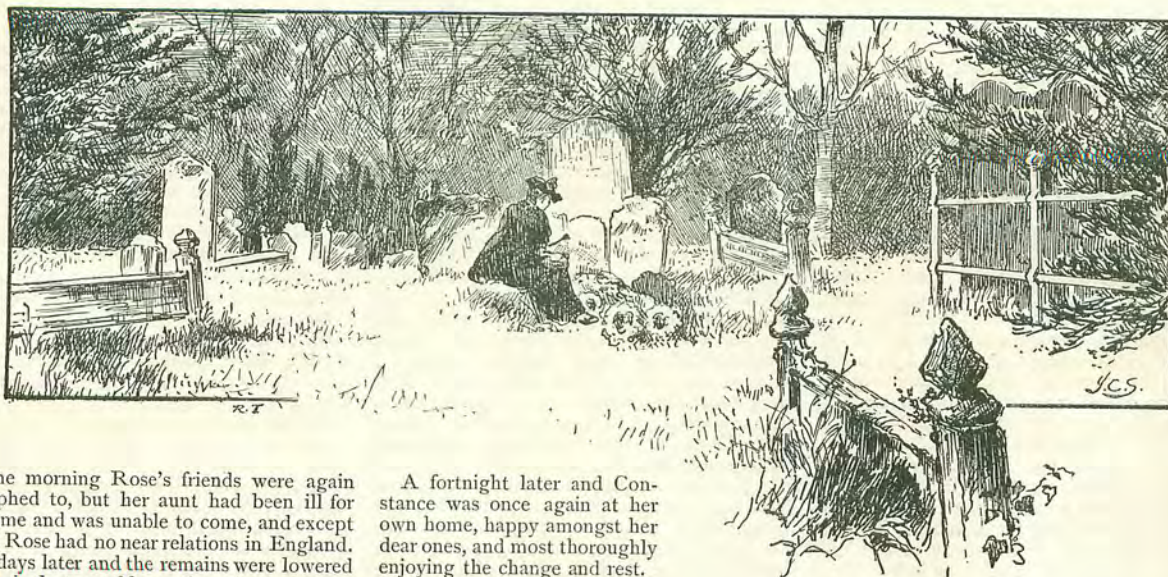




In the morning Rose's friends were again telegraphed to, but her aunt had been ill for some time and was unable to come, and except herself, Rose had no near relations in England. A few days later and the remains were lowered into their last earthly resting-place covered with beautiful wreaths.

Hospital work meanwhile went on as before. Constance did not even get the rest of that night in bed, as she might have hoped to. An accident had come in to Bolton Ward, a woman drunk and dirty but sadly hurt in some public-house quarrel, and she was sent as special night nurse with her. She had no time to dwell even in thought upon the sweet face she had left, sweeter than ever in death, Constance thought: she had hard work to keep her new patient quiet, and carry out the treatment ordered for her. A policeman stood outside the door of the ward evidently in charge of this poor miserable creature who had sunk so low, and yet as Constance washed, and gently tended her, she said to herself, "Once she must have been an innocent child, and she is still a woman, and the words are true for all, 'I am the resurrection and the life.'"

A fortnight later and Constance was once again at her own home, happy amongst her dear ones, and most thoroughly enjoying the change and rest.

"Pon my word, Connie, you don't look any worse for your year and a half inside a hospital."

It was her father's voice as he entered the breakfast-room the morning after her return home for a fortnight's holiday. Her face was as sweet as ever, but there was more depth in the dark dreamy eyes, and though by no means stout she certainly looked uncommonly pretty and well.

"I do feel very well, father dear," she said, going up to him.

"Have you had enough of it, I want to know? It has been a long month on trial."

Constance laughed a bright merry laugh.

"No, I have not had enough, and besides, the month must lengthen out into three years."

Mr. Wilson had never allowed himself to recognise the fact that she had bound herself for three years, so he muttered something about

girls going their own way and changed the subject.

