

## MASKING YOUR WINDOWS

In war, one of our great protections against the dangers of air attack after nightfall would be the "black-out." On the outbreak of hostilities all external lights and street lighting would be totally extinguished so as to give hostile aircraft no indication as to their whereabouts. But this will not be fully effective unless *you* do your part, and see to it that no lighting in the house where you live is visible from the outside. The motto for safety will be "Keep it dark!"

Every occupier of rooms, house or flat would be responsible for darkening his own lights. Lights in the halls or on the staircases of blocks of flats or dwellings would be the responsibility of the landlord or owner.

Of course, the most convenient way of shutting in the light is to use close fitting blinds. These can be of any thick, dark coloured material such as dark blue or black or dark green glazed Holland, Lancaster or Italian Cloth.

If you cannot manage this, you could obscure your windows by fixing up sheets of black paper or thick dark brown paper mounted on battens.

Alternatively, thick curtains of suitable material will serve, if they really cover the window frames with a bit to spare all round.

The simplest way of testing material, whether for blinds or curtains, is to hold up a piece against an electric bulb. If no light shows through, or only scattered pin holes of light are seen, then the material will do. If a patch of light shows through, it is no use.

Possibly you have blinds already fitted to your windows. If the material is not sufficiently opaque, you can treat it with Oil Bound Water Paint or Distemper of some dark colour. The following mixture can be applied with a brush :—

1 lb. of concentrated size, 3 lb. lamp black in powder form,  $\frac{1}{2}$  gill of gold size. The size and lamp black should be thoroughly mixed and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  gallons of boiling water added. This quantity will cover about 80 square yards of material.

If your blinds do not fit very closely, you could paint the edges of the window panes all round with dark paint. It will, of course, help if you also shade your lights so as to prevent any light falling directly on the window.

*Most Important*—do not forget your skylight if you have one, or glazed doors or even fanlights. You may find it simplest to make these permanently obscure by applying sufficient coats of some dark distemper or paint, or pasting them over with thick brown paper.

There is another thing to remember—Make sure that no light shows when your front door or back door is open. In some cases it may be possible to fix a curtain in the hall or passage to form a "light lock," but if this cannot be done, the light must be turned off before the door is opened.

Some people perhaps will only use one or two rooms at night in war time. This, of course, would simplify matters considerably, as the precautions indicated would only have to be taken for those particular rooms. But you would have to take care not to show by mistake any light in a room where the windows were not screened, and also to see that light did not reach the window of an unoccupied room through some open door.

*Do not leave things until the last*, but get together the materials which you think you would need. If you wait, you might find that you had difficulty in getting what you wanted. Besides, your help is wanted in making effective the "black-outs" for the A.R.P. exercises which are being arranged to try out our defences from time to time.

After all, it is only common sense to make our preparations in advance to meet a possible emergency.