figure 31.—Living room showing harmonious arrangement. View from living room to hall in a city apartment. Interior woodwork, mantel, and furniture are of wood in tones which range from the dark chest to the blond chair.

A room, or a group, is in balance when it appears to be at rest; that is when the total imaginary weight, or pull, on the attention, of everything on one side of a center appears to the mind to equal the total weight of everything on the other side. An accurate feeling for balance can be acquired easily by experiment and practice. There are two kinds of balance: Even or formal, known as *bisymmetric* balance; and uneven or "off center" known as *occult* balance.

Formal or bisymmetric balance.—The simplest form of balance is produced by placing two things exactly alike on either side of a center and at exactly the same distance from it. This is called either bisymmetric (double symmetrical) or formal balance—usually the latter because such an arrangement is somewhat stiff and precise in its effect upon the mind. To test it, exactly in the center of a piece of paper draw a rectangle 1 inch long and one-half inch wide. Imagine this to be a console table. Equidistant from this rectangle, in a straight line, draw two small squares (one on each side of the rectangle) to represent a pair of chairs. If you successively place a circle over the rectangle to represent a mirror, you will clearly see the bisymmetric balance. The effect of formality becomes more marked as you add more units to the group. While too many formal groupings will make the room seem stiff and unlivable, at least one formal grouping may be desirable in every room since formal balance affects the mind with a sense of stability and repose.

If the motive of formality is to be emphasized, the number and importance of formal groupings should be emphasized; if informality is desired, the use of formal balance should be limited.

"*Off center*" or "*Occult balance.*"—There is another kind of balance, usually called "occult" because it is less easy to see or to create. It is produced by arranging a number of unlike things with reference to a center on the basis of the mechanical formula that the "weight" of each will increase directly with its distance from the center.

As an experiment in occult balance, draw a rectangle 2 inches long and 1 inch wide to represent an imaginary fireplace. One-fourth inch to the left of the exact center, and at right angles to the "fireplace," draw a small rectangle 1 inch long and one-fourth inch wide to represent a love seat. Now, one-fourth inch to the right of the center, and at right angles to the "fireplace" draw two ½-inch squares to represent two chairs. Together the chairs will seem to the mind to "weigh" about the same as the love seat, and the whole group will be substantially in occult balance. Now erase the "love seat" and exactly in the same position draw a rectangle three-fourths inch in length to represent a sofa. You will notice the balance has been destroyed. It may be improved either by moving the "sofa" closer to the center, which will make it weigh less; or by moving the chairs farther away from the center, which will make them weigh more. In order to create a perfect balance, however, the chairs should be separated and a small rectangle placed between them to represent a table and lamp.

The salesman, if he is wise, will suggest pieces which, after suitable arrangement, meet the real needs and tastes of the family whether those needs be musical groupings, game-corner groupings, or conversational groupings. It may mean the sacrifice of some rule of decoration to make or keep a place for a favorite rocker, a grandfather's clock, or a treasured piece, but careful planning can make such a piece either a featured asset, or an unobtrusive addition if appropriately arranged in a proper setting.

The master rule for furniture grouping.—There is one all-inclusive rule for grouping furniture: "Bring together in a convenient place, those objects which will be used together."[18]

So many rooms become mere collections of furniture that along with this master rule for furniture grouping is placed William Morris' little rule, "Have nothing in your home that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

If a reading chair is placed in a room, make sure adequate lighting provisions are made, either by the addition of a small table lamp or a standing lamp. If possible, a table should be provided for smoking accessories, candy, or a bowl of fruit. If a "quiet" corner is desired, select one away from general room traffic. If the radio is a feature of the room, and the occupant likes to lounge in an easy chair while listening, place a comfortable chair near the radio. Remember that the chair also may be used for reading, so be certain to provide adequate light. Conversational groupings require two or more chairs placed close together with a table for refreshments.

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HARMONY

Speaking in general terms, it may be said that things harmonize, or go well together when they are more or less alike, and that they may be alike either because they look alike or because they affect the mind in the same way.

For example, if you cover a Sheraton satinwood bed with a fine silk taffeta spread in apricot, the two units will be harmonious because both wood and taffeta are in colors which contain a large admixture of the same hue, namely yellow. Moreover, they also will be harmonious because the fine lines and slender proportions of the bed affect the mind with a sense of delicacy and daintiness, and the fine texture, silken luster, and pale coloring of the taffeta affect it in precisely the same way. We can call the first type of harmony *physical*, and the second type *emotional*.

Both are basically important in the art of interior decoration, and make surprisingly powerful sales levers in dealing with that 60 percent of potential buyers whose primary interest in furniture lies in what it will do to make their homes more attractive.

Tests for physical harmony.—There are numerous tests which might be made by a salesman on the floor such as placing a square white handkerchief on a mahogany gate-leg table and placing under it a pearl grey rug to illustrate inharmonious effect resulting from the fact that the three elements are unlike in hue, tone (degree of light and dark), defining lines, shape, and texture.

A much simpler method is to compare room harmony with ladies wearing apparel. Let us suppose a woman put on a brown dress, white belt, and pearl-grey shoes. Of course, the effect would be most inharmonious. On the other hand, suppose she substituted a gold belt and brown shoes. A harmonious effect would be achieved as was done in the instance previously referred to, in which a dull gold velvet or satin, folded to the same width as the table, was laid on the table and a deep warm taupe or mahogany-colored rug substituted for the pearl-grey carpet.

Good rules to follow for harmonious physical harmony are:

1. All elements of a grouping should be united by a common strain of color regardless of whether that common strain is a warm or cool color.
2. All elements of a grouping should resemble each other in a textural effect.
3. Accessories should resemble the piece with which they are used in correct proportion to the whole.

Tests for emotional harmony.—Important points to remember when making tests for emotional harmony are:

1. Low illumination with areas of shadow is restful, but high illumination is stimulating.
2. Horizontal lines and long, low shapes arouse a sense of repose, but vertical lines and tall narrow shapes have the opposite effect.
3. Dark colors (like low illumination and horizontal extension) affect the mind with a sense of repose, but pale colors (like brilliant light and vertical extension) affect it with a sense of animation and activity.
4. Large, heavy objects give a sense of repose, but anything small and light produces the opposite effect.

Bearing in mind these facts, turn on the ceiling lights in a room and notice the stimulating effect. Now turn off the ceiling lights and light the lamps in the room. Study the effect and you will see that the lamp-lighted room is more inviting.

In like manner, tests may be made to illustrate each of these points, such as substituting two high-back chairs in a room for the sofa. You will notice immediately that the room is less restful.

The scale of harmony

Blends harmoniously with—	**Preferred color—**	**Contrasts pleasingly with—**
Light blue, navy, light green, green, heliotrope, purple, lavender, and gray.	Blue	Olive, yellow, orange, cream, tan, brown, and dark brown.
Blue, navy, myrtle, light green, lavender, and gray.	Light blue	Olive, pink, cream, and tan.
Light blue, blue, navy, light green, green, pink, purple, gray, and brown.	Lavender	Olive, yellow, cream, and tan.
Blue, navy, myrtle green, light green, green, pink, maroon, heliotrope, gray, brown, and dark brown.	Purple	Yellow, orange, cream, and tan.
Blue, pink, red, maroon, purple, gray-brown, and dark brown.	Heliotrope	Navy, myrtle green, light green, green, yellow, orange, and cream tan.
Pink, red, heliotrope, purple, brown, and dark brown.	Maroon or wine	Navy, light green, green, olive, yellow, gray, cream, and tan.
Orange, pink, maroon, heliotrope, brown, and dark brown.	Red	Navy, myrtle green, light green, green, olive, yellow, gray, and cream.
Red, maroon, heliotrope, purple, lavender, and cream.	Pink	Light blue, light green, green, olive, and gray.
Olive, yellow, red, cream, tan, brown, and dark brown.	Orange	Blue, navy, light green, green, heliotrope, and purple.
Light green, green, olive, orange, cream, tan, brown, and dark brown.	Yellow	Blue, navy, myrtle, green, red, maroon, purple, heliotrope, lavender, and gray.
Yellow, orange, pink, gray, tan, brown, and dark brown.	Cream	Light blue, blue, navy, myrtle green, light green, green, olive, red, heliotrope, purple, and lavender.
Olive, yellow, cream, brown, and dark brown.	Tan	Light blue, blue, navy, myrtle green, light green, green, maroon, heliotrope, purple, and lavender.
Olive, yellow, orange, red, maroon,		

heliotrope, purple, lavender, cream, tan, and dark brown.	Brown	Blue, navy, light green, and green.
Navy, green, yellow, purple, and gray.	Myrtle	Red, heliotrope, cream, and tan.
Light blue, blue, navy, myrtle green, green, olive, yellow, lavender, and gray.	Light green	Orange, pink, red, maroon, heliotrope, purple, cream, tan, brown, and dark brown.
Blue, navy, myrtle green,light green, olive, yellow, lavender, and gray.	Green	Orange, pink, red, maroon, heliotrope, purple, cream, tan, brown, and dark brown.
Myrtle green, light green, green, yellow, orange, tan, brown, and dark brown.	Olive	Light blue, blue, pink, red, lavender, and cream.
Light blue, blue, navy, myrtle green, light green, green, heliotrope, purple, lavender, and cream.	Gray	Yellow, orange, pink, red, and maroon.

Figure 32.—Chart of color combinations. [19]

SUGGESTIONS FOR ROOM COMPOSITION

Consideration of use will guide one to desirable groupings of various pieces. Consideration of balance will prevent placement of the pieces of heavy furniture on one side or one end of the room. Groupings of chairs and their accessories of lamps and stands should be made so as to foster social amenities.

The following suggestions for room composition have been offered by one specialist in the field of interior decoration:[20]

1. Furniture should always be arranged with the purpose of the room uppermost in thought.
2. Each individual piece should be placed so that it is convenient, so that its use is obvious, and so that it is not interfered with by other pieces nearby.
3. Pieces should be distributed so that circulation is not interfered with. Keep furniture away from door openings or passageways.
4. Furniture should be practically placed in its relation to the architectural or mechanical features, so that there is no interference with the use of such features. Particular attention should be given to the swing of doors, the opening of windows, and the operation of electrical or heating devices.
5. The location of movable pieces of furniture should be carefully studied for their compositional relationship to the fixed architectural features—doors, windows, built-in furniture, alcoves, niches, mantels, paneling, etc.
6. An agreeable balance of high and low pieces of furniture should be introduced. High curtained windows and doors may be substituted for high pieces of furniture in a composition.
7. The quantity of furniture used should not give the effect of either under-furnishing or overcrowding.
8. The distribution of the pieces should be relatively even. In a long room, one end should not appear crowded and the other end bare, nor should one wall appear more crowded than the one opposite.
9. Opposite walls should have similar groupings, or, if this is not possible, they should appear evenly balanced in quantity and arrangement.
10. Pictorial wall surfaces (scenic papers, mural decoration, tapestries, and large hanging pictures) should not be hidden by furniture or other objects to such a point that their visibility is marred.
11. Furniture should be related in scale to the size of the room. Large pieces of furniture creating heavy shadows or dark spots are inadvisable except in large rooms.
12. Furniture placed with lines parallel to the walls gives a greater effect of unity in a room than when placed in diagonal positions.

QUESTIONS

1. A customer asks: "Is it absolutely necessary to have a pair of these tables? Or can I get a balanced effect without having everything just like soldiers lined up precisely?" How would you demonstrate an answer?

2. What phrases or words have you found which seem to make a favorable impression on a "typical" customer, without overdoing the decorative approach?

3. How would you employ color to make a small room seem larger?

4. Explain the emotional appeal of color. Under what conditions would you employ violet? Yellow?

Gray?

5. What color scheme would you suggest for painting or papering the walls of a room which has a northern exposure?

*6. "In the living room, family life should center, * * * and guests find friendly greeting." To the interior decorator as to the furniture salesman, this means grouping. What groups should a living room have?*

7. How many of the common color names are important in selling goods in your store at this time and how may you learn and apply them to your merchandise?

8. Discuss the proposition that you are not properly equipped to meet special color demands when stock merchandise cannot be sold.

9. Discuss the principles involved in getting the proper color treatments for connecting rooms.

10. To what extent should a furniture salesman attempt to understand the art of interior decoration?

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FOOTNOTES:

[15] The Ross Crane Book of Home Furnishing and Decoration, p. 39. Frederick J. Drake & Co., Chicago, Ill. 1933.

[16] Jane White Lonsdale in The American Home, March 1940, p. 22.

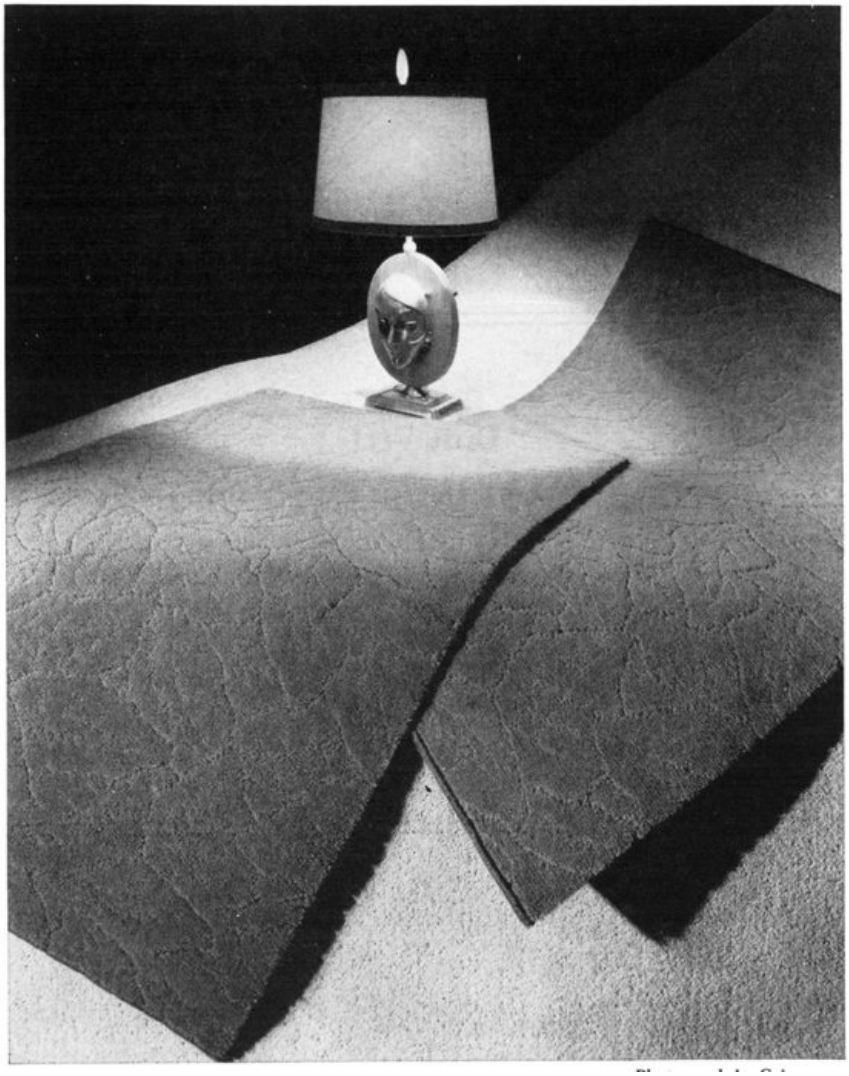
[17] The Ross Crane Book of Home Furnishing and Decoration, Frederick J. Drake & Co., Chicago, Ill., p. 109. 1933.

[18] Winnifred Fales: What's New in Home Decorating, p. 124, Dodd Mead & Co., New York, N. Y.

[19] Reproduced from "The Seng Handbook," The Seng Co., Chicago, Ill., p. 52. 1939.

[20] Sherrill Whiton: *Elements of Interior Decoration*, pp. 665-6. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1937.

Unit VIII
FLOOR COVERINGS AND FABRICS



Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 33.—A new note in contemporary floor covering is achieved in this sculptured, leaf-design, Wilton broadloom. The leaf design is achieved in the weave. The interesting lamp has a brass mask mounted on wood.

Unit VIII.—FLOOR COVERINGS AND FABRICS

DRAPERY AND UPHOLSTERY FIBERS AND FABRICS

FIBERS AND THEIR ORIGINS

Fibers used in the manufacture of home furnishing materials are both of animal and of vegetable origin. The former include the true and "wild" silks; wool, or sheep's hair; mohair, the hair of the Angora goat; horsehair, chiefly from the tail and mane; and in limited quantities the hair of the cow, pig, camel, and rabbit. Vegetable fibers include cotton, rayon, flax hemp, jute, ramie, kapok, palm fibers, moss, coir, and paper made from wood pulp. Their general characteristics are discussed here.

Animal Fibers.

Silk.—True silk is produced by the mulberry silk moth of China. Just how ancient the art of sericulture and the spinning and weaving of silk may be we do not know; but there is no doubt that it had reached a state of considerable development 4,500 years ago. It reached Japan about 1,600 years ago, and India somewhat later. About the year A. D. 550 two Persian monks brought eggs of the silk worm from China to Constantinople in a hollow cane, and the western silk industry was started.

The "wild" silks are produced by other worms, feeding for the most part on other leaves than mulberry. Most of the so-called *tussah* silk comes from the oak-feeding tussah worm, a native of Mongolia. The fiber is coarser than that of true silk, and so difficult to dye effectively that fabrics woven from it are usually left in the natural ecru or pale brown color.

Wool.—The many varieties of sheep yield wools which differ markedly in fineness, length of staple (2 to 16 inches for use in textiles), strength, resilience, and spinning quality. Accordingly, wools are sorted and "blended" before spinning, to suit the requirements of the particular fabric to be woven. Carpetings require the fairly long staple and fairly coarse fiber found in wools from Scotland, Russia, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Egypt, China, India, and the East Indies. The unsurpassable carpet wools of Persia and Asia Minor are largely consumed locally. Carpet wools naturally differ widely in desirability and cost, as do the many processes necessary to prepare wool for the loom. These differences require emphasis from the salesman in the demonstration of concealed values.

Most carpet wools arrive at the factory in the fleece, matted, dirty, and greasy. They are blended according to formula; passed first through a machine which separates the tangled masses and beats out free dirt; then to the scouring baths, which remove all grease and other impurities; then, after passing through a series of powerful wringers, to the dryer; and finally to the picker, from which they emerge ready for spinning.

Worsted yarns, used in making fine Wiltons, body Brussels, Wilton velvets and some chenilles, result from a succession of processes in which the fibers are placed parallel, the short ones eliminated, and the long fibers combed and drawn out into a fine, even "roving," which is spun into a thread, two such threads then being tightly twisted together to form a single-ply worsted yarn. These single-ply yarns are then twisted together to form two-ply, three-ply, or four-ply yarns according to the specifications for a particular weave.

Woolen yarns are made from short staple wool, and depend for their strength upon the minute serrations or scales on the surfaces of the wool fibers, which cause them to adhere, or felt, when held tightly together. The carding machine used in preparing these wools for spinning thoroughly intermixes the fibers instead of drawing them into parallel formations, as for worsteds. The loose roving is then spun into single strands, which are twisted into two-, three-, or four-ply yarns as in the case of worsteds.

Mohair.—The hair of the Angora goat is closely allied to wool, typically 7 to 8 inches long. It is lustrous, resilient, and enduring, but harder to spin than wool because the hair scales are not fully developed. Mohair fabrics have been used in the Orient since time immemorial, and they were popular in England in the early eighteenth century.

There are wide differences in mohair upholstery fabrics, based upon the quality of wool, number of points per square inch, and height of pile.

Horsehair.—The hair of the horse's mane and tail is used as a single filament without spinning in the production of upholstery chair cloths, and for floor coverings. In the form of curled hair it is the most resilient and costly upholstery stuffer.

Pig's bristles and cow hair are used for the same purpose. The soft hair of the camel is used in weaving certain oriental rugs, and rabbit hair in certain felts.

Vegetable Fibers.

Cotton.—This textile is in universal use and requires no comment. The silky appearance of some damasks and other cotton fabrics is caused by mercerizing, a process of treating cotton in either fiber or fabric form with caustic alkali.

Rayon.—This term, which in French means ray or beam, has lately been applied to artificial silks produced by any of four different industrial processes. Viscose silk, made chiefly from sulfite pulp cellulose, constitutes the great bulk of the rayon production today. It is now often combined with natural fibers, particularly wool and cotton, in drapery and upholstery fabrics which afford the luster of rayon plus the strength of wool or cotton.

Flax.—This plant has been cultivated since the stone age, and was regarded as the most important plant of commerce until near the end of the eighteenth century, when it was superseded by cotton. Flax fiber yields linen; also from it is obtained the tow used as a stuffer in upholstering.

Hemp.—The fiber of this plant closely approaches flax in strength but not in luster. It is used to a very limited extent in drapery textiles and cheap carpets. The waste fibers are also known as tow, and sometimes used in place of flax tow.

Jute.—A plant, grown chiefly in India, the lustrous fiber of which is used to a considerable extent in the manufacture of cretonnes, damasks, and other decorative textiles.

Ramie.—This plant, also known as rhea and China grass and cultivated chiefly in China, yields a fiber of great strength and a luster about like that of mercerized cotton. It is used in the manufacture of grass cloth, and also of ramie velvets, which are firm but less lustrous than linen velvets.

Kapok.—A tree cultivated in Java for the production of down; called in commerce kapok or "silk-cotton." Before the commercial development of rayon it made considerable headway as a textile fiber, but now is used chiefly as a stuffer for mattresses and pillows. Kapok has great resiliency and resistance to water.

Palm fiber.—Shredded leaves of the palmetto, used as a stuffer in upholstering.

Moss.—The hairlike filament left after the soft outer tissue of southern moss has been removed; used as a stuffer.

Coir.—Fiber prepared from the husk of the cocoanut; used in making porch rugs and brush mats.

Paper.—Spun into coarse threads and used in the manufacture of so-called fiber rugs.

DRAPERY AND UPHOLSTERY FABRICS

Tapestries.

Hand-made tapestries are woven on a loom harnessed with thin warps, by passing a shuttle containing a colored yarn over and under the warp thread where the color is required to form the pattern. In every line of weft or filling, the shuttle must be changed every time a change of color is required by the cartoon, or colored drawing of the design from which the weaver works. He sees the face of the tapestry, if at all, only in a mirror placed in front of the loom. Tapestry weaving requires a high degree of artistic and technical skill; hand-made tapestries are costly.

Machine-made tapestries are produced on a Jacquard loom, of wool, cotton, silk, or rayon, or in mixtures of these fibers. They vary enormously in appearance and durability.

Velvets, Velours.

Although the term velvet and its French equivalent (velours) may be used interchangeably, the general custom is to call drapery fabrics velours, and upholstery fabrics velvets. Both are made in a great variety of plain, stripe, and brocaded effects, and with the pile all cut, all uncut (looped) or else partially cut. Machine-made velvets and velours are made from silk, rayon, cotton, linen, ramie and wool, usually 50 inches wide and in a range of prices and qualities practically unlimited. In some of the cheaper upholstery velours the design is embossed, or depressed by a stamping machine, but in others it is placed in relief by cutting away the pile of the ground.

Plushes.

Plushes are long-pile velvets, formerly of silk or wool but now mostly of mohair. Properly their pile is less close and firm than that of velvets, but some of the finest quality mohair plushes have a very close, erect pile. In ordinary qualities the pile leans sharply, and in the panne type it is so flat as to have somewhat the same effect as lustrous satin.

Frisés, Friezes.

These terms are now loosely used. "Frieze" in French means curled or frizzed, and the word properly refers to a class of plushes in which the pile has been completely or partially frizzled. It is now applied to a variety of texture effects in velvet and plush, among them uncut patterns on a cut-pile ground; cut patterns on an uncut ground; plain velvets with alternating lines of cut and uncut pile; and uncut velvets.

Satins and Sateens.

Satins and sateens are made in the same way; the former of silk and the latter of cotton, plain or mercerized. The weave is technically a twill, but so modified that the diagonal lines are not visible, and the whole surface is smooth and lustrous.

Damasks, Armorers, Brocades, Brocateles.

It is difficult to define these weaves in a few words, and quite impossible to describe the extraordinary variety of textile effects produced by modern manufacturers, both in the basic weaves and in combination of two or more techniques.

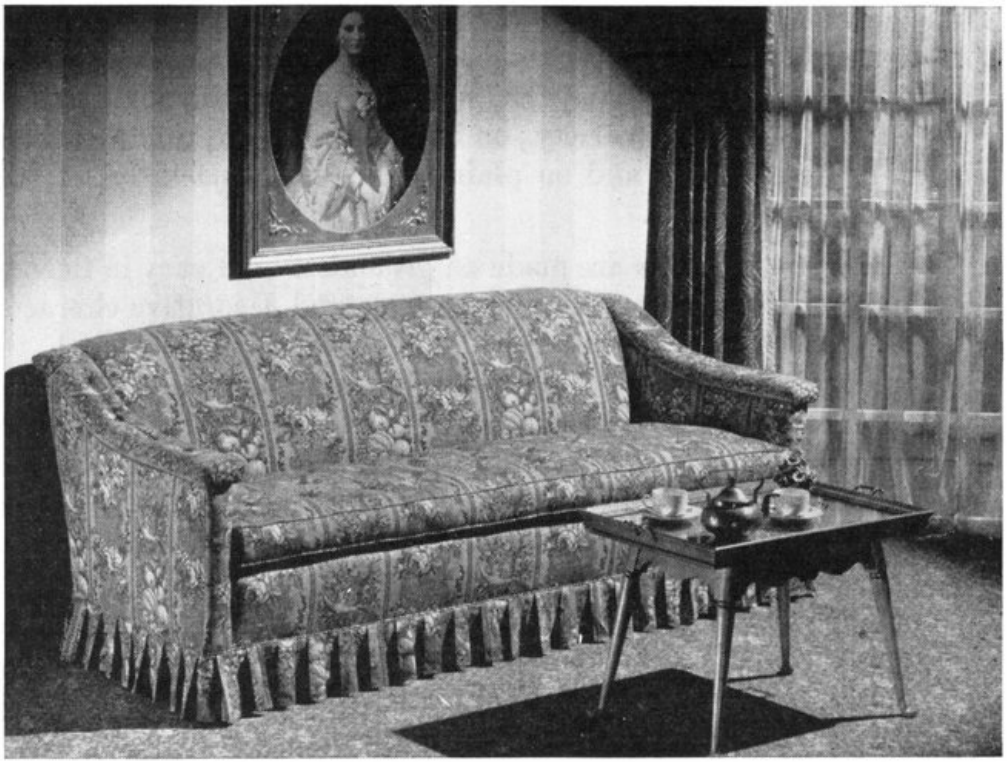


Photo by Grignon.

Figure 34.—Authenticity is stressed in this handsome sofa upholstered in a fabric which is an exact reproduction of a print used more than a century ago. The monotone print is in a soft brown tone. Accompanying the sofa is a duck-foot cocktail table with removable glass tray, and lovely gold framed portrait of Jenny Lind. The Axminster rug is a "texture chintz" in a tile green with small red, beige, and brown flowers.

Damasks are pileless figured fabrics in which the pattern is produced by exposing the warp threads, and the ground by exposing the weft threads; or the reverse. They may be made with both warp and weft in the satin weave, in which case the only contrast between pattern and ground is that caused by the direction of the lines; or with warp satin figures on a weft ground of taffeta or twill weave; or with weft satin figures on a ground of contrasting weave. Warp and weft may be of exactly the same color; or of two tones of one hue; or of two different hues. More than two colors are possible only through the device of striping, where warp threads of additional hues are introduced to form stripes which necessarily run the whole length of the piece. Damasks are made of silk, rayon, wool, cotton, mohair, linen, or jute, or in mixtures of two or more of these fibers.

Armures look like twilled weave damasks, except that they have small raised patterns produced by floating warp threads.

Brocades are embroidery effects produced by floating wefts on the surface of damask, satin, taffeta, and other weaves. Gold or silver metal threads are sometimes introduced in the figures.

Brocateles were originally somewhat coarse fabrics of silk and wool or silk and cotton with designs produced by the brocade weave. The term is now also applied to a type of heavy satin damask in which the satin figure is on a lustrous ground of the same or contrasting color.

