

Poor Clutterbuck! I cheered him up as best I could, and made a point of calling upon him for a chat now and then. He was re-elected the following year, but he was never the same man again—never recovered his old pompous buoyancy of man-

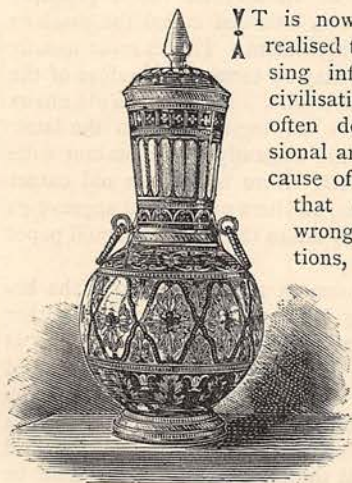
ner, though his devotion to the Vestry was greater than ever.

The other day I was called to his sick-bed.

"Pray, doctor, give my respects to the Vestry," he whispered, and those were his last words to me.

H. L.

ART-FURNISHING FOR MODERN HOUSES.



Y T is now beginning to be realised that the art-depressing influence of modern civilisation, so long and so often deplored by professional artists, is not only a cause of imperfect art, but that art itself, having wrongly restricted its functions, is to blame for the

ugly and unpicturesque character of our surroundings. Thus, as is always the case, cause and effect act and re-act on one another; and as artists are now

grappling with the existing ugliness—as they are busy in designing our furniture and dresses, decorating our rooms, painting our pottery, and in a thousand ways aiding in the diffusion of beauty—we may hope that the end of the reign of unthinking ugliness is in sight.

But the efforts of professional artists in these matters would be useless unless the public mind be educated to appreciate and take an intelligent interest in them. This education of the lay mind is just what is going on now. Following the natural course in such a case, the revival of art has found its first reception amongst the wealthier classes, who, by the influences of a liberal education, and the nature of their circumstances, are more free than others to enter into novel modes of thought. It is now every day being more and more strongly felt that not only for the rich the love of art is good, but that it must become the daily and hourly companion of all classes of the community. So rapidly spreading is the desire to do what is right in the matters of decoration and furniture, that the supply—not, indeed, of the materials, but of the necessary information—can scarcely keep pace with it.

Especially at the stage of the movement we have now reached, there exists a large class of people who, although they now take a very intelligent interest in these matters, are yet so hampered by circumstances that they find a quite unnecessary amount of difficulty in realising their aspirations. I mean people of fixed incomes, who are unable, from want of the necessary previous mastery of the principles of

the applied arts, to rely entirely on their own judgment in selection. Moreover, for them, the problem is often complicated by the fact of their possession of a houseful of furniture, possibly bad in design, which, although contemptible when viewed by the light of their more cultivated taste, yet so sufficiently serves their material wants as to render it an apparent extravagance to replace it.

As an attempt to clear away or lessen some of these difficulties, I propose to submit a few short papers, giving practical and well-tested information as to the best and most ready way of making the homes of the middle classes more in accord with artistic taste.

Of course, in these pages, and in such a brief space, I cannot give even an outline of the principles of applied art; but in all cases, as far as space will allow, I shall give a *reason* for preferring one thing to another, and this for two especial purposes. The first is that if one knows *why* such a thing is good or such another bad in art, it gives us the means of comparing together any other things of the same class. But the second purpose is more important, as it is intended to combat the common idea that art is in some respects antagonistic to health, comfort, or convenience. This is, of course, known to be a fallacy, but it is so often re-stated that I am most anxious to show, and illustrate in every possible way, that the art which demands any sacrifice in these important points is not true art at all. It may wear its outward semblance, but it is at best only a false and injurious libel upon its original.

Before going into details, there is one point which demands a passing note. In the case of a young couple about to start housekeeping, there will be no difficulty in showing them how to furnish artistically with as little expense as in the usual tasteless manner. It is only a question of trouble and pains. As Mrs. Westlake truly said, in a speech at the School Board for London, "To have things tasteful and pretty costs no more *money* than to have them ugly, but it does cost a great deal more *trouble*." But the other case, to which I have already referred, is by far the most common. People connected by their profession with these matters are constantly met with the complaint that So-and-so likes artistic furniture and decoration very much, and, if beginning again, would certainly "go in for it," but cannot bring themselves to get rid of the mass of upholsterer's goods, which if sold must be parted with at a ruinous sacrifice. If it be suggested to such as these that a small beginning might be made with

but little outlay, the reply inevitably comes that the effect would be incongruous—in other words, the implication evidently is that it is better to be wholly wrong than partly wrong and partly right. But there is more than that. There is the lurking fear that, once admitting the thin end of the wedge, they will be gradually and insensibly let into a whole series of what appears to be useless and extravagant expenses.

