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FLAGS FOR DECORATION.

How to Make Banners and Streamers For Christmas Festival.

There is generally a demand at Christmas time for banners and flags for decorative purposes, as they can be very effectively introduced among the holly, mistletoe and evergreens in the hall, ballroom and dining room, while for school treats, parish teas, etc., they are quite indispensable. These can be inexpensively made at home, as no great skill is required.

Bunting will stand rough wear and is cheap, but other materials may be employed, such as alpaca, cloth, serge, silk, woolen rep and cotton velvet. In a hall either silk or alpaca would be suitable, in a ballroom silk, in a dining room velvet or silk or, for a school feast, cloth or woolen rep.

The letters can be embroidered upon the flag, but applique designs are more effective and need very much less work. If embroidered the ordinary crewel stitch should not be used, as the effect is too flat and not sufficiently bold. The basket and straight stitches and the French knot are much the best for either mottoes or devices, and all kinds of thread may be used, according to the quality of the ground-work. Gold and silver thread, tapers and other wools may be utilized.

Having decided upon the size of the flag, cut the material to fit, lay it upon a large table and arrange the inscription, pinning each letter or ornament into position and carefully measuring the spaces to insure regularity. In cutting out letters enormous size is not altogether necessary for legibility. Much more depends upon simplicity of form and in the grouping of the letters of each word closely together and allowing a reasonable distance between the words themselves.

When the motto or inscription is arranged tack it firmly in place and note the effect before sewing it; then closely buttonhole the letters all around the edge, fixing them to the material. Should the device be required on both sides make the material double, sewing the letters on each side separately before joining the two pieces together.

The flag may be oblong or triangular, or the oblong may have the lower edge vandyked and finished with braid, silk fringe or cord. If fringe, then a silk tassel at each corner is a nice finish, and this, as well as the cord by which it is suspended, should match in color.

To prevent the banner being too limp a cord should be run through the hem around the edge to slightly stiffen it, and it is then fastened to the pole by strong cords fixed to the crossbar. On the top of the banner a number of small curtain rings must be neatly sewed, or, perhaps better still, loops of cord, and these are slipped over the crossbar, or in the case of a flag they are put upon the side and then slipped upon the pole itself. The pole is generally painted or stained, and the head is of turned wood, frequently gilded.

When monograms, crests and coats of arms are to be worked a gold cloth cut out and worked upon a material of a rich subdued coloring is particularly handsome, or those who are clever with a paint brush can paint the device in oils.

HOW TO CLEAN OILCLOTH.

Six Hints For Cleaning and Preserving Oilcloths and Linoleums

Always take milk and water to clean an oilcloth. Never use soap-suds, as this dulls the colors. Rub over with a mixture of one-half beeswax, melted, and while warm stirred into a saucer of turpentine. Apply with a dry flannel cloth and polish with a dry flannel. Or wash as above and oil with sweet oil or butter. Polish.

It is a good plan to scrub a floor which is covered with linoleum once a month with a brush dipped in paraffin and hot water—about two tablespoons of the paraffin to a small pail of water. This removes stains and marks and prepares the linoleum for a polish of beeswax and turpentine. Do not scrub more often, but wash weekly with a flannel. Never use soda or strong soaps for oilcloths or linos, as

it takes the color out and effaces the pattern.

Very little water should be used in washing oilcloth, as some of it will seep through to the cloth beneath and rot it. Use a flannel cloth well wrung out and wipe the floor until clean. Salsoda will aid greatly. Wipe the white spots caused by spilling any hot liquid on the oilcloth with a few drops of spirits of camphor.

To keep cork linoleum in good condition wipe it off daily with a cloth wrung out in tepid water and once a week with skim milk.

Never scrub oilcloths with a brush and never use soap in cleaning them. Those which have lain in stock for several years are the best to buy, as the paint is thoroughly hardened. Wash with a soft rag dipped in milk and water.