Printed fabrics.—Both hand-and machine-made printed fabrics are produced in an enormous variety; on linen, cotton, silk, rayon, mohair, wool, and jute grounds; and on plain twill, rep, damask, velvet, and other grounds.

1. *Printed linens* are made on grounds which vary in fineness and smoothness according to the scale and decorative character of the design. Hand-blocked linens vary in price with the quality of materials and craftsmanship, and also with the number of blockings required to form the design. In recent years both linen and cotton grounds have to some extent been machine-printed with wooden rollers instead of copper or brass, and against a padded backing, which has resulted in improving both line and coloring, and in giving them much the appearance of hand-blocked fabrics.
2. *Cretonnes* are made both by hand-and by roller-printing processes on unglazed cotton ground of widely varying texture and decorative effect, and at prices ranging from a few cents per yard for the cheapest roller-printed fabrics up to $15 or more for the elaborately hand-blocked effects. Thick and heavy cretonnes are made for wall panels and furniture coverings, and a few splendid figure panels are available in Gothic, heraldic, and *mille fleur* designs which resemble the old painted tapestries of fifteenth century France.
3. *Chintzes* are printed on a fine cotton holland. Glazed chintzes have a varnish-like

glow and considerable stiffness; semi-glazed are less glossy and more soft and pliable; unglazed closely resemble good cretonne, but the texture is finer.

4. *Warp-prints* or *shadow prints* are made by a process similar to that employed in drum-painting velvet carpets. Designs produced by this technique necessarily lack definition, and have a soft and shadowy appearance which cannot be produced by hand or roller printing. The most effective warp prints are of plain or mercerized cotton.

Embroideries.—Embroideries are justly considered important today. The art of the needle worker ranks close to that of the weaver of fine rugs and tapestries. Two only of its many forms are mentioned here.

1. *Crewel work* is customarily worked with colored worsted yarns on a plain linen ground, sometimes completely covered, but usually left open to form a background for the pattern. The stitches are varied in direction and character in order to give interest and richness to the texture. Most of the crewel work sold in the stores today is made with the bonnaz embroidery machine, which closely simulates the decorative effect of needlework.

2. *Needlepoint* embroidery is worked on open canvas. The fine or "petit point" (little point) is formed by stitches taken diagonally from one opening in the canvas to the next. The coarse or "gros (big) point" is made by similar stitches twice the length, and with thicker yarns.

Practically everything written about upholstery fabrics stresses their decorative value or their appropriateness to other furnishings in the room. Little is reported about their physical structure or durability. Those desiring to make a comparison of fabrics for breaking strength, weight per square yard, fabric balance, and resistance to abrasion will do well to secure a copy of Circular No. 483, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. The title is "Proposed Minimum Requirements of Three Types of Upholstery Fabrics Based on Analysis of 62 Materials." Copy may be secured from Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., price 5 cents.

FLOOR COVERINGS

It is well to remember that the foundation of every decorating scheme rightly should be the floor-covering. One's rugs or carpetings may contrast with the wall treatment, or they may complement it, but next to the room itself they are the largest color expanse. A good deal of thought needs to be given to the floor covering's selection. One can well afford to invest slightly more in this decorative accessory and obtain the soft new colors which lend so much charm to furniture groupings.

Floor coverings of proper texture and pattern can lend much sparkle and life to a room or they can ruin one's most carefully selected ensemble if they are drab and listless.

Floor coverings are divided into two groups: The soft-surface fabrics are made from a variety of textile fibers including wool which is the one most widely used; and the hard surface fabrics, including linoleum and the felt-base prints.

Soft-surface floor coverings are made both by hand and by machinery. The first class includes all Oriental rugs; European hand-knotted rugs; floor tapestries; and a few hooked, braided, and woven hand-craft rugs of limited production. The second class includes a wide range, of fabrics, nearly all of which are produced by the chenille, Wilton, Axminster, drum print, roller print, or ingrain processes.

ORIENTAL RUGS[21]

Rugs are woven in quantity in Persia, Turkey, India, and China, with a smaller production in Turkestan, Greece, the Caucasus, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. With few exceptions, the finer rugs come from Persia. Small rugs, woven primarily for individual or family use, are made throughout the rug-weaving countries. Small rugs made primarily for export, and the larger room-size rugs, usually called carpets, are woven chiefly in a few great production districts of the four countries first named.

In all oriental rugs the pile is knotted by hand, and in most weaves the wool is also scoured, carded, spun, and dyed by hand. Aniline dyes are used in many of the cheaper rugs—particularly in those woven outside of Persia—and either a superior quality of chemical dyes or the old vegetable dyes in the better rugs. All rugs except the poorest and cheapest are fast in color, unless they have been "painted."

Most oriental rugs are carefully made of good wool, and their durability under reasonable conditions of service is guaranteed by responsible dealers. The widespread notion that any oriental rug, however cheap and however abused in service, will wear indefinitely is of course absurd. Rugs are made of wool, not of concrete. Even in the Orient they wear out in time, notwithstanding the fact that they are not touched by heavy shoes. In the matter of durability oriental rugs have no inherent advantage over domestics. Everything depends upon the choice of wools and skill in handling.

The term "antique" is applied by collectors to pieces 100 years or more in age. Few such rugs are now in the hands of dealers.

Prices are based on the age or rarity of the individual specimen rather than on intrinsic excellence, as is the case with antique furniture or rare books. Only the expert is competent to recognize an antique rug or to judge of its quality or value.

Many rug merchants, department stores, and furniture stores advertise and sell as antiques any unwashed rugs which have been more or less aged and softened by use in the Orient, and which conform measurably in technique and character of design to antique standards. It is also a common practice to sell as antiques purely modern unwashed pieces reproduced in the old designs, particularly if such pieces have been aged artificially by some such method as exposure to bazaar traffic for a few weeks or months. Both practices are discountenanced by dealers of the highest standing, who apply to rugs of these kinds the term "semi-antique."

"Washing" and "Painting" of orientals.—Oriental rugs are usually woven in relatively bright, strong colors. In order to soften these colors to a point where they can be used effectively in the decoration of modern American homes, most rugs upon arrival in this country are given a treatment known to the trade as "washing" before they are offered for sale. (This is the same treatment given to "sheen type" domestics.) The mild reagents employed soften all the colors of good rugs without bleaching them or impairing their fastness to light. Poor wool is sometimes injured, and poor dyes bleached by the washing process; but the statement frequently encountered in books and magazines that any washed rug is undesirable is utter nonsense. The fact is, that, genuine antique rugs aside, most of the fine oriental rugs in this country are washed rugs, and innumerable fine homes use them. The high luster imparted to the wool as a part of the washing process is not permanent, and tends to disappear under the hard service requirements of small American homes.

Many rugs are retouched with dyestuffs, or "painted," after they have been washed; that is, parts of the design are treated with dyes applied with the brush by hand in order to alter certain colors, usually by deepening their tone. The dyes cannot be boiled into the wool or "fixed," and will fade under strong light.

Most oriental rug names do not show quality.—The name borne by an oriental rug ordinarily indicates the city or district of its origin, and throws little or no light on the excellence of the individual specimen. There is a widespread but totally erroneous idea that all rugs having the same name are alike in quality. The fact is that except for a few Turkish, Indian, and Chinese weaves, oriental rugs are not standardized, and that two Kerman rugs, for example, may differ as widely in quality as two Detroit automobiles. In buying oriental rugs, as in most other commodities, the consumer gets only that which he pays for.

Other things being equal, the cost of a rug per square foot increases directly with fineness of knotting. Other variable factors include the character of the wool and dyes; artistic and technical skill of designer and weaver; local conditions in the production district; and the interplay of supply and demand in the American wholesale market.

EUROPEAN HAND-KNOTTED PILE CARPETS

Carpet weaving was introduced to Europe by the Moors after their conquest of Granada, and established in Holland in the sixteenth century, and at Wilton and Axminster in England, and Paris in France, in the seventeenth century. Machine-spun yarns are now used in making these fabrics, but aside from this the processes are essentially the same as those employed in the Orient. Pile carpets are made in commercial quantities in Great Britain, Holland, Germany, France, and Spain and can be produced in any desired size, shape, pattern, coloring, or height of pile. Qualities vary widely in wool, knotting, and weavers' skill, and sell in the United States for anywhere from $20 to $200 or more per square yard. The time required for delivery varies from 3 to 12 months or more, depending upon size, character of design, and fineness of knotting.

Spanish rugs, like many of those made in China, are often embossed or chiseled, in order to add interest to the texture and to soften the relationship of strong juxtaposed colors.

FLOOR TAPESTRIES

See discussion of tapestries, under "Drapery and Upholstery Fabrics," page 155.

CHENILLE CARPETS AND RUGS[22]

As applied to floor coverings the term chenille (from the French *chenille*, a fuzzy worm, or caterpillar) designates a power-loom fabric capable of producing rugs in any desired size, shape, design, or coloring. This makes it the most practical weave for special order work. This technique, which is completely different from that used in the production of Wilton or Axminster carpetings, was developed in Great Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century, and until a comparatively recent date the great bulk of the chenille rugs used in this country was imported. Under pressure of war conditions a large number of looms were set up here in 1915 and 1916, and we are now the leading manufacturers of practically all grades of chenille carpetings.

Chenilles without seams can be made here in any width up to 30 feet, and in any length or shape.

There are many qualities, varying in character and quantity of wool, fineness of tufting, and height of pile, which may be anywhere from ¼ to 1 inch or more. In hand-tufted carpets the character of the design makes little difference in production costs, and the only limitations on the pattern are those imposed by fineness of knotting. In chenille, on the contrary, production cost increases rapidly with increasing intricacy of design, so that the square yard price for any given quality might be half again as much, or even two or three times as much, for a rug of elaborate design as for a plain rug of the same size. Special order rugs require from 1 to 5 months for delivery, according to size and character of design.

WILTON CARPETINGS AND RUGS[23]

Wiltons are woven of either worsted or woolen yarns on a jacquard Wilton loom. The essential facts concerning this weave from the consumer's viewpoint are: *(a)* the jacquard device makes possible the production of patterns revealing very intricate and perfectly clean detail, equal to that found in fine Persian carpets. *(b)* The pile is erect, with maximum wear at the point of maximum resistance, thus ensuring great durability. *(c)* Beneath the pile there is an elastic cushion of firm yarns, which adds greatly to the durability of the fabric. This cushion results from the unique Wilton technique, which carries from three to six differently colored yarns between each pair of warp threads throughout the entire length of the carpet, bringing one only to the surface for each tuft, while the others remain in the back.

All carpets of this weave are by no means equal in quality, durability, and value. In fact, Wiltons vary widely in all respects save that of the type of loom on which they are woven. They differ in the cost, fineness, manner of blending, and spinning, and in quantity of wool, which is the physical basis of excellence; in the use of worsted and woolen yarns; in height of pile; and in the number of points or tufts, per square inch (ranging from about 60 to 128 points per square inch); in quality and cost of dyestuffs; in perfection of finish; and in rigidity of inspection standards.

Customers cannot be stirred to enthusiasm by such statements as that a given rug is a 2-sheet, 131-2 pick, 256 pitch, 6-frame Wilton. Many women can, however, be interested in a picture of a harnessed loom at work, with a brief explanation, or caught by casual mention of the fact that in the standard 5-frame Wiltons there are 1,280 separate worsted yarns in the 27-inch width, and 5,120 in a 9-foot seamless rug. Most women are interested in the sources and treatment of wools, care in dyeing, weaving, and inspection.

BODY BRUSSELS CARPETS AND RUGS

The body Brussels was an immensely popular weave from the invention of the power loom to the beginning of the present century. Its sale is now only slight although we may see a come-back of the Brussels in streamlined texture effects. It is woven of worsted yarns only, on the same kind of loom as the Wilton, and with substantially the same structure. They differ in that the pile loops of the Brussels carpet are not cut. They are woven with three, four, or five frames of worsted yarns, their cost and value depending upon the number of frames, number of loops or points per square inch, quality of wool, and certain other technical variants. They are not produced on broad looms.

AXMINSTER CARPETS AND RUGS

Axminster rugs are in great demand in this country because of the unlimited possibilities of pattern and coloring. An additional feature is their moderate price which is a result of mass production techniques. This quality offers the consumer a seamless rug up to 18 feet wide.

The Axminster weave is produced by an ingenious process which beggars description but is explained and illustrated in the Britannica and other standard works on carpet manufacture. The technique permits production of rugs with a great variety of color effects in each pattern. The tufts, in the Axminster, are mechanically inserted in the fabric and bound down into the back, essentially in the manner of oriental rugs, except that the entire process is one of machine technique instead of the customary oriental hand-knotting. None of the yarn is buried in the back of the fabric, as it is in the Wilton weave, other than that which is required for attachment. Yarn preparation for Axminster weaving is a long process involving weeks of work, while actual weaving time requires but one-tenth of the entire time of manufacturing.

The commercial qualities of Axminster vary widely in wool, type of yarn, number of tufts per square inch, and height of pile.

TAPESTRY BRUSSELS, VELVETS, AND WILTON VELVETS

Tapestry Brussels have a looped pile like that of body Brussels and are woven of worsted yarns; Wilton velvets are also made of worsted yarns, and have a close upright pile resembling Wilton. Velvets (formerly called tapestry velvets), have a short upright pile and are made of woolen yarns. These weaves, which are not yarn-dyed, are made both by the drum printing and the roller printing methods.

In *drum printing*, the yarn is wound on a huge drum; the color applied by means of a carriage and color roller in narrow lines; the yarn removed and steamed to fix the color; the separate yarns wound on bobbins and then "set" in such a way that when fed into the loom over the wires that form the pile loops each line of color comes up where it is required to form the pattern. This

technique is economical of wool, but naturally is incapable of yielding the definite exactness of pattern produced by the other weaves.

In *roller printing* the carpet is first woven in white, and then printed on rollers by a process substantially like that of a perfecting press printing a newspaper in color.

Broadloom carpetings.—Any carpet woven on a wide loom. The term is applied particularly to Wiltons, Axminsters, and plain chenilles.

"Sheen-type" rugs; also known as American orientals.—Any machine-made pile rug which has been chemically washed to soften the colors and give it sheen and luster; made in the Wilton, Axminster and chenille weaves.

LINOLEUM

Because of consistent and attractive advertising by manufacturers, the quality and desirability of linoleum and felt-base floor covering are now taken for granted by consumers, and these floor coverings, once regarded purely as a utility product, are sold chiefly on the basis of their decorative appeal. In order to be well informed on their construction you must get the facts from the manufacturers whose products you handle, as both the materials and processes employed have been somewhat widely changed in recent years.

The old method of making linoleum involved the production of solidified linseed oil and its reduction by heat and the admixture of resinous gums to a rubberlike mass known as cement, which was then ground up with cork dust, wood flour, whiting, and pigment to form the "linoleum material." In plain and printed linoleums this material was then calendered on the canvas by heavy heated rollers and seasoned in the drying rooms from 2 to 60 days in temperatures of from 90° to 170°. Granites, jaspes, and cork carpets were made by almost the same process. In making inlays the colored linoleum materials were formed into patterns by one of several hand or machine processes.

In recent years progress has been made toward the partial substitution of linseed oil by a nitrocellulose base in the preparation of the cement. In addition, much linoleum now has a surface coat of nitrocellulose composition, which gives it a glossy surface practically non-markable and highly resistant to strong soaps and soda.

Felt-base floor covering has a printed pattern on a base of felt impregnated with a base of bituminous composition.

CARE OF LINOLEUM

Most linoleum used in homes is manufactured with a lustrous surface which can be maintained with little effort.

Washing.—The basis of all linoleum maintenance is the same—a thorough cleaning with a mild soap, followed by waxing. Soaps which contain excessive alkali destroy the linseed oil content of linoleum. Cleaning compounds of the type ordinarily used for scouring porcelain sinks and tubs, contain abrasive material and are not suitable for use on linoleum, because they scratch the surface of the material. These slight scratches soon fill with dirt and make subsequent cleaning more difficult; also, they shorten the life of the linoleum. Be sure that only pure soaps are used and wash with lukewarm water. Use very little water and remove all traces of the soap. The floor should then be allowed to dry thoroughly.

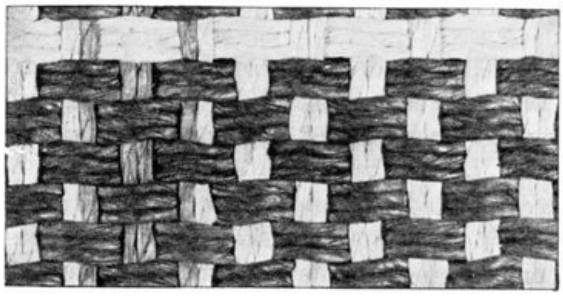
Waxing.—After the floor is cleaned and dried, apply a very thin coat of liquid or paste wax manufactured for the purpose of maintaining linoleum.

FIBERS AND RELATED RUG TYPES

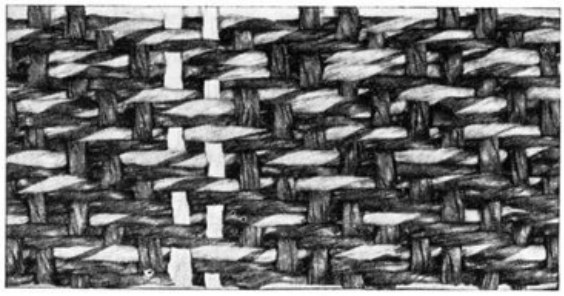
The striking improvements in weave, in colors and in styling made within the past few years have brought a new conception of the uses to which fiber and related rugs may be put appropriately. Originally thought of primarily as summer rugs, and then principally for porch use, today these rugs enjoy a greatly increased use.

Process of manufacture.—The materials employed and the processes of production in the making of fiber, grass, and other rugs of this type are so different that they deserve special mention and description. They are known as flat-weave fabrics to differentiate them from the pile fabric rugs.

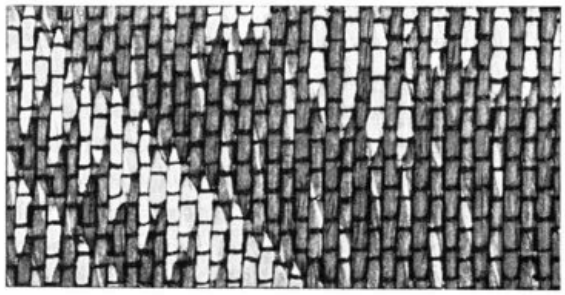
Fiber rugs.—When a new type of yarn made from wood fibers became available as a filler to take the place of wire grass, it widely increased the range of utility and beauty in this type of floor covering.



The basket weave



The twill weave



The jacquard weave

Courtesy Floor Covering Advertising Club, New York, N. Y.

Figure 35.—The striking improvements in weave, in colors, and in styling made within the past few years have brought a new conception of the uses to which fibers and related rugs may be put.

Wood fiber is made from fir or white spruce in great paper mills, where the logs are first reduced to pulp, then made into an extremely tough and continuous roll of a special type of kraft paper designed for twisting. These great rolls of kraft are cut into long strips of varying widths, then tightly twisted into strands of twine or yarn, the size of the strands depending upon *(a)* the width of the strips and *(b)* the tightness of the twist.

The better grades of fiber yarns are extremely tough and long wearing, giving the finished rug a tough, long-wearing surface. Also they are finer than the grass fibers, giving a thinner, less heavy feel, but increasing the cost because of the additional labor involved and the increased number of picks. Three basic weaves are used to give variety:

The basket weave.—In this 2-, 3-, and 4-weft or filler, yarns are shuttled across the loom between each raising and lowering of the warp. This produces a weave resembling the broad, flat weave of a market basket.

The twill weave.—More complicated because it requires additional loom equipment or "harnesses." While the basket weave requires only two such "harnesses" (one to go up while the other goes down) in twill, the addition of more "harnesses," and chains to operate them, produces interesting variations. In the twill weave, three harnesses are used. Each warp strand passes over two filler strands and under the next two, producing a diagonal, ribbed effect, giving a heavier feel to the rug, and resulting in maximum yardage.

Jacquard weave.—This type requires a different loom, equipped with the jacquard mechanism described in connection with the Wilton process, but constructed to carry the much heavier fiber yarns. In this process each warp yarn has its own "harness" which is raised and lowered by the operation of the cards, punched like the rolls of a player piano, to produce the desired pattern. (See fig. 35.)

Color is introduced into fiber rugs both in the kraft as it is made, and by stenciling.

The ingenious use of contrasting fibers, such as sisal, cellophane, and fibers varying in color from dark to light and back again, are often employed to develop interesting weaves and patterns.

Wool fiber types.—Still another variation is achieved by combining wool yarns with fiber. This type is woven with fiber warp tightly bound together with a cotton warp that appears on the

surface. Filler yarns are of alternating fiber and wool carpet yarns, so woven that the fabric is reversible. Pattern is achieved by the coloring of the yarns and by stenciling. The amount of wool varies to secure the result desired. It gives to the fabric a softer feel underfoot.

Wide ranges of colors, weaves, and patterns are now available in fiber rugs to meet all decorative needs. For custom, room-size rugs larger than 9 × 12, many of the most popular patterns are offered in broadlooms, in widths up to 12 feet.

Grass rugs.—Only in three localities in the world is produced the grass from which these useful rugs are constructed. It is the wire-like grass which grows wild in the marshes which dot the great prairies in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the vicinity of Winnipeg, Canada. It grows to a height of 2 feet without a joint, and in the spring is covered with water which gives it the waterproof characteristic. When dry it is cut and, after curing, bound into continuous strands.

Grass rugs employ the simplest of all weaves, the "over-and-under," the warp yarns being raised and lowered alternately as the weft or grass yarns are shot across the loom in the shuttle, to bind the fabric together.

Design usually is applied upon one side of grass rugs by painting by hand or sprays, through stencils, although introduction of different colored warp yarns achieve interesting pattern effects. The natural color of the grass is always a part of the design. Most rugs then are varnished to brighten colors and preserve the surface. The better qualities are bound on four sides. Grass rugs are reversible, usually plain on one side, patterned on the other.

Sisal rugs.—From Yucatan, Central America, and the West Indies comes a tough, heavy, long-wearing fiber called sisal. Its largest use is in the making of twine and rope, but its great durability makes it an important fiber for floor coverings.

Sisal fiber is derived from the leaf of a plant, much as linen is made from the stem of the flax plant. Fibers remain after the pulp of the leaf is pressed out. They are twisted into strands of the desired thickness, then woven into floor coverings, as are the fiber rugs. Colors are introduced by dyeing the strands, by stenciling the woven fabric, or both.

Sisal fiber is often used with other fibers to widen the range of color and utility.

Varied uses.—While the different types of grass and fiber rugs developed out of a demand for cool, colorful floor coverings that primarily could be used during the summer, their usefulness has been greatly widened as new methods evolved and new materials became available. They now comprise an essential part of every well-rounded showing of floor coverings. Their wide acceptance is an illustration of the way in which new types of fabrics are developed to meet new conditions. Insofar as their basic materials differ, the care of fiber rugs differs from those of other fabrics, as set forth in the discussion "Proper Care of Floor Coverings," page 169.

PROPER CARE OF FLOOR COVERINGS[24]

Frequent cleaning prevents the dirt from accumulating in the surface of pile fabrics. Unless it is removed, fine particles of grit become buried at the base of the pile. Sharp edges of this grit, grinding against the pile as the rug or carpet is walked upon, tend to sever the wool fibers. Cleanliness becomes the most important factor in care.

Use of a vacuum cleaner is recommended for cleaning, both of new and old fabrics. Surface dirt may be removed daily with a carpet sweeper or soft-bristled broom, the former being preferred. After cleaning, the nap should be gently brushed so that the pile is all left lying in the same direction. Vigorous beating or shaking of rugs or carpets tends to loosen the pile tufts, and is condemned. Small rugs should never by cleaned by "snapping" them as this causes threads to break.

The bulletin of the Institute of Carpet Manufacturers states:

> Under no consideration should an attempt be made to shampoo a rug or carpet while on the floor. There is no shampoo method or device which, while the carpet is on the floor, adequately cleans the fabric to the base of the pile or effectively removes the soap and detergent material. This residual soap and detergent material cause rapid resoiling, development of crushed appearance, and may cause the development of rancid odor or a gradual color change in the dyestuff.

Axminster, chenilles, velvets, and Wiltons.—These should not be swept hard at first and never against the nap. Sheared when finished, a little light woof or loose wool will come out for a time. Long ends should be cut even with the surface of the rug and never pulled out. Unequal crushing of the surface will produce light and dark patches on any cut-pile rug. Application of a hot iron on a damp cloth will allow pile to be brushed to normal position.

In a marked degree, carpets do not fade. Manufacturers employ strong, fast dyes and carpets will not fade except when exposed to the direct rays of the sun. The simple preventative solution for sunlight fading is to use window blinds judiciously. But carpets do discolor or change in hue, because of infiltrated dust which is basically gray in color. It is not the dirt that may be swept away, but fine dust in the atmosphere that settles permanently in carpet, adding gray to the tone of the carpet, whatever its original color may have been. Therefore it is advisable when purchasing carpet to choose a shade a trifle stronger than the final floor color desired. In matching wall coloring, draperies, or upholstery fabrics, at the time of purchase, it is a wise expedient deliberately to soil a small cutting of the carpet so as to judge what its appearance will be for most of its life.

When subjected to severe wear, use of rug cushions beneath rug or carpet is advised. The plain or smooth surface of the cushion should be placed next to the rug.

SELLING COVERINGS FOR OTHER FLOORS[25]

Information gained in the discussion of the problems, plans, and thinking of the customer as to color likes and dislikes, and harmony in color and design, opens the way for discussion and possible sales of floor coverings for other rooms.

It may be accepted that every purchaser of a rug or carpet has definitely in mind plans for other rooms. She has cherished, if unexpressed, schemes for changes, improvements in all her rooms. The merchandise she has seen, rest assured, has stimulated interest anew in her other favorite decorative schemes. It is all very tempting and alluring. Importantly, also, she is in the buying mood. The occasion is made to order for following through with presentation of fabrics for additional rooms, preferably for an immediate, but, if not, for a future sale as soon as budget or circumstances permit.

Such a purchase may concern:

1. Rooms which adjoin, the rugs and carpets of which must be harmonious in color and design to achieve most pleasing results. Such are hall and living room; living room and sunroom; or
2. Those which essentially are units in themselves, in which great expression of individuality in color and design is permissible. Such are library, bedrooms, and nursery.

The adjoining room.—The most common of house plans provide a central entrance hall, with rooms opening on either side, and stairway rising from it. This plan gives an air of spaciousness and, obviously, because two or more rooms are visible at once, calls for most harmonious floor treatment throughout. Rugs and carpets are extremely important in such a scheme. Properly chosen, they create a feeling of unity and pleasing color harmony. Lacking that unity and harmony, the result is far from pleasing, and may be a decidedly disturbing feature.

Use of identical fabrics.—Adjoining rooms may be covered with the same fabric, alike in color and pattern. Wall-to-wall carpeting or identical rugs of correct size achieve the pleasing result of unity and harmony secured by alikeness.

Use of fabrics harmonious but not identical in color.—Variation is pleasing as well as likeness; covering hall, for instance, in a strong color, and adjoining rooms in colors which harmonize through likeness or in the complementary ranges. This is, of course, more complicated, but an effect not difficult to achieve.

Combining plain and figured fabrics.—The use of a figured pattern in one room, and in the adjoining room a plain fabric which picks up and repeats the dominant color in the ground color or in the figures of the pattern produces a lively result, pleasing and effective.

Stair carpeting is important in the decorative picture. Stairs properly carpeted are soft under foot, safer, quiet, more comfortable. They supply a fine note in the decorative scheme. The stair carpet should repeat the dominant color of the hall or room from which they ascend.

For other rooms.—Rooms which may be considered as units in themselves permit of more individual treatment, an expression of the likes of the occupant or occupants. This group includes bedrooms which, statistics show, are the most sparely and poorly carpeted of rooms. Suggestions that consideration be given to bedroom floor coverings will appeal to a large percentage of customers.