Now this last idea raises so serious a question that I should be sorry to be at all misunderstood on the point. Although it is rightly claimed for good applied art that it is something more than a mere luxury—that its influence, when in daily *rappor*t with it, is most certainly to enlarge our ideas and to refine our nature—it is none the less true that there are other and still more important objects to care for. An artistically appointed home would indeed be dearly purchased at the cost of stinting our provision for future years, or our children's education, our charities, or our hospitality to our friends. But in the matter of pure luxuries and superfluities it is often possible, although spending no more money, to purchase more lasting pleasures. By many little economies which will readily suggest themselves, we may often provide the means of acquiring something which will prove an enduring delight. Moreover, we are providing an endless round of employment, amusement and discussion, which will sometimes render more costly and perhaps less innocent recreations unsought-for.

In some cases too, as we shall see, a little may be done by our own actual work and by the labours of our children. If the young people take to this kind of occupation willingly it will be found to secure a double advantage: at once furnishing our homes with pretty and useful things otherwise costing a good deal of

money, and at the same time providing an amusement which, healthy and pure in itself, will obviate the desire for the round of expensive pleasures coming generally under the head of dissipation.

Let us now suppose the case of a family of moderate means, inhabiting a middle-sized house, already furnished with the usual appointments of such a residence. The husband and wife are both fond of artistic furnishing, but are not rich enough to sell off their old *mobilier* and re-decorate and re-furnish throughout. Now, in such a home as this there is usually some *second-class* room, probably the breakfast-room, or a little den called the master's study, or some such apartment. This is most usually furnished with what may be termed the refuse of the other more important rooms. Here are the old chairs and the sofa from the drawing-room when the latter was enriched with the elegantly carved walnut suite upholstered in damask. Here is laid the old carpet from the dining-room, and here are the old engravings thought too shabby to adorn the white-and-gold paper in the drawing-room.

It is in such a room as this that I think the beginning might best be made, and I would rather complete the renovation of this room, bit by bit, as opportunity offered, than do a little in one room and a little in another. We shall, at all events, gain the benefit of experience by seeing what we can do in a room of minor importance before spending time and money upon the best rooms, wherein failure would be a far more serious matter.

The first thing to be done is to make the walls look a little more interesting. The walls, forming the background of the objects in the room, should necessarily be of a retiring character. It is obvious that nothing staring either in pattern or colour can possibly be admitted, and although the fuller discussion of the subject of wall decoration must be deferred for the present, it may as well at once be laid down as an axiom that nothing approximating primary colours is admissible as the general tone for walls of rooms, nor should any patterns be employed which assert themselves in any way to the eye as patterns. Suppose, in the room under consideration, we hang the lower part of the walls up to the level of the mantelpiece with a dark citrine-coloured paper of a small and rather *set* pattern, taking care not to choose a paper in imitation of tiles. Hang the walls above this with a lighter paper, with an *all-over* pattern of leaves and conventional flowers, if possible in two shades, only of one colour, say a neutral green. Papers such as these can be had at about half-a-crown the piece of twelve yards, and the room being small, the whole cost of paper and hanging would probably be under three pounds. If the ceiling wants rewhitening, it will be more in harmony with the walls if coloured with a warm buff tint instead of the ordinary bluish-tinted white.

The woodwork of the room is in all probability grained to imitate maple or oak. This may be painted in two coats of a darker shade of the colour of the upper part of the papering on the walls. At the



OVER-MANTEL AND SUSSEX ARM-CHAIR.