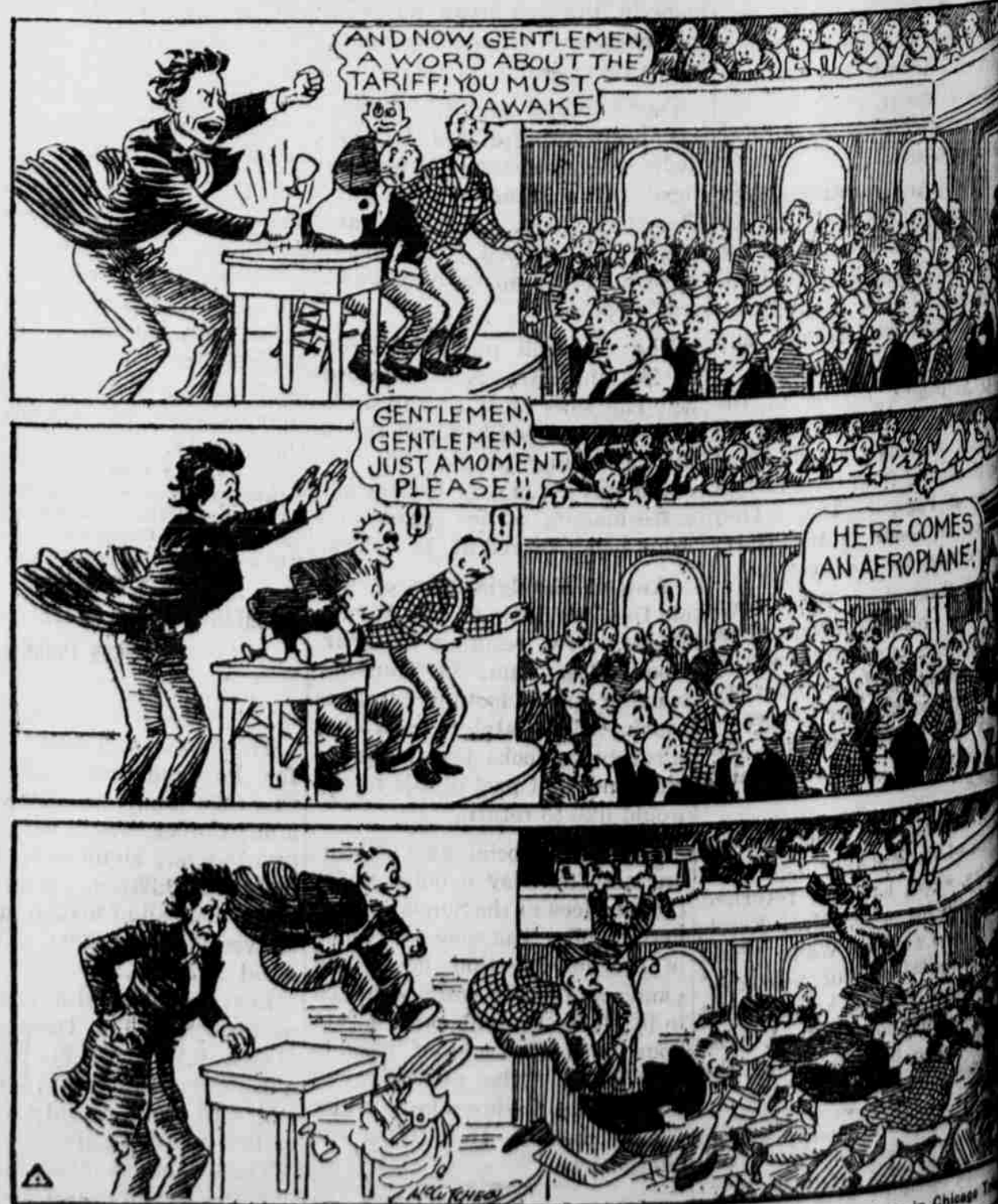
Buttermilk is the best possible thing to clean linoleum and oilcloth.

Shellac comes in two colors, red and white, and can be obtained in flakes at hardware and drug stores. Put some into a bottle and cover with alcohol (denatured is cheapest), in a warm place for several hours, shaking occasionally. This with more alcohol as desired. Keep the bottle stopped, as the alcohol evaporates readily.

How to Save Tablecloths. It is well to have your tablecloths and sheets folded widthways occasionally, instead of lengthways, as this prevents the fold from always coming in the same place and thus causing that place to wear out first.

How to Make Salad Sandwiches. For salad sandwiches mix the celery and mayonnaise with sliced white lettuce and spread on this with bread.

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—McCutcheon in Chicago