During the showing of merchandise and discussion of the problems involved in the selection of the specific floor covering the customer comes to buy, remarks will often indicate the need for rugs or carpet for other rooms.

USE OF ENSEMBLES IN SELLING[26]

Into selling in recent years has come a most efficient method of proving just how a specific rug or carpet will look in combination with other furnishing elements. This is the ensemble or group method, for the word "ensemble" means an assembling or grouping.

Whether it be the simplest kind of ensemble, displaying only the rug or carpet, with lengths of drapery and upholstery fabrics, and built by the salesman before the eyes of the customer; or the most complete and elaborate form, the model room, the ensemble method has these outstanding advantages:

1. *It develops interest.*—The mere physical operation of building the simpler display before the customer, arouses interest because it involves action. Selection of items and addition of each element in the group adds to the interest.
2. *It carries conviction.*—Conversation as to combinations of colors and designs, and resulting effects are interesting, but an ensemble display of actual merchandise in the colors and designs actually available, visualizes the accomplished effect for those who cannot visualize them mentally. And few can.
3. *It concentrates attention* upon the specific rug or carpet, narrows down the

possibilities of choice and tends to hasten decisions.

4. *It stimulates action* and tends to close the sale by spot-lighting the specific fabrics favorably as the basis for achieving the desired beauty of color, design, and harmony which is the objective of the customer. It presents the solution to a specific problem in terms of actual merchandise. The same factors operate in pointing out the pleasing effects achieved in model rooms.

American Furniture Mart Photograph.

Figure 36.—Living room grouping of upholstered and occasional pieces. Among the interesting details are the low relief carving on the apron of the upholstered chair, the black iron-type drawer pulls, the carving on the base of the desk, and the neatly turned desk chair. The hooked multicolor Axminster rug is worked in shades of beige, red, blue, and green. The brass, double-candle desk lamp is a practical accessory.

Ensemble selling presupposes a knowledge of the way in which available materials may be used effectively. Various pleasing schemes should be worked out with the basic rug and carpet stock colors and designs as the foundation of the schemes. Lengths of drapery and upholstery fabrics and wall coverings suitable for use with each basic rug or carpet color may be selected to provide effective and pleasing results.

Ensemble units may be built over an easel which displays a standard-sized carpet sample; or may use a sample rug with a chair, table, or lamp, the drapery and other fabrics being thrown over the chair. The object is to bring the various elements together effectively so the customer may see them. The ensemble is to prove that these other factors will harmonize satisfactorily with the floor covering.

In the selection of elements for ensemble units, whether temporary or permanent, the advice of the decorating department of the store, if one exists, will be invaluable. Many manufacturers of rugs and carpets have established decorating services, the benefit of which is available to store as well as to consumer. Such services are much publicized, extremely popular, and influential with the public and widely used by consumers. Store and sales force alike will be wise to know what such potent sales influences are advising.

Another source of such data is the editorial pages of magazines, many of which publish decorative schemes in color. These influence the thinking and buying of many readers.

Let it be emphasized again that the ensemble, potent as is its influence should be employed only when the sale is not possible otherwise. And only after the possibilities of one grouping have been exhausted should another one be built. The customer must not be confused by much, but rather enlightened by a little.

QUESTIONS

1. Under what conditions would it be good salesmanship to change arrangement of a suite on the display floor, or to bring in rug, draperies, table runner, glass, or silver as a means to closing a sale?

2. What technical information does a good salesman need to use in demonstrating concealed

values in upholstered furniture?

3. How do you demonstrate values in floor coverings?

4. What procedure do you follow in seeking to produce the largest volume of sales from paid-up, inactive accounts?

5. What ideas or procedures are said to be most irritating to those who examine your stock as potential customers?

6. The high school graduating class this year is furnishing a faculty room as a gift to the school. Exactly what would you do to make the sale for your company?

7. What tests would you apply to demonstrate that a given new home reflects harmony in the home furnishings?

8. What are profitable uses for floor plans?

9. If a well-dressed woman, not known to you, asked to be shown an oriental rug, how would you go about it to make a sale?

10. Suppose you were showing inlaid linoleum to an elderly woman, that finally you found a pattern to please her, and that upon learning your price she stated positively that she could buy the same pattern much cheaper at Blank's. What would you say or do?

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FOOTNOTES:

[21] Stipulation 2851 of the Federal Trade Commission, Washington, released June 24, 1940, requires a respondent firm to agree to cease using the words "Persian," "Chinese," "oriental," "Kashmir," "Mandalay," "Baghdad," "Baristan," "Persiatana," "India," or other distinctively oriental appellation in connection with any rug which does not contain all the inherent qualities and properties of an oriental rug; unless, if properly used to describe the design or pattern only, such words of oriental appellation shall be immediately accompanied by a word such as "design" or "pattern" printed in equally conspicuous type, so as to indicate clearly that only the form delineated on the surface of the rug is a likeness of the type named; for example, "Persian design," "Chinese pattern."

The respondent corporation also agreed to discontinue use of the word "guaranteed" unless clear disclosure is made of exactly what is offered by way of security; as for example, refund of purchase price.

[22] For an illustrated technical account of chenille manufacture, see Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th edition; vol. 4: Carpet manufacture.

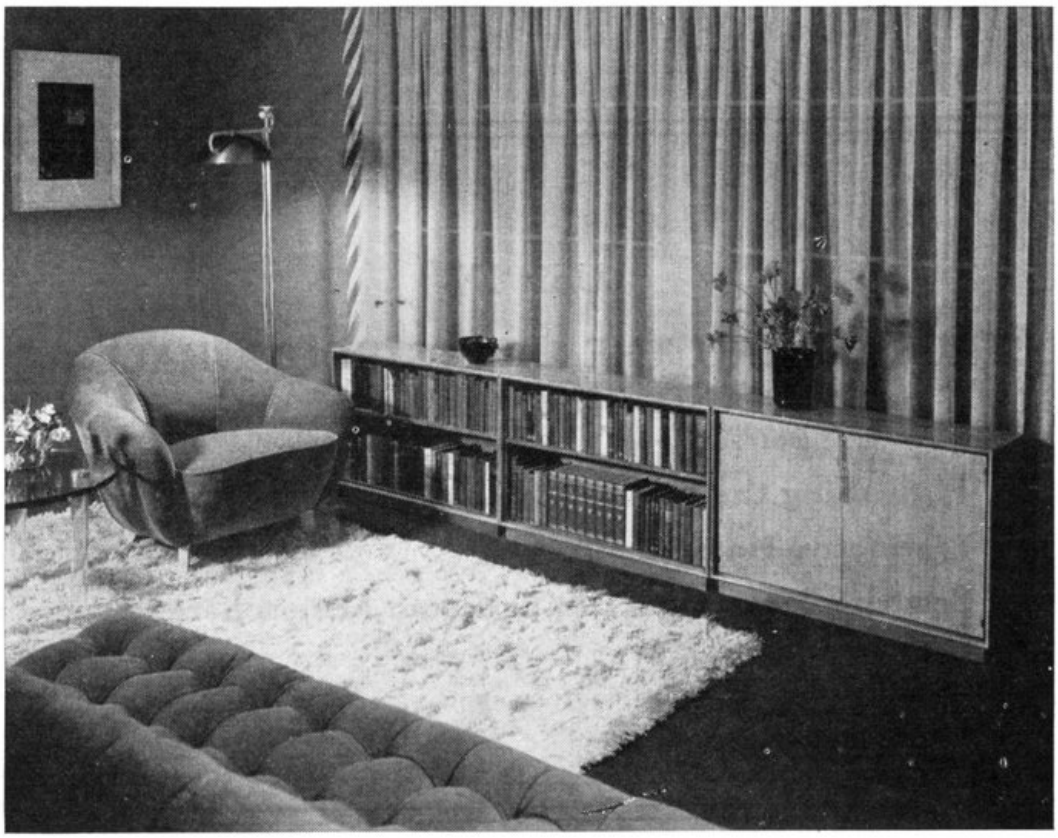
[23] For an illustrated explanation of the Wilton and other techniques, see the Encyclopedia Britannica, place cited. The name Wilton comes from the old English town, an early seat of carpet making.

[24] Ideas reproduced from "Rugs and Carpets of America," pp. 41-42, The Floor Covering Advertising Club, New York, N. Y.

[25] Rugs and Carpets of America, pp. 57-58, Floor Covering Advertising Club, New York, N. Y. (1940.)

[26] Reproduced by permission of Floor Covering Advertising Club, Institute of Carpet Manufacturers: Rugs and Carpets of America, p. 55.

Unit IX
FURNISHING THE LIVING ROOM, HALL, AND DINING ROOM



Courtesy American Walnut Manufacturers Association.

Figure 37.—Designed by Gilbert Rhode, this many-purpose grouping of modern pieces can be arranged to fit the individual room and taste. Use of hairline stripe of natural inlay at regular intervals gives an unusual fabric like effect to this modern design.

Unit IX.—FURNISHING THE LIVING ROOM, HALL, AND DINING ROOM

FURNISHING THE LIVING ROOM

The living room is the heart of the home. It is here that members of the family meet and spend a great part of their time; here that friends and guests are entertained; here that "memories are made." The woman is rare who does not recognize the importance of her living room both as a factor in family life and as an index of her own position, taste, and skill. Since the family living room is the show window of the home it is well to convey to the customers' mind that the personality of herself and her family should be reflected in this room. (See fig. 31, page 142.)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT EVERYWHERE

Comparatively few living rooms are genuinely attractive. It is safe to say that 9 living rooms out of every 10 could be improved enormously, and often at little cost. Some are merely shabby or out of date. Many are colorless, depressing, uncomfortable, commonplace, and unlovely. Nearly all lack important elements, and are in some respect underfurnished. In innumerable cases their owners are more or less clearly aware of these defects, deplore them, and would like to correct

them.

This means that always there are possibilities for new and replacement sales of living room merchandise. Moreover, it means that any woman who today asks for any article for living-room use, however unimportant or inexpensive, may be at the point where she can be influenced to consider the purchase of additional articles. A systematic effort to explore and develop these latent possibilities infallibly will result in larger sales.

ARCHITECTURAL AND DECORATIVE STYLE

Comparatively few houses are designed throughout in an architectural style so well defined as to demand adherence to the same or closely related styles in furniture. Even in the case of many houses so designed we find that the owners prefer to equip their rooms with furniture of styles more pleasing to their fancy. Often this practice results in bad decoration, but after all there is little that can be done about it. Your job is to equip yourself to be a competent adviser and to give sound advice when it is wanted.

Under ordinary circumstances, do not ask your customer the style of her living room. If she doesn't know, or if the room has no style, she may be embarrassed or vaguely displeased by the question. On the other hand, if she regards the style of the room as in any way important she will in all likelihood volunteer the information.

LIVING-ROOM WALL TREATMENTS

The walls of the living room constitute its largest and most important single element, and form the background against which all other elements must be seen. The lighter the tone of the walls, and the smoother their texture, the greater will be the reflection and diffusion of light throughout the room and the larger its apparent size.

Painted or Plastered Walls.

Calcimine and water paint are effective in simple and unpretentious living rooms of any size, but should not be used in rooms intended to be sumptuous, elegant, or formal in effect. They are most pleasant in colors, belonging to the yellow-to-orange family, such as buff, maize, putty, or in light pastels.

Walls covered with canvas and painted in oil, without paneling, and with or without effects of stippled modeling or glazing, can be used in living rooms of any type, and with furniture of any style.

Paneling, because of the severely balanced distribution of wall spaces and the effect of dignity produced by long, straight lines, tends to give a room a quality of formality and dignity which is reflected in the style and distribution of the furniture and relieved by a free use of color and ornament in the other elements of the room.

Rough plaster and compo walls, varying in unevenness of texture and depth of tone according to the scale and style of the room itself and the furniture to be used in it, are effective with houses of the cottage, Early English, and Mediterranean types and with Early Spanish, Italian, and English furniture and the cruder and heavier examples of French Provincial, Early American, and unstyled furniture.

Patterns in Papered Walls.

Wallpapers are made in an extremely wide range of variation in texture, coloring, and pattern. Properly chosen, wallpaper is a suitable wall finish for practically any style of room, and a suitable background for practically any style of furniture.

Since personal preference has a great deal to do with the selection of wallpaper, the salesman's job should be merely to assist the customer on color and appropriateness of design. Studying the papers you will note that some have formalized motifs, others simple, repeated patterns. When in doubt, stay to the simpler patterns. However, there is no set rule on the types of wallpaper to be used, good taste and personal preference being the main factors.

FLOOR COVERINGS FOR THE LIVING ROOM

The floor may be treated with a single, room-size rug, several small rugs, or linoleum.

A room-size rug usually is preferred where practicable in a small room because it causes the room to appear a little larger than when small rugs are used.

Linoleum when used in a living room may carry an inlaid design in keeping with the room or may be used as the basic floor covering with small, soft-surface rugs.

Rug Must Dominate Floor Area.

There is no rule to govern the proper width of margins, other than the general requirement for a dominant element in every composition, which means that in the case of a single large rug the effect will be unpleasant if the rug is so small that it seems to the mind less important than the

total uncarpeted space. Ordinarily the side margin should not exceed one fourth of its length.

Several small rugs used together should be sufficiently alike in coloring, type of pattern, tone, and texture to ensure the unity of the floor treatment, but not identical, which would make the effect monotonous. This requirement would forbid the use together, for example, of characteristic Persian and Chinese designs, because of too sharp differences in pattern; or of pile and pileless rugs, because of too sharp differences in texture; or of light and dark rugs, because of great differences in tone.

It is never necessary, and rarely desirable, to have all of the rugs closely alike in color; but there must be pronounced elements of likeness. In general it is best to have at least one, and preferably two or three colors appear in varying degrees of importance in each rug.

Small rugs should be placed so as to be closely related to the fireplace, door, and principal pieces or groups of furniture. They are distracting and meaningless when scattered with no reference to this relationship.

Don't Place Rugs at Angle.

Small rugs should be placed straight in the room; that is, so that their edges parallel either the side or end walls. To scatter them at angles destroys the organic unity of the room.

The floor coverings should be darker in tone than the walls, but not so much darker as to contrast harshly, and so impair the harmony and restfulness of the room.

In general the scale of the floor covering design should vary directly with the size of the room. Small rugs appear inartistic with large scale designs which might seem perfectly appropriate on larger rugs. The vigor of drawing and coloring in the floor covering also should increase with the size, or rather the effect of weight and massiveness, of the furniture.

LIVING ROOM WINDOW TREATMENTS

Venetian blinds have become increasingly important as a treatment for windows in all parts of the house. Venetian blinds permit the user to control the light and add a decorative note to a room regardless of its period. Tapes of the blind should match the floor covering, the walls, or harmonize with the color scheme of the room. Although the off-white, cream, and buff blinds are most popular, colored blinds in keeping with the color scheme of the room also are in good taste. Other window treatments are roller window shades, glass curtains, and draperies.

Venetian blinds.—Most blinds are custom made and ordered to the customer's specific window size. Measurements should be taken within the molding. Venetian blinds may be used alone, with draperies, or with glass curtains and draperies. Venetian blinds harmonize with any period or setting and may be used on hall doors, kitchen, and bathroom windows as well as all other rooms of the house. Waxing maintains the slats most of which may be kept clean by washing with a bland soap and dusting regularly.

Roller window shades.—Roller window shades offer an inexpensive and easy means of controlling light and vary widely in quality, appearance, and price. Roller shades should be fairly close in hue and tone to the walls. It is necessary that the shades harmonize pleasantly with the house as seen from the outside.

Glass curtains, or the thin transparent curtains which in ordinary houses hang next to the windows, are necessary to soften the light by day; to cover what would otherwise be the bleak bare rectangle presented by an uncurtained window by night; and to provide the decorative interest of soft texture, flowing line, and soft color.

When desirable, glass curtains can be stiffened at the top and mounted on small movable rings to permit pushing back in the interest of morning sunshine or a fine view. They never should be made conspicuous by reason of striking pattern or sharp contrast with the walls. Pure white curtains can be used only in living rooms of the most delicate type, having light walls and woodwork. In most rooms use cream or light or dark ecru. Glass curtains require ample fullness of material (from 1½ to 2½ times the width of the window, depending upon fineness of mesh), and in ordinary houses should be hung either to the sill or to the bottom of the apron.

Outer hangings, or draperies, serve to subdue or control the lighting of the living room; to ensure a subtle sense of privacy and intimacy to its occupants; to soften while emphasizing the structural lines of its openings; and to add the charm of color, texture, and pattern.

The draperies should be plain if used with strikingly figured walls; figured, if used with plain walls; and either plain or figured if used with walls covered with a pattern of simple and inconspicuous design and coloring, according to personal taste or the amount of ornament in the other surfaces of the room. Figured draperies may be used with figured rugs when (1) both patterns are in the same style of design, as Chinese chintz with Chinese rugs; or (2) both patterns make a free use of the same type of line, as in an Italian damask with a Persian rug; or (3) one pattern is of marked individuality while the other is small, simple, or lacking in individuality.

In general the draperies, whether plain or figured, will repeat one of the colors important in the rug. When used with a plain neutral floor covering (as warm gray, fawn, or rose-taupe) the draperies may be unrelated to the rug in color. In this case some of the color of the draperies should appear on or near the floor, in the form of upholstery or pottery in order to ensure the repetitions essential to harmony. The tone of the draperies may be and generally should be

somewhat darker than that of the walls; but never so much so as to overemphasize the draperies at the cost of the other decorative elements of the room.

The draperies usually will be run to the floor in the more formal and more sumptuously furnished rooms; and to the apron in the more informal and simply furnished rooms. The heavy materials, like silk and cotton reps, damasks, brocades, brocatelles, satins, velvets, thick taffetas, and richly colored printed linens and hand-blocked cretonnes should be hung to the floor; the very light and thin materials, like silk or rayon gauze, silk tissues and small-figured prints, voiles, organdies, thin casement cloths, whether plain, striped, or broché, should be hung to the sill or apron; while the medium-weight fabrics, like broché silks, poplins, chintzes, and the thinner taffetas, cretonnes, and linens, may be hung either way, according to decorative requirements or personal preference.

Some architectural defects may be covered up by the clever use of draperies. Oftentimes windows may be made to look larger by extended draperies across the wall.

FURNITURE AND FURNITURE GROUPINGS

Every living room is made up of groups of furniture. What these groups are depend on the size of the family, the size of the home, the number of guests who may be expected under normal conditions, and the interests of the family. The architecture will determine placement of furniture to a considerable extent. There are several possible "centers of interest." A fireplace is one of these. A long wall, with windows, may be the logical spot for the sofa. In a musical family, the piano or radio may be a focal point.

Courtesy American Furniture Mart.

Figure 38.—Outgrowth of the platform rocker is this smart spring base chair designed by Alfons Bach and upholstered in beige and brown tapestry. The open bookshelves and desks are in a new, rubbed, fawn-colored finish. The swinging arm bridge lamp has a brass base and together with the clipper ship pictures and accessories adds a dignified note. The Axminster rug is in a sand tone.

Every grouping opens the possibility of selling "add-on" items. The *conversational* group—sofa and at least two chairs requires at least two tables and two lamps. The *reading* group implies a chair—or two chairs—at least one lamp, and a piece to hold books and magazines. Usually this would be a table, but it easily could include a bookcase. (See figs. 37 and 38.) The *writing* group takes in desk, chair, and lamp. A well-arranged "business corner" for the living room (see fig. 36), or an attractive alcove off this room, or for the "den," may become the center of interest of the home. There, for efficient operation, may be grouped the telephone, writing desk, and typewriter, with drawers and cupboards for stationery supplies and budget records, bookshelves for reference books, and a floor lamp. From this one place all the business of the home can be carried out efficiently: Ordering, corresponding, telephoning, and check writing.

In combination, whatever the style, the seeming "weight" of each end and each side of the room must balance the opposing side, and the corners joining sides and ends must "flow" together naturally. The reading group and the conversational group may include some of the same pieces,

and the desk chair may be used as an auxiliary conversation piece.

In the arrangement of furniture it must be remembered that:

1. Furniture should be so arranged as to make the most of the light (as in placing desks, reading tables, and chairs), and also to satisfy the personal habits and tastes of the members of the family.
2. In general, the center of the room should be kept clear, which gives an effect of spaciousness, facilitates easy movements and regrouping when the room is full of persons, and affords a better view of its interesting features.

In the interest of beauty and distinction, it is important to avoid:

1. Too exclusive employment of large and heavy pieces, which make a room stiff, spotty, and uninteresting when used without small tables, chairs, and cabinets.
2. Monotony in the height, color, and texture of the furniture.

AVOID REPETITION OF UPHOLSTERY PATTERNS

Living-room furniture should not be covered throughout in the same material, or even in the same pattern, coloring, or texture, because the effect would be tiresome. On the other hand, the degree of diversity must not be so great as to make the room inharmonious and confusing. Coverings of large and important pieces should fit closely into the general color scheme, while those of small chair seats, benches, or stools may serve as piquant contrasting elements. Coverings should not contrast so strongly with the floor covering as to cause the pieces to stand out like spots, and thus to mar the repose and harmony of the room. In general, plain or self-toned coverings will be used with highly figured walls or floor coverings in the case of the larger pieces, while marked emphasis upon pattern is desirable when both walls and floor covering, or hangings and floor covering are plain.

DISTINCTIVE HALL FURNITURE

The hall really sounds the keynote for the whole house, and does much to make or mar its beauty; it is the place in which strangers and guests form their first and last impressions of the home and the ideals and tastes of the household.

In most houses the decorative importance of the hall is undervalued and the room itself is underfurnished and far less inviting and attractive than it could and should be. In order to expand sales of hall furniture by the suggestion and sale of related merchandise, or by influencing home owners to refurnish, you will require some knowledge of the individual rooms and their present furnishings, and a fair knowledge of the principles, processes, and materials involved in hall decoration.

Just how much information you consider essential, and when and how to ask for it, will of course depend upon your judgment of your customer's taste, intelligence, and disposition. Taking retail practice as a whole, it is certain that more time is wasted and more potential sales lost by failure to secure adequate preliminary information than by unnecessary or unsuccessful attempts to do so.

HALL DECORATIONS: PRINCIPLES, PROCESSES, AND MATERIALS

The hall should have an atmosphere of warmth and hospitable welcome, a note of rich but quiet dignity, and a real quality of interest and charm. Its hospitableness can be insured by emphasis upon warm color and properly shaded light. Richness of effect is produced by emphasis upon ornamented as opposed to plain surfaces, particularly in the floor covering, walls, furniture, and accessories. Dignity results from the use of long lines in the interior trim, border lines of the rugs, and length or height in the furniture where practicable, and also of formal balance in furniture arrangement. Interest and charm are secured by a free use of color and texture, and a measure of distinction in the design of furniture and accessories.

Relation of the Hall to Adjoining Rooms.

The hall must announce or suggest some of the decorative elements of connecting rooms, and accordingly must have many points of resemblance and harmony in coloring, line, and texture. In choice of the "key" pieces of furniture, which give distinction and smartness to the hall, there should be similarity in outline and proportion to the "key" living room pieces, but identity in period style is wholly unnecessary. High-backed seventeenth century chairs of the more slenderly proportioned types could be used in the hall opening into a Sheraton dining room without marring the sense of harmony in the suite.

Courtesy American Furniture Mart.

Figure 39.—Ideal for the hall is a cedar chest which serves the duo-purpose of providing valuable storage space as well as being decorative. This mahogany chest, built to resemble a chest of drawers, has a cedar lined bottom drawer. The chest proper is the depth of the first and second sham drawers. The oval mirror, a fitting accessory, has a gold-leaf frame.

Wall Treatments for the Hall.

When the walls are of plain or ornamental plaster, calcimined, or painted in oil, they should match the adjoining room if either is small or both rooms are small, in order to gain an effect of spaciousness. Where the hall and the adjoining room both are large, the walls may differ in hue; but marked difference in tone is unpleasant. For example, light stone walls in the hall and medium light green in the living room will be agreeable; dark stone and pale green, disagreeable.

When the walls are papered, the effect will be more interesting if the hall paper is different from that of adjoining rooms. If the hall is small, its paper should match that in the adjoining rooms rather closely in hue and tone, differing in texture or pattern, or in the fact that one paper is figured and the other plain. Small halls are high in proportion to their width. A figured paper helps to correct the proportions, whereas a stripe would raise the apparent height of the ceiling.

When the walls are plain, sufficient ornament to enrich the room and relieve it from any effect of thinness must be supplied by floor coverings, draperies, furniture, and accessories.

Floor Coverings for the Hall.

In a decorative sense, floor coverings are more important in the hall than in any other room, because the floor area is smaller in proportion to wall area, and there are fewer interesting pieces of furniture, and relatively fewer accessories. Here are some practical suggestions:

Linoleum is increasingly used for the hall since it permits the user to express her originality and good taste in many interesting forms. Plain or mottled linoleum with an attractive motif or monogram set into the center is both decorative and practical. A border or trim, in keeping with the architectural style of the room, also adds to the decoration. The linoleum may harmonize in color with the floor covering of the room adjoining or may carry out its own color scheme in keeping with the theme of the hall.

If the hall adjoins the living room it is well to use the same floor covering as in the living room

since this has a tendency to make both the hall and the living room appear larger. If small rugs are used in the hall they may be of contrasting tone to the living room rug or may blend with the general color scheme.

Stair carpets are desirable for the following reasons:

They are more comfortable, less noisy and easier to keep in condition than bare treads.

They are safer, especially for children and old people.

They make the hall far more hospitable and inviting.

They add a much needed note of color to the room.

They serve to unite lower and upper floors artistically by a sweeping line of color.

Draperies for the Hall.

Except in the case of doors with a metal grille, or recessed doors, Venetian blinds, or curtains, or both, are desirable on the doors and sidelight of a hall of ordinary size and architectural character, because they ensure a sense of privacy, temper the light, add the interest of color and texture and help to invest the hall with a quality of intimacy and hospitality.

HALL FURNITURE MUST BE DISTINCTIVE

Hall furniture must fit the room in scale. Avoid pieces so small and thin as to seem poor, weak, and inadequate, or so large as to crowd the room and destroy its decorative balance. In general, use furniture of slender proportions against light smooth walls, and thicker or more massive furniture against darker and rougher walls.

It is highly important to use distinctive pieces in the hall; partly because it is from this room that the visitor receives his first impression of the house, and partly because the room can use but few pieces, which are seen against such relatively large wall spaces that they must be of unusual interest in order to redeem the room from bareness and a commonplace quality.

Hall furniture should reveal as much variety as is consistent with the necessary harmony. Matched pieces usually are to be avoided. Even in the case of console table and mirror, a mahogany table, for example, usually will be more pleasing with a gold or lacquer mirror of harmonious shape than with a matched piece in mahogany. Differences in woods, finishes, ornamental detail, and height add interest to the room through variety.

As minimum equipment, the hall should have a table or cabinet with a mirror, and something on which to sit. Table and mirror constitute the dominant element; the mirror adds desirable spaciousness, and the charm of reflected vistas, and both are necessary for practical as well as artistic reasons. (See fig. 39.) A seat of some kind is necessary to ensure a sense of hospitality, and as a courtesy to the stranger who enters the home, but is not immediately admitted to its inner rooms. A chair, preferably of the straight high-backed type, a bench, or a low chest with cushion will meet this requirement.

STRENGTHEN DOMINANT ELEMENT

As the dominant element, table and mirror should not be dwarfed by the wall behind them. If for any reason a small table is placed against a wide wall space, a long wall banner or panel should be placed on the wall behind the mirror in order to build up the group at eye level. It may be built up at the base by a chair at one or both sides, torcheres, etc. Never use a mirror wider than the piece that stands below it, or a narrow mirror with a wide table, unless a wall panel also is used to supply the necessary width. Modern hand-woven tapestries often are used for hall walls when their cost is not prohibitive. Other devices for the purpose include panels made from damask, brocade, brocatelle, plain or figured velvet, real or imitation crewel, Indian or Persian calico prints. A panel often is used on the wall behind a low chest.

The hall table need not be of the conventional console type. When wall space permits, any long narrow table will serve, as will a round or square English card table, with the half-top either flat or raised against the wall. In the very small hall a large nest of tables can be used as a small console.