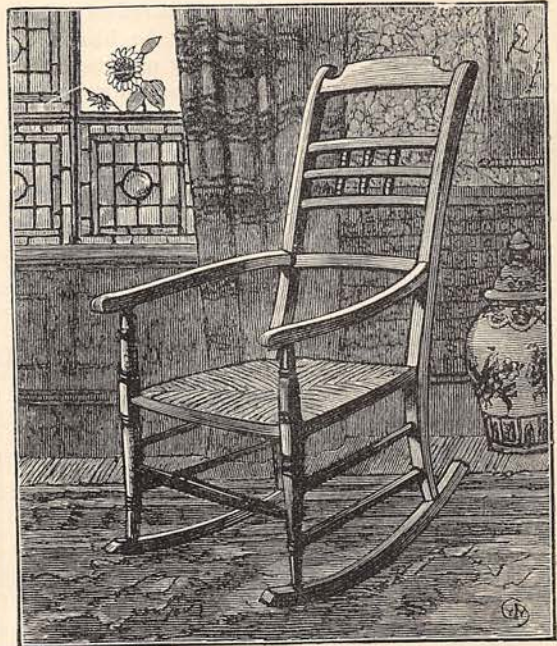
junction of the two papers fix in the wall a wooden moulding, which can be bought very cheaply at so much a foot at the timber-yards. If the painting of the woodwork is done at the same time as the papering this moulding should be painted to match, if otherwise it may be painted black. The moulding forms a surbase and costs no more than a paper border. The dado (the paper below the surbase) may be advantageously sized and varnished if the room is much used, and especially where there are young children. It will now prove not only an improvement artistically, but an actual economy, from the fact that most of the wear of a wall-paper is confined to the lower parts where it is subjected to being knocked about with furniture, occasional contact with heads, and spattering of ink and so forth. The varnished surface will stand a good deal of wear, will bear washing, and at the end the dado may be renewed without involving the repapering of the whole room.

The walls having now assumed an altered appearance, we may turn our attention as soon as we can to the floor. Suppose the boards are too old, rough, and unsightly to bear staining and polishing. Of course, as a carpet all over the room is inadmissible for many reasons, we must cover the margins round the walls with something. I should prefer to cover the whole of the floor with Japanese matting. It is cool and pleasant, makes a very durable floor-covering, bears washing, and tones into a very agreeable colour. The ordinary sort costs about two shillings a yard, and as it is a full yard in width, it is a cheap material for the purpose. It is better not fastened down, as it soon treads down flat, and can be easily taken up in strips for cleaning purposes.

The ends of each strip should be secured either by binding or by unravelling a few of the straws and tying over the projecting ends of the strings running lengthwise.

A small square of drugget without pattern may be laid down, and a few Oriental rugs disposed where wanted for comfort's sake will complete the floor furniture. The cheap Scinde rugs so commonly sold at the shops, at prices from seven-and-sixpence upwards, may be used, but they are seldom very good in colour. Some of the larger shops have generally on sale a lot of *old* Persian and Turkish rugs, perfect in colour and texture, which are sold at prices varying with their condition, from one to several pounds; but the oldest and most worn-out one will be of better value than any of the cheap manufactures.

The walls, ceiling, and floor are now all in keeping, and the fireplace begins to assail us with its want of beauty. Of course in most cases the tenure of the house will prevent our going to the expense of removing it altogether and putting something better in its place; so what is possible must be done to mitigate its ugliness without disturbing it. Various devices have been adopted for this purpose; the most usual and perhaps the best is the addition of a mantelboard covered with cloth, with a valance say one foot in depth depending therefrom. The jambs are now the only parts of the chimney-piece visible, and these, whether of marble,



YORKSHIRE ROCKING-CHAIR.

enamelled slate, or what not, I would ruthlessly *paint* in the colour adopted for the woodwork of the room. The mantelboard is better straight than shaped, as it is called, and the valance should also be straight. The latter offers a favourable field for crewel-work, say a row of stiff flowers, or failing the necessary talent, a quaint decorative effect may be produced by sewing on at intervals some of the little Japanese crape pictures commonly sold at the Oriental warehouses, with narrow tapes to form border lines.

On the mantelpiece, as a looking-glass of some sort is generally looked for, a very good piece of furniture is a simple form of what is called an over-mantel. This may be bought or made cheaply, and consists of a small looking-glass in the centre, with a couple of shelves with brackets under them at the sides. This will serve to display any little articles of pottery or metal-work not too precious to be exposed to ordinary handling.

As this is not a sketch of our *beau ideal* of a room, but rather a suggestion as to what may be readily and cheaply done to make the best of an ordinary one, the discussion of the general question of furniture will be better deferred until we are treating of the completely new furnishing of a house; at present merely offering a few hints as to the furnishing of this particular room. The chairs already in the room are not likely to be good enough to remain unless, as sometimes happens, they are really old ones of the Chipendale or the Adams type. Even in the latter case they will probably be more advantageously disposed elsewhere. For common use there is nothing in the market better or cheaper than the ordinary black Sussex rush-bottomed chairs, of which the modern type, although degenerated from the old in point of

