

Better Bedrooms.

Speaking broadly, the general effect of a bedroom should be light, soft and restful. If a patterned wallpaper be decided upon, the greatest care should be taken to select one that is not wearying to the eye. Plain papers in good tints are always pleasing, but the advantage which a patterned one possesses is that it does not show the wear and use of daily life so quickly.

The question of colouring depends entirely upon the aspect of the room and the amount of light it receives. The colder colours, blues, greens, greys and mauves, should be handled very sparingly unless the room gets more than its share of sunlight; and even then the pale shades of those colours (except grey) should be avoided, because they can never hold their own, decoratively speaking, against bright sunshine; in fact, pale blue and pale green serve no useful purpose whatever from a decorator's point of view.

Grey is in a somewhat different category. Being a neutral shade, it can be used for walls in rooms, even those with a cold aspect, provided the necessary warmth of colouring is supplied by curtains, carpets, bedspread and other items, though possibly cream-coloured walls would look better in the majority of such cases. Creamy-white paint is, I think, the most pleasant for the woodwork of any bedroom.

The floor covering sometimes presents rather a puzzling problem, many ultra-hygienists going so far as to say that bedroom floors ought to consist of washable linoleum, with only a rug beside the bed as a concession to luxury. So Spartan a suggestion finds no favour in my eyes, but certainly a fitted carpet is a mistake, not only from the hygienic standpoint, but also because it cannot easily be taken up for cleaning, or turned round to equalise the wear.

Cover the floor with plain linoleum by all means, or, better still, with cork carpet, which is softer and warmer to the tread, but have a square of carpet or plenty of rugs as well for the sake of comfort. The advantages of laying linoleum or cork carpet all over the floor are obvious. No dust can work up between the floor-boards into the underside of the carpet, no under-felt is necessary, and the room is not made uninhabitable when the carpet is taken up to be beaten or cleaned.

The carpet should strike the deepest note in the colour scheme, whether it be in harmony with or in contrast to the walls. Good Oriental designs in soft colours always look well, or you can use a Wilton or Axminster carpet with some simple geometrical pattern, though possibly, if the walls are covered with a patterned paper, a plain pile carpet would be the best choice of all for a bedroom.

With regard to the furniture of our bedrooms, we are still somewhat slaves to the conventional "suite." A dressing table and a wardrobe are obvious necessities, but, to my mind, there is no reason why they should match each other so meticulously, with a washstand *en suite*. The last-named piece of furniture is gradually becoming obsolete, though some folk seem to preserve it as a fetish not to be eliminated because it "matches" the wardrobe and dressing table, even though it is never used. Bedroom chinaware, too, presents greater scope for the display of bad taste in design and form than almost any other domestic crockery, which is an additional reason why many people have banished from their homes the clumsy washstand, with its drudgery of carrying and emptying.

The ideal bedroom, of course, has a bath-dressing room attached, but failing the ideal the existing bathroom is very commonly made to serve for the ablutions of the family. A fitted lavatory basin in the bedroom, with hot and cold water, is a very great convenience, but I am one of those who question its provision from the hygienic point of view, and also I dislike its appearance. The best treatment of the kind I have seen in a bedroom took the form of a large cupboard built across the angle formed by two outside walls. This had a full length mirror on the door, and its appearance was that of an ordinary hanging cupboard, but when opened the interior proved to be tiled and fitted up with porcelain basin, nickel-plated taps, plate-glass shelves, mirrors and all the appointments of a luxurious little toilet cabinet. Best of all, it was ventilated by a small window.

Some people use their bedrooms as a sort of extra sitting room, and, in flats and small houses especially, it is a very convenient plan for the mistress of the house to have her desk and some comfortable chairs in the room, so as to be able to read, write, or rest there undisturbed. With the paraphernalia of washing out of sight, there is nothing in the rest of the necessary bedroom furniture to preclude the use of the room as a sitting-room.

By far the most important piece of furniture, of course, is the bed, concerning which there was a well-illustrated article in *Our Homes and Gardens* for June last, to which readers would do well to refer. But even the most beautiful bedstead will prove but an elegant piece of camouflage if the spring and the bedding are not well chosen. The craze for cheapness which spread over the country some years ago is responsible for much discomfort in the form of inferior beds, the so-called "combination" type being a particularly unpleasant variety. In case that description does not convey its own meaning, I would explain that a combina-