In many halls a lowboy or chest of drawers is decorative and useful. Other possible items include the decorative cabinet, small tables, flower stands, floor or banjo clock, screen, lamps, desk, love seat, radio, and cane or umbrella rack. Always check the possibilities of the hall in a house you furnish.

The general methods discussed in relation to piece and group sales of living room merchandise apply equally to the hall. In addition it should be noted that it is practically impossible to suggest the proper choice of hall furnishings in the absence of measured drawings, since both the number of pieces and their size are more definitely determined by floor and wall space than is the case in any other room. Every sale of hall furniture of any importance should be followed by a call at the house as soon after delivery as possible. If the new furniture does not fit the room, corrections may be made promptly, before any ill-will develops. Moreover, in many cases additional merchandise can be suggested and sold.

SECURING HOSPITABLE DINING ROOM ATMOSPHERE

The dining room should have an atmosphere of cheerfulness and hospitality both under natural and artificial lighting; and since it is occupied but three times a day at most, and for short periods only, its decorative treatment may have more "snap" than would be agreeable in the living room.

SECURING A HOSPITABLE ATMOSPHERE

To produce an atmosphere of cheerfulness and hospitality, emphasize:

Warm or light pastel colors particularly in the walls.

Ample light, properly controlled.

Curved lines, and curvilinear shapes to soften hard austere outlines of case pieces and windows.

Gay, contrasting colors in ornamental details.

Variety and originality.

Cheerfulness and animation will be increased by increasing the diversity of the room treatment through contrasts in hue, tone, line, form, and texture, within the limits permitted by the requirement of unity and harmony. This consideration demands special care in the dining room, because the important pieces of furniture usually are matched, with a resulting loss in diversity which must be made up in the other elements of the room.

Here we have the chief single reason for the great number of monotonous, uninteresting dining rooms. To the skillful salesman this will suggest *(a)* a sound reason for pushing sales of such accessories as mirrors and pictures, tier tables for plants and accessories, and for plant stands; *(b)* an approach for the sale of broken suites and unmatched pieces. Many women feel that their dining rooms cannot possibly be correctly furnished unless they are equipped with a matched suite. This is not always true. Many distinctive dining rooms have been furnished with harmonious, unmatched pieces.

DINING ROOM WALLS

The same principles and processes discussed under living room wall treatments apply to the decoration of the dining room, subject to the qualification that for the reasons noted above, the dining room walls often may have more striking patterns and sharper contrasts.

Scenic landscape or other highly decorative papers may be effective in the dining room, although they would not serve as a living room background.

What was said concerning the living room will afford the basis for judging the proper relation of walls to the style of furniture. Highly figured walls do not require choice of plain dining furniture, or vice versa.

The general principles of harmony govern the proper relation of walls to floor covering. Polychromatic walls require that two or more of the colors be repeated (not necessarily accurately matched) on the floor. The floor covering should be somewhat lower in tone, and characterized neither by too little vigor or boldness of drawing to harmonize with the walls, nor too much. Choice among these would depend upon personal taste and the degree of sunniness and warmth required in the rug in order to bring the room total up to the level desired by the buyer.

DINING ROOM FLOOR COVERINGS

The dining room may be treated with a room-size floor covering matching or harmonizing with the living room rug or linoleum or with a single large rug. Some housewives prefer to leave the floor bare, except for two or three small rugs. With figured linoleum the practice is unobjectionable, except for the loss of the sense of physical comfort and hospitality created by pile carpets under foot. With hardwood floors it is open to the objections that it is inhospitable; that it is too weak in a decorative sense to support the weight of the relatively large and heavy furniture; and that it makes the room seem thin and poor, mars the harmony between walls and floor, and prevents a convincing and satisfying distribution of color.

As compared with the living room, the dining room is relatively small and its furniture relatively large, striking, and uniform. This means that the floor covering must be adapted in scale and emphasis of pattern and coloring to sustain the load of this heavy furniture, and thus to prevent an effect of stiffness and spottiness in the room; and that it must have plenty of pattern and color when the other elements of the room are deficient in variety.

A single rug should be large enough to permit free movement of the chairs without letting the back legs touch the bare floor. In general, the rug should just clear the front legs of furniture placed against the wall. In small rooms, however, it is desirable to have the rug come to within 12 or 15 inches of the wall in order to increase the room's apparent size.

DINING ROOM WINDOW TREATMENTS

Window shades, Venetian blinds, glass curtains, and draperies are desirable in the dining room. Their selection is governed by the general considerations discussed under living room window treatments, page 182.

When a dining room has but one window or a single group of windows, there is some danger that the draperies may give the room an effect of spottiness and lack of balance unless care is taken to repeat the color of the draperies in some way on two or three of the other walls. With plain draperies, touches of the same hue should so appear, in pictures, wall panel, screen, sideboard decorations, or some similar device. With figured draperies containing several colors, at least one of the important colors should be thus repeated. (See fig. 29, page 130.)

DINING ROOM LIGHTING

The dining room should be lighted by direct light, released through a ceiling fixture. The light from this source can be turned off when candles are used; but the ceiling will be bare and unpleasing without this central point of interest, and most families prefer not to dine by candlelight alone.

The fixture should have sufficient height to keep the glare of light from the eyes of diners. The effect will be most agreeable if the light is released through several globes of low wattage, and if each of the globes is shaded in such a way as to keep the table in an arc of slightly higher illumination than the rest of the room.

Side lights are effective as auxiliaries, but not as the principal source of light.

Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 40.—Many features of this eighteenth century dining room grouping make it adaptable to contemporary homes. It is scaled to fit a small-size dining room; it is simple in design and it provides valuable storage space in its compact design. The pedestal legs on the table carry through the Duncan Phyfe theme of this suite. The corner cabinet is decorative and practical and the credenza-type buffet adds the necessary weight to the grouping.

DINING ROOM FURNITURE

Usually the dining room adjoins the living room, and it may be assumed that the same style will be carried through, although not imperatively so. Any eighteenth century style—Hepplewhite, Sheraton, or Chippendale can be used with any eighteenth century style or with Colonial or Duncan Phyfe furniture, providing wood, textures, and fabrics have unity, similarity, color likenesses, or pleasing contrasts. (See fig. 40.) "Modern" in walnut living room pieces will look well with walnut dining room in contemporary design. Maple living room furnishings look well with Early American or French Provincial dining room furniture. It is easier to combine single styles than several styles harmoniously. Frequently, however, the most interesting arrangements are from several styles put together well.

Try out, on the floor, in idle moments, a Sheraton dining table with Chippendale or Duncan Phyfe chairs. The scale may be right or wrong—your judgment should tell you. Naturally, the store finds it easier to sell "sets," but should you run into difficult customers, this knowledge of interesting

combinations may "save" a sale.

Courtesy American Walnut Manufacturers' Association.

Figure 41.—A living-dining room suite. Designed by Gilbert Rhode, New York, N. Y. Folding dinette table with one drop leaf. Photograph shows view open, table set for four, table moved away from wall.

Tell customers that, although they may buy six chairs, it is not only good taste from a decorative standpoint but also from a practical point of view to have a host and hostess chair. These are upholstered chairs with tall backs and are used at the head and the foot of the table. The host chairs either should match the draperies or harmonize with the color scheme of the room. Many times host and hostess chairs upholstered in a print, matching the draperies are cheerful and decorative. Stripes are popular as upholstered seat covers on dining room chairs, but plain coverings in damask, leather, or tapestry are also in good taste. Small figured patterns are also used.

COMBINATION LIVING ROOM AND DINING ROOM

Many of the new homes are being built with living room and dining room combined into one unit or with a large living room and very small dining room. For the single-unit rooms, a happy choice is an extension or a gate-leg table and a low chest of drawers for linen which may be used either in the living room or in dining room. Small dining room tables which may be extended to seat six or eight may be arranged in front of a bay window or along the wall at one side of the room in keeping with the general room harmony. The dining chairs are placed near the table, when not in use, and may be used as bridge chairs or auxiliary seating equipment. (See fig. 41.)

Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 42.—A contemporary dining room grouping made of birch and finished in a light wheat tone. Simply carved with a modernized wheat motif, this grouping relies upon its simplicity for smartness and distinction. The chairs are upholstered in a rose-colored, leather-like fabric and trimmed with small bronze nail heads. The legs of the table and chairs taper gracefully and eliminate the box-like features usually associated with contemporary design. The credenza-type buffet and china have pulls of matching wood.

Dinette furniture, especially made for the dinette, offers a variety of selection and need not necessarily be in keeping with the living room scheme. Light woods are popular for dinettes, maple, oak, birch, and pine being popular for this purpose. When the dinette is replaced by a larger dining room ensemble the dinette set may be used in the breakfast room or in the kitchen. Small size china cabinets and buffets accompany many of the dinette sets.

Junior dining room sets are small scale dining room ensembles and are usually shown in fine cabinet woods in styles found in large size dining room ensembles. The junior dining room sets differ from the dinette sets in that they are usually not as informal as the dinette and are designed for the small-size dining room rather than for the dinette.

ENSEMBLE SELLING

Sales of living room merchandise fall into two classes: *Piece sales*, involving the selection of one or more pieces for use in a room already partially furnished; and *ensemble sales*, involving the selection of most or all of the furnishings necessary to equip completely a room, or even a house.

These two types of sales present different problems and require the use of different methods. However, they are alike in two important respects. In all of them the self-interest of the buyer is the determining factor; and competition in one or more forms is inevitable.

THREE FORMS OF COMPETITION

The first and inescapable form of competition is a competition among conflicting desires in the mind of the average buyer. In order to buy one thing, she must give up something else. Furniture dealers and salesmen habitually assume that the woman who enters a furniture store and asks, for example, for an easy chair, has already decided to buy one. The fact is that the customer is often merely weighing the satisfactions likely to come to her through possession of a chair against those offered by other articles or services also under consideration. In this case you must lead her to desire a chair more than she desires anything else before you can sell any chair, however large your stock or low your prices.

Unhappily, much furniture advertising is calculated to give the reading public a false impression of the necessary price levels of good furniture. It may be that you can please your customer with a chair at the price she has tentatively decided to pay. If not, you must please her in a more costly piece. Here you run up against new competition; for however able your demonstration of quality may be, your customer is certain to weigh that additional item of cost against the additional articles that she must give up in order to buy the chair. Hence something more than a

convincing demonstration of the intrinsic worthiness of the piece will be necessary to complete the sale.

Finally, there is a third form of competition—that among different furniture stores for the same sale. However well the customer may like your chair at the price asked, it is natural for her to try to find something just as good at a lower price, or more pleasing at the same price, since that is her habit in buying other commodities.

She knows that there are other good stores nearby, with scores of easy chairs to show her, and that they are advertising bargains and holding out inducements to get her trade. You cannot prove to her in advance that she will only waste her time by looking further, and any arguments, pleadings, or high-pressure methods designed to keep her from doing so are quite likely to have precisely the opposite effect.

WHAT SHOPPERS REALLY WANT

At this point a surprisingly large percentage of salesmen weaken. Knowing that it is impossible to oppose successfully the self-interest of the buyer, they can think of nothing else to do. In point of fact there is nothing else to do in a great many cases, *except to make every possible effort to create an impression sufficiently powerful to bring the buyer back after her shopping tour is over*. In many other cases, however, there is a way to meet competition, if you can develop the ability to use it.

The woman who wants an easy chair, a sofa, a rug, or a desk, also wants something else which is far more important to her, namely, a more satisfying room. She doesn't tell you about it, but she really hopes that the new piece under consideration will add more beauty, comfort, distinction, or impressiveness to her room.

Get her to thinking of her room as a whole, with the new article a part of that whole. Lead her to believe that the desirable qualities which she seeks will appear in it as a result of your help in selection and arrangement. In other words, appeal to her self-interest by offering her something highly important which she knows in advance cannot be found elsewhere.

THE "ROOM PICTURE" METHOD

To overcome the inevitable competition of opposing desires, and to reduce or eliminate shopping for variety of selection or price, make your customer see the piece under consideration not as an individual unit, but as an integral part of her room. As long as she is permitted to think that she is buying a chair and nothing but a chair, she will be concerned with a multitude of details, most of which are of no real importance,[27] and will be strongly disposed to keep on looking until she has exhausted every possibility of finding something completely satisfactory in all of these details.

Transfer her interest to her room as a whole, with your chair as a part of it, and you immediately rob most of these details of their earlier importance in her mind. Paint a sufficiently attractive mental picture of her room as it will become with your chair in it, and she may buy the picture, and the chair as an essential element of it. She will not care to shop further for a better looking or cheaper chair, in the fear that even if one could be found the picture would be spoiled.

THE SHIFT FROM UNIT TO ENTIRE ROOM

Possibly you have had the experience of losing important sales to men working in stores far smaller than your own or to decorators with no more physical equipment than could be condensed into a small office or studio. Why should you have lost such sales when you enjoy the great advantages of ample stocks, lower prices, better terms, and the prestige of a well-known and financially solid house? Obviously, because the other man had the skill and the power to *shift your customer's interest and desire from merchandise, as such to what merchandise will do*.

In order to make a normal sale by means of this "room-picture" method, you will require:

1. Full knowledge of your own merchandise from the technical and artistic aspects.
2. Considerable knowledge of the customer's room and its important elements.
3. Adequate knowledge of decorative principles, including the emotional values of light, color, texture, line, and proportion.
4. A little knowledge of the decorative accessories—pictures, potteries, glass, embroideries, and the many small things necessary to save a room from bareness, and to give it color, snap, and intimacy.

It is desirable but by no means necessary that you have these accessories for sale; however, you must know how to talk about them, because it is impossible to make a living room genuinely attractive and satisfying without them.

WHY CUSTOMERS ARE DISAPPOINTED

Few furniture men appreciate the extent to which sales volume is restricted by insistence upon selling parts instead of finished products. Not only is furniture displayed as a pharmacist displays drugs in the rows of bottles on his shelves; but also customers are asked to do their own

compounding and to accept full responsibility for the results.

Many salesmen habitually assure the buyer that her room will be comfortable and beautiful after they have placed in it a sofa, two chairs, an end table, one floor lamp, and a radio. Of course it isn't, and disappointment results. She sees her room as bare, thin, spotty, unhomelike, and unlovely. She knows something is wrong, but she is without knowledge to correct it.

Ensemble selling and complete room settings are the home-furnishings industry's modern answer. Unless she is able to arrange the major pieces of her furniture in a manner that will show them to the best advantage, unless she has at least the requisites in the smaller pieces, lamps, and other accessories, she may never get the full satisfaction that she should for the money she has spent in the furniture store. It is the salesperson's duty to fit his customer's purchases into a complete room or home.

NATURALNESS ESSENTIAL IN ENSEMBLE SELLING

In ensemble selling, don't lecture, talk about yourself, or appear in any way to be airing your knowledge. Simply talk in an off-hand manner, as if you were dealing in commonplaces as familiar to your customer as to yourself. The important matter is to learn promptly enough about her room to enable you to link some of its characteristics with the characteristics of your merchandise, so that as you point out the many desirable features of her room, and the perfect way in which your furniture harmonizes with and emphasizes these features, she is brought to the conviction that she should have the room just as you have pictured it, and therefore must have your furniture, without regard to what other stores may have to offer.

This method is not too easy when one first begins to employ it, nor should it be used with every customer. It will interest a surprisingly large percentage of customers, and it often will result in a sale in situations where all other methods fail. It is planned selling, which, based on the enlightened self-interest of the buyer, helps her to buy, and so smoothes the path before her that she may purchase her needs room by room.

SELLING THE COMPLETE ROOM OR COMPLETE HOUSE ENSEMBLE

Many important sales will involve the complete room ensemble or the complete house ensemble both of which are used to the great advantage of the store and of the public. Usually such sales are in sight long enough in advance to permit you to study and measure the rooms. In important sales of this kind, try to get the head of the house in for the first showing. You will probably be unable to close the sale without him, and he will be likely to save your time as well as to increase the amount of the sale. Do not overlook the fact that it is important to see the house after the sale is made, preferably when the goods are being installed. In this way you guard against possible disappointment, ensure good will, and often find room for more merchandise.

There are three general methods for dealing with these room sales. The choice between them will depend upon your judgment as to the probable reactions of the customer.

Setting Up a Complete Room in Advance.

Measure the room accurately, locating doors and windows; study the room, and so far as possible the disposition, tastes, and means of the buyers; select harmonious furnishings for the entire room, usually with one or more substitutes for the most important pieces; lay out the room with chalk, or with a chalk line or string tacked to the floor, with recesses for the windows and openings for the doors in their exact locations; set up the room with the merchandise selected, keeping the substitutes at one side for emergency use; arrange to have the customers call by appointment; and show the whole setting, making your talk while they examine it.

If you know the people, and feel sure that the total cost of the room is not far above what they expect to spend, this is a good method. Otherwise there is some danger that they will dislike one or more single elements of the room, and without giving you the opportunity to correct them, reject the whole setting; and also that they may ask for the total price before a real desire for the setting has been aroused, find it unexpectedly high, and refuse to pay it.

Building Up Room With Customers.

Proceed as above to the point where the room is laid out; but instead of actually placing the furniture keep it at one side; explain to the buyers the lay-out of the room, locating the doors and windows; have the furnishings brought in and placed by porters one piece at a time, starting with the floor covering. This will give you the chance to prepare their minds for each piece, and to sell your picture as they see it grow before their eyes; to make immediate substitutions in case one of your selections fails to please; and to reduce the price hazard.

For example, they may ask the price of some important piece such as the rug or sofa, or you may quote it in the course of your talk. If there is a quick objection, you will be able to reassure them by a statement that something of similar appearance but lower price can be substituted later without marring the total effect.

Laying Out Room to Scale.

Proceed at the outset as in above; but instead of laying out the actual room, prepare a scale drawing on a regular floor plan, to the scale of a ¼ inch to 1 foot, or a large drawing to the scale of 1 inch, to 1 foot. Make drawings or symbols of the furniture to be used to the same scale, cut them out, and fix them to the floor plan by means of thumb tacks. This will permit shifting them about in case of question as to the arrangement of the room. Have the furnishings assembled, and brought in by porters as needed and arranged in small intimate groups, if space permits. Otherwise carry the drawing board with you as you take your customers through the stock from one of the proposed pieces to the next.

This method is necessary in small stores where it is practically impossible to spare floor space for a display lasting several hours. It can be made somewhat more effective by drawing in the four-wall elevations and indicating the space relationships of furniture and walls.

In the ordinary ensemble sale where no advance preparation is possible, quick thinking and smooth action are essential. Such a sale may start anywhere, but ordinarily you will start it where your stock is most complete, or where for any other reason you expect to encounter minimum resistance. Many stores have a series of model rooms, or several series furnished completely at different price levels. A visit to these rooms will give the salesman a fair idea, of what his customers consider necessary, what they are prepared to pay, and where to start the sale.

QUESTIONS

1. What methods do you follow in reducing to a minimum the kinds of competition a salesman must meet in selling furniture for the living room? dining room?

2. A salesman asks his customer: "Just what kind of studio couch do you have in mind?" Why is this bad practice?

3. Why do you use a floor-plan idea for getting a picture of the background which has brought a customer to your store?

4. Suppose a customer seems determined to purchase a piece of furniture which you know is not suited for her use. Do you discourage her at the risk of losing the sale?

5. Suggest three or four good ways to interest your customer in rugs for the living room.

6. Few customers are able to afford use of the most costly furnishings. How do you proceed to convince the average woman that certain essential harmonies actually cost nothing whatever in money?

7. Suppose you are consulted by a young couple soon to be married. They ask you for suggestions for furnishing their five-room apartment. How do you proceed?

8. How does customer age present a problem in selling house furnishings?

9. Why is it not good practice to ask your customer the style of her living room?

10. Work out a plan for furnishing an unattractive hall in the home of a well-to-do couple, and outline steps you would take to call your ideas to their attention?

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FOOTNOTES:

[27] Every salesman knows how exacting many buyers become when their minds are fixed upon an individual unit. The chair is just a little too this or that; the rug has a square inch of blue where there should be a square inch of red; the cretonne is perfect in design and coloring, but 10 cents a yard more than she had decided to pay; and so on.

Unit X
FURNISHING THE BEDROOM, SUNROOM, KITCHEN, AND BREAKFAST ROOM

Courtesy American Furniture Mart.

Figure 43.—Tile, long associated with the kitchen for walls and floors, becomes the decorative theme of this ensemble, making a striking contrast against the gleaming white walls, and the coral table top marked off in tile effects offers a new decorative note. The color is repeated at the back of the cabinet, on the top rail of the chairs, and on the interior of the unusual utilities which have open shelves for accessories. Small chrome hardware is used.

Unit X.—FURNISHING THE BEDROOM, SUNROOM, KITCHEN, AND BREAKFAST ROOM

FURNISHING THE BEDROOM

Many still think of the bedroom only as a place in which to sleep. In point of fact often it is used as a secluded sitting room where one may close the door and rest, shutting out the cares and

activity of a busy day. It should more properly be called a relaxation room, and furnished with that thought in mind. To meet this trend toward more diversified bedrooms, the salesperson should organize his stock mentally on the basis of night stands, desks, boudoir chairs, chaise lounges, lamps, and bookshelves for use in the family bedroom or guest room, and equally suitable pieces for the nursery playroom and the individual bedrooms of young and older children. For years the magazines have been describing these double-function bedrooms, broadcasting their convenience and charm, creating in the minds of readers a widening interest and acceptance, and thus preparing a new field for selling effort.

Moreover, there are multitudes of homemakers who know little or nothing about this comfortable modern trend in bedroom decoration, and still consider that the only furniture essential or desirable is a 3-, 4-, or 5-piece suite and a slipper chair or two. Many of our old customers, who now regard their bedrooms as completely furnished, can be interested in the purchase of additional new merchandise by persistent educational and development work.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BEDROOM

The bedroom differs from the hall, living room, and dining room in that it is a personal room, not shared in common by all the members of the family. Individual tastes and preferences may be given free rein in its decoration. Hence, the salesperson who is able to help his customer express a distinctly personal quality in her room enjoys a great advantage over the salesperson who lacks this ability. In selling bedroom furnishings, the successful salesperson will require knowledge of various decorative accessories, including bedspreads, linens, pictures, ornamental glass toiletries, and pottery.

Many women have clear ideas as to the effect they want their bedrooms to reveal. One will want a restful room; a second, a gaily colorful and animated room; and a third, a dainty room. When such buyers fall into the hands of a skillful salesperson, price (within their economic limits) becomes a matter wholly of secondary importance, and competitive shopping is forgotten. Selling from this approach becomes largely a matter of giving studied expression to the decorative motif chosen for the room. If it is daintiness—furniture, walls, floor covering, draperies, and accessories must be selected and arranged to concur in creating an effect of daintiness. An ability to work out these decorative motifs and to talk about them interestingly in the course of a year's work will "save" dozens of orders.

THE WALLS

Bedroom walls may be tinted, painted, or papered depending upon the type of effect desired.

Tinted walls are used in pastel colors with beautiful effect in a wide range of colors. All that is necessary to know is the customer's color preference since, today, any color may be worked into an effective bedroom.

New wallpapers offer an endless variety of color combinations and many times the entire room scheme may be furnished by the wallpaper.

It is good taste to keep the bedroom in pastels or light tones since dark tones have a depressing effect upon the occupant. In some instances, the type of furnishings to be used will determine the type of wallpaper to be used. French furnishings require the dainty, flowery type of paper; English furnishings are more subdued—either a plain paper with a small figure, or with subdued florals. Early American and Colonial rooms will take a colorful flowered paper or a "quaint" pattern. It is well to keep in touch with the decorative magazines in which room settings using correct paper on the walls are shown in color and which offer many suggestions for other interesting wall treatments.

TREATMENT OF CEILINGS

Ceilings should be either cream, off-white, or light pastel colors harmonizing with the wallpaper. It is most important that the ceiling be kept light in tone with the possible exception of an extremely modern room where a dramatic effect is to be achieved. In a library, the ceiling may be darkened to bring it "closer to the floor," but in a bedroom the ceiling should be kept light to make the room appear large and airy.

FLOOR COVERINGS

A room-size rug is to be preferred when practicable for a small bedroom, because it causes the room to appear larger than does a combination of small rugs, yet many bedrooms are being artistically furnished today with small scatter rugs.

Since the bedroom is closed off from the other rooms, one can be more daring in the choice of floor covering; it is not necessary to blend the coloring to the other rooms. New pastel floor coverings in plain and floral tones offer endless opportunities for bedroom use and color need be considered only when selecting a pattern now that there is no longer any set method of dictating the type of pattern especially adaptable for bedroom use. Today, it is merely a matter of personal preference and good taste, the only requirement being that one keep in mind the general color scheme of the room.

In Colonial and Early American bedrooms, small hooked rugs add a note of color and decoration to the room. In modern bedrooms, scatter rugs in lovely pastel colors add a new, interesting note.

DRAPERIES: GLASS CURTAINS, VENETIAN BLINDS

In the bedroom today Venetian blinds serve to soften and control the light; draperies are used more or less for decorative purposes. The draperies may match the spread, pick-up the color tone of the rug, or repeat the color of the boudoir chair, chaise lounge, or the accent color used in the accessories. Venetian blinds may be used in a variety of colors with matching or contrasting tapes. In many instances, sheer curtains are used as draperies, crisscrossed and tied back in the manner of the formal drape. Usually light weight materials are used for bedroom draperies the material varying according to the type of room. In the more formal room satin and lightweight damask draperies are used. In the informal room printed draperies, crepes, voiles, or candlewick are used.

While glass curtains may be used with Venetian blinds, in many instances they are used instead of the blinds. They are made of net, voile, marquisette, muslin, organdie, or any sheer material. In color, they are white, off-white, or pastel. Preferably, they are made with double fullness of material, and hung either to the sill or the apron.

A popular item now being added to many bedrooms is the small dressing table with detachable skirt. The dressing tablet may be artistically placed in front of the window and the skirt made of the same material as the draperies. In this way the draperies serve as a frame for the dressing table and create a beautiful picture. In many instances where a customer is interested in investing in good bedding but cannot afford to buy the entire bedroom suite at one time, it may be well to suggest a box spring and mattress on legs with detachable headboard and a small dressing table with detachable skirt. An inexpensive chest of drawers completes the ensemble. Later the box spring and mattress can be used on the regular bed, the dressing table maintained or moved into the guest room, and the chest of drawers used in another part of the house.

"PLUS" SELLING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUMMER

The bedroom offers excellent opportunities for the salesman to interest the customer in "summerizing" the house. During the summer, heavy spreads should be removed and light, washable spreads substituted. Cotton curtains, spreads, summer weight blankets, slip covers for chairs, scatter rugs to replace large rugs, new dressing table skirts, and summer pictures and other accessories are all within the realm of summer sales.

Although all the rooms in the house offer wonderful opportunities for summer sales, the bedroom best adapts itself to opportunities for this "plus" selling.

FURNITURE

Bedroom furniture usually is shown and sold in suites. As ordinarily displayed on the floor, closely crowded and with the bed in short rails, the pieces of a suite appear so much alike that an unimaginative customer will find them monotonous and uninteresting. This means that the successful salesman must find words to picture the suite as it will appear against the varied and colorful backgrounds and accents necessary to bring out its beauty and individuality.

There is no sound artistic or practical objection to the use of pieces from different suites in the same room; provided, of course, that the resemblances in proportion, line, and coloring are sufficiently marked to ensure harmony. This is the only way in which antiques can be used, and it is no less effective with modern pieces. This point is particularly important in the sale of furniture for a child's room or a small guest room, which will not take a full suite in any case, but which will offer a valuable opportunity to sell broken lots. Stress the fact that use of unmatched but harmonious pieces is modern practice, that such pieces give interest and individuality to the room, and that ensemble grouping is as desirable in the bedroom as in the living room or sunroom.

THE BEDROOM SUITE

When a customer asks to see a bedroom suite, but gives no further hint as to her preferences, several questions enter your mind immediately:

How many pieces can she use?

What wood, finish, style, and type of design is she likely to prefer?

Has she been looking at furniture elsewhere?

How much can or will she pay?

Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 44.—"Right and left" twin chests offer a practical new decorative treatment for contemporary rooms and may be used singly or combined into one unit. Included in this grouping are "right and left" twin beds using the same decorative treatment as the dressers. A turquoise green tinted transparent lacquer finish is used on this unusual suite to give an iridescent effect. The large "pouf" hassock is upholstered in turquoise blue pin-dot satin. The Axminster rug has large multi-colored cineraria flowers on a soft grey background.

Do not ask any of these questions at the outset. Normally, the first actual question is whether the furniture is for use in her own room. If the answer is "Yes," she is likely to acquaint you at once with her ideas, if she has any well-defined preferences. In the absence of such a lead, take her at once to an attractive suite, never at either extreme of your bedroom patterns.

The ideal starting point is an open-stock pattern, complete both with beds and with a full assortment of cases. If she is at all interested in this suite, probably she will tell you at once that she cannot use all the pieces. This naturally will lead to information as to the size and character of her room, its woodwork, walls, and floor covering, whether it is to be used by two people, and if so, whether she prefers a full-size bed or twin beds.

LIMIT NUMBER OF SUITES SHOWN

In any event try to gain a fairly clear idea of the room, particularly of its size and available wall spaces, before you show a second suite, as this information will help you to cut down selling time. In the absence of a voluntary and positive statement, do not ask how many pieces she wants. Once on record, she may stand pat; otherwise there always is the chance, even if she plans to use only three pieces, that she may buy a full suite, using the extra piece, if necessary, in another room in order to get a pattern that particularly pleases her.

Bedroom suites are so much alike in general appearance, and usually displayed in ways which so thoroughly rob them of individuality that it is dangerously easy to show too many. Baffled by the prolonged attempt to compare a multitude of minor details and to picture a long succession of suites in her own room, the average customer may be expected to become confused, lose confidence in her own judgment, and decide either to "think it over" or to "look further."

Partitions, dividers, and model rooms speed up the sale of bedroom furniture because they make it possible to preserve a more marked appearance of individuality among the suites thus separated. They serve also to confine the buyer's attention to the suite under consideration, and to reduce the likelihood of confusion and indecision by enabling the salesman to show only such suites as promise to be acceptable. For the same reasons the box method of arranging an open bedroom floor usually is to be preferred to arrangement in rows. The exact method of boxing must be determined by the location of floor columns and the number of pieces shown in a suite.

BUYERS DO NOT WANT TO SEE ENTIRE STOCK

It is important to limit the number of suites shown to the minimum necessary to effect a sale. Obviously, this is possible only in the degree that we learn enough about the buyer's tastes and

the details of her room in the earlier stages of a sale to keep away from all unsuitable merchandise. Most women do not care even to look at unsuitable merchandise. They want to see the right thing, measured in terms of fitness for their own purposes and use.

The woman who shops for a dress, hat, or coat in a modern store neither expects nor desires to see the entire stock or any considerable part of it. She is comfortably seated in a well-lighted room which contains little, if any, exposed merchandise. The salesperson, after a quick mental appraisal, asks a few leading questions, and brings from the stockroom one, two, or possibly three models, carefully chosen on the basis of suitability, size, and style. If these are rejected they are removed, and a second small selection brought out. Unsuitable merchandise is not seen by the customer, and the possibility of confusion and indecision thus is reduced to the minimum.

SEE ACTUAL ROOM, IF POSSIBLE

In important bedroom sales which are worked up in advance of the customer's visit to the store for the purpose of actually making selections, it is important for the salesman to see the room to be furnished if possible, or in any event to secure measurements of the floor and wall spaces. This will eliminate guesswork and enable you to have the suite you want to sell set up under such conditions, and with such accessories and related merchandise as will bring out its individuality. Even in ordinary floor sales sometimes it is desirable to have a suite taken off the floor and set up in a situation where it can be seen to the best advantage.

STEPS IN SELLING A SUITE

As a means of summarizing certain factors which the salesman constantly must keep in mind, let us consider in order the steps to be taken in conducting a normal floor sale of a bedroom suite:

Meet the customer and take her to the suite with which you have decided to start the sale.—Throughout the entire interview, whether it results in an immediate sale or not, the customer must be aware of a degree of courtesy, alert and intelligent interest, patience, and attention to her comfort and convenience noticeably greater than she is accustomed to receive in other stores or from other salesmen. This is fundamental, and indispensable to successful salesmanship.

Show the first suite.—This suite is a "trial balloon." You do not expect to sell it, but rather to use it as a means of gaining necessary information about the customer's tastes and needs and the room to be furnished. "High light" the set in a few words, and then keep still and let her talk if she is willing to do so. Remember that you are not in position to instruct or even to advise her as to what she ought to buy. Your first duty is to find out as soon as possible what she wants to buy, or at least what she does not want to buy. In "high-lighting" this suite, avoid superlatives, and statements which may set up resistance. Do not, for example, proclaim that it is the latest, the buyer's favorite, or that you have a suite just like it in your own home. Make your introduction as interest-compelling as possible, but base it on some such noncontroversial subject as wood, style, or beauty of design. If she says nothing, turn to the case nearest her, comment on its wood and finish, run your finger lightly along it, and try to get her to do the same thing. Then say something interesting about the style, the design, or the manufacture. If there still are no signs of real interest, shift to the subject of her room, and begin to draw out the information you require. This should stir her interest. If not, move on to another suite which you know will look well in her room, and begin all over again.

Courtesy American Furniture Mart.

Figure 45.—Square upon square offers a new decorative theme in this Ipswich bedroom group. This suite combines the simplicity of contemporary design with Early American charm. The 4-row Axminster rug illustrated is in one of the new hooked designs.

Remember to point out any "gadgets" which the suite may have—special shirt drawers, locks, secret compartments, jewelry compartments, hidden box, stocking drawers, or drawer mirrors. All of these items offer "plus" selling features and many times are a factor in the sale of a suite. Be sure you have examined all of the suites on the floor thoroughly so that you have discovered all possible gadgets and opportunities for "plus" selling features.

Unless a customer shows such a keen and unusual interest as to warrant the belief that an immediate sale is possible, do not spend too much time with the first suite.

Courtesy of American Furniture Mart.

Figure 46.—An Early American bedroom grouping ideally suited to American homes. Simple in design, it is rich in American tradition, for it is the type of furniture first used in this country by the original settlers. Scaled to fit a medium-size room, the furniture is sturdy, practical, and decorative. Made of maple and finished in a rich, red-brown tone, a suite such as this is adaptable to rural or urban homes.

Show the second suite—a contrasting type.—Since all things gain in individuality and distinction by contrast with their opposites, usually it is good salesmanship to show a second suite sharply different from the first in appearance. If you watch some salespersons at work, you will see that they move slowly and regularly down one aisle and back the next, taking each suite as it comes, however closely it may resemble the one before it. At best, this method wastes time, while with many customers it results in weariness, confusion, and a well-defined suspicion that the salesperson is only an order-taker. In general, move toward the sale by longer but fewer jumps, and show contrasting types in the effort to heighten the buyer's interest, and to arrive as quickly as possible at an understanding of her likes. We know, for example, that some women prefer slender, delicately designed bedroom furniture, while others want bulk. It is quite impossible to judge their preferences from their appearance. Suites shown by the method of contrast will uncover this and similar preferences immediately, and thus speed up the sale.

Assuming that you pick the second and all succeeding suites in the light of increasing knowledge of the customer's tastes and the size and decorative character of her room, move forward slowly. Since you are not guessing blindly, but acting in the light of knowledge and taste, you must assume that the buyer will be interested in what you are showing, and take ample time to develop her interest.

Remember that the customer must like the appearance of any suite at which she is looking and regard it as well suited for her own use before she will consider buying it. Emphasis upon the beauty and distinction of wood, finish, and design, and skillful use of the "room-picture" method of presentation should precede emphasis upon construction and price. However, construction becomes an important factor when you reach the second suite just as soon as you see signs of acceptance for appearance and decorative fitness. If no such signs appear, move on to the third suite.

Show just as many additional suites as may be necessary but no more.

Close the sale, if and when possible.—There is no simple formula for closing a sale, and no set point in the sales interview at which to make the attempt. Notwithstanding a vast amount of theorizing on the subject, the only rule of practical value to the salesperson appears to be the old rule of experience and common sense: Try to close any sale the moment you have reason to believe the customer is ready to buy; not before, and not after.

FURNISHING THE SUNROOM

The sunroom, though of ancient origin,[28] is a comparatively recent addition to the American home. Its rapid development doubtless is due to widening popular confidence in the therapeutic value of sunlight. Today's sunroom is in practice an informal lounging room which takes the place of the disappearing back parlor, and as such is a highly useful and important part of the home. Add the fact that it can be, and usually is, so decorated as to offer the relief of striking and colorful contrast to more conservatively furnished rooms, and we have ample reason for the popularity of this room in American houses. Many housewives whose homes contain small sunrooms do not know how to make them attractive, and many others apparently have no desire to do so. Often the room is a mere "catch-all" and final resting place for worn or outmoded furniture discarded from the other rooms.

Many homemakers who come to our stores for ideas on sunroom decoration either turn away to the decorators or big-city stores, or are promptly headed to low-priced merchandise, and leave with little more than two $6.75 reed or metal chairs, a small table, a fiber rug, a bridge lamp, a smoking stand, and a few yards of cretonne.

Salesmen must shift from emphasis upon the drab and commonplace to emphasis upon the distinctive. This will be easy, because persons who have sunrooms usually can well afford to pay for making them attractive. In every sale of sunroom merchandise, whether for a new house or an old, we must have the courage to point out that this room, potentially so large a factor in the comfort and enjoyment of the family, so much used by intimate guests, and so conspicuously placed as to be an open advertisement of the taste of its owners, should be furnished in a manner consistent with its proper importance. In order to convert this talk into profitable sales, we must of course have a stock of interesting ideas and suggestions on modern sunroom treatments.[29]

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The sunroom should be comfortable, but colorful and stimulating. This will demand good furniture and well-sprung seating, careful arrangement for convenience without crowding, colorful textiles, good lighting, and interesting accessories.

Since the sunroom often is small and of irregular shape, it should be measured before furnishings are selected.

THE WALLS

It is common practice to find sunroom walls covered with bright and strikingly figured papers. Usually the effect is unpleasant because:

1. Such papers make the room seem smaller,
2. With windows on two or three sides of the room, such papers on the remaining wall spaces rob the room of balance,
3. Draperies or furniture coverings, or both, together with the necessary colorful accessories, give the room all the animation it can stand, and therefore make plain or simple wall treatment desirable.

Walls may be painted, papered, paneled in natural wood, or covered with one of the new cloth or wood-veneer fabrics.

THE FLOOR COVERINGS

For general considerations governing choice of floor coverings for the sunroom, see Furnishing the Hall, page 188.

Note as an exception that a plain carpet or large rug often is preferred to a figured carpet or rug in spite of a tendency to shade and the fact that it shows dust and ashes more easily because:

1. It offers a more effective background for gaily figured draperies and floor coverings.
2. The rich and unusual colors often desired for sunroom use are easier to find in plain carpetings.

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Some method of controlling natural light must be afforded by the window treatment. Venetian blinds are preferable for this purpose, because they can be adjusted instantly to the varying height of the sun; whereas moveable draperies, lined and interlined to make them opaque, either

will exclude the light altogether when closed, or leave a band of bright light from top to bottom when partially closed.

Glass curtains are not always used on windows which have Venetian blinds and draperies. When such draperies are omitted, thin unlined curtains in a neutral or in a positive color are used alone. They should be made to draw, with sufficient material to provide double fullness when fully drawn.

Sunroom draperies may be of any material not too heavy to accord with the scale of the room or too elegant to accord with its decorative character and other furnishings. Choice among plain, simply figured, and strikingly figured fabrics will be governed by the size of the room and the amount of ornament in other surfaces.

THE SALE OF SUNROOM MERCHANDISE

Suggestions will be welcomed.—Although no new principles are involved in the sale of sunroom merchandise, the subject merits brief comment. A woman interested in home furnishings for any other room in her home is likely to have fairly definite ideas of her own, or least to be familiar with conventional methods of furnishing these rooms. This makes the salesman's talk one of discovering and interpreting her ideas, and helping to carry them out by means of his own merchandise. With the sunroom this is not often the case. It is relatively a new room, serving one purpose in one home, another in the second, and none at all in the third. Customers are likely to be open to suggestions, and to buy better merchandise and with less resistance, in the degree that these suggestions are clever and a little out of the ordinary.

This means that initiative and imagination are necessary to marked success in selling sunroom furnishings,[30] and that accordingly we must be alert both to gain ideas on sunroom treatments from books, magazines, and markets, and to study our own merchandise from the viewpoint of its possibilities for sunroom decoration.

SUNROOM TREATMENTS

The old days when reed and willow were top favorites for sunrooms has passed. Despite the fact that many beautiful styles in these materials are on the market, other types of furnishings have moved into the sunroom to augment and in many instances replace the old favorites.

Early American furniture in soft brown or honey-colored, maple, covered in chintz or printed linens, or in one of the many new textures developed for this type, is a happy choice for many sunrooms. Others are attractive when equipped with light-colored woods upholstered in lovely pastel fabrics. Chrome-steel furniture offers many opportunities for the sunroom as do bentwood, glass, enameled furniture, and rattan.

The sunroom offers an opportunity to sell such "plus" items as studio couches, sofa beds, standing bridge sets, radios, magazine racks, desks, and lamps. Since many sunrooms may be interpreted as an extension of the living room, these offer an opportunity to sell regular living room stock, upholstered chairs, a sofa or love seat, the necessary tables, lamps, and accessories.

EQUIPPING THE BREAKFAST ROOM AND KITCHEN

The breakfast room has no fixed position or character. It may be a nook or small alcove, equipped with built-in table and settles, and decoratively a part of the kitchen; an important room of fair size and pronounced individuality; or—as is often the case—a room so small as to be pretty well crowded by a small table, four chairs and their occupants, and connected with the dining room by a cased opening or French doors.

The proper aims of breakfast room decoration are *(a)* to make it as comfortable, spacious, and uncrowded as possible; *(b)* to give it a sunny, inspiring quality; and *(c)* to emphasize its individuality while linking it harmoniously with the more important room, if any, into which it opens.

WOODWORK AND WALLS IN THE BREAKFAST ROOM

Since the breakfast room is a gay informal room it should be cheerful, light, and colorful. Walls may be tinted, painted, or papered. If tinted, light pastels should be used. If painted, colored decalcomanias may be used to add a decorative note. Fruit and flower prints in gay colors on a light pastel or white background, gay stripes, or colorful figured wallpaper may be used. Woodwork, if possible, should be white or the pastel color of the walls. Since most of the furnishings for the breakfast room are light in color, gay, colorful accents should be used both in the wall decoration and in the pictures and accessories.

FLOOR COVERINGS, DRAPERIES, FURNITURE

Here—as in the hall and the sunroom—imagination, familiarity with good current work, and energy will sell more goods in less time than the stodgy, conventional, lackadaisical methods which so many buyers meet when they undertake the furnishing of a breakfast room. In this field it is easier for a good man to trade *up* than *down*, no matter what class of customers he works

with. In the comment, "This would be a delightful place in which to start the day," we have the starting point for all good work in furnishing the breakfast room.

THE KITCHEN

Within the last few years, more money has been spent by the consumer on the kitchen and laundry than on any other rooms in the house. Mrs. America today is kitchen conscious and is ready for a thorough modernization job on her kitchen. Kitchen planning as an important phase of selling should be carefully studied. Kitchens should be planned to be efficient and should be laid out carefully, preferably by an architect, for the installation of sink bases, extra built-in cabinets, and other features. However, the kitchen also offers unlimited opportunities for the sale of portable cabinets, kitchen tables and chairs, cabinet bases, work tables, curtains, linoleum, pots, pans, and accessories.

The modern kitchen had its beginning in the United States, less than 25 years ago. The rise in the general standard of living in our country, rather than the increasing scarcity of domestic help, has been greatly responsible for the development of modern kitchen equipment and the innumerable mechanized aids now available to the housewife.

As usual, beauty at first lagged behind invention. Indeed the early cabinets, refrigerators, and ranges differed as sharply in appearance from the beautifully proportioned and smartly colorful models found in the shops today as the automobile of 20 years ago differed from the streamlined aristocrats of today.

In the beginning, convenience and the elimination of drudgery seemed enough, and drab ugliness was accepted as an inescapable part of kitchen work. Later, in a sort of blind devotion to cleanliness and sanitation, kitchens were done like hospitals in hard and shiny white tile, white walls, white curtains, white range, cabinet and refrigerator, white utensils and dishes. From this intolerable tyranny of white we have at last been delivered. The door has been thrown open; color has entered the kitchen. The American homemaker of today, whether her room be large or small, asks for a kitchen which not only is a convenient and pleasant place in which to work but a source of pride and a delight to the eye.

Courtesy American Furniture Mart.

Figure 47.—Chrome adds sparkle and verve to this attractive kitchen ensemble made with flared hairpin-curved legs and enamel and natural-wood top.

Color and convenience in the kitchen.—And truly, the best of modern kitchens are charming places. Seeing them, one wonders how further improvement can be possible. Vibrantly light, yet without glare; cozily warm without excessive heat; tranquil with the tranquility of perfect adaptation of parts to function; unbelievably convenient; and bathed in the glow of soft harmonious-color, they are immensely more pleasant and distinguished than the shops and offices where men must spend their working days. Among all the professions, homemaking has been outstanding in creating an attractive and satisfying environment.

Of course this does not mean that all kitchens are attractive and satisfying. That unhappily is still far from true. Yet beyond doubt, the desire for them is widespread and growing. Yearly, and with

accelerating speed, the processes of modernization are going forward.

Floor coverings for the kitchen.—First comes the floor. There was a time when linoleum was regarded purely as a utility, but that time has passed. The new linoleums are handsome in appearance, pleasant to work on, and easy to care for; hence they are almost universally employed in the modern kitchen.

The walls.—The walls may be done in enamel paint, or papered with the new washable fabrics, which offer a wide range of choice in pattern and texture. Never use really dark color on the walls, and remember that the lighter you make the wall color, the larger the room will appear. As to hue, yellow tones, from pale cream to maize, will help to make the room sunny and cheerful; light gray-green will make it cool and restful; apple, or any yellow-green, will make it restful but sunny; and such yellow reds as peach, apricot, or pale salmon will make it warm and cheerful.

The trim.—In very small kitchens the woodwork often is painted to match the walls, either exactly, or in a slightly lighter or darker shade. In rooms which are larger, or where more decorative "snap" is desired, the woodwork may be done in a contrasting color, as apple green with cream walls, or a soft green-blue with apricot.

Kitchen curtains and accessories.—Kitchen curtains may be used as an opening wedge in kitchen sales. Interest in a pair of curtains has been known to start a complete remodeling job. On the market today are innumerable curtains in a variety of colors and designs. Since much originality and ingenuity is used in making attractive kitchen curtains, many women are attracted to these inexpensive items, to "pep up" their kitchens. Often they lead to the sale of a cabinet, table, or new linoleum. Kitchen furniture should be shown with dummy windows on which crisp, attractive curtains are hung. Decorative towels add to the gayety of the kitchen and are helpful in setting up a kitchen display.

Accessories for the kitchen are colorful and decorative and a little ingenuity and suggestion will get a woman interested in the kitchen. National magazines and the women's section of newspapers are constantly giving suggestions for fixing the kitchen. Cookie cutters with colorful handles nailed to the walls, kitchen implements with colored handles hung on attractive racks; wooden bowls cut in half and nailed to the wall, then planted with ivy—all are unusual suggestions appreciated by women. The endless variety of new things which may be suggested for the kitchen is a veritable gold mine for the salesman who takes the opportunity to investigate the possibilities.

Many interesting and delightful things go into the modern kitchen which were unknown in those of 20 years ago. One sees a colorful pad for the work chair, a hanging bookshelf for cookbooks and accessories, an ornamental wall clock, colored prints, and plants. And of course in many a kitchen there is the breakfast nook, with its decorative furniture and its colored linen, glass, and china.

Some breakfast nooks are just sufficiently shut-off from the kitchen by a buttress or low partition to tempt the housewife to make a sharp difference in their decorative treatment. Usually this is a mistake, particularly if it results in a large or striking paper on the walls. It is better to carry the same wall color throughout, and to depend upon small things to lend the desired individuality to the alcove. There is no danger of monotony in this practice; while a sharp change impairs the spaciousness of both rooms, and robs them alike of serenity and beauty.

Study of the above will enable you to offer definite advice to women who want to modernize their kitchens. Even though some of the details may not deal with merchandise you sell, all this knowledge will prove valuable in winning the customer's confidence.

FINAL EMPHASIS FOR ALERT SALESPERSONS

Since we are working in a free country which now contains more than 40,000 retail furniture outlets, it should be clear that we cannot make anyone buy anything. Selling continues to be chiefly a matter of people, not of goods in stock; for example, we find one dealer, operating with a small stock in a small town, complaining that all the good business goes to the city; while a second dealer, operating with a similar stock in a similar trading area, allows almost nothing to get away from him. The latter makes it his business to know what is going on in his community; goes out after an order well in advance of the time the goods will be needed; learns what is required; knows how to sell it; and where and how to secure it. The main difference is in the men, not in conditions.

BE ALERT FOR OPPORTUNITIES

The able salesperson is energetic, stout-hearted, and enthusiastic. He never permits himself even during periods of slow business to fall into the dangerous habit of assuming that every customer will be reluctant and exacting, and every sale difficult. He expects a fair percentage of quick and easy sales, and is prepared to seize every opportunity to make them.

Having confidence in himself, his store, and his merchandise, he works on the assumption that most of the people who enter a furniture store are definitely interested in an immediate or later purchase of merchandise to suit their particular needs and tastes. He further assumes that he will be able to learn those needs and tastes, find in his stock the right merchandise to satisfy them, and present the advantages of this merchandise in a clear and convincing way; and that when they are so presented, the customer will buy. This assumption may not always be valid; but

it never fails to give him confidence and driving power, and is the necessary basis of consistently successful salesmanship.

The able salesperson never forgets that his customer will not buy until she is satisfied and convinced, however attractive his merchandise, low his prices, or logically complete his demonstration. He knows that she may have prejudices which are not easy to discover, or bits of information or misinformation which may cause her to question or distrust what he tells her, and thus to impede or wreck the sale.

ORDERLY PRESENTATION OF MERCHANDISE

One may never be certain which method and selling appeal will cause any particular individual to buy. Accordingly the salesperson will be prepared to follow an ordered procedure which will in theory exhaust all the possibilities. The important factors may be emphasized in the following order:

1. Pleasing appearance (design, coloring, materials, finish).
2. Personal and decorative suitability (size, convenience, emotional effect, prestige value).
3. Sentimental appeal (style, historical, or social associations, prestige value).
4. Quality (materials, construction, finish, established service record, manufacturer's reputation, store's reputation or guarantee).
5. Price (in relation both to the customer's means and spending habits, and to the sum total of values provided by all other factors).

CLOSE OF SALE SHOULD COME LOGICALLY

Ordinarily the charted sale will develop in this order:

1. Elimination of possible alternatives and concentration upon merchandise to be sold.
2. Elimination of resistances through answering spoken or unspoken objections.
3. Final demonstration of appearance, suitability, and values.
4. Direct suggestion to buy, when suggestion is necessary.

However, closing a sale is not a separate operation, but rather the natural and logical culmination of a continuous process, planned from the beginning to help the customer buy what she wants or needs. Thus the difficulties of closing a sale often are the result of inept work in the earlier stages. Good salesmanship is far less a matter of overcoming these difficulties than of foreseeing them at the beginning of a sale, and thus making it impossible for them to arise at the end.

For this kind of salesmanship we require:

1. A knowledge of people and the way their minds habitually work.
2. A thorough knowledge of home furnishing merchandise in general, and our own in particular.
3. A sound working knowledge of the principles and practice of the home-furnishing art; and
4. Planned procedure in showing our goods and in closing sales.

Give a chemist a bottle of colorless liquid containing three or four metals in solution, and in an hour or less he will tell you exactly what those metals are. He doesn't guess, but puts the solution through an ordered series of reactions which gradually exhaust all the possibilities.

Making a sale is roughly an analogous process. In dealing with a long succession of unknown customers we cannot possibly guess just which procedures will satisfy any one customer's tastes and personal, decorative, and financial requirements. Human beings never react with the exactness of chemical combinations, but their reactions may be relied upon to make planned selling enormously more profitable than use of any combination of haphazard methods yet devised.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you do when your customer says, "I will wait for the spring sales?"

2. In what ways may good window display aid you in selling bedroom furniture?

3. Illustrate, if possible from your experience, the use of the complete "room picture" method.

4. What are the advantages of glass curtains?

5. Under what conditions would you sell pieces from different suites for the same bedroom?

6. Give a demonstration of harmony in furniture for the sunroom.

7. What part may effective use of the English language play in helping you close sales?

8. If it were your decision, would you rearrange your display floors on the basis of harmonious and convenient groupings, or on the basis of displaying articles selling in greatest quantity?

9. Explain satisfactorily how the idea of "groups" may make sleeping quarters sparkle with the occupant's personality.

10. Show what is meant by the statement that the floor is really the "key" to a well-balanced room.

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Pp. 135-145 and pp. 213-225.

FOOTNOTES:

[28] Ancient Roman houses often had an apartment or enclosure on the roof which was open to the sun, and accordingly known as the solarium. This term is applied to the sun-drenched rooms built into modern hospitals for the use of convalescents, and also is employed by architects and writers as a substitute for sunroom in the modern house.

[29] Highly valuable suggestions, and illustrations of smartly furnished sunrooms, can be obtained from books and magazines, and also from the manufacturers of furniture, floor coverings, drapery, and upholstery fabrics and window shades.

[30] The same thing applies to the sale of porch furniture—another undeveloped field. Drab, weather-worn, and utterly undistinguished furniture is out of place on the modern porch, and should be replaced by the smartly colorful and genuinely comfortable furnishings now available in wood, reed, or metal.

Unit XI
ACCESSORIES THAT MEAN "PLUS" SALES

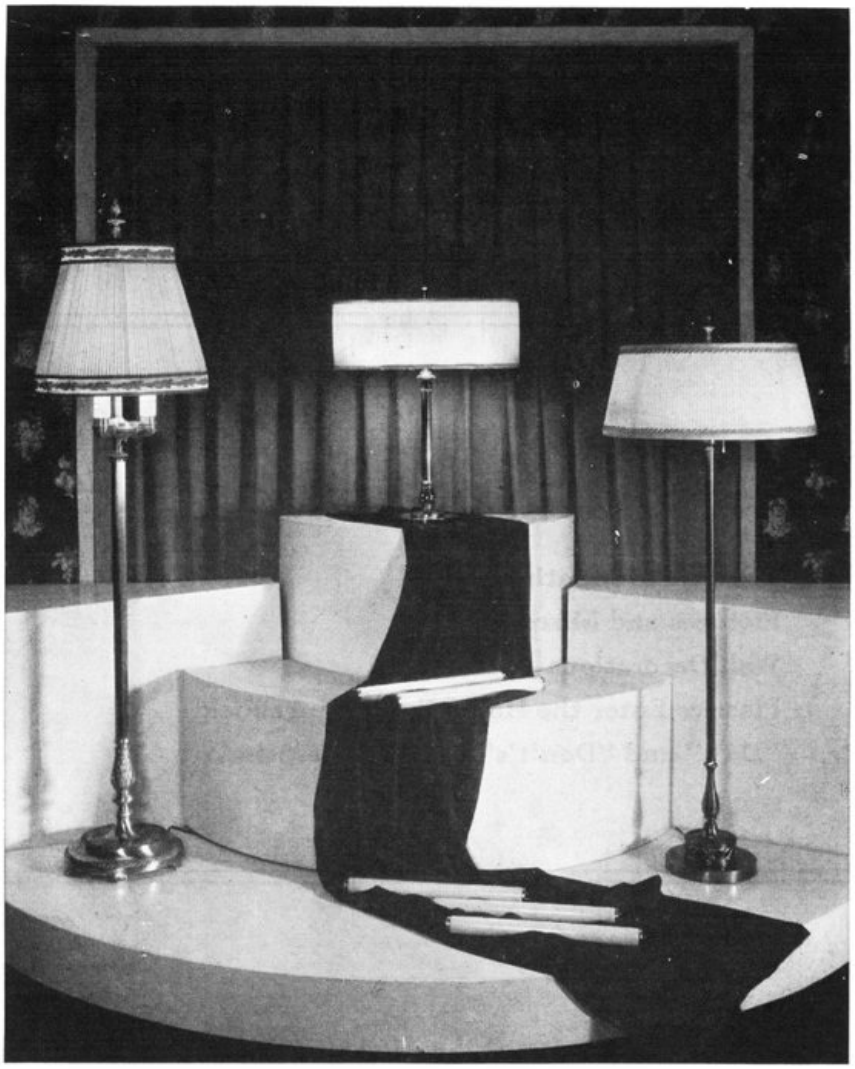


Photo by Grignon.

