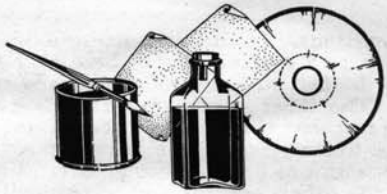

CHAPTER SEVEN

WOOD FINISHING

Wax Finish.—By this is usually meant the paste form of wax which can be applied direct to the work by means of the fingers or a cloth. About ten minutes is allowed for the wax to flat out; then the piece is polished by running the lathe at low speed and holding a piece of soft cloth against the revolving spindle. A second coat can be applied one hour after the first. The wax finish also includes the use of the harder waxes—Carnauba wax, beeswax or paraffin wax. These are in lump form, the application calling for the pressing of the lump against the revolving spindle so that the wax will become soft and adhere to the turning. After the piece is evenly coated, the actual polish is obtained by rubbing with a soft cloth.

Frictional Polish.—A handful of fine shavings taken from the work are cupped in the hand and pressed against the revolving spindle. This will bring out some measure of shine to the work, but is usually done only as an initial step for some other form of finishing.

Oil Finish.—This entails the use of hot, boiled linseed oil as the only polishing medium. The oil is brushed on, and then thoroughly rubbed with a soft cloth as the lathe revolves. Considerable rubbing is necessary to entirely dry the oiled surface.

Varnish.—The varnish finish is applied to turnings much the same as for any other form of cabinet work. The finishing is not done on the lathe, with the possible exception of paste filler, if required, which may be rubbed off at a low spindle speed.

Proper Application of Pad in Applying French Polish. The Lathe Should Be Operated at Low Speed.

French Polishing.—For a first project, best results can be obtained by using maple, with boiled linseed oil or paraffin oil as a first coat. The polish is made of pure white shellac, boiled linseed oil and denatured alcohol. These are not mixed in one bottle, but are kept in three separate bottles. A soft rag (no lint) or absorbent cotton completes the equipment. Both are sometimes used—a pad of cotton wrapped in, say, cheese cloth. The pad should be about ½ inch thick by 2 inches in diameter. Place the pad over the mouth of the shellac bottle, and tip the bottle to fairly well saturate the rag; then, place the pad to the mouth of the alcohol bottle and put on about half as much alcohol as shellac. Add two or three drops of oil. Run the lathe at low speed and apply the pad to the spindle. Hold the pad lightly at first, increasing the pressure until the cloth is almost dry, then, add a little more shellac and an equal amount of alcohol, and apply again until the pad is almost dry. The operation is repeated until the whole surface of the work is evenly coated. After the first coat has hardened (24 to 48 hours) apply a second coat. The second coat is unusually more difficult than the first coat. Whereas the first coat can be put on with a fairly wet pad, the second and all later coats should find the pad just damp with the necessary mix. Gradually increase the proportion of shellac, using just enough alcohol and oil to prevent rings from forming on the work as the shellac piles up. A pure water or alcohol rub is necessary as a final step to completely remove any oil film.

Shellac Finish.—This is a polished shellac surface, somewhat similar to French polish. The lathe is turned by hand and a coat of pure white shellac applied. The shellac is allowed to dry for about ten minutes, and is then lightly sanded with worn sandpaper. Using the same kind of pad as for French polishing, moisten the cloth with a very little thin shellac and apply to the revolving work. A drop or two of linseed or machine oil can be used as a lubricant. After the necessary polish has been obtained, wash with clear water.