

COLONEL RUDDERBUFF'S POSSESSIONS: A PAPER ON FURNITURE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOW I FURNISHED FOR A HUNDRED POUNDS."



I HOPE that all my readers will understand that it is from no desire of boasting of my goods and chattels, but with a genuine wish to help others that I take up my pen to write a brief description of my house. I took to furnishing somewhat late in life, for I only married and settled down a year ago. My wife, dear creature, was just out of

the school-room, a sweet child who knew nothing of the comparative merits of tables and chairs; so as I naturally wished our house to do us credit, I brought to the work the experience of my sixty years, and managed things myself. The result has been a grand success. I hear everywhere now that my house is the best furnished in the county; my neighbours admire it immensely; and I am beset with requests to tell them where and how I got my things, and, above all, what I paid for them.

So bored have I been by repeated reiterations of "Dear Colonel, would you mind telling me in confidence where you obtained that delightful easy-chair, or that softest of soft carpets?" that, worn out by my own furniture, the idea of writing this paper came into my head, and I determined that once for all I would publish a description of some of my home treasures.

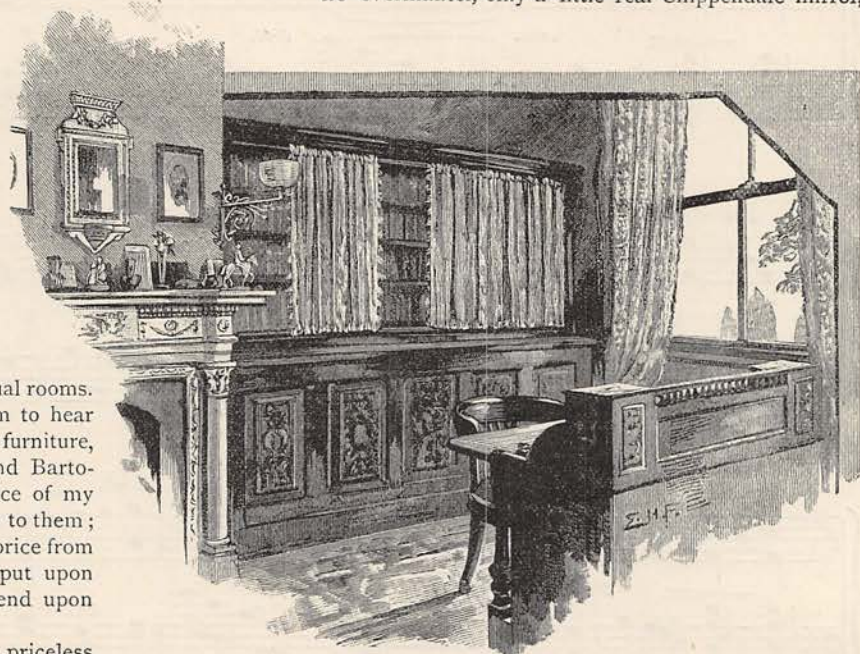
I am not going to bore my readers by lengthily describing my house, or even the individual rooms. It would not benefit them to hear of my old Chippendale furniture, my inlaid harpsichord, and Bartolozzi panels; even the price of my old oak would be no guide to them; for these things range in price from the value that the sellers put upon them, and absolutely depend upon the fashion of the day.

Many of my curios are priceless in value—I try to forget what I

paid for them—while others I picked up in Germany and France for next to nothing. But these have all their own individuality, while the things I want to tell you about are those that can be bought by all who want them.

My drawing-room is very large, and is almost entirely furnished in Chippendale. A casual observer would think that it was all of the same period, but I will tell you that the settee and chairs are modern, though if you could examine them you would find that they are quite as well made as the old. I am giving an illustration, in which you will notice that as the chairs are for a drawing-room they have straight cushioned backs, instead of having them cut as the dining-room Chippendale always are. This is much more comfortable. I paid twenty-seven guineas for this set. The chintz with which they are covered is well worth illustrating; it is one of the most beautiful of modern chintzes, for modern it is, though it looks as if made fifty years ago—faded yellow roses on a cream ground with dull olive-green foliage. It could not be more artistic nor more moderate in price, for it only cost one and elevenpence a yard. The summer curtains are made of this chintz lined with washing Italian cloth in cream-colour. In the winter I hang up curtains of olive-green velvet, and I hardly know which set looks best with my wall-paper, which is one of the now fashionable large patterns in one colour—pale buff, on a lighter shade of the same.

My mantelshef is of mahogany. Nothing else looks so suitable with Chippendale furniture. I have no overmantel, only a little real Chippendale mirror,



THE LIBRARY.



A CORNER OF THE DRAWING-ROOM.

costing about two pounds, mahogany with cut edges and a gilded cock. No Chippendale room should ever have an overmantel; it is the greatest mistake, as they do not belong to that period.

The beautiful standing cabinet with the glass doors and drawers, and the china cupboard (shown in the illustration), are both modern, though an exact copy of old Chippendale. They are wonderfully inexpensive for furniture of such good design and workmanship. I only paid £7 15s. 6d. for the cabinet and £4 17s. 6d. for the cupboard. Look well at the carved tops; they give lightness and beauty to the whole. Give a glance also at my little corner stand in bamboo, with its bright-coloured palms and pots. These pots are joined to each other with a patent fastener, and can be taken apart and used for other purposes, while the stand will do for holding work-baskets, tea-cups, or books; it cost just half a guinea.

By rights the floor should be French-polished, and beyond a few rugs no carpet should be laid down. I tried this for a month, but the legs of sixty are not so nimble as those of twenty-five, and after I had entered my drawing-room head-foremost some half-dozen times I resolved to try a change. "Better be a slave to comfort than to fashion," said I; so tight over the floor is now drawn an olive-green kalmuk at 1s. 11d. the yard. This colour does well with our covers and wall-paper, and makes a good ground for our beautiful antique Persian rugs.