refinement of form and detail, is still harmless enough and constructively right. They may be bought for about seven-and-sixpence each. For easy and arm-chairs for fireside use, an old arm-chair such as a Yorkshire rocking-chair, or some such restful type, may often be picked up for a few shillings at a broker's shop. Let the seat and back be restuffed and covered with a figured tapestry, or even cretonne, and the woodwork blacked and polished. If prejudice were not so strong,

people would look with a more favourable eye on the Windsor form of chair with wooden seat. They too like the Sussex chairs have degenerated, but old ones are often to be bought, and the simplicity and perfect constructive truth of their make is so grateful to the artistic eye, that it is surprising that they are not more used. There is an example of one of them in Mrs. Jopling's "Sympathy," a colour-print from which forms the frontispiece to the present volume of this Magazine.

THE SONG-BIRDS' DEPARTURE.

AROUND the cedars on the lawn
 The evening mists are early drawn,
 On each its cobwebs' glittering bells
 At noon of autumn's cold breath tells ;
 The woods their golden mantle wear
 To grace the passing of the year ;
 Saddest of all, resounds no trill
 From blithesome warblers—all are still.

The cuckoo long ago has fled,
 The blackcap dulled his sable head,
 The whitethroat sought more sunny climes,
 The fearful swallow left betimes ;
 O'er barren moor or stubble bright,
 The wood-wren wings her silent flight ;
 While many a whistle from the skies
 Marks where the plover southward flies.

What guides these birds to warmer lands ?
 Doth chance impose such strict commands ?
 Did myriad races die before
 Survivors sought a foreign shore ?
 Not so ; Creative Love impressed
 Upon their natures His behest,
 And still, obedient, they observe
 The charge, nor from His purpose swerve.

We grieve, but lasting song would cloy
 Capacities of sober joy ;
 And though we mourn the silent bands
 Of birds which flit to stranger lands,
 Brighter the welcome we extend
 Next April to each well-known friend,
 And more we long 'mid winter's snow
 To hear new songs when lilies blow.

M. G. WATKINS, M.A.

SECOND-COURSE DISHES.

EVERY housekeeper knows that it is very difficult to have any variety of second-course dishes in winter. Eggs are then scarce and dear, and milk is not easily procured. It was in winter that Miss Julia Hamilton first tasted a compôte of oranges, French pancakes, a shape of prunes, claret jelly, and Indian fritters.

Julia was observed by her hosts to be very meditative while she tasted these hitherto unknown delicacies one after another. At length she roused herself from her abstraction, and exclaimed, "I never saw so many nice things on the table together, Aunt Hannah ; and you always have nice things."

"Is that what you have been pondering so deeply, Julia?" asked her uncle, with a laugh. "I fancied you were thinking of the riddle I gave you to guess."

"I was trying to guess a riddle, certainly, Uncle James. It is this : how to feed Mark well and make him very comfortable on our three hundred a year. We shall not have more than that between us, and he has a good appetite, I am glad to say, and is particularly fond of sweet things."

"So are you, Julia."

"Yes, indeed, I am. I expect to eat a large portion

of my own wedding-cake. Mamma says she will give us a quarter of it to take with us on our wedding tour."

"Who could say such a dreadful thing but a bride of twenty?" cried another uncle, who was dyspeptic, and lived upon wholesome viands, provided expressly for himself by his careful sister-in-law. "Unlimited wedding-cake ! Horror ! But I have noticed that you venture rashly upon the most indigestible compounds, such as roly-poly puddings and jam tarts. If there must be a special cake for wedding breakfasts, why does not some one invent a cake that middle-aged and elderly people may partake of without injury? Your aunt is a famous cook—she should invent a new wedding-cake."

"Not until after Mark and I have eaten ours, I hope," said Julia.

Mrs. Hamilton took no notice of the compliment to her prowess as a cook—she was too well accustomed to consider herself unrivalled in that department—but she replied to her young niece's first remark, which had been occupying her mind for several minutes—

"You say you never saw these dishes before. Why, child, you have eaten them at this table over and over again. What are you thinking of?"

ART-FURNISHING IN MODERN HOUSES.—II.



N the first paper on this subject a few suggestions were offered as to the way in which a beginning might be made in a room of secondary importance. It was shown that this might be done without involving any very heavy outlay, and that the plan offered two special advantages, obviating the popular bugbear of incongruity, and at the same time giving us the advantage of actual experience

of certain effects before attacking more important apartments. In place of continuing the discussion of the furnishing of this particular room, it will be better perhaps at once to commence our general consideration of the furnishing and decorating of a house. As the greater contains the less, it will be easy to apply the principles of selection which we shall propose for the whole house to any particular case.

