



HOW TO MAKE A JAPANESE CABINET.

WITH a few simple materials, a little constructive ability, and strict attention to the directions which follow, a cabinet may be made which will compare more than favourably with the so-called Japanese articles which cost so much money to buy, and are often very common to look at.

The foundation consists of three starch-boxes, to be bought at any oil-shop for 3d. apiece. Remove the lids with a hammer and a large screw-driver, set the boxes on their sides one above the other, then fix securely with French nails. It is best to drive these in at the corners, both back and front, taking care that the heads and points are well embedded in the wood, to obviate all possibility of scratches. Hammer tin-tacks here and there in the shelves formed by the junction of the boxes, and you will find yourself in possession of a very substantial framework, consisting of two sides and a back, an open front, and two shelves. This is all the ugly drudgery, and is very quickly got over.

We next proceed to the decoration, which may of course be effected to suit individual taste, but the model is adorned in a somewhat Oriental style. The top is covered with Japanese paper. This is very costly to buy by the piece, but samples may be bought very cheaply at Liberty's, and will serve quite well if expense be an object. The top may be covered in one piece, if your bundle allow, or if you do not happen to have one large enough, take one piece for the middle, lay one edge flush with the back and bring the other over the front edge and turn it in underneath, using either glue or tin-tacks to affix it. A band of another paper, which harmonises with the first, should then be fastened down on either side and secured underneath as before, then you have a neat edge to the top of your cabinet, and will not require either the fringe or the scalloped leather, which find so much favour in the eyes of amateur cabinet-makers. Care must be taken in the selection of papers for the top, that the gold colour in each should harmonise, or the effect will be disastrous. These golds vary so much that it really requires care in order that bronze gold and pale-yellow gold colour should not be placed side by side. At the junction of the centre with the strip on each side, hammer in a close row of oxidised fancy nails at 1d. the dozen. The model has a top whose centre has a ground of an indescribable blue, on which grow wonderful tropical plants in gold. The bands have a pattern of raised peacocks' feathers chasing each other in gold, on a flat gold ground.

To adorn the two sides, place a panel of the Japanese paper (any pattern and colour will do) two feet four inches high and eight inches wide in the middle. The edges may be quite rough, and fastened to the wood by means of tin-tacks, which will be subsequently hidden. Now comes a great secret. Take some strips of corrugated brown strawboard wide enough to reach from just within the

rough edge of your Japanese paper to the edge of the cabinet, and fix this with a few tin-tacks, taking care not to break the ridges. You will require a strip down each side of the panel, with the corrugations lengthwise, another of the same width with the ridges across for the top, and a wide one of the same for the bottom. Brush this corrugated strawboard lightly and quickly with black enamel, and sprinkle with a few blotches of gold dust, as described in my article "Star-Drift Work," in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER for February 22nd, 1896. This must be done quickly, because the strawboard is very absorbent and the enamel soon dries. If very little gold is used for this, the effect is really good. Two panels may be made instead of one, if preferred, and a cross-bar of the corru-



gated strawboard affixed. This should be rather wider than the sides and top-piece, and the panels should be of slightly uneven size. Of course they should both be the same width, but the upper one should be nearly square, and the lower one longer. Neither should be smaller lengthwise than across, or an unpleasantly stumpy air would be communicated. The model has one long panel on one side, and two as described on the other, by which simple means monotony is avoided.

You now have a handsome panel framed with, to all appearance, black reeds fastened together, and the fact of the enamel drying a dull black heightens the effect. About half-a-dozen of the oxidised fancy nails, hammered through the reed-work where it looks shaly or bulges on to the firm wooden side, serve as metal bosses, and look professional.

(The short panels should be made to correspond somewhat with the position of the

shelves in the front, as a good architect takes care that the decoration of the outside of a building shall bear some relation to the storeys of the interior.)

The visible exterior is now completed, because the back will assuredly be against the wall of the room, and its treatment will be described later.

For the inside buy three sheets of brown paper, at 1d. per sheet. Cut a piece to fit on the shelf from the back over the front edge, and fasten underneath, as described in the decoration of the top. Cut another piece to fit over the sides and back, overlapping the edges slightly and fix this. Now brush the brown paper over with gold size and sprinkle gold dust on thickly, doing a portion at a time, because the size dries quickly, and the dust will not stick unless the surface be wet.

In doing the sides and back, spread liberally with size, and tilt the cabinet so that you drop the gold on more easily, and then stand the cabinet straight again, when the dust will weigh down the size into patterns truly Oriental, and look like Japanese lacquer. The size makes the paper a rich brown colour, which shows up the gold beautifully. The rest of the inside must be treated in the same way, as also the hitherto crude outside back.

Put a stick of bamboo along the back of the top to hide the joints, the same along the sides of the top, across the bottom, the two shelves, and up the two sides of the front. You may also have a piece of bamboo along the top front if you like, as in illustration, but if you followed the directions carefully it will not be necessary, except you desire uniformity. The bamboo must have very tender handling. Saw it carefully to the required size, pierce it where you want to nail it with a fine bradawl, and hammer gently through the holes thus made, taking care not to let the small head of your nail pierce the bamboo, or it will split, and your work and material be wasted.

If any reader should try this for herself she will be well rewarded for her pains, possessing a prettier and more effective piece of furniture for 5s. than she could buy ready-made for a sovereign.

The approximate cost of the whole is:— Boxes 9d., fancy nails 6d., tin-tacks and French nails 2d., gold size 4d., gold dust 4½d., brown paper 3d., bamboo 6d., black enamel 6d., Japanese paper 1s. 6d. Corrugated strawboard you would probably have by you, having wrapped some bottle for the post, but it would cost only a few pence to buy, so the cost of the cabinet would be roughly 5s. This is not a fancy price, because the cost of each item is put down as the result of experience. You will also have some material over, using but little of the Japanese paper, and not more than half of the gold dust, both of which will serve many other useful and ornamental purposes.

PAMELA BULLOCK.