And now I must introduce you to my library bookcases, but I should like to take you first into the dining-room, and show you upon the dinner-table two new inventions which I find most useful. The first is my white china dinner set, with my crest in gold upon each article. You see nothing wonderful in it till the

hot dishes are brought in, each fitted with a china cover bearing the crest. By hot dishes I mean the vegetable-dishes, soup-tureens, and sauce-bowls. The whole of the dish and cover is made of china. There is no metal fitting, but when the cover is tilted back it interlocks with the dish and supports itself in an upright position, thus obviating the usual difficulty of drips falling on the table-cloth or on the carpet when covers are removed. There is nothing unusual either in the appearance of my plated spoons and forks; you did not see them when half made as I did, and therefore have not the satisfaction of knowing that extra quantities of silver are deposited on the parts most liable to wear. Thus, on the back of the prongs of a fork, and also on the handle (where the principal friction comes), is an extra thickness of silver, making it about four times the ordinary durability. Both these are patent, and can be procured only from one firm.

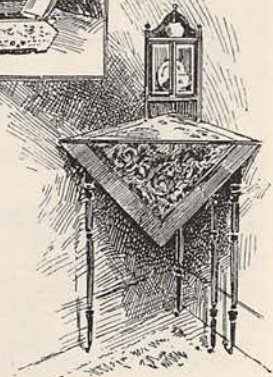
My library bookcases are of black oak, and are fitted with curtains, which I like better than glass doors. Below the woodwork of the bookcase, just at the top of the first shelf, runs a little brass rod, and at the bottom of the last shelf you see another like it. Both these are fitted with rings, to which the curtains are attached. Two curtains are used, and they should be wide enough to fall in ample folds when drawn.

I think that my friends perhaps admire my library curtains more than anything in my house. They are of woven Bengalese silk, so fine that they could be almost drawn through a wedding-ring. They are made in many patterns in colours of straw and gold, with tints of pale green and strawberry intermixed. They are fringed, and cost 45s. a pair. I hang my windows with them; but as for my bookcase I required width and not length, I bought a bed-quilt

of the same material at 25s. 9d. This I cut in two, using the fringed side for the edge where the curtains join. I ought to add that my bookcase does not come down to the ground; it stands upon carved oak cupboards, and therefore the curtains and dark oak line one side of the wall.

My walls are covered with Morris blue willow-leaf paper, and to go with this I have a most beautiful Wilton carpet, electric-blue upon indigo; it cost me 5s. 6d. a yard, and is wearing splendidly. I have a high mantelshelf made in the Adams style and painted white; it is not enamelled, but is "flatted," which means that the paint is unvarnished, dull white. The little Adams mirror over the mantelpiece is flatted too; it is a true copy from a very ancient one, and cost 26s. I hang no screens nor grasses above it, for such articles would be quite out of keeping with the style of my room; but on each side of the mirror hang little sketches painted in red on white opal, and framed in black wood. My clock is in a wrought-iron case, and wrought-iron gas-brackets project on each side of the fireplace. I do not pretend to call this library an Adams room, for the oak furniture would prevent that being possible. It is full of chairs of all periods, bought only for comfort, and has artistic treasures from many foreign lands scattered on the shelves and hanging on the walls.

My little carved oak corner table cost me only 30s.; it fits into the corner, and has a flap which can be let up or down at pleasure. Among my latest acquired curiosities is a Venetian painting, framed in a new way. The foundation of the framework is of deal, but it has been covered with a bright terra-cotta Roman satin, upon which a conventional pattern of dragons and cupids has been painted in steel-colour



THE CORNER TABLE AND PATENT DINNER SERVICE.

and gold in lustre. The effect is most excellent, and well repays any trouble taken in making it. My wife has copied it since very easily by simply ironing on an ordinary crewel-transfer pattern, and then filling it up with the paint. She finds that the rather coarse Roman satin at 3s. 6d. the yard and 52 inches wide is the best for this purpose.

And now, as I begin to feel somewhat overpowered for want of my after-dinner nap, I think that I will finish. I have striven to satisfy my friends by describing some few of my possessions, but I have not touched on my greatest treasure, nor mentioned my latest purchase—it was a black oak cradle. And quite between ourselves, because it is a little early and my friends might smile, I will tell you that I have planned the next time I am in town to procure at a certain well-known shop in Regent Street a large spotted rocking-horse for the sole use of Baby Rud-derbuff.

THE STRONGER WILL.

By EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, Author of "Monica," &c.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH. DEPARTURE.



LORENCE stood looking after him—a strange, beautiful light in her eyes.

"My brave, true-hearted Rudolf!" she said half aloud, and turned to walk towards the house again.

Rudolf's absence from morning chapel aroused no comment. Mr. Howard had spoken rather peremptorily last night as to his avoiding exertion for a time, and although only Florence understood the real significance of the injunction, it seemed to explain any slight indolence on his part. But Mr. Cadwallader was a little uncomfortable, re-

membering the stormy interview of the previous evening, and knowing that both it and the previous amount of exertion he had forced upon Rudolf had been condemned by the doctor.

He remembered now how Rudolf had complained of fatigue, how his plea had been disregarded, and how white he had looked as the interview proceeded. He had been angry with him the preceding evening, but he was not angry now; his vexation had cooled, and he was a little uneasy about his nephew, on account of Mr. Howard's manner, rather than by reason of his words.

The first thing, therefore, that he did on leaving the chapel was to go up to Rudolf's room, which he found empty, the letter he had written the last thing lying where he had left it upon the table.

Mr. Cadwallader broke the seal, and read the brief