

and crowding on each other, one being jostled let go, and Jabez toppled over the precipice!

There was a scream, a splash in the water. Tabitha, taking clothes from a line in the back yard, cried out, "What is that?" Parson Brookes' startled pigeons flew from their dove-cote, and wheeling round in widening circles cooed affrightedly.

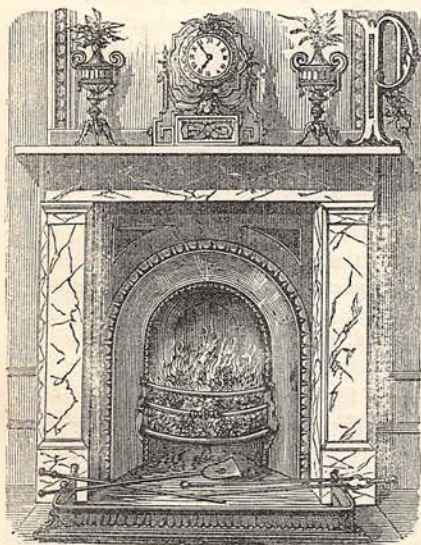
The white-faced boys stood aghast. Unless his fall had been seen from the opposite croft, their victim would be drowned before any aid they could bring was available; a wide circuit must be taken before a bridge

could be reached! Buildings blocked up that river-side! They looked at each other and spoke in whispers; then, with an animal instinct of self-preservation, sneaked off in silence and terror, leaving him to his fate.

Not all. Kit Townley, who held the parcel, had drawn near to remonstrate. With a shriek he threw down the paper, and, hardly conscious what he did, tore wildly through the gates, and across the College Yard, to startle the first he met with the alarm that a College boy was drowning in the Irk!

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

"HOW SHALL I FURNISH MY DINING-ROOM?"



LAIN, yet not bare; sombre, yet not funereal; precise, yet not primitive—these are the leading characteristics of an English dining-room, and therefore, on the whole, it is easier to attain them than it is to form a beautiful drawing-room. You may perhaps remember that while furnishing the latter we had to be guided by certain points concerning the aspect, size, and shape of the room; in furnishing the dining-room, however, this consideration is not such a necessary preliminary, because, speaking generally, there is but one style to adopt for this room. In the first place, we are circumscribed as to the variety of pieces of furniture, not as to the number, for that depends upon the size of the room—whether, for instance, we have a dozen or half a dozen chairs; but we may not introduce a variety of style in those chairs, strict uniformity being demanded in all the dining-room requirements. This, however, we shall see as we progress with our purchases, so we will turn our steps to the paper-hanger's and criticise his stock. The paper of a room bears a very important part, for it invariably is the first object upon which the eye rests when entering through the doorway. Warmth, comfort, and hospitality our dining-room should silently proclaim; and therefore we, as a rule, make choice of rich glowing colours, and handsome substantial materials.

A few years ago, nearly every dining-room had a flock paper on its walls; and very well these papers looked, and well they wore—too well, I suppose, as they

afforded no excuse of shabbiness for replacing them; they were expensive at the outset, and troublesome to get rid of, for every morsel of the old flock paper has to be scraped off before one of any kind can be hung in its place; these are the reasons, I suspect, which led to its dismissal from our houses. In small rooms perhaps a paper of this kind does look too heavy, and may be a trifle dingy, but they suited large well-lighted rooms admirably.

A stiff geometrical design is the most suitable, and crimson, oak, or green is the usual colour chosen; the introduction of a little gold into the pattern has a very brightening effect.

The fortunate possessors of many pictures very often turn the walls of their dining-rooms into a picture-gallery, and for this purpose they discard paper of any description. The walls are painted some plain delicate colour, such as a pale green, buff, salmon, or cream-colour. In this latter case the paint on the doors, skirting-board, and shutters should correspond, but usually the wood-work of the room is painted in imitation of oak. Occasionally the wood is only varnished, but then it ought to possess strong recommendations in itself, and be some one of the beautifully grained American woods. It seems to me that paper and paint are more noticeable for their good or bad qualities in a dining than in any other room—perhaps because there are fewer objects to attract our attention. Frequently we, who are tenants, are not allowed a voice in the matter, and the landlord exercises his own will and taste in papers and paint; so we will at once set off to buy carpet and curtains.

I say that for a dining-room there is no carpet to compare to a Turkey carpet, be it new or old, bright or faded, large or small; there is always a sense of comfort, and warmth, and luxury felt at every step taken on one of these carpets. Furniture of any kind looks well on it, curtains and covers of any colour agree with it; it lasts a lifetime, and yet one never grows weary of the pattern; and when it is, as the saying goes, "on its last legs," it will look superior to many another that is but "a little worn." My readers will deem me an enthusiast on the subject of Turkey carpets—perhaps I am. Of course they are costly in the first instance, but then no time is required to fit or sew them, the square is soon laid down, and if it does

not cover the whole room, as most probably it will not do, the space left is covered with a plain-coloured drugget or Indian matting—or the boards may be coloured with a staining-fluid at a merely nominal cost.