It was a very happy fortnight, everyone was most kind, in fact she was treated like a visitor, and waited on and made much of, and yet the very fact of this would sometimes bring a lump into her throat. Her home corner was gone: what else could she expect? Would it be natural that for as long as she chose to stay away there was to be her vacant place left at home. No! everything had gone on without her, though at times she may have been missed; she had been done without. She had interests now, in which her dear ones could but imperfectly share, and the thousand and one cares and pleasures which had made up their home-lives since last she saw them were many of them unknown to her: still, what mattered it so long as love remained.

(To be continued.)

MY DOLL'S DRAWING-ROOM, AND HOW I FURNISHED IT.

WHAT mother or grown-up sister has forgotten the delights of a doll's house? One of the most vivid recollections I myself retain out of my own childhood is of playing with one belonging to a little neighbour, who, an only child, had more toys and much more expensive ones than I had. How I envied her the possession of this treasure. I was very ingenious at making toys for myself, though, and found probably more enjoyment out of my manufactures than I could have got from most elaborate purchases.

My father being an architect, perhaps my delight in house-building and arranging was hereditary; at all events, I know I was always making cardboard houses and furniture, and all one summer, until a heavy rain came and destroyed the fragile structure, my little brother and I were employed in laying out grounds to a white cardboard villa set up in our own garden patch. Someone gave me a small round birdcage, which I immediately appropriated as a summer-house, and built the villa to correspond. It was located on the confines of an asparagus-bed, which our imaginations turned into a grove of trees. Many, many years have passed since that happy summer, and my youngest child is the same age. As in my own childhood, toys are luxuries not to be profusely bought, and so when I

found my darling was longing for a doll's house I began to plan how I could make one for her at small expense.

One evening of leisure I set to work, and the start was so much applauded that I determined to proceed.

The first thing necessary, of course, was to have the house made. I decided, after a mental calculation of the various articles of furniture I wished to make, that I would not have a four-roomed mansion, but one good-sized apartment, which would hold furniture of a reasonable size and amount. So I explained my idea to a young carpenter, and he soon after brought me a strong deal box, thirty-six inches wide by sixteen inches deep and eighteen inches high.

The box was painted inside and out, and a window was put in each end. There was no front made, as I thought the room would be more convenient without it.

The decoration of the drawing-room was the first matter for consideration. As the walls were coloured terra-cotta, I chose a pale blue paper for the dado, four and a half inches in depth, and a friendly paper-hanger of my acquaintance made me a present of various strips of bordering, out of which I contrived a pretty one for the dado of deep red and gold. I papered the ceiling with some of the pale

blue paper, and pasted a narrow cornice of gilt paper all round it, which completed the decoration.

I found the painted floor such an excellent contrast to the light furniture I was making, that I decided to have no carpet, only a large hearthrug. It was several days before I was satisfied with an idea about this important feature of the room, but at last I saw some cretonne at a draper's, the border of which was the very thing. I bought a strip twelve inches in length, and cut off the two borders—all I wanted. The one I cut again into ends for the other. Laying them across the uncut piece, I carefully joined the pattern, and feather-stitched them on, beginning at the corners and working towards the centre. I carried the embroidery all round the rug, so that it should not show, at a short distance, where it was joined.

The curtains I made of yellow chiffon, with *lambrequins* of yellow lace across the tops. Little chains of gold beads held them back, and are hung on brass-headed tacks.

The chimney-piece next demanded attention. I saw, coveted, and readily obtained from a chemist an empty cardboard box of the required shape and dimensions for a mantelpiece. It is a certain lime and glycerine box, I may mention, stands about five and a half

inches high, and has a flap-cover, which forms the mantel-board. It is seven inches wide and two and a half inches deep. I raised the flap, cut away the front, leaving half an inch each side, and covered it with blue paper like the dado, not forgetting the bottom. Then I took the piece I had cut out, and from it made two little flaps about three inches wide, and high enough to just go in and out under the mantel-board when attached to the box. These flaps I meant to look like encaustic-tiled sides. They were first covered with blue paper, which extended half an inch beyond them to be pasted on the sides, not cut entirely away for this purpose. Three strips of gold bordering, stamped with tiny round figures, imitate the tiles very well, and are placed on each flap, which, when pushed back by a small black-varnished grate, give the structure quite the appearance of a tasteful, slow-combustion drawing-room fireplace. The mantel-board I covered with yellow silk with a full frill of yellow lace to match the window *lambrequins*. The little grate was purchased in London for a shilling, and has a miniature set of fire-irons with it. I also bought a mirror for the mantel-piece, which adds greatly to the appearance of the room. It is nine inches high and the exact width of the mantel-piece. My first intention was to gild the frame with Judson's gold paint, but I decided to drape it with chiffon, like the windows, instead, and I think it looks more artistic.