Figure 48.—Fluorescent lighting is adapted to new lamps of period and modern design, as illustrated in this grouping designed by C. E. Waltman. At the left the tubes are used in a vertical position and the lamp follows period design. The center modern table lamp has a chrome base and oblong shade. At the right a round shade is used.

Unit XI.—ACCESSORIES THAT MEAN "PLUS" SALES

LAMPS AND LIGHTING

Those engaged in selling home furnishings are well aware of the fact that accessories of all types are important factors in increasing sales, and that by suggesting the use of proper accessories, many "plus" sales are made. Many times, new accessories are so incongruous with the other older furnishings in the room, they have caused an entire room to be refurnished and brought up to date. This is particularly true of lamps.

We are standing today on the threshold of an entirely new era in lighting. New illuminants are being developed and new methods are being devised for applying light to meet the needs of modern living. Only a little over a third of a century has passed since the first incandescent lamp was invented by Thomas A. Edison, and the electrical industry has since made tremendous progress. The cost of current has been cut in half due to engineering accomplishments and the illuminating engineer has taken advantage of this progress to develop a more liberal and a more intelligent use of light.

Scientific principles have been applied to all phases of home lighting and standard specifications worked out by the Illuminating Engineering Society for all types of lamps. Using a footcandle as a standard measurement of light intensity, the illuminating engineers have made these findings:

1. In normal sunlight there are 10,000 footcandles of light. In the shade of a tree there are 1,000 footcandles, and indoors during the sunlight hours there are 5 footcandles of light.

2. The efficiency of a standard candle flame source is calculated to be the equivalent of about 0.1 of a lumen per watt (1 lumen is the quantity of light given from a single candle on a surface 1 foot square). Edison's first lamp had 1.4 lumens per watt, and present-day 100-watt electric bulbs have 1,520 lumens.

3. Light is made up of all colors of the rainbow. This was discovered in 1666 when Newton passed a beam of sunlight through a prism and learned that light had in it all the colors of the rainbow, which, when mixed in the proper proportions, produce white light. A combination of all these colors produces sunlight, and in different proportions, incandescent light.

Lamps for home use, now on the market, may roughly be divided into two major divisions, decorative lamps and utilitarian lamps. Under these main divisions are the classifications of the various types of lamps, such as decorative, table, commode, and floor lamps, scientific desk lamps and utilitarian lamps for various rooms and purposes.

1. Decorative lamps are those used primarily for decoration. Table and commode lamps fall largely under this classification, for living room use, and vanity and boudoir lamps for bedroom use. Decorative lamps use a variety of materials for bases such as china, glass, metal, pottery, terra cotta, wood, porcelain, and marble and employ ornate shades which in many instances greatly reduce the illuminating ability of the lamp. Several years ago, before the principles of lighting were given the consideration they are receiving today, lamps which were purely decorative were in much greater demand than they are at present. Today's decorating principles demand that lamps should be useful as well as decorative, and most lamps on the market conform to good standards of lighting. There are, however, lamps designed strictly for decoration which employ dark shades using such materials as quilted velvet, chenille, wood veneer or other opaque fabrics, and which are of unusual shapes that restrict the light. These lamps, while serving a definite need in a decorative scheme, should not be used for reading purposes or provide the only illumination in a room. The purely decorative lamp should be treated merely as an accessory and used in the same manner as a vase or a non-illuminating object.

2. Utilitarian lamps are those which adhere for the most part to scientific standards of lighting, and are designed for specific rooms and purposes.

According to specifications laid down by the Illuminating Engineering Society,[31] the minimum light requirement for average reading in the home is 20 footcandles of light. For fine print and sewing the minimum requirements are 35 to 50 footcandle intensity.

Standards for study and table lighting set up by this society, call for lamp bases 28 inches in height equipped with a reflector bowl made of opal diffusing glass, 8 inches in diameter. At a distance of 12 inches from the base of the lamp, a 100-watt bulb must give 30 footcandle intensity to comply with their standards, and at a distance of 36 inches, 5 footcandle intensity.

Divided into groups, utilitarian lamps fall into these classes:

Study lamps.—These are lamps which adhere to all of the I. E. S. standards and are used on desks for reading purposes or as a table lamp. They are somewhat less decorative than the regular living room lamp since they are more severe usually being made with a brass base and parchment or simple silk shade.

Table lamps.—These are decorative lamps with bases made from the same materials as the purely decorative lamps; however, they are usually more conservative than the purely decorative lamps, and rigidly avoid unusual shaped shades or novelty treatments which might cut down the utility of the lamp. I. E. S. standards are not rigidly followed on all table lamps, but the specifications serve as a master guide. When dark shades are used they are usually lined with white to reflect the light. Reflector bowls are used to encase the light bulb. These are made of holophane, milk, or glazed glass, and provide a diffused indirect light.

Commode lamps.—Commode lamps are smaller than table lamps and are usually used to flank a sofa or as pairs on either side of a chair grouping. I. E. S. standards for this type of lamp call for a base 23 inches in height, an 8-inch reflector bowl and an intensity of light, 12 inches from the center of the lamp, of 30 footcandles,

when a 100-watt bulb is used.

Floor lamps.—Several types of floor lamps are now in use—the lamp with diffusing bowl and fabric shade and the reflector lamp. Floor lamps show a tendency to shorten and new junior floor lamps are about 10 inches shorter than standard models. I. E. S. standards on floor lamps call for a base 58 inches in height, a reflector bowl 8 inches in diameter and an intensity of light 12 inches from the base, of 30 footcandles, when a 100-watt bulb is used. At 24 inches from the base a 100-watt bulb should give 10 footcandles of light intensity, according to these standards. Floor lamps are usually made of metal or wood and many have marble or crystal inserts in the base. Many of the new floor lamps have three-way mogul-type lamp arrangements in addition to a reflector, which give four intensities of light. The reflector bowl may be lighted separately from the bulbs.

Reflector lamp.—The reflector lamp is a tall floor lamp with a glass or metal bowl. The light is reflected upward toward the ceiling. This is in contrast to the lamp with the diffused glass reflector bowl and fabric shade which directs the light downward toward the floor as well as throwing a portion of light toward the ceiling. The reflector lamp may be used instead of a ceiling light but is not recommended as a reading lamp.

Bridge or lounge-chair lamps.—Most of the old-type bridge lamps in which a bulb hung from a projected arm have been replaced by a reflector type lamp which employs a diffusing bowl. These bridge or swinging-arm lounge-chair lamps are smaller than the floor lamps, and can be adjusted to any position over a chair. Many have a cover or closed top on the diffusing bowl so the light will not shine in the user's eyes.

Although theoretically lamps have no traditional period styling, since all lamps are a product of modern invention, manufacturers have styled lamps of all types to blend with period decorations, and have classified them as to English, French, Colonial, Early American, modern, nautical, juvenile, and commercial types to meet various decorative demands. Lamps for use in period rooms should be selected in the same manner as accessories, the simpler types of lamps for English settings, the more ornate types for French and Victorian.

Materials long associated with the various periods of furniture design, and popular during certain centuries have been employed in lamp bases; bone china, Wedgewood, Sheffield silver, brass, and Chinese porcelain bases have been used on eighteenth century lamps. Just as one would select brass or milk glass accessories for an Early American room, lamps made to resemble old vases, oil lamps used during the period, and hurricane lamps with an electric light replacing the candle in the glass chimney, are appropriate for rooms furnished in Early American style.

For the French room are the more elaborate lamps such as onyx, crystal, metal figurines, and French china. Modern lamps are made in such materials as wood, glass, cork, plastics, and metal. Floor lamps, as well as table lamps, follow period styles, and lamps are designed to accompany practically every type of setting.

After determining the style of lamp for a particular room, the next problem is the type of lamp to use. It is well to remember that enough light should be provided in home decoration so that the ratio of darkness to light will not exceed 10 to 1. It is also a cardinal rule of decoration that each grouping should have a light in keeping with the purpose of the grouping; for example, a lounge chair is used primarily for lounging and reading. To place a lounge chair in a room without a lamp as its companion decreases the utility and enjoyment of the chair.

Courtesy American Furniture Mart.

Figure 49.—Many interesting new pieces make up this grouping. The chair side table provides accommodation for books, lamps, and smoking accessories and offers the new approach to eighteenth century utility pieces. The refreshment cart heralds the return of the once-popular tea table. A drawer in the back of the table provides space for silverware and linens. The lounge chair is covered in maroon striped satin damask. The rug is an all-over textured Axminster.

If a table is used beside the chair, a lamp in proper proportion to the table should be used. The lamp may provide a color accent beside the chair or may be of a material in keeping with the decorative trend. Since the lounge chair is used for reading, the lamp should be a good reading lamp and should come up to the scientific standards set up for good light. If no table is to be used, a bridge or lounge chair lamp may be added.

Commode lamps should be in proportion to the sofa with which they are used. Reflector lamps fit into corners, or may be used beside a grand piano or in front of windows.

If the decorator keeps in mind that the lamp is an accessory, that it should complement the room and serve a specific purpose by its use, the correct use of lamps is made quite simple.

When a woman wishes to buy a lamp the salesperson should first inquire where the lamp is to be used. If it is a table lamp find out if there are other lamps in the room. Ask if there is a chair next to the table and if that chair is used for reading or sewing. If the lamp is to be used purely for decorative purposes it may be of a different type than that which provides adequate light for a specific purpose. Find out the general period of the room and the color scheme so the lamp will be in keeping with the surroundings and provide the proper accent. Impress the customer with the necessity of a lamp for every grouping, and with the importance of good lighting.

Oil lamps for farm use have been styled to resemble electric lamps and have enameled bases, diffused reflectors and attractive shades. All lamps regardless of the source of light have been materially improved and there is no need for any person to have poor lighting in the home today.

PICTURES AND MIRRORS

Pictures and mirrors are important accessories in present day decorating and their correct use can change the appearance of the entire room.

Pictures vary according to size, subjects, and medium used. There is no set, all-comprehensive rule for the use of pictures, but certain types of pictures are used with certain types of settings either because the subject matter confines it to a certain period, or the technique used is in keeping with a definite century.

Frames many times control the use of a picture, and an old picture may be placed in a modern frame and used in a contemporary setting. Mats used on pictures may be varied according to the subject matter and the frame selected according to the manner in which the picture is used. Wood frames are popular and in good taste and are shown in natural wood color, mahogany, walnut, maple, or enameled. Gilt frames are still in use, but for the most part picture frames are simpler than in the past century.

Pictures should be selected according to their subject and should be in keeping with the general trend of the room. Certain subjects are known to be ageless and are in good taste when used in an eighteenth century room or in a modern room. This specifically refers to Chinese pictures or florals and they vary in use only by the type of frame employed. Portraits may be used with all periods if they are done in oil and properly framed and preserved.

Many times a picture, if large and particularly lovely, may furnish the decorative theme of the room, and the colors used in the picture picked up in the upholstered pieces and the accessories. At other times pictures will provide a necessary color accent.

Certain subjects, popular during a particular century, lend themselves to rooms of that century, as for example, hunting scenes are known to be of English origin and lend themselves to English settings. Elaborately dressed women of the French court shown in a court scene are best used with a French setting, and a daintily furnished girl's room requires dainty subjects on the wall such as flowers, birds, or feminine subjects.

Pictures may be hung singly, in pairs, or groups according to the manner in which they are used. A small picture placed over the center of a sofa is out of balance with the sofa. One large picture or a group of small pictures may be used depending upon the size of the picture. A sense of balance should be brought into play when hanging pictures, and common sense used not to let the picture over-balance the piece with which it is used, nor to appear dwarfed on a large wall area.

Pictures should be hung so that the center is eye level to the person standing in the room. They should be hung flat against the wall with the hooks and cords used to suspend the pictures entirely concealed. Many novel arrangements are being used effectively in contemporary decorating, and it is a good habit to watch the home furnishings pages of the newspapers and national magazines for new methods of arranging pictures.

Mirrors are playing an increasingly important part in today's decorating scheme as they have been found to serve a multiple purpose.

Architecturally, mirrors may be used to give the illusion of increased space. A wall covered with mirrors will make a room appear twice its size. Because of this illusion of space, many rooms, furnished in the modern manner use large, full wall mirrors as part of the decorative scheme.

Mirrors fall into two main classes, the Venetian type without frames, and the framed models. Mirrors may be etched, painted, sand-blasted or have decorations applied to the exterior, such as pieces of wood, flower containers, or bits of metal. Many frames are made of wood and finished in mahogany, maple, walnut, or bleached wood or gilt frames. Many times genuine gold leaf is used. Single, double, and triple beveled edges are used, in many instances the beveled edge being the only decoration on the mirror. Mirrors with beveled edges are shown with and without frames.

The old belief that mirrors vary in quality according to the thickness of the glass has been disproved. The United States Department of Commerce under its commercial standards (C. S. 27-36) has set up three grades of mirrors for classification by the manufacturers. These include:

A quality.—The best type of mirror, in which the central area of the glass is free from major defects but the mirrors may contain tiny, well-scattered bubbles (referred to by the Government as seeds) and short, faint hairlines on the back or face of the mirror. The outer area of the mirror may also contain well-scattered bubbles and faint clouds.

No. 1 quality mirrors are rated as second grade and may contain tiny, well-scattered bubbles, short faint hairlines and scattered clouds.

No. 2 quality mirrors are rated as third grade and may contain scattered bubbles, some coarse bubbles, light beams, light scratches and some cloudiness. The No. 2 mirror may also have a "bull's-eye" (distortion) if it is not visible from directly in front of the mirror.

Although these are highly technical specifications laid down by the manufacturer, the consumer may watch for certain imperfections when purchasing mirrors. A good test which may be made of a mirror as to its quality is to examine the mirror from the front and the side to see that the reflection is not distorted. Ceiling and floor lines should appear perfectly straight, and not waved. The mirror should be comparatively free from bubbles, and scratches should be very faint.

Mirrors which employ window glass, show distortion when given the side test, and lines will appear to be waved.

The quality of the mirror depends upon the manufacturer since many chemicals are used and atmospheric conditions have a pronounced effect upon the finished product. Mirrors made under proper conditions should give at least 5 years of service without tarnishing. Improper silvering will result in tarnishing within a few months.

Color of the mirror is also a determining feature of the quality. Good mirrors should be a sparkling white color. Poorly silvered mirrors reflect a yellowish tint.

Tinted mirrors for decorative purposes are shown in blue and peach tones. These reflect a colored image and are considered in good usage in certain instances when this color is needed in the room.

Plain silver mirrors are most popular and when used in a room, pick up and reflect the colors of

the room without adding an additional tone.

Many times, when it is necessary to bring color into a certain part of the room, a mirror is used since all of the colors are concentrated in the glass and reflected back into the room.

Both period and modern mirrors are on the market with period types especially adapted to period rooms. The shape of the frame and decorative accent determine the period of the mirror, and sizes vary according to the purpose for which they are to be used. The same principle applies to hanging mirrors as in the case of pictures, and mirrors should be in related balance to the piece with which they are used. Unless designed as a left and right mirror, mirrors should be used singly rather than in pairs although mirrored wall plaques may be used in pairs or grouped in the same manner as pictures. Mirrored frames on pictures are being widely used since they combine the use of a mirror with a picture.

Mirrors may be used in the dining room over a buffet or commode; in the living room over the mantle, sofa, or wall grouping, in the hall, in the bedroom, bathroom, and in the kitchen. Kitchen mirrors should be plain, unframed, and undecorated. Many times an interesting group is made up of a mirror flanked by a pair of pictures.

WALL DECORATIONS

In addition to mirrors and pictures, there are many other types of wall decoration. Sconces, or small shelves nailed to the wall on which plants or small art objects are placed, are growing in popularity. Wall brackets for growing plants, knickknack shelves, corner shelves, clocks, plates mounted on wall holders, murals, and tapestries are all used in today's decorative scheme.

In an eighteenth century room, an effective grouping can be made of three wall sconces arranged in pyramid fashion, on which Chinese celestial figures are placed. Sconces may be used singly, in pairs or in groups, and may be made of wood, glass, or metal and either finished in natural color, gilded, or enameled. A grouping of sconces with art objects over the fireplace, above a sofa, on a narrow wall, or in the hall is extremely effective. Plants with drooping vines may be placed on the sconces, or colorful art objects in keeping with the general scheme of the room.

The popularity of touches of living green in the room has brought wall brackets for holding potted plants to the fore. These brackets are usually made of wrought iron and are enameled white or pastel colors. A ring holder keeps the pot in place and provides accommodations for one or several such plants. Wood plant brackets are also on the market and are used in the more formal period rooms. Wall brackets for plants can be used in any room from the kitchen to the front porch and may be placed on the window frame, in the archway of a hall, on the walls flanking a mirror or picture, on a narrow wall, or may hang from a central doorway. Many times colored pots in contrast to the wall bracket are shown, and the effect is cheerful and adds color and growing greens to the home.

Knickknack shelves have become popular with the increased hobby of collecting art objects by the amateur. Knickknack shelves are shown in a variety of styles for various rooms, and are available in wood, enameled metal, chrome, and glass. In the bathroom knickknack shelves are used to hold bath accessories, powder, toilet water, and attractive bottles and jars; in the kitchen these shelves may hold salt and pepper shakers, tiny decorative pitchers and gayly colored kitchen accessories; in the bedroom, perfume bottles, and knickknacks find their way to these shelves; and in the dining room and living room, plants in decorative pots, and art objects add color to the wall and the room. Corner shelves, which fit into a corner of the wall and make use of otherwise waste space are used in the same manner as the knickknack shelves which are shown in a variety of shapes and sizes.

Clocks to hang on the wall are made in styles to harmonize with every room in the house. Kitchen clocks, in white and pastel enamels to match the room's color schemes, novelty bedroom clocks, and living room clocks come in period and modern varieties. Popular for the Colonial and Early American room is the banjo clock. Many of the new clocks are operated by electricity.

A popular wall decoration consists of rare plates, placed in wall-plate holders and arranged in groups on the wall either over a sofa, or mantle, or on plain walls. Plates may be used in the same manner as pictures but care should be taken to select plates which have genuine decorative value and have interest either by their antiquity, coloring, or subject.

Murals in which photographic subjects are enlarged in a panoramic manner are used as wall decorations, particularly in rooms furnished in a contemporary manner. Outdoor scenes, familiar scenes of the city, or a composite of photographic subjects of interest to the occupants of the room are applied to the wall either in the manner of wallpaper or in a frame as a gigantic picture. Murals, properly used, are extremely decorative but should be used under the guidance of an expert who understands the correct application of the mural to the wall.

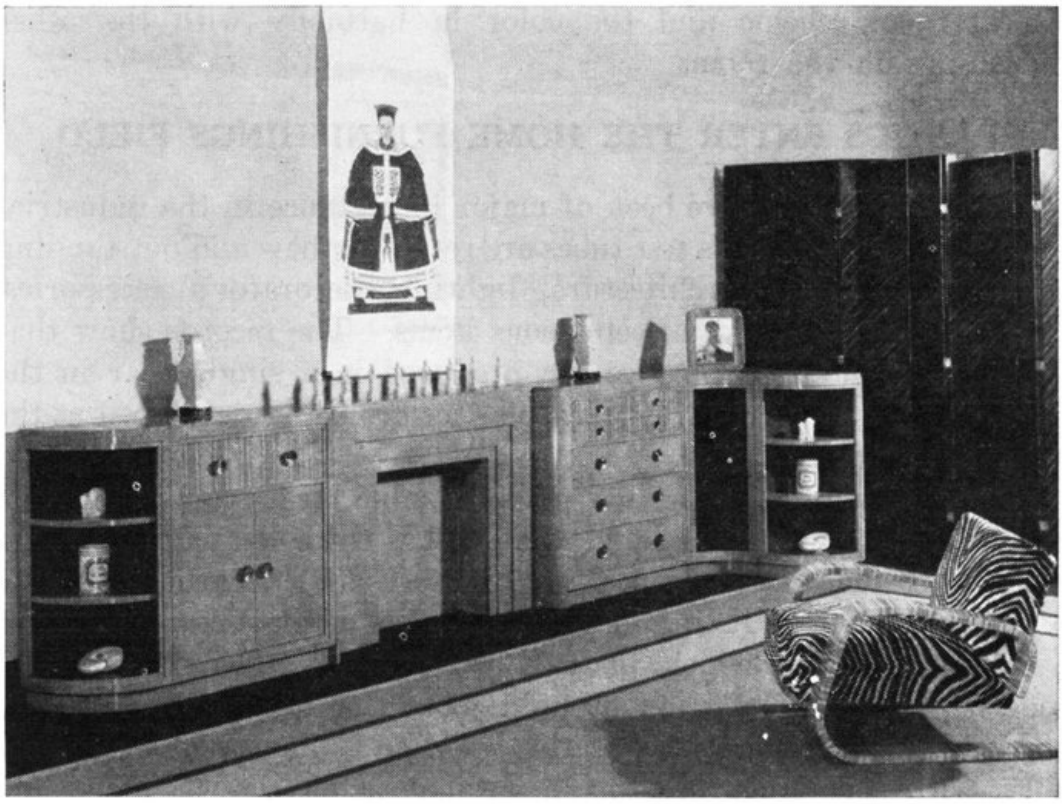
Tapestries are not in as common usage as a decade ago, having been abandoned in favor of pictures, mirrors, wall brackets, and other newer accessories. Tapestries many times give a heavy appearance to a room and have been condemned by many modern housewives as "dirt catchers."

Many of the tapestries in use today are framed and these may be used in the same manner as a picture. A large tapestry hanging may be used on the wall of a study or den or behind a large wall piece. The subject of the tapestry should be in keeping with the general room scheme and the color in harmony with the other furnishings in the room.

PLASTICS ENTER THE HOME FURNISHINGS FIELD

For years plastics have been of major importance in the industrial field. Now the chemist's test tubes are revealing new and outstanding uses for plastics in architecture, lighting, decorator's accessories, furniture novelties, and miscellaneous items. The records show that 160,000,000 pounds of plastics are produced in a single year in the United States alone, and that new plastics are being developed at the rate of one a year.

This evolution of plastics has made possible large-scale production of articles within a price range that makes them available to large numbers of homes. A recent issue of the British Yearbook devotes 55 pages to the mere listing of products made of plastic and 30 pages to substances from which plastics are derived. The fifth annual modern plastics competition brought more than 1,000 entries. Top award in the furniture classification went to a display of occasional tables with revolving tops, made without using screws, bolts, and other attachments ordinarily used in furniture construction. At the January and June (1941) Furniture Mart shows in Chicago, Ill., plastics definitely entered the competitive fields for interior decoration, surfacing, hardware, and paneling. There were "all-plastic rooms" featuring dinette sets, bedroom suites, dressing tables, vanity chairs, bar stools, consoles, bedside tables, and sophisticated modern stow-away chests. Chrome and wood were combined into a high chair with a back formed of pink and blue opaque woven plastic. There were bedroom groupings in soft, light grays matched by the woodwork of the room. Plain panel backs of beds were in cedar to match the carpet. Wall paper was plaided in ivory and two-tone gray. There were bedrooms in French Provincial style; others in simple Colonial, or Georgian. Dining room groupings were shown in sparkling furniture that was not glass but was warp-resisting and impervious to mars, nicks, chipping, and such abuse as would require refinishing in the case of wood or metal pieces. The talent of ingenious designers and decorators had been used to aid in producing home accessories in plastics. There were on display table lamps, curtain rods, picture frames, salad bowls and utensils, vases, wastepaper baskets, bird cages, carved ornamental centerpieces, mirror frames, and coat trees. Plastics were shown in fluorescent lighting effects possessing the advantages of day-like light, less heat, less power consumption, and greater illumination per unit of power consumption. There seemed to be no major product in the home furnishings field, including lighting and accessories, for which this "plastics age" had not prepared an entry.



Photograph by Grignon.

Figure 50.—Exhibit 249, June (1941) American Furniture Mart, Chicago, Ill., showing reproduction of wood grain so applied as to take the form of a veneer as an integral part of the surface processed. The chair shows zebrawood graining.

As talking points for plastics in the home furnishings field, consider the following claims:

1. The plastic used for furniture is neither a finish nor a protection for a finish. It is a hard-surfacing substance said to be "many times as strong as wood."
2. Tests show that it is not affected by hot dishes up to 200° F. Liquids of all types and unusual temperatures harm plastics not in the least. These include perfumes, ordinary acids, alcohol, nail polish, and fruit stains.

3. Plastic surfacing will not discolor or fade, even though exposed for a long period to the sun's rays.
4. Plastic pieces need neither polish nor wax. They are washed with ordinary soap and water.

Salespersons should understand a few basic technical facts in order to discuss plastic pieces or sets or "all-plastic" rooms with interested customers.

The term "plastics" is a commercial, rather than a scientific, designation; the line is drawn not so much by what the substance is, as by what it will do. The materials called "plastics" have in common not only the ability to be formed while soft into a desired shape possessing rigidity, but also the chemical characteristics of having been polymerized; that is, they are constituted of large molecules which are aggregates of similar molecules.

Plastics are classified into two types depending on their physical properties:

1. *Thermoplastic.*
2. *Thermosetting.*

Thermoplastic materials soften upon being heated and become solid again when cooled. This change of state can be repeated over and over. Thermosetting plastics on the other hand are compounds which definitely alter their chemical constitution in the course of molding under heat or pressure or both.

Plastics also may be classified according to their chemical source. The 18 or so known basic types fall into 4 general fields: Cellulose plastics, protein plastics, natural resin plastics, and synthetic resin plastics.

CELLULOSE PLASTICS

Cellulose nitrate, the classic in this type, begins life as cotton linters—the short fibers next to the seed in a cotton boll. Purified, the cellulose is treated with mixed nitric and sulfuric acids to produce pyroxylin. Camphor, alcohol, and color are added as desired. The mixture becomes a dough-like substance which is rolled, baked, seasoned, and polished. When heated, it may be shaped to any form desired; and it can be cut, sawed, filed, blown, rolled, planed, hammered, drilled, and turned on lathes. It may be obtained in practically every shade and hue, in transparent, translucent, opaque, and in mottled and pearl effects.

PROTEIN PLASTICS

Protein plastics date back to 1890 when Dr. Adolph Spitteler of Hamburg, Germany, set out to make a white "blackboard" for classroom use. He mixed sour milk with formaldehyde and got a casein plastic, a shiny substance from which many a modern button and buckle is made. It is possible to use soya beans, lignin from wood, coffee beans, and peanuts in making protein-type plastics.

NATURAL AND SYNTHETIC RESINS

An example of a natural resin is *lac* secreted by a little red insect that sucks the sap of trees and converts it into a protective covering for itself. *Lac*, upon being refined and dissolved in a suitable solvent, forms a shellac. Dr. Leo Baekeland in 1907 was investigating this natural process when he combined formaldehyde and phenol with the aid of a catalyst and heat. The result was a synthetic resin, the basis of the first molded phenolic plastic—the familiar substance of telephone receivers and many other objects. The commercial development of urea-formaldehyde plastics was made possible by availability not only of formaldehyde but also of synthetic urea.

Comparatively new in the field of structural materials, but significant for those who sell home furnishings, are laminated plastics, plywood, and veneers. Laminated plastics are made by treating sheets of paper or woven cloth with synthetic heat-reactive resins and subjecting built-up layers of the treated materials to heat and pressure. Such plastics also may be bonded to thin wood sheets and to metals. The resulting materials are useful for furniture and for interior decoration.

