

they seem to belong naturally to the child's world. One of these fascinating creatures was the first mount of a little girl, a friend of mine. "Topsy," as they called her, had the sweetest and most engaging manners in the stable or the field, would allow herself to be coaxed and fondled like a doll, and would wander all over the enclosure for a piece of sugar from her little mistress, who devoted herself to her entirely, thereby arousing the lasting jealousy of her poodle dog, who begged in vain for notice on these occasions. But when it came to riding her, Topsy did not prove by any means such a treasure. She played a hundred mischievous little tricks with the child, shying, twisting, and jumping in all directions, and giving her in all nine tumbles, happily none of them the least serious, but enough to prove that the pony had too keen a spirit for practical joking to be suitable for so young a rider. Topsy accordingly was wisely relegated to a little two-wheeled cart, which she conducted with gravity and decorum, and my young friend became possessed of one of those charming confidential little cobs which seem to me so suitable for children. I made a sketch of her on this pretty

little animal as she said good-bye to us one day, starting on her first "*real* ride with mother," as she called it. The ride was a *real* one, she explained, because the leading rein had been finally and entirely abolished.

As my little friend said good-bye to me, so must I now say good-bye to my readers, whom I have already detained too long with these every-day reminiscences of our friends the horses. Still, those who are riders themselves will, I hope, pardon my prolixity. They will know how gladly one lingers over the happy memories of days spent in the hunting-field, or of wanderings through pleasant lanes with two little ponies showing us the way, or of solitary rides through forest glades and over wide downs and moors—especially when these days belong to a past beyond recall: memories of "glimpses which have made us less forlorn," memories of days when the complexity, the weariness, the worry of life still seemed strange and far away, when existence was simple and comprehensible, and enjoyment centred itself in a free bounding gallop over grassy slopes under sunny skies.

A LUXURIOUS SNUGGERY.



A COSY CORNER.

A LIBRARY such as would be considered worthy of the name by scientific and literary men, and by noblemen who possess collections of volumes handed down from father to son for generations, is probably far out of the reach of many of my readers. The morning-room or breakfast-room, whichever name it may go by, usually answers for library as well in moderate-sized houses—and, somehow,

for luncheon or dinner; then away through empty space goes careering the supremely fascinating idea which has been a veritable will-o'-the-wisp all the morning, but was just taking shape, and would have gone far towards winning us fame—so we flatter ourselves—if that unlucky domestic had not recalled us to every-day life, and caused us to scramble up our written pages into a heap and ignominiously retire. In spite of its usefulness, I find that the morning-room is often extremely ugly. A discarded suite of furniture from some other apartment "does well enough," the table-cloth is far from innocent of ink-stains, the sewing-machine, never a lovely object, stands in the bay window, and the ornaments are second-rate. By far the best of the bunch is the book-case, with its rows of dear old friends, any one of which we could lay hands on in the dark. Sometimes, though, even these are kept in disorder.

Now I am going to describe a room I am modernising. Why any one should have things ugly about when he could with no trouble but only pleasure have them pretty, I never could understand. Taking a look round, I feel a thorough aversion rising towards that horrible round table; it encroaches on space, and is the stamp of formality: therefore I issue an ukase for its immediate banishment anywhere out of my sight.

Now that Man of the Mountains is no more seen, we set to work with a will. The Brussels carpet is in good condition, and the colouring and design are Eastern in style, so they will fall in with my scheme. The walls are neither good nor bad, they are simply

it often becomes the favourite retreat of the family. We are apt to be disturbed by callers if we set to work in the drawing-room, and when we have our papers about in glorious confusion on the dining-table, Jane is certain to enter with the paraphernalia

neutral in tone, and the woodwork is not assertive, being a mixture of cream and buff tints. Our limit as to expenditure will not allow of our touching these.

The mantel-piece will never do as it is, and we tackle that first. Fortunately, it is a wooden construction. A carpenter is called in, who fixes a dark oak beading as a kind of frame for the lincrusta panels—"wood effect," as it is termed—which we have bought to ornament the jambs. Over the mantel-piece he sets up a narrow mirror. In the course of our peregrinations in our search after the beautiful, we have come across a pair of embossed metal panels really valuable and old; these, framed in lincrusta, which harmonises splendidly with their deep bronzy tones, the man places one on each side of the glass, fixing small shelves above to hold a few pieces of china.

Now for the drapery. I have invested in some yards of golden-brown plush—wool brocade would have answered the purpose, but I must own to a leaning towards plush, the folds are so rich and the reflected tints so charming—and some golden Nagpore silk. Climbing up a pair of steps, with hammer and nails in my apron pocket—for I will delegate the draping of these fabrics to none—I take the end of plush, which we have edged with a silk ball fringe, and throw it over the right-hand shelf, letting it fall a little way below the mantel-shelf. Drawing it along in folds to

serve as a background to the ornaments that will be placed there, I raise it high above the centre of the glass and fasten it firmly. Three palm-leaf fans and some feathery pampas appear to keep it in place. Then I loop it so that it falls in a festoon, catching it up over and beyond the corner of the left-hand shelf, introducing here some pampas and dried palm-leaves, from whence it drops in cascade folds to the floor. At the same corner (the left-hand) I insert a fulness of gold Nagpore silk, having left an end to fall down like a second curtain beneath the plush, only it is not so long; this I draw above the shelf and over the top of the glass, partially veiling the latter, and carry it up to a point above the right corner to correspond with the festooned plush on the left; knotting it there, I allow it to fall to the floor.