Commencing in the natural order with the parts of the house first seen on entering it—the hall and staircase—it may as well at once be said that the philosophy of the decoration and furniture of these sections is to make them a part of the home, and not merely a link between the street and the room, a thoroughfare to be got through as quickly as possible, which is too often the idea expressed in their narrow and cramped dimensions and their meagre furnishing.

In the ordinary small town houses of the middle classes, the furnishing of these features of the dwelling is generally supposed to be complete with the provision of a hat and coat stand, an umbrella stand, a hall table, and a couple of hard, shining, comforthless wooden chairs, or a long narrow wooden bench. Now, it is not to be wondered at that no more is attempted when we constantly find in modern houses—even of the better sort—the hall reduced to the merest passage, and the stairs cramped up within the narrowest possible limits. Halls (?) of three feet wide and stairs under two feet nine inches wide are not uncommon. Add to this that they are alternately dark as Erebus, lighted only by a small fanlight over the street-door at one end and by a squinting reflection from a staircase window at the other, or, on the other hand, blazing with the light of a huge window perhaps running up through two storeys. Consider, too, that they are draughty, cold, cheerless, monotonous in line and colour, and it is not surprising that they have come to be looked upon as mere thoroughfares, and that the natural feeling is to get out of them as quickly and as often as we can into the more cheerful and cosy rooms.

Those who have the happiness of living in an old house find out that, on the contrary, the hall and staircase may be much more than mere thoroughfares. In such houses as are here and there yet spared to us,

especially in the neighbourhood of the river at Chelsea, and at old Kensington, as well as occasionally in the other suburbs of London, the entrance hall is invariably of a generous width, and the staircase, wide in the treads and easy in ascent, is solidly built with massive newels and handrail, and handsome turned balusters, thickly set. The walls are, or have been, wainscoted, at all events up to the handrail level; and wide landings with recessed windows form delightful nooks, which, when suitably furnished and decorated, give a snug home-like look to the staircase and afford pleasant lounging-places, where one can feel as much at home on a summer's afternoon as if enclosed within the walls of a room. It may be said that the stinted width of the modern hall and stairs is rendered necessary by the narrow frontages afforded for most urban houses, and that an increased allowance of space in these thoroughfares would diminish the convenience of the more important sections of the dwelling. But in reality this is seldom the case; it is more often the result of a mistaken apportionment of the space available. It would hardly be credited what a few inches of additional width in the hall will do to improve it, while the loss of these few inches is scarcely felt in the rooms adjoining. For example, take a frontage of nineteen feet. Deducting two feet for the thickness of the walls, we have seventeen feet available for division between entrance hall and front room. In nine cases out of ten the builder will devote at least thirteen feet six inches to the room, leaving three feet six inches only for the hall—a width which leaves but scanty room for two people to pass each other, and none at all for furniture. Increase the width of the hall to four feet, or still better, to four feet three inches, and it is at once felt to be comfortably wide, circulation is possible, and there is even room to spare for a narrow table and seat, while the room adjoining is not appreciably injured.

But for our present purpose we must take things as they are. Perhaps the little digression above may not, however, be entirely useless if it induce the speculating builder, to whose tender mercies most of us are delivered over, to grant us an additional inch or two in the width of those parts of our homes which have been for long so despised as scarcely to be considered worthy of thought and pains in decorating and furnishing.

We may take it as a foregone conclusion that the walls of the hall and staircase are covered with the usual sienna marble paper twice sized and varnished. How this particular covering and no other has so long come to be considered *de rigueur* for this purpose is not far to seek. In the first place, there has long been an idea that marble walls were the very *ne plus ultra* of magnificence and excellence. Even Mr. Charles Eastlake, whose valuable hints on taste in the household have had considerable effect in awakening people's attention to the possibility of

bringing art into our homes—has certified to us that marble is the most agreeable wall-lining for a hall, and “next to that, real wainscoting.” Perhaps for a palace, or for the huge palatial residences of our old nobility, marble from its magnificence may be suitable enough as a wall-lining, but in our humid and chilly climate it appears to me not at all in accordance with middle-class notions of comfort. It is cold, hard, and too suggestive of bath-room and lavatory ideas. This is perhaps a heresy, but at all events, granting the fixed idea that real marble was the proper wall covering, and that its cost renders it generally unattainable, it is not to be wondered at that for many a weary year an imitation of it in varnished paper should have been insisted on. For my own part, considering the hall and the staircase equally with the rooms an essential part of the home, and considering too our narrow and cramped passages and staircases, I should prefer a suggestion of something warmer and more comfortable. The ill effect of the marble paper is also much increased by the custom of hanging it *in blocks*, which, by their size, entirely destroy the scale of the walls, and still further “force” the constricted effect of their scanty dimensions.