This type of material was used in decorating the Library of Congress Annex. It was extensively used on the British superliner, Queen Mary. From vinyl resins, one of the new families, comes the center of the sandwich in safety glass. The plastic interlayer is not broken by a blow but stretches, at the same time holding broken pieces of glass together and preventing flying splinters.

At the present time the varied diversity of plastics is a major asset. In the home furnishings field, whoever wants a new, strong, graceful, functional material for a new product has a wide range of materials in all color combinations from which to make a choice. For the first time, the claim may be advanced that certain limitations in furniture design have been released and that innumerable variations without changing the shape or structure of the product are possible. By the use of fascinating surfaces, textures, and colors, it is possible to create designs which, while simple, possess charm, intrinsic beauty, and distinction. The introduction of such a product to the home furnishings field brings a new competitive element.

"DO'S" AND "DON'T'S" FOR THE SALESPERSON

Every salesperson has his own technique for closing a sale, but there are certain methods which seem to impress favorably the potential customer and others which react unfavorably.

Among the objectionable selling methods is that of making personal comparisons; for example, to tell a customer that you have a chair, a lamp, or a rug exactly like the one she is buying usually does not impress her. The average customer likes to feel her taste is superior to the salesperson's and that she can afford something beyond the price range of the person serving her. Many sales are lost by the salesperson making a personal reference to himself in this manner.

Don't take a superior attitude when waiting on a customer, who seems less informed on the subject than yourself. Suggest, rather than tell her what to use, and appear to be serving her in a graceful manner, letting her know you enjoy waiting on her. Mate her feel perfectly at ease in your presence, yet treat her with the respect that she as a customer deserves.

Many people rather like being referred to by their name as it gives them a personal feeling with the store. When you know the name of the person you are serving, refer to her name from time to time but don't repeat it too often. When she leaves, thank her, by using her name and once or twice during the conversation mention it. Be sure you pronounce the name correctly, however, and that you refer to her by her correct title, noting whether or not she is married or single.

People are usually interested to know that the merchandise they choose compliments their personality and their persons. This is true of clothes and is an important element of style. It is true of homes and rooms where the harmony of color and design can be used to the best advantage when properly adjusted to the personality of the due or the family that uses it. Obviously this lies in the realm of newer advances in proper home styling and decoration. Nevertheless, many salesmen in average stores can enhance their effectiveness and their service by helping their customers to avoid choices that do not seem to harmonize with their obvious personal characteristics. To truthfully assure a customer that her choice does properly reflect herself is likewise obviously good salesmanship.

People have become accustomed to prideful ownership of automobiles similar to those bought by their neighbors. The backbone of the home-furnishings industry is, however, the individuality of the American home and it has never succumbed to stereotyped style or decoration. Almost every customer either consciously or unconsciously recognizes this and will be interested in furniture that sets her home apart from others and represents her individual taste and planning. The first time a customer may ask questions of a salesman; the second and third time, just return to look. Never make any customer feel that you are annoyed by her delayed purchase or that you recognize that she is still looking. Make yourself available, should she want additional information, but allow her time to consider the merchandise at her leisure, if she is so disposed.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the most satisfactory arrangement of lighting units for a living room? A dining room?

2. What is cove lighting?

3. "The texture of objects determines the amount of colored light they will absorb." Explain.

4. Explain the terms: Candlepower, footcandles, lumens, parabolic reflector, and indirect lighting.

5. Under what conditions would you advocate the use of tapestry wall hangings?

6. Are you familiar with the light specifications worked out by the Illuminating Engineering Society, 61 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.?

7. How would you build an effective window display to increase sales for your lighting fixtures department?

8. Discuss the correct use of rhythm in display.

9. Do you advise use of price cards in connection with your accessories display?

10. What opportunities exist to display accessories combined in use?

11. In what way is display a silent salesman?

SUGGESTED READING LIST

BURRIS-MEYER, ELIZABETH. *Decorating Livable Homes.* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, N. Y. (1937.)

Accessories, VIII, pp. 206-232.
Light, IX, pp. 232-248.

CRANE, ROSS. *Home Furnishing and Decoration.* Frederick J. Drake & Co., Inc., Chicago, Ill. (1933.)

Pictures, XII, pp. 183-191.
Lighting, XX, pp. 247-253.
Lamps, XXI, pp. 253-261.

EBERLEIN, MCCLURE, HOLLOWAY. *The Practical Book of Interior Decoration.* J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Pa. (1919.)

Artificial Lighting, IX, p. 324.
Pictures and Their Framing, XI, p. 350.
Decorative Accessories, XII, p. 364.

FALES, WINIFRED. *What's New in Home Decorating.* Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc., New York, N. Y. (1936.)

Science of Lighting, X, pp. 207-229.

JACKSON, ALICE *and* BETTINA. *The Study of Interior Decoration.* Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., Garden City, N. Y. (1928.)

Accessories, XIV, pp. 317-340.

KNAUFF, G. B. *Refurbishing The Home.* McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, N. Y. (1938.)

Lighting Problems, XIV, pp. 289-302.
Pictures, Hangings, Accessories, XV, pp. 302-317.

FOOTNOTES:

[31] The Illuminating Engineering Society is made up of illuminating engineers and those engaged in the lighting field who have worked out set standards for illumination from tested specifications.

A FINAL WORD

We bring the final unit of this course to an end with a cordial wish for your prosperity and success.

We have tried to open more widely the door of opportunity.

No man can fix a limit to your progress but yourself.

The sale of home furnishings at retail can be one of the most interesting of occupations with professional standing and a good professional income as its rewards.

We hope and believe that you will win and enjoy these rewards, and with them another and greater. This is the happiness of creative effort.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A:—GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acanthus leaf.—A classical ornamental form, derived from the acanthus plant.

Arabesque.—Intricate interlacing ornament, in the Arabian manner.

Arcade.—A series of arches, supported by columns (fig. 10, page 59).

Aubusson.—A fine quality of hand-made tapestry; originally made at Aubusson, France, used for carpets or upholstery.

Baluster.—In architecture, a turned or square upright support for the rail of a balustrade; in furniture, a splat with the outlines of a baluster. (See fig. 22, page 106.)

Band or banding.—A narrow inlay which contrasts in color or grain with the surface which it is used to embellish.

Banister.—Same as "baluster."

Baroque.—The style which followed that of the Renaissance; characterized by rectangular outline much softened by use of curves, and exemplified by Louis XIV furniture, and in modified form by that of the late Jacobean and William and Mary styles.

Bead or beading.—A small molding, usually of semicircular shape.

Beauvais tapestry.—A fine hand-woven tapestry made in Beauvais, France, since 1662, and used for wall panels and furniture coverings.

Bombé.—Puffed, rounded, or bulged.

Brass.—An alloy of copper and zinc.

Broken pediment.—See "pediment."

Bronze.—An alloy of copper and zinc.

Bun foot.—See "foot."

C-*scroll.*—In the form of the letter **C**.

Cartouche.—An ornamental form based originally upon the open scroll; an oblong, elliptical, or shield-shaped flat panel, used in the decoration of furniture.

Caryatid.—A draped female figure, used as a support in place of a column or pilaster.

Chamfer.—The surface formed by cutting away the angle formed by two sides of a board.

Classic.—As here used, conforming to the style of ancient Greek and Roman art.

Collar.—A narrow strap or band, used near the top and (or) bottom of the leg.

Court cupboard.—A short cupboard; originally a small cupboard set on a side table, but later built as one piece.

Cyma curve.—A double or **S** curve, as in the cabriole leg.

Dado.—The lower part of a wall, when marked off by panel or moldings.

Deal.—Scotch fir.

Fiddleback.—Having splats shaped something like a violin.

Finial.—A terminating or crowning detail.

Flemish scroll foot.—See "foot."

Fluting.—Decoration by means of flutes or channels, as in a chair leg or dresser post.

Foot—

Ball.—Globular, and attached to leg by slender ankle.

Ball and claw.—Derived from the Chinese and representing a dragon's claw holding the great pearl.

Bell.—Bell-shaped, and joined to leg by slender ankle.

Bracket.—Used for cabinets, but not for chairs.

Bun.—In the form of a flattened ball. See "trumpet-turned leg," under "leg."

Dutch.—Another name for "pad foot."

Flemish scroll.—See illustration, page 62.

French.—See illustration, page 57.

Hoof.—See "cabriole leg with hoof foot," under "leg."

Leaf scroll.—See illustration, page 16.

Pad.—See illustration, pages 59, 65.

Paw.—See illustration, pages 59, 65.

Peg top.—Turned to a point, like a top, and attached to the leg without a sharply defined ankle.

Spade.—See illustration, page 68.

Spanish.—See illustration, page 53.

Serpent.—Used on tripod tables.

Fresco.—In the fine arts, a method of painting on freshly laid plaster before it dries.

Fret.—Interlaced ornamental work, carved on flat surfaces or pierced for galleries, chair backs, or aprons.

Gallery.—An ornamental railing of wood or metal along the edge of a table, desk, or sideboard.

Gesso (pronounced jes-o).—a plaster-like material spread on a surface or moulded into ornamental forms as a base for painting or gilding.

Gilding.—An overlay or covering of gold leaf, or of gold powder with size.

Girandole.—A very elaborate type of candle holder, used on the walls of late seventeenth and eighteenth century French salons, and usually made in pairs.

Highboy.—A tall chest of drawers, mounted on legs.

Japanning.—Art of varnishing with japan; see "lacquer."

Knee.—The projecting upper curve of a cabriole leg; see "leg."

Lacquer.—In period decoration, a varnish, of which the best was produced in Japan by tapping the varnish tree and drying the sap in the air. Pigments were often added for color. In Japanese lacquer work at least 15 coats, separately polished, were applied.

Leg.—

Cabriole.—Made in many styles. Illustration on pages 16, 65 show an example with hoof foot and carved knee.

S-*scroll.*—See illustration, page 62.

Trumpet-turned.—Here shown with inverted cup and bun foot. Many variations of this general form include octagonal legs and pear bulb legs.

Term.—Many variations of this form, which is here shown in an ornate leg of the style of Louis XIV.

Lowboy.—A chest of drawers, usually not more than 4 feet high and standing on four legs.

Marquetry.—Inlaid work, usually in colored woods, but occasionally with the addition of ivory, bone, mother-of-pearl, etc. Sometimes differentiated as *intarsia*, in which the materials are placed in channels gouged out of the surface of the base, and *marquetry*, in which the pattern is formed as a veneer and glued to the surface of the base.

Mullion.—A slender bar or pier, forming a division between windows, screens, etc.

Neoclassic (New classic).—Designating the revival of classic taste in art, and here applied to the second revival after the discovery of Pompeian art early in the eighteenth century.

Ormolu.—An alloy of copper and zinc; used in France for the production of furniture mounts, which were usually first cast, then chiseled with jewel-like precision, and gilded.

Parquetry.—An inlay of geometric or other patterns for floors, often in colored woods.

Patina.—In furniture, the surface appearance assumed by wood, marble, or other materials as the result of long exposure.

Pediment.—In classic architecture, the flat triangular space between the roof lines on the end of a building; now often curved, and applied to over-doors, cabinet tops, etc. In the broken pediment the top line is cut away.

Pewter.—An alloy of tin with some other metal usually copper, lead, or antimony.

Reeding.—Embellishment produced by narrow convex moldings; the reverse of fluting.

Rococo.—The general decorative style which developed from and followed the Baroque; characterized by exclusive employment of curved line, avoidance of complete symmetry, and exuberant and fanciful ornament in which shell and scroll forms were freely employed.

S-*scroll.*—A scroll roughly in the form of the letter **S**, often used for the legs of chairs or cabinets; see "leg."

Serpentine.—Sinuous or winding; in furniture, bow-shaped, with the ends straight or bent back like a Cupid's bow.

Splat.—A broad, flat upright member in middle of chairback.

Splay or splayed.—Spread outward obliquely.

Strap-work.—A decorative design consisting of a narrow fillet or band with crossed, folded, or interlaced ornament.

Silhouette.—As applied to stretchers or skirts, an ornamental outline or profile.

Squab.—A thickly stuffed loose cushion, especially one used for the seat of a sofa, couch, chair, or stool.

Swag.—A decoration in wood or metal, resembling festoons or draperies.

Truss.—In furniture, a rigid frame, of solid, open, column or arcade construction, used in pairs to support the ends of a piece of furniture, and usually connected by some form of stretcher.

Tester.—A canopy over a bed, supported by the bedposts.

Trestle.—A braced frame, forming whole support of a table top.

Appendix B.—GENERAL READING LIST

In order to avoid confusion, this list is restricted to a few books which are adequate for our present purpose, and usually are to be found in every public library. Books dealing with materials, construction, and special aspects of home-furnishing practice, and with salesmanship and merchandising principles are listed for suggested reading at the end of each unit.

GENERAL REFERENCE

The new Encyclopedia Britannica (14th edition) contains an astounding wealth of well written and beautifully illustrated material very useful to the salesman.

GENERAL READING SUGGESTIONS

WHERE TO BEGIN

CRANE, ROSS. *Interior Decoration. A Study Course for Furniture Men.* The Seng Co., 1430 No. Dayton Street, Chicago, Ill., 1928.

EBERLEIN, HAROLD. *Practical Book of Interior Decoration.* J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Pa. 1937.

KELSEY, CLARK. *Furniture: Its Selection and Use.* National Committee on Wood Utilization, United States Department of Commerce. Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 1931.

MUSELWHITE, KATHERINE. *Principles and Practice of Interior Decoration.* Suttonhouse, Ltd., Publishers, Los Angeles, Calif.

PALMER, LOIS. *Your House.* Boston Cooking School Magazine Co. 1928.

POST, EMILY PRICE. *Personality of a House.* Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York, N. Y. 1933.

POWELL, LYDIA. *The Attractive Home.* Macmillan Co., New York, N. Y. 1939.

REYBURN, SAMUEL W. *Selling Home Furnishings Successfully.* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, N. Y.

WHITON, SHERRILL. *Elements of Interior Decoration.* J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Pa. 1937.

MAKING AN ATTRACTIVE INTERIOR

BURRIS-MEYER, ELIZABETH. *Decorating Livable Homes.* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, N. Y. 1937.

BURROWS, THELMA. *Successful House Furnishing.* Manual Arts Press, Peoria, Ill. 1938.

KNAUFF, CARL G. B. *Refurbishing The Home.* McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. New York, N. Y. 1938.

KOUES, HELEN. *How To Be Your Own Decorator.* Tudor Publishing Co., Inc., New York, N. Y. 1939.

MAAS, CARL. *Common Sense In Home Decoration.* Greenberg Publishing Co., New York, N. Y. 1938.

MERIVALE, MARGARET. *Furnishing The Small Home.* Studio Publications, London, n. d.

MILLER, GLADYS. *Decoratively Speaking.* Doubleday, Doran & Co., New York, N. Y. 1939.

STOREY, WALTER. *Period Influences in Interior Decoration.* Harper & Bros., New York, N. Y. 1937.

FURNITURE STYLES

ARONSON, JOSEPH. *Book of Furniture and Decoration.* Crown Publishers, New York, N. Y. 1937.

ARONSON, JOSEPH. *Encyclopedia of Furniture.* Crown Publishers, New York, N. Y. 1939.

HOLLOWAY, EDWARD. *Practical Book of American Furniture and Decoration.* J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Pa. 1937.

KIMERLY, W. L. *How To Know Period Styles in Furniture.* Grand Rapids Furniture Record Co. 1912.

ORMSBEE, THOMAS. *Early American Furniture Makers.* Tudor Publishing Co., New York, N. Y. 1930.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Handbook of the American Wing*. R. T. H. Halsey-Charles O. Cornelius. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N. Y. 1928.

STRICTLY MODERN

DRAPER, DOROTHY TUCKERMAN. *Decorating Is Fun.* Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., New York, N. Y. 1939.

FRANKL, PAUL. *Space For Living.* Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., New York, N. Y. 1938.

PATMORE, DEREK. *Color Schemes for the Modern Home.* Studio Publications, London. 1936.

----. *Decoration for the Small Home.* G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, N. Y. 1938.

Yearbook of Decorative Art. Studio Publications. 1938.

Appendix C.—A SUGGESTED TEACHING OUTLINE FOR A GROUP LEADER

Unit IV contains much more material than can be discussed at one meeting. The group leader must be selective and decide which points are to be developed at the group meeting. Two programs are suggested.

FOR THE FIRST GROUP MEETING

1. *Opening remarks by the group leader* (5 minutes):

   a. No matter what kind of furniture we stock and sell, we first must have a working knowledge of the historic styles.

   b. This unit contains condensed information on period decoration. You will not need to learn all these details thoroughly—at least not at once. Take the unit home and read it carefully.

   c. After this reading, think over your own stock and decide just what parts of the description of period furniture will be most useful to pick out and study in detail.

2. *"High-lighting" a furniture sales talk* (35 minutes):

a. A series of talks made by various salesmen and limited to 5 minutes each. Have five or six articles, furniture and rugs, grouped in front of the class and assign one piece to each man after he gets on his feet. Stress the style appeal of the piece under discussion.

b. Permit a minute or two for criticism after each talk and criticize them solely as to their probable effect in influencing a buyer.

3. *A Colonial bedroom* (15 minutes):

Demonstration by Mr. Williams will cover all the elements of a good selling talk—fitness, room arrangement, color appeal, beauty of design, style (with emphasis upon sentimental appeal and present vogue) and price. The demonstration should be criticized on the basis of its smoothness and cumulative effect, or "build-up."

Intermission

4. *Is our merchandise properly styled for our own trade?* (25 minutes):

Designed to put the buyer on the defensive, and to develop through frank discussion any need for changes in the character of the merchandise from the point of view of design and price only. You are trying to build up a business-getting machine, with no friction, dissatisfaction, or mental alibis. The idea that a salesman can sell anything to anybody will have to be discarded.

5. *Promotion plans for this season's business* (15 minutes):

By some owner or by the chairman; a brief, candid statement of plans for buying display, advertising, and all forms of promotion and sales effort. Good to insure enthusiastic teamwork and to build up loyalty.

6. *Personal experiences* (10 minutes):

The chairman will draw upon the selling experiences of individual members of the group.

FOR A SECOND GROUP MEETING (IF DESIRED)

1. *Opening remarks by the group leader* (5 minutes):

a. We can make the best start, with least likelihood of resistance, by helping the customer to find articles that suit her needs, tastes, and means, and add to the comfort, harmony, and beauty of her home.

b. Style in furniture doesn't stop with the historic styles, but it does start there, and if we are going to make profitable use of style as a selling factor we must first know how our own merchandise is styled.

2. *Styling our own stock* (50 minutes):

a. Early European styles. Mr. Stark (15 minutes).

b. Eighteenth century European styles. Mr. Pearson (20 minutes).

c. American styles. Mr. Hahn (15 minutes).

Go in a body directly to the nearest piece to be shown, and move on the minute that this piece has been adequately discussed. See to it that the men give a brief, orderly statement on three points: (1) The style with which they identify the piece; (2) reasons for the classification; and (3) types of non-period pieces, rugs, etc., in your own stock that could be used harmoniously with it. Time should be allowed for criticism and comment, even if very few pieces can be examined. If the group fails to arrive at general agreement on any piece, request the men who are arguing most keenly about it to consult other authorities and report at the next meeting.

Intermission

3. *Selling furniture on style basis* (30 minutes):

Demonstration by Messrs. Black and Herrick. In this demonstration, let the men have 15 minutes free from interruption, with the time limit announced in advance; stop them promptly when their time has expired; and call for comment and criticism. These sales rehearsals are of the utmost value if properly conducted. They should never be permitted to lag or become involved in windy discussion.

4. *How can we make use of unit III in closing any sales now pending? Open discussion* (20 minutes):

A sale of importance often has to be as carefully prepared and staged as a stage play. If the style appeal can be used to advantage in sales hanging fire or in sight, use the brains of the entire organization to find out how to do it.

As an alternative procedure to that suggested in 4 above, the following may be preferred by some group leaders:

Appoint three style leaders, or divide the entire force into three style committees, to deal respectively with *(a)* the early European styles, from the Renaissance to

William and Mary; *(b)* the eighteenth century European styles; and *(c)* the American styles. These leaders or committees should be instructed to go through the stock, assign as many pieces as possible to the various historic periods, and be prepared to give the reasons for these assignments to the whole group. In a large stock, limit the assignment to living room furniture only.

5. *Assignment of practice work* (5 minutes):

Typed forms prepared about as follows should be distributed at this time:

Historic style_____ Name of salesman_____

Approximate dates of beginning and end_____

Reigning monarch_____

Principal characteristics of the style_____

_____

Details of construction, ornament, and decorative practice_____

_____

_____

Other styles more or less closely related to this one_____

_____

Pieces in our own stock which can be assigned to this style. Give number,
article, and finish_____

_____

Criticism and comment by Mr. (Name of second salesman to be filled in later)_____

_____

Fill in one of these sheets with a different style for each salesman. Choose only the styles important for your own business. Hand these forms out with the request that they be filled in after careful study.

Appendix D.—THE LEADING FURNITURE WOODS

Acacia.—Africa, Australia, and generally throughout the warmer regions of the globe. The 550 species of acacia include several valuable timber woods, among them the Australian blackwood and acacia koa (see Koa) of the Sandwich Islands. Acacia was used as a furniture wood in the Byzantine and Romanesque styles more than 1,200 years ago.

Amaranth.—Chiefly from British Guiana, South America. Also known as purpleheart tree and violet wood. It is of fair size; wood heavy, hard, and of a deep purple color not fast to light; used in marquetry embellishment of Louis XV furniture, and still popular in fine furniture.

Amboyna.—East Indies, Malay Archipelago. (Also spelled Amboina, from the island of that name, Dutch East Indies.) This beautifully figured and mottled wood has much the color of satinwood. Amboyna burl, so-called, comes from the padouk tree. (See Padouk.) It is a rich golden yellow, shot with brilliant red, and is one of the most costly woods in the world.

Apple.—The fruit wood, used in Elizabethan England and since, as an inlay.

Ash.—Europe, Asia, and North America. A large, widely distributed group related to the olive family. There are 20 species in North America, ranging from desert shrubs to the magnificent white ash of the lower Ohio valley. The wood is markedly ring-porous, and when skillfully finished is very handsome, either plain or quarter-sawed. Varieties commonly used for veneer are figured trees of American white ash, English, Australian, and Japanese ash, the latter known as "tamo." Color ranges from grayish white to nut brown in tamo; a small fiddle or peanut figure is characteristic.

Aspen.—Chiefly from Maryland and the Appalachian Mountains. (Also known as silver poplar.) Large trees, yielding some figured logs having a characteristic small block mottle figure. The wood is of light-straw color with some light-brown streaks, and takes a beautiful finish.

Avodire.—West coast of Africa, near the equator. A creamy colored wood, yielding a handsome figure in crotch or quarter-sliced veneers.

Ayous.—West coast of Africa. Cream-colored wood of a slight greenish tinge; resembles prima vera in appearance, and because of its low cost is sometimes used as a substitute for blond woods.

Basswood.—North America. (Also known as linden and whitewood.) This tree, which belongs to the lime family, has a wood of cream-white color, almost free from visible markings due to pores, annual rings, or rays. In furniture manufacture it is used for plywood cores and kitchen table tops to be left unfinished.

Beech.—Europe, Asia Minor, and eastern North America. Of the same genus as the oak and the chestnut, this tree yields furniture wood of light reddish-brown color. It has about the same weight and hardness as sugar maple.

Birch.—North America, Europe, Asia Minor, and northern Siberia. A hardy, beautiful tree, yielding a hard and handsome wood, whether in plain or quarter-sawed surfaces, or in the form of veneers. The wood is of close texture; often has a wavy grain, producing what is known as curly birch, noted for wavy figure of changing high lights and shadows.

Bosse.—Africa, French Ivory Coast. This large tree, closely resembling the cedar, has a wood light red or pink in color, which takes an excellent finish. It is used in America only as a veneer.

Boxwood.—Europe, North America, and the West Indies. An extremely heavy, tough, close-grained wood, white or pale yellow in color, used in making musical instruments and also in furniture inlay.

Bubinga.—West coast of Africa. Closely related to the rosewood, and its equal in weight, hardness, and capacity to take a high polish. The wood is slightly darker than mahogany. The veneer is usually striped, but sometimes figured, with a gorgeous black mottle. (See Kewazingo.)

Butternut.—North Central United States. (Also known as white walnut.) This relatively small tree has a short trunk which makes it difficult to get veneer logs of good length and free from knots.

Cedar.—Asia, Africa, and North America. The cedar of Lebanon has been a favorite with poets and painters for thousands of years. Other famous members of this family are the deodar or "god tree" of the Himalayas, and the thuya. Among the American varieties are the incense or white cedar, the Port Oxford or Oregon cedar, and the red or American cedar. Cedar was used as a furniture wood in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Persia almost 4,000 years ago.

Cherry.—Europe and North America. This fruit wood is now rare and little used in furniture making but it is highly valued by cabinet makers by reason of its handsome fine-grained texture, its freedom from warping, and its capacity to take a high polish.

Chestnut.—Europe and North America. The wood is closely allied to that of the oak, which it resembles in general appearance, though it is softer and the medullary rays are finer and less pronounced. Ideal for lumber cores of hardwood plywood. Decay resistant; easily glued and easy to work. The blight in no way subtracts from the quality of the wood, but it has decreased the amount now available.

Cypress.—Europe, Asia, and North America. The common cypress is straight, tapering, and stately, but dark and forbidding in appearance. The wood is hard, close-grained, of a rich reddish hue and durable. A veneer of cypress stumps, with a highly intricate grain, is used in furniture making under the name of *faux satine*, or false satin.

Deal.—Scotland. The Scotch fir, used to some extent in Elizabethan England and later as a furniture wood.

Ebony.—India, East Indies, and Ceylon. Accurately, the black, heavy heartwood of a genus of tropical trees. According to legend the wood was used by the ancient kings of India not only for scepters and images, but also as drinking cups. Macassar ebony, so named from Macassar, seaport of the island of Celebes, Dutch East Indies, is notable for its close grain, intense hardness and rich hazel brown color, striped or mottled with black. It is much used in this country, where it is often known as "marblewood."

Elm.—Europe, Asia, and North America. A noble and beautiful tree, widely distributed in the north temperate zone. In this country white elm is chiefly important for furniture, with some use of rock elm and slippery elm. The wood is hard, ranging in color from reddish brown at the heart to white sap wood, and has a fine wavelike grain when plain sawed. The richly figured leather-brown burl veneers made from trunk burls of elms from the Carpathian mountains, in central Europe, are among the costliest of cabinet woods.

Goncalo alves.—Brazil. A hard and beautiful wood, closely related to rosewood. It has a rosy straw color, streaked with dark brown and black; is both sawed and sliced on the quarter, and is used for the same purposes as Macassar ebony.

Greywood or Silver Greywood.—See Harewood.

Gum.—United States. The term gum tree is applied to several unrelated gum-bearing trees in the United States, of which the wood of the red gum is chiefly used for furniture. It has a close grain, uniform texture, white sapwood, and reddish brown heartwood, the latter sometimes containing dark streaks, and known in the trade as figured gum. Tupelo gum and black gum have almost the same texture as red gum, but are white or warm gray in color. Gumwood was formerly called satin walnut in this country and still bears that name in England. Red gum is one of the

most widely used hardwoods for plywood and ranks second among native hardwoods in production of face veneers and first in production of utility or commercial veneers. The sap wood is commonly called "sap gum."

Harewood (artificial).—England and the Continent. Harewood, a West Indies wood now practically extinct, was much used by eighteenth century cabinet makers. Artificial harewood, also known as silver grey-wood, is made from carefully chosen English curly maple, known there as sycamore. The logs are first cut into planks and air-dried for three months; then cut into veneer and dyed with iron salts in huge tanks under pressure, which produces a beautiful silver grey wood with a slightly metallic sheen. It is one of the most costly veneers.

Holly.—England. English white holly has been used since the time of Elizabeth for inlays. The thin veneers, having an exceptionally close texture, can be dyed to various colors. It is similar in appearance and use to boxwood, but less expensive.

Iroko.—Africa. Though not of the teak family, this wood is called African teak. It is hard, firm, of the color of a ripe cucumber, and in veneers has a waxy figure.

