

The Growing Use of the Stencil

FOR centuries stencilling has been an accepted form of decoration but it is only in comparatively recent years that the stencilling of painted walls and furniture has become extremely popular.

Stencilling is one of the most effective as well as simple means of adding character to an interior. It may be employed anywhere, from the tiny cottage to the formal public building, because of its great adaptability. And stencilled decoration is in keeping with the modern style trend towards the very simple in all things.

There is virtually no limit to the decorative possibilities of the painter's stencil. Many designs are available, innumerable color effects may be obtained and a large variety of arrangements are possible.

One very practical application is the stencilling of a narrow border design on plain walls to simulate panels. Small silhouetted figures of people, animals and ships are effective placed in such panels, depending upon the type of room.

Shaded tiffany panels, at the top of each of which is some odd, stencilled motif, lend to large rooms an individual touch.

In the case of long halls and rooms, stencilling is a useful device for making them appear to be of better proportions. For example a long hall, divided into vertical panels

formed by stencilled borders, seems much shorter than it is actually.

In the kitchen, formerly so drab and plain, decoration with stencils brings most attractive results. The kitchen is really the most used room in the small home and can easily be rendered bright and cheery by first painting the walls a light color and then perhaps running a narrow stencilled border of some appropriate design, in vivid colors, around door casings and window frames. A touch of the same motif on the window shades is good.

A small design in bright colors may also be stencilled on the kitchen cabinet, the refrigerator, the table and benches of the breakfast nook, a chair or stool, and the same motif may even be used on the cereal set. The window curtains may likewise have this motif in a border, making a harmonious, pleasant room.

Color in the kitchen has become so much of a vogue that one of the leading department stores in New York is showing pots and pans in bright colors to match the housewife's favorite color scheme in that room. Even the kitchen garbage receptacle comes in for a painting!

The stencil may also be employed to good advantage in the nursery or child's bedroom by decorating the walls with a border of animals in action, or birds, or perhaps Mother Goose characters. Another inter-

esting treatment is stencilled hollyhocks or other tall flowers, running up the wall from the baseboard. The floors, too, need not be forgotten. Various geometrical designs make excellent borders or the whole floor may be done in squares.

The bathroom is sometimes stencilled in marine effects. Two very popular designs are swans and dolphins with the same pattern to match in the towels. Sailboats, too, are pleasing. The shower and the window curtains may come in for decoration with the same motif.

The sun parlor or the outdoor veranda is another possibility for an artistic stencilled treatment. The couch cover, pillows and even the fibre rug may all be stencilled with the same design and, of course, the painted furniture should carry it. An oilcloth cover for the porch table, stencilled in harmony with the general color scheme, is much used of late.

The bedroom with its popular painted furniture can be made most attractive with cretonnes in window drapes and chair cushions, the design for the stencil perhaps taken from a motif in the cretonne and carried out on chair backs, dresser, lampshade and dresser cover. In the stencilling of furniture, a little care should be exercised not to overdo it. To repeat the same design on every drawer of a chest or dresser, for example, tends toward monotony. It is best to use one principal motif and one or two

smaller designs, leaving the spaces blank.

In the majority of instances the modern home the painted surfaces are in a flat finish. Difficulty is encountered in stenciling over a surface so painted. correct formula for such a follows:

100 lbs. Dutch Boy white-lead
2 to 3 gals. Dutch Boy flatting c

This formula is suitable also the stencilling paint if the quality of flatting oil is reduced to 1¾ gallons.

The selection of colors for stencilling is an important factor. With a light warm-gray side there is a choice of a variety of medium colors such as grayed greens or reds. However, when paint on the side wall is a dull buff, green or blue, greater care is necessary in picking the stencil color in order to avoid an unpleasant contrast. On a pale green side a deeper green stencilling color the same order will prove satisfactory. It is also possible in this to use certain tans, deep reds, deep gold with good effect. The side wall is a buff or a deeper shades of brown and as well as the deeper shades of will be found entirely appropriate. In certain special interiors, nursery for example, brighter colors may be used than would be suitable for the living or dining room.

If the wall has been painted in a slight gloss or eggshell finish an interesting effect may be obtained by stenciling with a flat paint of practically the same color as the side wall. This will produce a difference in degree of gloss between the stenciled design and side wall finish, the resulting effect being very pleasing and more subdued than that obtained by introducing a contrasting color. A similar difference in degree of gloss results when the stenciling is done in eggshell over a flat finish.