On the other hand, the colour of old sienna marble paper is very agreeable, and could we get away from the suggestion of another material, the slight diversity of tint caused by the marbling is sufficient to break up the monotony of a plain coloured surface without asserting itself offensively as a decided pattern.

There is yet room for some of our enterprising wall-paper manufacturers to introduce some papers containing two shades only of the same tint very slightly differing from each other, and patterned with a small “all-over” design of an unobtrusive kind. These would be most useful for a variety of decorative purposes. It seems ungrateful, in the face of the vast improvements made of late years in this branch of applied art, to take exception to what has been done; but I am afraid it must be owned that, as a rule, the patterns and colours in nearly all wall-papers assert themselves far more than is desirable for ordinary wall decoration. Now that individual excellence has been attained in nearly all the accessory arts, it is time to insist upon their due subserviency being kept—a desirable result which is unlikely to take place without much insistence in these days of competition. Every manufacturer naturally struggles to bring his own productions forward without regarding the fact that his work is eventually only to take its place as a part of a whole. Thus, the paper-stainer designs his papers with so forcible a scheme of line and colour, that their proper function—that of affording an agreeable *background* to other things—is lost sight of. So, too, the cabinet-maker is so eager to show his skill in inlaying and carving, that the cabinets he makes to display works of art aim at being works of art themselves, and challenge the attention of the spectator in competition with treasures of which the proper display is their only *raison d'être*.

Whatever may be said for or against the much-discussed dado, there can be scarcely be two opinions about its appropriateness in halls and staircases. The line of wear in these sections of a dwelling is so defined that it is almost self-evident that a contrivance should be adopted by which the part of the wall constantly liable to being soiled and injured, and therefore frequently wanting renewal, is separated from the portion seldom touched. The height of the dado should not be less than four feet six inches, and where paper is adopted (more durable and expensive wall linings not being attainable) it should always be twice sized and varnished. A wooden surbase moulding is also preferable for many reasons to a paper border. For the colour and pattern a moderately dark tone is allowable, and any small set pattern looks suitable. I do not recommend the papers usually sold, especially for staircase dados; they are generally too large in scale, and too self-assertive in pattern. Japanese leather-paper makes an excellent dado, but is rather expensive, ranging from four to eight shillings per square yard. Matting used for this purpose is scarcely suitable, as it collects and holds the dust. Plain paint is good if the upper part of the wall be papered, but if the latter be distempered or painted the walls have a monotonous uninteresting appearance. With a patterned dado the upper part of the wall may be distempered in a lighter tint of the ruling colour of the dado. If the walls are already hung with marble paper in fairly good condition, there is no necessity to incur the expense of stripping the walls, as the joints may be rubbed down smooth and the distemper colour laid over it. In some cases it is necessary to paint the walls once in thin oil-colour before distempering, to prevent the varnish working through and making the work look mottled.

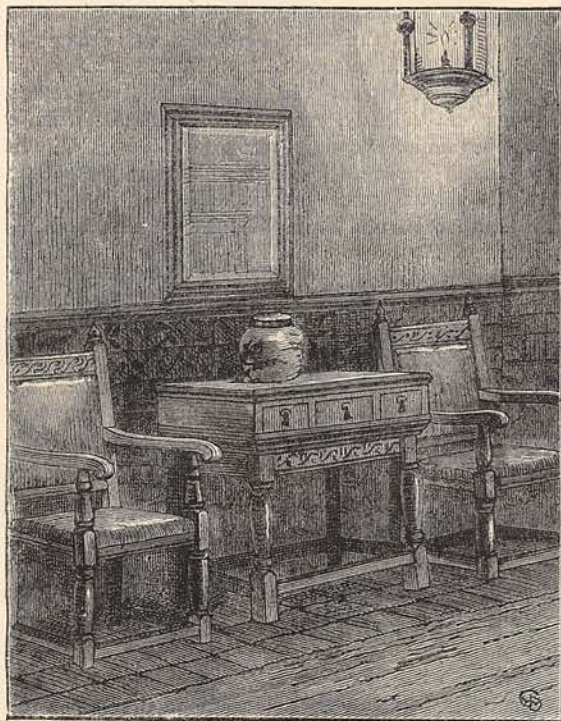
For the floor covering, a cleanly readily-washable material is certainly a necessity for the outer hall. Putting aside the more expensive stone, marble, or mosaic floors, perhaps encaustic tiles are the most suitable, taking care that no pronounced or obtrusive pattern be adopted. Tiles of one subdued colour are best, with perhaps a line of another shade to mark the border. There is a common sort of Staffordshire tile, made in red, buff, and black, which may be used in cases when the cost of encaustic tiles is beyond our means. The effect of these tiles is very good, and owing to the slight irregularity of the tiles and the comparative coarseness of the jointing, they commend themselves better perhaps to the artistic eye than the rigid nicety of encaustic tiles. If the cost of a tiled floor is greater than can be afforded, and assuming the boards to be in fairly good condition, I would suggest staining and varnishing the whole of the floor, and laying a strip of matting or oil-cloth of one colour down the centre, observing not to fasten either material down, as it is a necessity that it be readily removable for cleaning purposes.

