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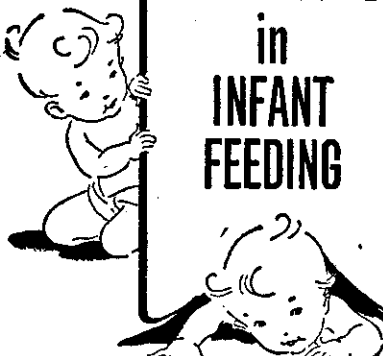


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## Sports and Pastimes (VI)

# HINTS FOR HOME DECORATORS —And Home Wreckers

I ALWAYS feel that people approach the subject of Home Decorating from the wrong angle. They take it far too seriously. You cannot get much fun out of Home Decorating unless you regard it essentially as a sport and pastime, the enjoyment of which is directly proportionate to the number of persons taking part.

At present, the basic purpose of Home Decorating has been obscured by those people who regard it as a form of Art. It is nothing of the kind. If you set out to decorate a hall or a birthday cake, you don't concern yourself with the primary rules of colour harmony and design. You merely aim to produce a cheerful effect. And this, and nothing else, should be your object when you decide to decorate your home.

If one wanders through the furnishing section of a large store one often sees a harassed-looking woman squirming with indecision in her effort to choose between two lengths of curtain fabric, or between two almost identical cushions. Her problem is complicated by the fact that she cannot remember just what shade of green the bedspread is. She finally makes her choice, only to find that her memory has played her false. After that, each glimpse of the mis-matched article has the power to plunge her into agonies of self-reproach. We meet dozens of cases like this each day, and it should serve to remind us of the agonies of spirit that lie in store for those who make a fetish of Home Decorating. No such pangs are suffered by those who treat Home Decorating as a Sport and Pastime.

### The Home Decorating Party

Perhaps your section is not big enough for a tennis court, so you can't ask your friends round to tennis. You would like to give a dance for your son's twenty-first birthday, but the drawing room isn't sufficiently large. You'd like some people in to play bridge, but you haven't a card table. But no matter how small or badly equipped your house, you can always invite your friends to a Home Decorating Party. In fact, the shabbier your home, the better, for if the decorating is successful, there is the possibility of an improvement being effected, and if the decorating is not successful, you can console yourself with the thought that the furniture wasn't worth much to begin with. All you need in the way of equipment for your party is (1) A number of tins of enamel in various colours. (2) Paint brushes. (3) A supply of overalls. (4) A well-equipped bathroom and facilities for removing paint from people.

**The Walls:** It is usually advisable to do these separately first, but most amateurs make a habit of doing both walls and furniture at the same time. To avoid this, remove the furniture before the guests arrive. Calsomine or water

paint is usually the best, as it can be washed off easily. If, on the other hand, you use the new oil paint for walls, your friends may have to wait a long time before the last trace of it wears off. If you must use oil paint therefore, we recommend a flesh toning.

**Paperhanging:** Owing to the European situation, this has fallen somewhat into disrepute lately.

### Painting The Furniture

There are two entirely different methods of furniture painting, depending on whether you have any furniture or



not. I read a most interesting article the other day in a series of how to furnish a home on £25, which explained a method of painting non-existent furniture. The idea is briefly that if you want a bed and can't afford to buy one, you obtain a wire-wove mattress, convert blocks of wood into legs, and paint a head-piece for the bed on the wall behind it. The method can be extended indefinitely. You can't afford a carpet. You paint one on the floor. You haven't any chairs. You paint some on the floor and sit on them. You need some pictures. No, you don't paint them on the wall. You cut them out of illustrated magazines, paste them on the wall, and paint frames round them.

This method of furniture painting demands, however, a high degree of skill. It is, therefore, unsuitable for the home decorating party, as your friends have possibly not handled a paint brush since you all went to kindergarten together. You will, therefore, use the other method, and give them a free hand with your existing furniture.

### Colour In The Home

But perhaps your distrust of their ability extends even to this. Or perhaps you don't really believe in colour in the home. Perhaps you like seeing the grain in the wood of the dining-room table. You may even have preferred the kitchen chair before somebody painted it orange. In that case, you will have to resort to our first method. Hide all the furniture in the washhouse. Bundle the carpet into a wardrobe. Then let your guests enjoy themselves. Let them paint carpets on the floor and bed-ends against the wall. Then when at last they depart, tired but happy, and flushed with the glow of achievement, you will stand at the door. "Thank you so much," each will say, "It was a simply wonderful afternoon. And we were a help, weren't we?"

When the last one has disappeared round the corner of the drive, you will take your bedstead out of the washhouse and set it up where it will hide the crudely painted image of itself. You will unbundle your carpet from the wardrobe and dispose it so that it covers the bizarre reproduction. And when your guests return again, they will be transported with delight at the effectiveness of their work. Your reputation as a hostess will be made, and you may have the reward of being invited to their houses for similar afternoons of fun with a paint-brush.

### Those Dreadful Pants!

AS Italy's Foreign Minister and Il Duce's son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano has an opportunity to ponder the customs of his enemies (says "Time"). The other week his "Telegrafo" of Leghorn found in ladies' pants the common denominator of the Axis' foes: "Pants for women first appeared in Bolshevik Russia . . . Snobs at British and U.S. summer resorts found the fashion interesting and perfected it . . . This is just another example of one of the many points in common between Communism and plutocracy." "Telegrafo" might have gone further, noting that the ladies of that other enemy of Totalitaria, China, have worn pants for many years. And so, until a recent Italian decree against them, did the Countess Ciano.



COUNTESS CIANO

... ideologically de-bagged