The book-case stands opposite the mantel-piece.

Comfortable seats have been fixed in the bay window, for which we have made cushions of terra-cotta and cream brocade; a frill of the same hanging to the floor takes off any hardness of effect. Curtains of brown and gold brocaded silk sheeting hang on either side, with Madras muslin frilled beneath; these muslin curtains are repeated in the partitions; they are all short so as not to interfere with the seats, and are caught back with Liberty silk scarves of a true shrimp-pink shade. On one side is the writing-table with its chair, and across the corner, between it and the fireplace, is the fashionable, straight, high-backed sofa, upholstered in terra-cotta and cream brocade. Behind it we put a tall stand which we have enamelled coral-pink, and on this we set a brown pot, holding a fine palm. The sewing-machine stands on the other side of the window; over it is thrown a strip of brocade edged with golden-brown plush. Near the left curtain is an octagonal Japanese lacquer and bamboo jardinière, which is filled with half-a-dozen pots of hardy ferns.

An arm-chair is placed by the book-case, with a small table enamelled coral-pink beside it. I always like a little table in close proximity when lounging in an easy-chair; it is convenient when laying down one's work or book. These occasional tables should never be overcrowded; a china bowl with a small fern in it, or a quaintly shaped glass with flowers, is quite sufficient in the way of ornament, so that a cup of tea can be set



HOW TO TREAT THE MANTEL-PIECE.

down without fear of accident. A corner bracket of coral-pink shows off some good specimens of china.

Standing crosswise to the wall at the end of the room opposite the window is the piano. The back we drape with gold Nagpore silk and Eastern striped crêpe, looped, so as to discover an under corner piece of brown plush. The front has been modernised with red monochrome paintings on wooden panels, in imitation of Bartolozzi. An inlaid mother-of-pearl coffee-table stands against the back of the piano, and here we place a brass pot with a fine aspidistra. A Japanese three-fold screen of black satin, gold embroidered, keeps off the draught from the door. Between piano and fireplace is a coral-pink corner cupboard. Before it are an arm-chair and a pretty ivory-white table with real Japanese lattice panel. The chairs, enamelled ivory-white, are covered with various brocades. We have taken great care, however, that the colouring of these should all harmonise with the general effect.

A rich, warmly toned interior is the result at which we aimed in evolving our scheme, and our efforts are crowned with success; for it would be difficult to find a more cosy, comfortable snugger anywhere.



HOW TO TREAT THE PIANO.

THE REST CURE, AND WHEN IT IS INDICATED.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

MR. FEATHERSTONHAUGH opened the breakfast parlour door and shouted to his housekeeper. He shouted in tones so stentorian that no one, except a medical man, could have believed him to be either an invalid or ailing in any way.

"Mary," he cried, "is there no possibility of your going about your work a trifle, just the merest trifle, less boisterously? And there goes that dreadful door-bell again. Oh, dear! Ring, ding! Ring, ding! all day long; first the baker, then the butcher, then somebody else. Heigho! it is provoking, for if I didn't happen to be a trifle nervous and out of sorts, no house in the world would be quieter than—There it goes again!"

I leant back in Mr. F.'s easy chair, and kept the morning paper before me. Silence is golden with patients like this.

"And nothing I touch seems to go right either. I placed that knife on the edge of the plate straight enough. Look at it now. Lying on the carpet as if to spite me. And there goes the coffee next all over the new white cloth!"

"Depend upon it, my friend," I said quietly, "that things go on just the same whether we are well or ill,

only in the latter case we are more sensitive. If you have a cut finger, for instance, everything appears to go against it."

"Now," continued Mr. F., "if I weren't sleepless at night, all the country-side would be as still as the bottom of the sea; but simply because I am in need of rest, and could sleep if I got a chance, every living thing must keep awake to annoy me. Last night, for instance, Simpson's cow must keep moaning constantly as if she had something on her mind. Boulder's beast of a dog must bark and howl intermittently, and his horses must neigh, and no sooner have they somewhat settled, and I am dropping off, than all the cocks in the parish wake up and begin hollering. You needn't laugh behind your newspaper. You are laughing, I can see the paper shaking. I'm losing my memory, too. If I want such a simple thing as a pen, even, d'ye think I can find one? Not for the life of me."

"Am I getting old, I wonder?" He turned on me almost fiercely as he spoke the last words, and I put down the paper, got up, stretched myself, and walked leisurely to the window. It was a lovely morning in early summer; the grass was very green and trim on Mr. F.'s pretty lawn; there was abundance of foliage