The margins of the stairs may also be stained and varnished, or they may be painted with a light tone of the ruling colour in the stair-carpet. For the carpet itself, there is now no lack of good Brussels

and other carpets of unexceptionable patterns and colours. Some carpets are made in plain colours without pattern, with a broad border of lines only. These, although rather expensive, are very durable, and have a very good effect. If the landings fortunately happen to be wider than the stairs, it will be necessary to have some unbordered carpet matching the stair-carpet. The usual brass rods form the best fixing, but they may well be much stouter than the sort most commonly sold, and should have strong brass eyes well screwed to the tread and riser. It is scarcely necessary to hint to the careful housewife that the length of carpet for each flight should be half a yard or so in excess of what is actually required, so that the position of the carpet with respect to the "nosing" of the stairs, where nearly all the wear occurs, may be frequently changed.

For the ceilings of passages and the soffites of the stairs, in the cases where the upper part of the walls are distempered, papering in a quiet pattern is to be recommended. If, on the other hand, the walls are papered, the ceilings and so forth are best only coloured in a light and aerial tint of the ruling colour of the walls.

Coming now to the furniture, it may be premised that any substantial furniture is suitable. It is quite a modern and unnecessary convention that a special form and character is correct for hall furniture as distinguished from that of any other part of the house. For this purpose, however, it is well to select strong furniture with a minimum amount



OAK HALL FURNITURE.

of upholstery, which collects the dust, the great enemy always more or less rampant in the neighbourhood of the street-door.

A table with a drawer for brushes, and two or three comfortable chairs, or a long settee, are necessary articles. Especially not to be commended is the meagre bench with turned roller ends, which so unhappily suggest being rolled off on to the floor. The amount of furniture and the sizes will naturally depend upon the space available, and in too many cases for the outer hall or passage a narrow long seat and table of small projection will occupy as much of the space as can be spared from the thoroughfare. There is no reason, however, why even this scanty display should not be designed correctly, and be as attractive as we can make it.

The first illustration on this page shows suitable forms for this furniture. Where the width is not so restricted a couple of old or new high-backed arm-chairs and a table of similar style, as suggested in the second sketch, are very appropriate. A looking-glass over the table is also a convenient addition, and helps to give a home-like appearance.

It must always be remembered that the look of the entrance hall or passage strikes the initial notes of the entire effect of the house; it is the first glimpse we get of its inner economy, by which we form a judgment of what is likely to follow, and we are predisposed to like or dislike the whole accordingly. Therefore, we shall