Kewazingo.—Africa. A veneer made in France from a species of bubinga, and cut in a peculiar way to a wavy figure. It is used as a decorative as well as a base wood in tables and case goods.

Khaya.—Africa. (African mahogany.) See Mahogany.

Koa.—Hawaiian Islands. Belonging to the acacia family, the koa is the most valuable Hawaiian tree. Its beautiful wood is of golden color, sometimes streaked with black or brown. Most logs have some figure and many have a pronounced ripple grain in veneers.

Kingwood.—British Guiana, South America. A heavy wood, related to the rosewood, and sometimes called violet wood because of its color. It is chiefly used in the form of veneers sawed from small logs, about the size of fence posts.

Koko.—Andaman Islands, East Indies. The East India walnut; has a hard, smooth texture similar to koa; not much figure, but a narrow prominent stripe when quartered; nut brown color.

Lacewood.—Australia. (Also known as silky or Australian oak or selano.) This wood of a light, rosy color has pronounced medullary rays, and when quartered yields a beautiful effect of grain strikingly similar to that of coarse lace.

Lauaan.—Philippine Islands. (Pronounced la-wan', with both a's as in "arm".) A tall tree native to the Philippines, the wood of which bears a marked resemblance to mahogany. Formerly marketed as "Philippine mahogany," and now as red lauaan.

Laurelwood.—Andaman Islands, East Indies. Related to koko, and one of the finest timbers of the East. Laurelwood is a highly figured wood, gray with black stripes, and with a wavy grain.

Lime.—Europe. (Also known as linden, the North American variety is basswood.) A soft, white wood, extraordinarily well adapted for carving in high relief or in the round.

Macassar.—See Ebony. (Often, and properly, spelled Makassar.) Makassar oil, originally produced from the sandalwood of Makassar, was so much used as a hair dressing in Victorian England that it gave rise to the use of antimacassars or "tidies," as a protection to upholstered chair backs.

Magnolia.—Southeast United States. Also species are found in Japan, China, the Himalayas. The wood is fine-grained, fairly hard, white at the sap and of a pale yellowish or greenish tinge at the heart.

Mahogany.—A fine cabinet wood, is noted for variety and beauty of figure or pattern of the grain of the wood. Widely used for veneers and lumber of extreme dimensions and freedom from defect. Used for traditional furniture styles such as Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and Duncan Phyfe, and desirable for modern styles either in traditional or the lighter finishes.[32]

Three general types of mahogany are recognized: West Indian, conceded to be the hardest and strongest. Most of this type now comes from Cuba, but less than 5 percent of the American imports of mahogany are from the West Indies. The mainland Tropical American, which grows from southern Mexico to Colombia and Venezuela and appears again on the Upper Amazon and its tributaries in western Brazil and eastern Peru. Somewhat milder textured than the West Indian. A third type comes from the West Coast of Africa. This mahogany is not quite as firm textured as the American mahogany, but the trees are large and many are highly figured. Accordingly, the most of the mahogany veneers used in this country are *African*.

Mahogany wood is strong and tough, uniform in structure and close or moderately open grained, depending upon the locality where it is grown. Mahogany possesses a combination of physical and woodworking characteristics that have brought it into high renown as a cabinet wood. It is receptive to the

finest of finishes. Freshly cut mahogany ranges from a light pink to yellow, but on exposure to light and air, quickly turns to a reddish brown or sherry color.

Mahogany has an interlocking grain which, on the quarter, usually reveals a straight stripe or ribbon figure. To a more limited degree some trees show broken stripe, rope, ripple, mottle, fiddleback, and blister figures and various combinations of these figures. Outstanding are the crotch and swirl figures obtained from sections of the trunk immediately beneath a fork or crotch in the tree. Mahogany does not produce clearly defined annual growth rings common to trees of the temperate zone. Consequently, the shell or leaf pattern in flat cut mahogany is due to the interlocking grain rather than to annual growth rings.

Maidou.—Burma and Indo-China. This tree is closely related to the amboyna, but has a coarser figure and a darker brown color. Maidou burls are hard, sound, and valuable.

Makore.—Africa, West Coast. (Also known as African cherry.) A large tree, yielding a furniture wood similar in texture and coloring to our cherry, but frequently revealing a strong black mottle.

Madrone.—California and Oregon. (Also called Madrona.) Chiefly used in in the form of burl veneer, which has a tough hard surface, intricately veined figure, and rose-pink color.

Maple.—North temperate zone. There are about 150 species in the maple family, of which 13 are native to North America. The sugar maple (also known as hard maple and rock maple) is a magnificent tree which sometimes attains a height of 120 feet. The wood is heavy, hard and of fine grain, as is that of the black maple. In veneers the maples yield many beautiful effects, including curly maple, bird's-eye maple, and the remarkable maple burls from Oregon trees. With the "natural" finish it is principally used for bedroom, porch, and kitchen furniture. Occasionally it is used in combination with other woods for exposed parts which are stained or painted and for interior parts where strength or rigidity are essential.

Marblewood or *Marble-heart*.—See Ebony.

Movingue.—Africa, west coast. A straw-colored wood resembling Java teak, but more yellow in color. In veneers it produces mottled wood and fine feather crotches.

Myrtle.—Northern California and Oregon. A greenish-yellow wood, which when used in veneers has the peculiarity of showing the characteristic figuration of plain, butt, and burl woods in a single small area. Chiefly used in burls.

Narra.—Dutch East Indies and the Philippines. Red narra varies in color from deep red shadings to attractive rose tint. Yellow narra ranges through the brilliant browns to golden yellow. When cut on the quarter the appearance is not unlike quartered unfigured satinwood.

New Guinea Wood.—A recent popular importation. Brown to light gray with definite black lines. Large trees produce wide, long veneers. A highly figured wood with straight narrow stripe. Resembles oriental wood, but slightly lighter. Usually cut on the quarter.

Oak.—North temperate zone. Of the hundreds of species of oak, 84 are found in the United States. Some of the splendid forest oaks reach a height of 150 feet. In the trade, oak lumber is classified as *white oak* (cut chiefly from the white, chestnut, post, burr, over-cup, and swamp chestnut oaks), and *red oak* (cut chiefly from the red, Shumard red, scarlet, black, and yellow oaks).

English brown oak is taken from certain English white oak trees, the wood of which has become brown from an infection of microscopic fungus which feeds on the tannin in the wood, leaving a brown residue which gives the wood the appearance of fine tortoise shell. Many of these trees were sturdy specimens hundreds of years before the Norman conquest in the year 1066.

Pollard oak is the term applied by English cabinet makers to oak burls. The veneers are choice and costly. Its uses are legion, but in fine furniture it has great strength, durability and attractive appearance.

Oriental wood.—Queensland, Australia. (Also known as Queensland or Australian "walnut.") These huge trees resemble the Australian silky oak and the American blue beech. The wood, which is comparatively new on the American market, resembles walnut in appearance, and the veneers, quarter cut, yield stripe, fiddleback, and mottled effects.

Padouk.—Burma and the Andaman Islands. (Also known as Vermilion wood.) A beautiful wood of reddish golden color with prominent ribbon stripe. (See Yomawood.)

Pearwood.—Europe and North America. The fruit wood, much used by seventeenth century furniture makers.

Peroba.—Brazil. The largest family of fine Brazilian woods. Peroba Rosa has a pink

color, somewhat resembling that of tulipwood, while Peroba Blanca resembles satinwood. The veneers have a fine grain and take a remarkable polish.

Poplar.—United States. The cabinet wood known as yellow poplar, whitewood, and poplar in this country, and as canary whitewood in England, comes from a tall North American tree known as the tulip tree. The wood is of fine grain, uniform texture, and of a color ranging from the yellowish white in the sap to yellowish green, purplish brown, or iridescent blue in the heart. It closely resembles magnolia, but is somewhat softer. Must not be confused with the rarer Brazilian tulipwood.

Prima Vera.—Central America. While not a mahogany, prima vera is generally known as white mahogany. The wood is of cream color with a greenish cast, and resembles stripe mahogany in texture.

Purpleheart.—See Amaranth.

Redwood.—Northern California. (Also known as Sequoia.) Chiefly used in furniture in the form of veneers cut from the huge trunk burls, which yield sheets 5 × 6 feet without defects. The wood has a strikingly veined figure and a light brick-red color.

Rosewood.—Brazil, eastern India, and Madagascar. Brazilian rosewood, also known as Rio rosewood, was formerly extensively used in making piano cases and musical instruments, and is still sometimes known as piano-wood. Color varies from brownish yellow to deep red, with black growth lines. The veneer is generally cut rotary, but also sliced on the quarter or across the heart. East Indian rosewood, sometimes known in veneer form as malabor or Bombay rosewood, is one of the finest cabinet woods. It varies in color from clear yellow through the reds to purple, with dark stripes. Madagascar rosewood, also known as *faux rose*, is a heavy hardwood ranging from pale pink to dull red in color, and revealing a fine pin-stripe in veneer.

Sapele.—West African coast. Most Sapele logs are cut on the quarter and produce a straight stripe that in width is about halfway between the stripe of mahogany and stripe of satinwood.

Satinwood.—Puerto Rico, and Island of Ceylon. This finest of cabinet woods was obtained by the eighteenth century masters from the West Indies, but little is now to be had outside Ceylon. Whether straight-grained or figured, satinwood has an incomparable beauty and fire.

Snakewood.—Brazil. This term is applied to several woods, of which the most striking is the handsomely mottled wood of the South American leopard tree. It is used only in veneer.

Sycamore.—United States. This name is applied to the native American plane tree, although the term still is applied to the ancient Egyptian and Asia Minor mulberry. Sycamore wood, generally known in Europe as maple, is reddish-brown in color and when quartered is handsomely figured. It has interlocked grain and is therefore difficult to split.

Tamo.—Japan. (Native name for the Japanese ash.) Veneers cut from figured logs reveal an extraordinary wavy-like figure, and are beautiful and costly.

Tanguile.—Philippine Islands. A Philippine hardwood similar to red lauaan (see Lauaan) and like the latter at one time marketed as "Philippine mahogany."

Teakwood.—Region of the Gulf of Bengal. A hardwood of extreme durability, with white sapwood and a beautiful golden-yellow heartwood which on seasoning becomes dark brown, mottled with still browner streaks. The teak tree is native to India, Burma, and Thailand, and the wood is known to have been used in India for more than 2,000 years. It is one of the most enduring woods, and instances are recorded of teak beams which lasted more than 1,000 years.

Thuya.—Algeria, Africa. (Formerly and properly spelled "thuja.") This is the botanical name for the arbor vitae, or tree of life, of the cedar family. In Europe the thuya burl is considered to share with amboyna the distinction of being the finest of all woods. The veneer is of reddish brown color, with a characteristic figure remotely suggestive of the feather crotch, and speckled with small round "eyes." It is used in Europe chiefly for fine cigarette and jewel cases.

Tigerwood.—Africa, west coast. (Also known as African or Benin walnut.) An inexpensive but handsome veneer wood, ranging from golden-yellow to dull brown in color, with a wide and pronounced ribbon stripe. The crotches are large and good.

Tulipwood.—Brazil. An extremely hard wood of pinkish-red color, much used since the seventeenth century for marquetry.

Vermilion wood.—See Padouk.

Violet wood.—See Amaranth and Kingwood.

Walnut.—North temperate zone of America and Europe. American walnut is produced

commercially from Wisconsin and Southern Ontario to Kansas, Tennessee, and the Carolinas. It is widely used for lumber and veneers.[33]

Its use as a cabinetwood for furniture began in the late fifteenth century and has continued from that time until the present. The wood's natural color, within its outer band of creamy sapwood, ranges through a gamut of soft grayish browns whose deepest note is pale chocolate sometimes lightly tinged with violet.

Dean S. J. Record, Yale University says: "Walnut is one of the finest cabinet woods in the world. It has stood the test of time. Trace its use back through the centuries, and it will be found a medium of expression for what successive periods have considered most beautiful and worthy in furniture design. As one lover of the wood phrases it, 'from the massiveness of the Flemish, the elegance of the Italian and French, and the balanced beauty of the eighteenth century English walnut, by its inherent qualities, has been the one cabinet wood that fulfilled all demands.'" This record resulted from walnut's unusual combination of physical and mechanical properties.

It is widely used not only for the most costly furniture, but for the medium priced as well, because of another important feature—its great variety of figure types. These vary from the severely plain straight-quartered walnut, commonly seen on modern furniture and architectural woodwork, through sliced wood, rotary, many types of stumpwood, to the swirls, burls, and highly figured crotches.

In addition to the American species, imported varieties such as French, English, Italian, and Circassian, are still used occasionally. However, more than 99 percent of all America's needs are supplied by our own American walnut, which ranks somewhat higher in strength properties than the European variety.

Yomawood.—Burma and the Andaman Islands. (Also known as Burmese Padouk.) This is one of the most beautiful woods, varying in color from deep crimson through cherry red, pink and red-brown to brown. The figure is commonly of the straight ribbon type, but some veneers show a cross figure, a little like that of figured satinwood.

Zebrawood.—Africa, west coast. (Also known as Zebrana.) This highly decorative wood has been used since the early eighteenth century. The trees are large, and the veneer logs are imported in squares 4 to 5 feet square and 20 feet or more in length. The wood is light in color, and when cut on the quarter the veneers reveal dark stripes of extraordinary straightness, which makes the wood a favorite for matched diamond veneers. The name is derived from the resemblance of this wood to the skin of the zebra.

Appendix E.—COMMON RUG TERMS[34]

Burling.—An inspection treatment after weaving, to straighten up sunken tufts, to clip off long tufts, and otherwise add to finished appearance of fabric.

Chenille.—A soft tufted or fluffy cord of cotton, wool, silk, or worsted, made by weaving four warp threads about soft filling threads, afterward cut.

Filling.—Threads thrown across the warp to fill up space between knots.

Ground color.—The prevailing color against which other colors create the motif or design.

Jaspe.—Broad irregular stripes of two shades, usually a lighter and darker shade of the same color, used either as an effect in plain goods or as a ground frame (sometimes in top colors as well) of figured goods. It is produced by dipping a skein of yarn twice in the dye, first the entire skein in the lighter shade and then a portion of it in the darker shade. Various types of fine or broad jaspes are obtained by the twist given the yarn. From the French word meaning marbled. Linoleum: A two-toned pattern resembling marble.

Jute.—Fiber from inner bark of jute plant, used as base for cheaper rugs.

Pick.—The weft thread shuttled through the fabric crosswise of the loom between the warp threads. The weft serves to tie in the yarn that forms the surface tufts or loops. The number of picks per inch is indicative of the closeness of the weave; for example, a high class Wilton has about 13½ picks per inch. In the Axminster weaves, the word "row" means the same as "pick." (See Wires.)

Pile.—Projecting fibers or tufts on surface of rug; the *nap*.

Pile weaving.—In which there are two warps one with the weft forming the base and the other, formed into loops over wires, making the pile. In Brussels, the wire is pulled out leaving the loop intact. In Wiltons, there is a knife at the end of each wire which cuts the yarn as the wire is drawn out, making each loop a tuft. The pile is closer on Wiltons than on Brussels, as 13 wires are used to the inch, 8 being customary on Brussels.

Pitch.—Indicative of closeness of weave, considered in connection with "pick" or "rows." Pitch means the number of warp threads per inch measured crosswise of the loom. The warp threads run lengthwise of the fabric and interlock to bind in the weft, thus fastening the surface yarn. The closer together the warp threads the finer the weave; for example, good Wilton rugs are 256 pitch, meaning that there are 256 warp threads to each 27 inches of width of carpet, or 1,024 in

a 9 by 12 rug.

Quarter.—Unit of loom width, 9 inches, or ¼ of a yard. The standard carpet width is ¾, or 3 times 9 equals 27 inches. Yard-wide carpet is known as $^{4}/_{4}$; 9 feet wide as $^{12}/_{4}$; 15 feet wide as $^{20}/_{4}$, etc.

Shot.—The number of weft threads (see "pick") considered in reference to the tufts or loops of surface yarn. Two-shot means that there is one weft thread between each row of pile tufts. Three-shot means three weft threads to each row of tufts, one on the back and one on each side. Three-shot, requiring more material and more loom motion, adds to the cost, but increases durability.

Staple.—The general fibers of wool or cotton, considered as an index of quality; for example, a single fiber judged by itself as to length, thickness, and resiliency denotes the quality of the batch.

Stuffers.—Coarse yarn (usually jute) running lengthwise of the fabric that is caught by the weft and warp and bound into the fabric to form a thick, stiff, protective backing.

Top colors.—Colors forming the design, as distinguished from the ground color.

Tuft.—A bunch of flexible fibers like hairs, united at the base. Fine Wiltons contain 18,000 tufts to the square foot.

Warp.—Threads running the long way of rug, between which the weft, or woof (cross threads) are woven.

Weft.—Threads running the short way of the rug.

Wires.—Metal rods inserted between warp at same time weft is inserted, crosswise of loom. When withdrawn, resulting loops compose the pile. Number of wires is also used as index of quality.

Woof.—Same as weft.

Worsted.—Selected wool yarn made from long fibers, combed parallel and twisted hard. Three pounds of raw wool provide one of worsted.

Appendix F.—AN ADVERTISING CHECK LIST

This advertising check list was worked out by the Chicago Tribune for appraising the effectiveness of retail advertising. Copy which gets 70 points or better has proved to be satisfactory. Sample checking of your advertisements against this table occasionally is suggested.

		Rating
1.	Does the headline contain news value?	15
2.	Is there a promise to the reader's self-interest?	15
3.	Is there an appeal for direct action?	10
4.	Is the advertisement of proper size for the importance of the offer and for its most favorable presentation?	10
5.	Is the advertiser's signature clearly displayed?	5
6.	Is the merchandise or service mentioned in the headline?	3
7.	Does the headline include the name of the firm?	2
8.	Does the illustration show the merchandise or service in use?	5
9.	Does the illustration invite the reader to project himself into it pleasantly, profitably, or favorably?	3
10.	Does the lay-out locate elements logically and eye-invitingly?	5
11.	Is the lay-out exciting or attention compelling?	3
12.	Does the copy tell what is new, different, or better about the merchandise or service, especially from the style angle?	3
13.	Does the copy inspire enthusiasm for the merchandise or service?	3
14.	Does the copy have a definite ring of truth and sincerity?	5
15.	Does the copy tell the merchandise or service is priced to save money?	2
16.	Does the copy tell that the product is guaranteed, lasting, and gives good service?	3
17.	Does the copy develop and appeal to price?	2
18.	Does the copy or illustration imply the merchandise increases sex appeal?	3
19.	Does the copy tell why the merchandise is so priced?	1
20.	Does the copy tell of the seasonal appeal of the merchandise?	1
21.	Does the copy describe the merchandise or service with reasonable completeness?	2
22.	Does the copy indicate a personal loss for not buying or using the product?	1
23.	Are all negative thoughts connected with the product eliminated from the copy?	2
24.	Does the copy indicate enthusiasm of users, such as testimonials?	2
25.	Does the copy bring out superiorities of the merchandise or service over competitive products?	1
26.	Is the urge to action repeated three times—in the heading, in first paragraph, and in closing?	5
27.	Is the price displayed so it will command sufficient attention?	3
28.	Is there a free deal, free offer, free trial, or something free included?	3
29.	Have all details to facilitate action been included? (Phone number, order blank, store	2

hours, mention of air conditioning, parking, etc.)

Appendix G.—FIVEFOLD SELLING PLAN FOR FLOOR COVERINGS[35]

One furniture store has enjoyed a record of sales increases every month but one for the last 2 years in the floor coverings department. This is attributed to a fivefold merchandising approach based upon "style" and "value."

During the entire year, other than at special "sales periods" this company promotes oriental reproductions, finer broadloom (tone on tone) carpeting, washed carpet, inlaid linoleum (yard goods), always accenting "Style" and the necessity of fine floor coverings in relation to fine home furnishings.

During the so-called "sale periods" of the year, the store features "Room-wide floor coverings," "Bound broadloom remnant rugs," low-priced 9 by 12 Axminsters, and, in February and August, oriental reproductions at reduced prices. The store theme is, "Value in every advertisement." Customers are always sold the advertised merchandise, and full stocks make it unnecessary to say—"Madam, we are sold out." These two things build customer confidence in the store's publicity and in the store itself.

Here are the fundamentals of the "Fivefold Plan":

1. *Advertising.*—Based on 5 percent of the departmental volume, the floor covering department is represented in the newspaper 52 weeks of the year. *Constant promotion insures results.*
2. *Window display.*—A window is assigned to the department every week wherein may be found the advertised merchandise, or new and highly styled floor covering innovations. *A Window Every Week.*
3. *Inner-store displays.*—The theme is "Fine floor coverings are a necessity in the home of today." Every one of the model rooms features as an integral part of the furnishings a fine rug. The same holds true in the "Smaller home groupings." These rugs are not placed on the floor and forgotten. The furniture salesmen call attention to them daily. The carpet salesmen from time to time make use of these groupings as selling aids.
4. *Trained salespersons.*—New merchandise is sold *first* to the salespersons. They are taught also that "truth" is the most powerful selling argument.
5. *Service.*—The customer is not sold to be forgotten. This company keeps in constant touch with the customer after the sale is made, both to foster business and to keep her satisfied.

Appendix H.—COLOR AND STYLE IN MODERN ADVERTISING COPY?

For months we have been interested in checking home-furnishings advertising copy in daily papers. This easily may become more than an absorbing pastime.

As this is written, there is before us copy of a double-page spread by a well-known company which sells home furnishings. The copy fairly shouts color, tapestries, and period styles. Even brief study of the copy will show how many and varied are the offerings to meet ever-increasing competitive demands for something new.

This one piece of copy—typical of many appearing in the daily papers—should convince any home-furnishings salesman that he must be a constant student if he is to appear at his best as an interpreter of color and style to his customers.

Look at this parade of 19 different colors, both plain and pebbly twist, in carpets in 9-, 12-, and 15-foot widths.

Plain colors

Reseda green.
Beaver taupe.
Royal blue.
Heather-mist.
Cherry red.
Normandie rose.
Horizon blue.
French peach.
Burgundy.
Maple tan.
Henna wine.
Roseglow.
Dubonnet.
French grey.

Pebbly textured colors

Burgundy.
Reseda.
Maple tan.
Roseglow.
Royal blue.
Tango rust.
Jade green.
French peach.
Platinum beige.
Burnt copper.
Deer-tone.
Dubonnet.

Oriental rugs in exquisite blending of colors and native originality in design are offered in India, Teheran, Garevan, Kirman, Bidjar, and Ardebil weaves. (See footnote 5, p. 160, unit VIII.)

For the *dining room* there are *Sheraton-Hepplewhite groups* of "genuine mahogany construction rubbed and then waxed to its deep rich red color." Choice is offered of pedestal dining table, or one of the leg type; also "choice of the famous Hepplewhite shield back or Sheraton model chairs." Other offerings include an *Adam* group in "genuine Honduras mahogany with beautifully figured swirl mahogany veneers, delicately carved"; an *English Chippendale* group; an *Early American* group of solid rock maple construction. Separate pieces for the apartment dining room from which one may create his own ensemble include offerings of a—

Sheraton extension console—genuine Honduras mahogany construction inlaid with satinwood.

Duncan Phyfe side chair of lyre back design.

Colonial corner cabinet—genuine Honduras mahogany.

Sheraton drop-leaf table of the pedestal type.

For the *living room* are offered "upholstered pieces—sofas, wing chairs, easy chairs, open armchairs, 'tailored' in effective coverings; but which may be purchased in muslin and tailored in fabrics of your own selection." Look at these noteworthy dependable furniture friends:

Chippendale wing chair with handsomely carved cabriole legs; ball and claw feet. Tapestry tailoring.

Fireside wing chair.—Colonial Chippendale design; ball and claw feet of solid mahogany. Tailored in tapestry.

English easy chair.—Exposed frame solid mahogany covered in a combination of tapestry and velvet.

English club chair.—Seat cushions filled with genuine down. Tailored in damask.

English Chippendale sofa.—Tailored in damask.

Eighteenth century easy chair.—Tailored in frieze.

Barrel-back chair of English design.—Tailored in brocatelle.

The occasional pieces include: Secretary Desk in three designs—American Hepplewhite, Colonial Sheraton, and Early Colonial.

Cocktail table.—Hepplewhite design—hand-tooled leather top.

Cocktail table.—Chippendale period—swirl figured veneer top.

Tier table after the colonial period—each of the tops is square in shape making an

ideal lamp table for the chair side.

Knee-hole desk.—Eighteenth century English.

Kidney desk.—Finished in the old colonial red tone.

Nest of tables.—Sheraton in design—master table has hand-tooled leather top.

Book shelf.—Early colonial in design, genuine Honduras mahogany.

For the bedroom are many new interpretations of old periods in interesting color finishes and a variety of woods, including an offering of—

American Hepplewhite finished in the new silver green known as silver-mint.

American Sheraton.—Honduras mahogany inlaid with satinwood.

English Sheraton.—Inlays of marquetry.

Chippendale group following the Chinese influence.

Modern figured oak.—Blond color—trimmed with silver hardware—hanging mirrors of crystal type.

Chinese Chippendale group.—Genuine Amazon mahogany with crotch mahogany panels.

Early American.—Solid maple finished in the traditional tone.

French Provincial.—Solid maple, finished in lovely pine color, each piece effectively proportioned—twin beds of the footless type with upholstered headboards, covered in chintz.

Appendix I.—CHECK LIST FOR PLANNING A STORE-WIDE PROMOTION

(Courtesy the National Retail Furniture Association, Chicago, Ill.)

1. Opening date; closing date.

   (NOTE.—The most successful store-wide promotions run 10 days. Two weeks should be the limit. Make your plan at least a month ahead. Be all set at least a week in advance.)

2. Name.

   (This should include at least a hint of the reason why you are holding this sale.)

3. Merchandise to be featured.

   (See that a good percentage of this is new merchandise, items that you have never run before. Store-wide events based entirely on old merchandise are never as successful as they should be.)

4. Total advertising expenditure for event:

   a. Newspapers.

   b. Direct-mail.

   c. Radio.

   d. Window and store displays.

5. Advertising expenditure by days.

   (Start your sale off with a bang and end it with a grand finale. The middle will take care of itself.)

6. "Presale" or old-customer courtesy days:

   a. The dates.

   b. Form of announcing them to customers (letter, folder, phone calls, etc.).

   c. Special terms, premiums or other inducements to old customers who purchase on these dates.

   (NOTE.—Sale or no sale, most of your business comes from old customers. See that they get special attention in any store-wide event.)

7. Window displays:

   a. Merchandise to be featured.

   b. Window streamers.

   c. Price and description signs.

8. Interior and other displays:

   a. Aisle banners, post hangers, elevator signs, cashier and credit department signs.

   b. General floor arrangement and special merchandise displays.

   c. Buttons or other special identification insignia for salesmen.

d. Truck banners.

9. Price tags.

For any store-wide event, your merchandise should carry special price tags—not the ones you ordinarily use.

10. Quotas:

a. By departments.

b. By salesmen.

11. Meetings:

a. Special meeting for all employees.

b. Meeting for sales employees only.

c. Meeting for credit employees only.

12. Special employee remuneration:

a. Store-wide sales contest, selling and non-selling help.

b. Contest for salesmen only.

c. Special "spiffs" on particular pieces of merchandise which you wish to push.

(NOTE.—It is not recommended that every store-wide promotion embrace every one of these points, although this is possible. You should, however, consider all these possibilities in planning your store-wide sale.)

Appendix J.—READY REFERENCE INDEX

FOOTNOTES:

[32] Statement prepared by the Mahogany Association, Chicago, Ill.

[33] Statement prepared by American Walnut Manufacturers Association, Chicago, Ill.

[34] The Seng Handbook, The Seng Co., Chicago, Ill. (1939), pp. 54-55.

[35] Reproduced by permission of Robert B. Palmer, advertising manager, Duff & Repp, Kansas City, Mo., and the National Furniture Review.

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TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

Silently corrected simple spelling, grammar, and typographical errors.

Retained anachronistic and non-standard spellings as printed.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SELLING HOME FURNISHINGS: A TRAINING PROGRAM ***

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