Really the room began to look charming, although no furniture was yet in it. The first thing in that line I manufactured was a large cabinet, and the chief material was a cardboard box, five and a half inches by four inches and four inches high. I turned the box upside down and cut away all the sides except enough to form the four legs. Then I put the cover down over the top, and upholstered it all over with blue plush. I next covered another box-lid about an eighth of an inch smaller, but the same shape, and fastened it underneath, an inch from the ground, as a shelf. A third, also the same size, I covered with the plush after cutting away one of its rims, and sloping off the sides. Then I fastened it, standing up, to the

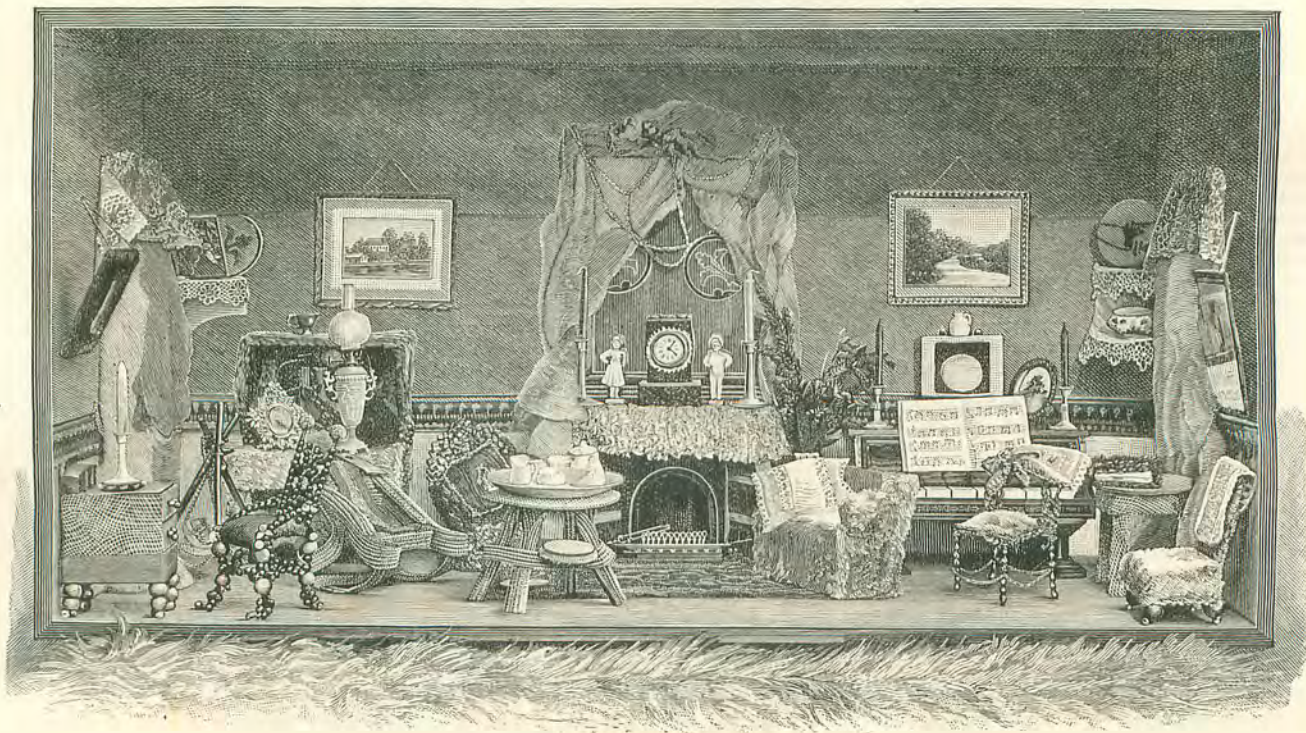
table portion, as the back of the cabinet, the top and side rims forming a recess, into which I put a little mirror, and draped it with yellow ribbon. Finding the back rather tottery I made two chains of gold beads, the size of pearl barley grains, and with one on each side fastened the two parts of the cabinet more firmly by sewing the chains about an inch from the inside edges of the table, and then again to the back, the same distance from the bottom.