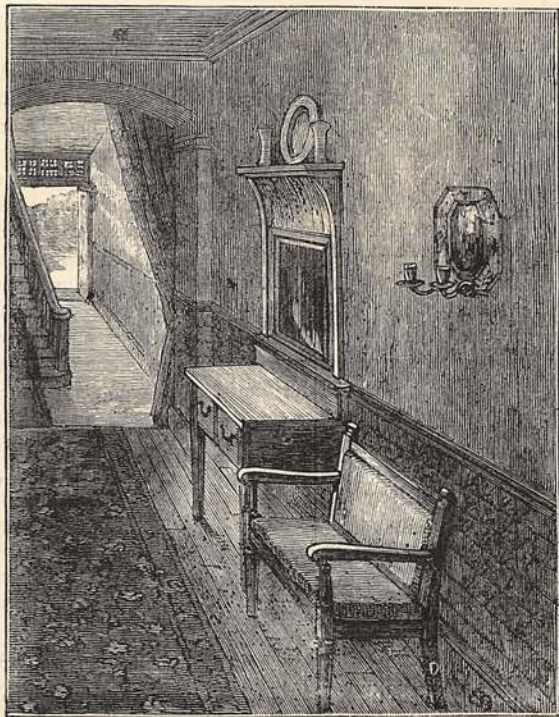
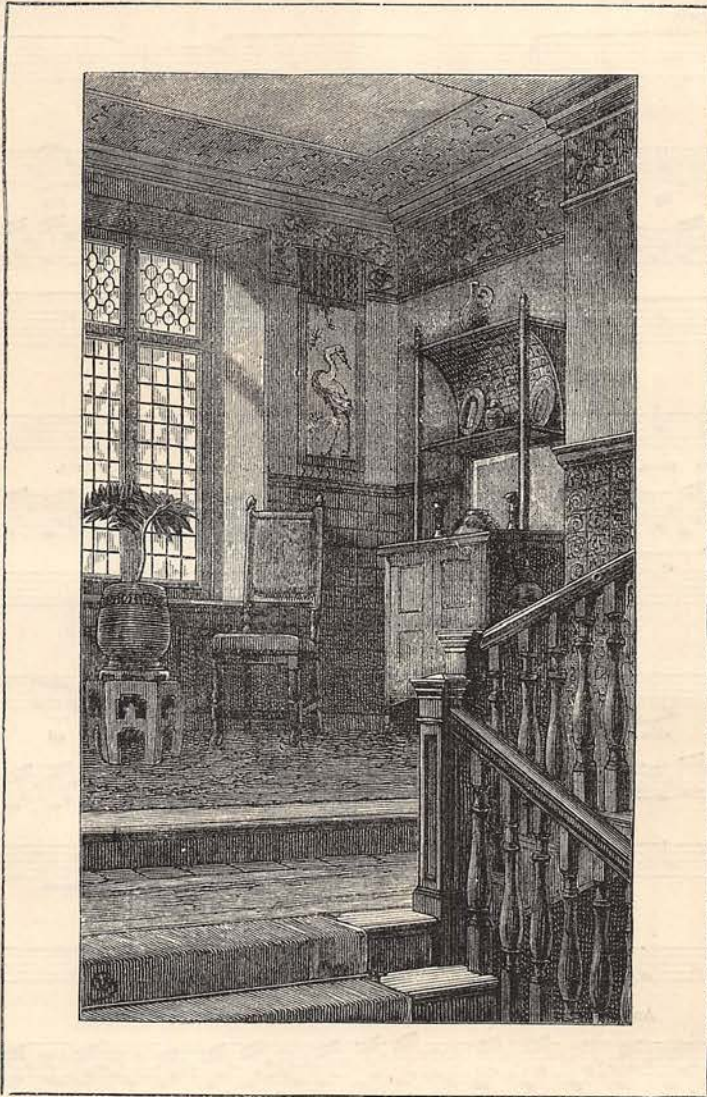


TABLE AND SETTEE FOR A NARROW HALL.

always be careful that our outer hall is in keeping with the rest of the house. Hats, coats, and umbrellas should be disposed in an inner hall, and if possible in a recess. The rickety erections which the taste of the upholsterer has created for the combined reception of these articles of apparel and protection are all without exception inadmissible. Simple pegs for hats with

may be satisfactorily treated. Wherever any such recess or break in the circumscribed monotony of the staircase happens to exist, it will of course always be made a great deal of, and the additional charm which it gives to the house is always well worth the trouble of decorating and furnishing it.

Cabinets for the display of china should be en-



A STAIRCASE RECESS.

small hooks under for coats, and an umbrella stand formed as plainly as possible, are all that is necessary. In order to keep the wet coats from the wall, the recess in which they hang or the part of the wall under the hooks, where no recess is available, should be lined with woodwork, painted or stained and varnished.

The above illustration is a representation of a windowed recess one step above the landing—a common feature in staircases—and shows how such a place

closed as much as possible, with air-tight glass doors, so as to avoid the necessity of dusting, with the accompanying risk of breaking, the contents every time the stairs are swept down. Large pot-pourri jars, common Flemish grey ware, bronzes, old Dutch brass-work, Bellarmine bottles or greybeards, are always welcome to the sight and are all very suitable for the adornment of halls and landings. Growing plants, especially those of the palm kind, are also not to be forgotten.