

**HOME-MADE WINDOW SHADES.**

'We weren't living exactly "sixty miles from a lemon," but we were living a good way from any place, and when it came to fitting up the house, we were amazed at the number of windows which required shades, and the small supply of material on hand. Indeed, those we had were either too short or too narrow, and didn't seem to answer the purpose at all. At the nearest point, where such things could be purchased, the price struck us as so utterly unreasonable, that we declined to disburse the necessary amount of cash, especially as there was something like twenty fathom of windows in the building. The timely arrival of an ingenious friend helped us out amazingly. She had written us that she was coming, and we wrote her the particulars of our dilemma about the shades. When she arrived, she brought among other luggage a parcel which was duly turned over to the head of the family, with the laughing remark:

"There, my dear, are all the necessary supplies for your windows, and the bill is just 15s."

The parcel contained two dozen shade rollers with fixtures, a lot of fringe and some white muslin, the purpose of which we did not at first understand. The next day our friend went to work, measured the windows, sawed the rollers, and put up the fixtures. She then, with a very sharp shears, cut the curtains of exactly the size required, out of the muslin, and fastened them to the rollers with the smallest gump tack, which were also in the parcel. The hems of the curtains were finished, the fringe put on, and sticks put in. The curtains were then tacked to a cross-beam in the garret, this being the most convenient place. They were fastened by the sticks in the hems, very slender nails being driven through as each end and in the middle. The cloth was then saturated with starch, in which was dissolved some white glue, and weights were attached to the rollers. They were then allowed to dry without being touched. Having been cut by the thread and tacked, so that the cloth fell in exactly a perpendicular line, the curtains dried perfectly square, and, when put up, rolled as easily as a holland, which they very closely resembled.

In large cities curtains are so inexpensive that it is scarcely worth while to take the trouble to make them, but in country districts or where goods are very high priced it pays excellently well to make the curtains at home. It is really very little work, requiring only careful attention to cutting of the cloth and sawing the sticks, and a mechanical eye to put the fixtures up straight. Some home-made curtains have been so neatly finished that the casual observer would never imagine them other than the work of a professional. Fine heavy sheeting, or even cambric, makes extremely pretty shades, if carefully managed. Fringe or any other desired finish may be used, and will add greatly to the neatness of the job. A fine quality of size may be used instead of starch and glue, but must be very carefully applied, and permitted to become thoroughly dry before using.

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**'THE COMPENSIOUS SNAIL'**

'The Compensious Snail' is the subject of a humorous article under the above title, which contains the following passages:—

Poets are, of course, disrespectful to the snail.

'The thing that crawls,  
Most motions o'er a danger's walk.'

It is reproached for being 'slow' and slimy. It is the 'dull' snail 'with foundered pace,' which affords a simile for all things that move without haste, from 'Hyperborean' nights to cockbys 'creeping to school.' Yet Davenan is not altogether absurd when he takes the other side, and writes—

'So runs the simple snail in clay track,  
Hastening, with all his tenement on back.'

for when we compute the creature's pace we ought, in fairness to weigh its burden too. Eagles would not fly so swiftly if they had their eyes on their backs, nor swallows 'outstrip the wind' if carrying their nests of mud. Besides deliberation in movement is not necessarily sloth, for as an ancient of wisdom has said, it is easier to run a mile behind a hare than to walk one mile behind a snail. There is a prodigious conscientiousness about the creature, for, like the fairies, they measure every yard they take with their bodies. When a Yogi says he has travelled ten miles he means that he has gone over the whole distance, using himself as a six foot rule, lying down upon and coming in bodily contact with every yard of ground. They may be seen on their journey going, some, as ordinary caterpillars do, crawling flat, others, like the 'looper' caterpillar, throwing themselves forward on their open palms and bringing the feet up to them, 'looping' their bodies at each stride. So it is with the snail. He neither hops nor skips, but takes everything exactly as it comes, without evasion or compromise. He studies the ground he traverses, preferring to be the master of a limited subject rather than have a mere skipjack acquaintance with many. Look at the tortoise. He, too, carries his roof on his back, and what a responsibility seems to weigh upon him; how carefully and delicately he goes! If he pranced about he would be absurd; as it is, his gravity has earned for the tortoise the respect of all nations. Folk lore universally insists upon the immense respectability of the testudinous ancient. What a grand old testacean it is in Celtic myth! Think of it—standing on nothing except its own dignity, and yet supporting the Earth on its carapace. Nor would it be less preposterous if the snail were to jump like a grasshopper, who is a vagabond without any address that you can write to him at all. Not so the snail. He is a solid householder, and the architect of his own fortune. You know where to find him when you have found his house. His pace therefore becomes him.

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