But you may not share in my admiration for the Turkey carpet, then a Brussels will serve your purpose, bearing a neat geometrical pattern on its face. A sprawling pattern dwarfs the size of a room, and no gay groups of flowers look suitable on the floor of a dining-room. The prevailing tint of the carpet and curtains should contrast, not repeat that of the wall-paper. The larger the hearthrug the better, for a dining-room. It will be wise to protect the new carpet by laying down a square of drugget, for there are continual drops and spots and crumbs falling on to a dining-room floor, which it were much better should be received by a drugget than be allowed to spoil the carpet's good looks.

A small-patterned felt drugget will be the most satisfactory—crimson and black, or green and black, or brown and oak—but before making a final decision, let us look on the wrong side of the drugget, and see if the pattern and colour are stamped through; for if they are not, depend upon it, we shall soon rue our purchase. Every morning when the maid brushes it, much coloured fluff will come off on to brush and into dust-pan, and in a very few months the new drugget will be flecked with white here and there, wherever feet or brush have worn off the surface colour. This of course would not have happened had the colours been printed through.

A heavy, handsome, substantial material is what we want for the curtains. Cloth, woollen rep, and Cotelan (a German manufacture made of silk, wool, and cotton) seem to be the most suitable for the purpose; a plain colour bordered with a trimming to correspond will look the best, especially if the room be small in size, or low in height; but if you have a large and lofty room, and feel inclined for something more lively, there are gaily striped reps which will meet with your approbation.

If you have an eye for economy, a dark shade of green is the most durable—green being a colour which does not readily show signs of smoke or dust, nor does it fade as quickly as members of the family of crimsons and clarets have the reputation of doing.

Is the furniture to be dark oak, light oak, or mahogany?

Your choice must be a final one, and we must not deviate from it in any particular; that is to say, all the furniture must be *en suite*, for the room would have a very patched and forlorn look if the articles of furniture in it did not agree with one another.

Old oak belongs to old houses, and if you are going to live in one, you cannot do better than seek for old-fashioned furniture. Carved oak chairs with high backs and square seats, and elaborately carved sideboards and buffets, look extremely handsome, and fortunate indeed are those persons who can secure and display such treasures; but where this cannot be, good old mahogany is not to be despised by any means.

It will look attractive and worthy of its station if kept in good order—which means, if it is well rubbed and polished; but, alas! how seldom do we see this done! Oh, how the old chairs, and tables, and sideboards must sigh and groan over the sad neglect they suffer!

Light oak is the fashion at present in modern houses; if the real wood is too expensive, a commoner kind of wood painted in imitation is substituted.

The most convenient dining-table is one which has its legs placed at the four corners, and the most inconvenient is the Pembroke table, whose four legs are in such awkward positions that they are always in everybody's way, and invariably get kicked or knocked by some one. Then there is a dining-table whose legs are clustered in the middle, and form a pedestal; this has its drawbacks, for the weight of the dishes presses most heavily where there is no support, and consequently this kind of table is not very steady in its behaviour. Wherever the legs are, don't let them have castors, because, when a table is easily moved, it is perpetually awry.

The chief glory of the dining-room is the side-board, and there is always much time consumed in the choice of this piece of furniture. Carving adds much to the beauty, but it is a costly style of decoration if it is well done, and, for my own part, I would rather have a perfectly plain side-board *well made*, than one showy and florid, having great pretensions, but proving an impostor on inspection.

A dumb-waiter, or wagon, is a useful addition to the room; its place is near the side-board, and its office is to hold various things at meal-times, for which the side-board and butler's tray have not room. For instance, if there is dessert, the plates and glasses are placed ready on the wagon.

For the coverings of the chairs, and sofa—should there be one, which is just a matter of convenience—morocco is undoubtedly the best for wear and appearance. The real morocco has been cleverly imitated, so that I doubt if any one but an upholsterer could distinguish the difference. This imitation is about half the price of real morocco.

The material known as Banbury Plush has its admirers, and very handsome and comfortable it looks; but it possesses one tiresome fault, which is this, it clings most pertinaciously to dresses, and when such garments come near it, either to sit upon it or pass by it, there is always so much consequent dragging and pulling about, that what is an amusement at first, becomes a veritable nuisance ere long.

We will just give a passing glance round, and see if there is anything more to speak about. Yes, we have said nothing about the ornaments. These must be few in number, and plain, but handsome.

On the mantelpiece, only a clock, candlesticks or small candelabra, spill-pots, and a couple of vases should stand; and these several ornaments should be made of bronze, serpentine, or marble. On the side-board only a few things should be allowed place, and these should be salvers, tea-caddy, biscuit-box, dessert-knife case, lamp, and such-like articles appertaining to the table.

E. C.