With this massive article of furniture I thought two tables would be sufficient. The former I made of cardboard. I cut two rounds, one three inches in diameter, the other four inches. The larger round was for the top, and I covered it with some thick dark brown paper, resembling shark skin in texture. I steamed this off a broken paper case. Any other dark paper would do as well, or the table, when finished, might be painted or enamelled, but I liked the rough surface of my paper, because it looked like wood—or so I fancied it might look to a child. Next I made four legs from straight strips of cardboard, three and three quarter inches long, covered them with the paper, folded them over twice to give them more substance, and gummed them to the larger round, half an inch from the edge, at equal distances, and by means of the paper, cut a little longer than the cardboard. These gummed ends were all turned towards the centre, and over them was placed the smaller round, and gummed down securely. Last of all I cut a strip of paper and gummed it upon a ribbon the same width and long enough to encircle the table. When dry I spread the inside, that is, the ribbon lining with gum, placed one end against a leg at its junction with the table, and drew it rather tightly around the other legs, and back again over the first, like a bandage. This made a finish to the table, and secured its firmness.

The other table is in imitation of a wicker five o'clock tea-table. I cut an oval top from a discarded sailor hat. The straw was smooth and rather fine, and the edge of the wide brim was turned down, which was a useful item in its subsequent history. I made the four

legs for my table by cutting strips from the straightest part of the hat. These were about two inches wide and about five inches long. I rolled each one, sewed it up about four inches, and then spreading out the unsewn remainder I stitched it to the oval, taking care that the cotton was not visible on the top. When all the legs were thus sewn on they formed a cross, lying flat upon the oval top. To bring them into right position I cut another strip exactly the length of the table's circumference, sewed it together into a ring and encircled the legs with it, about half way down. I then fastened it to the legs, and they stood firmly. Lastly I cut two little round shelves for the bread-and-butter plates from the part of the brim nearest the turned down edge, leaving a piece of this attached to each as a flap by which to secure it to the ring of straw around the legs.

I next made a writing cabinet from three match-boxes, first removing the drawers of two. Four little legs were necessary to set it up, and these I made from large wooden beads in the following manner. I took the match-box which held its drawer, and with a long needle, threaded with stout silk, I pierced down the first corner, and drew the silk tightly. Then I threaded on two big beads, and a small gilt one, passed my needle back through the large beads and the box, and then down the next corner, as close to the edge as I dared venture, without fear of breaking the box. When all the legs were thus attached, and the silk firmly secured, I gummed the three boxes together. Then I covered all but the front and top with the rough paper described above. I cut out a piece of brown glazed cardboard for the top, and made a row of little pigeon-holes for the back by bending a strip of the same across, gumming it to the sides, and slipping two tiny pieces of it into the aperture thus made. Another piece, still of the same brown cardboard, I cut to fit the back of the cabinet and to come up behind the pigeon-holes, and a little above them. It was now complete except the drawers. I made knots for these before slipping them in their places, with three



MY DOLL'S DRAWING-ROOM.

gold beads, each about the size of a grain of sago. The needle was passed through the inside of the drawer, the beads threaded on and the needle passed back. It was rather difficult to fasten off the thread, as the match-wood is so brittle. I did not cover the drawers, as their natural yellow colour looks well with the brown.

Most people understand how to make a sofa. I made mine of cardboard, and covered it with blue plush. The seat is six and a half inches by two inches by two inches. The back is four inches high. I padded the back and seat, and made arms for each end by rolling two strips of cardboard, stuffing them, and after covering the ends with rounds of plush, finishing the hard pillows with a band of plush round the cardboard. Then I fastened them to the sofa, and threw across one a little antimacassar. This I will describe later on. I determined to have variety in my chairs, so this is how I attained it.

