

VENEERED AND SOLID FURNITURE

Although there is a public prejudice against veneered products, a large proportion of all the furniture manufactured has more or less veneered construction in it. The high-grade finish woods are used almost entirely as veneers. More table tops, drawer fronts, doors, and side and end panels of all kinds of furniture are built up of three or five layers of wood than are made of single solid pieces.

Veneer construction has several advantages over solid wood, besides permitting the use of cheaper material in the core or on unseen surfaces. These advantages should be borne in mind by the purchaser who thinks that veneering cheapens the product.

Alternate plies in practically all built-up panels are laid with their grains running at right angles to each other; that is, in three-ply veneer the face veneers are glued at right angle to the core, and in five-ply material the face veneers and the core are parallel and the intervening layers or crossbands are laid at right angles. A panel of this construction has the advantages that it is more nearly of the same strength in all directions, and that as it absorbs or gives up moisture it shrinks and swells about as much one way as another. Splitting along the grain in one set of plies, is made impossible by the cross grain of the alternate plies, and rapid shrinking across the grain in the face veneers is offset by slow shrinkage along the grain in the core.

Veneered panels do not change dimensions as much as solid wood. Warping is largely eliminated in thick panels by plywood construction.

More care can be taken in the selection of surface wood in veneered furniture than can be taken in solid furniture. The manufacturer can dry veneer stock very quickly and cheaply, and he can utilize all of his wood to the best advantage.

Veneered furniture, if properly cared for, will last as long as solid furniture. The glued joints when correctly made are as strong as the wood under ordinary service conditions. Long exposure to very damp air or direct contact with water, of course, will decrease the joint strength even when a very water-resistant glue is used. But such service conditions would be almost as detrimental to solid furniture as to veneered furniture, because even in solid furniture the members are joined together with glue.