It is, of course, practical to employ an eggshell gloss as the stenciling color over an eggshell wall finish. The formula usually used when an eggshell gloss finish is desired follows:

100 lbs. Dutch Boy white-lead
1 1/4 to 2 gals. Dutch Boy flatting oil
3/4 gals. pale varnish suitable for enamel

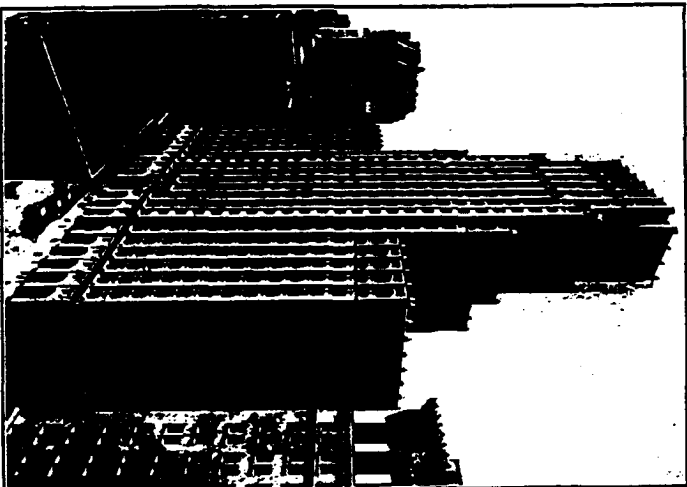
The flat and eggshell formulas give-

en will be found suitable not only for decorating plaster walls and woodwork but in finishing and stenciling furniture, oilcloth and other articles.

The colors for tinting the paint may be either colors-in-oil or colors ground in japan. Both kinds have been employed in stenciling and have been found equally satisfactory, but some painters have stated that colors ground in japan, or superfine colors, are preferable since they make the stenciling paint set

up more rapidly. Large quantities of colors-in-oil tend to slow up the drying. Consequently, when such colors are used in large amounts, some drier should be added.

Ready-cut stencils are obtainable from a number of stencil companies whose catalogs show a wide variety of designs and figures for stenciling.



The Russ Building, one of San Francisco's newest skyscrapers. Dutch Boy white-lead was used throughout in painting this building.

The "Old Capitol"

THE title refers to the old Iowa State capitol building at Iowa City which is now being used as the Administration Building of the Iowa State University.

The "Old Capitol" as it is now called is typical of the architecture of that unhurried age when man sat down and leisurely worked character into his buildings; an age which brought forth such architectural

classics as Independence Hall in Philadelphia and Faneuil Hall in Boston.

"Old Capitol" was built way back in 1840, before Iowa was admitted to the Union. R. H. Little, of the Chicago Tribune, quite aptly describes it in his column "A Line O' Type or Two."

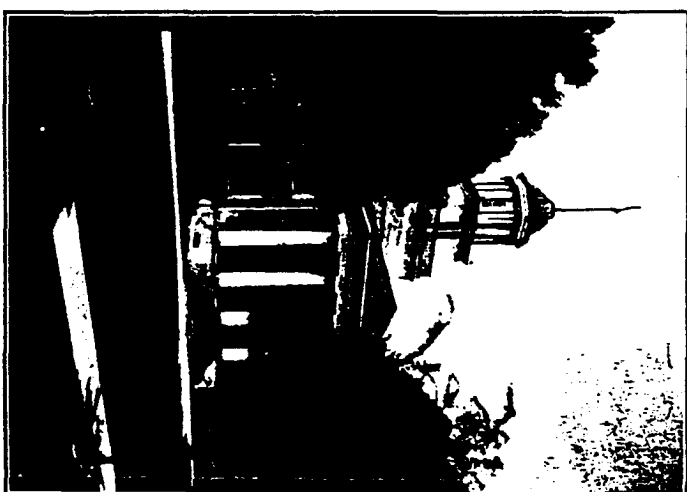
He says "Father Samuel Mazzuchelli, a Cath-

olic missionary with the Indians, the only man in all that wilderness at the time who knew anything about architecture, drew the plans and supervised the erection of the building.

"We don't know much about architecture, but we know what we like, and we know that quaint old building, with its Gothic pillars on

each side and its enchanting cupola dome, preaches peace and tranquillity in the midst of a mad, cloud-piercing, set-back, ninety-nine storied age.

"But inside Old Capitol is the greatest marvel, the hanging staircase. There's a staircase that just naturally swings right out into the air and spirals around the floors above without resting on any-



The old Iowa State Capitol now used as Administration Building of Iowa State University at Iowa City, Iowa.