No. 1 is very elaborate, of jet beads, strung on wire. I first made a square frame and four legs of copper-wire, twisted. I slipped the beads on the legs, and fastened the ends of the wire by turning them up with a pair of pincers. A square of cardboard, covered with old gold silk, was next sewn to the frame for the seat, and the back was contrived as follows: I had two gold-headed pins, these I threaded with jet and stuck them into the cardboard as the two main supports, bending their points firmly under with the pincers. Two shorter supports of beads, threaded on wire, were next put between them. The wire started from the seat, passed up through the beads, had three gilt ones for an ornamental top, then passed down through the beads again and was fastened off beneath. The four supports were now bound together by two cross-pieces of wire and beads, and were perfectly firm, but to give further security little arms, made the same way, were attached to the back an inch from the seat, and brought forward to the front legs. For the same reason a cross-piece was put round the legs, half-way down. Lastly, a piece of silk was sewn under the seat to cover the ends of wire, and a little cushion tacked on at the four corners.

No. 2 was made with gold beads and copper-wire, but less elaborately. Strands of fine gold beads were twisted round the frame of the seat, and the back was simply two pieces of copper-wire bent in an oval shape, one within the other, with the gilt strands twisted over them. The beads for the legs were the larger ones used for chair No. 1, and for the cabinet, etc. This chair had a blue plush seat.

No. 3 was a lady's easy-chair, of blue plush—the seat consisted of a lozenge box. I first fastened on the feet, made each of a red wooden bead the size of a small cherry, and a gold bead to hold it on with, just as described in the writing-table. The box was then padded and covered with plush, and stood one inch and three-quarters from the floor. I cut a back of cardboard three inches and a half long, and rounded at the top, padded it and covered it with plush. It was then sewn on, and the chair stood complete.

No. 4 was an American wicker-chair. It was made from a coarse blue and white sailor-hat. An oval, four inches and a half at the widest cut from the crown, formed the back. This coarse straw when undone will pull out straight. I cut two strips eleven inches long, bent them square, sewed each together, and then the one to the other. This made the bottom of the chair, and I next sewed the back to the top row. The seat was easily framed by sewing strips of the straw together and fastening them in. For the arms I bent strips at right angles, sewed one within the other, cut them to the required size, and fastened them to the back. Slipping the

other ends between the seat and the bottom part of the chair, and stitching them down finished it; but I made a little yellow silk cushion for the back, embroidered with forget-me-nots, which brightened and made it look more comfortable.

No. 5 was a rocking-chair, made from the straw-hat which furnished me my tea-table. The seat and back were cut alike from the brim, in a sort of wedge shape. Any curly-brimmed straw will answer the purpose, which is to give the seat a flap hanging down, and the back, one bending backward. The wedge-shaped pieces cut out—with their narrow ends only an inch smaller than those opposite, which had the flaps—I laid them face to face and sewed the narrow ends together. I then cut out two triangular pieces of straw, rolled the edges of the bases, and sewed them. These were for the arms: I held one (with its rolled edge turned inside) in the angle formed by the seat and back, and sewed it to both. The other arm was secured in the same way. Next I cut four strips from the brim of the hat, five inches long and one inch wide. They of course were curved. I turned an end of each back, making a loop with a projection of straw, fastened the loop to the strip, and then sewed each to the sides of the chair by the projecting piece of straw in such wise that the two back ones curved back and the front ones forward. The space between a front and back leg was three inches and a half. Two straight strips of straw, five inches and a half long, were next cut for the rockers and sewn into the loops. The difference of two inches made the curve, but as the chair was inclined to topple over, I cut another strip, four inches long and one inch wide, and put it at the back, from one rocker across to the other just inside the loops, and found the balance quite restored.

The chairs and tables now being completed, I turned my thoughts towards the final details. I had bought a small piano, quite a pretentious-looking semi-grand, with the splendid compass of one octave—and all for sixpence! Its fatal drawback was that it possessed no legs, and these I proceeded to supply. Four empty reels were given me—not ordinary cotton-reels, but larger-sized ones from a tailor, with narrow tops and spindle columns. I black-varnished these and glued them to my piano, which now stood proudly on its ebonized legs! A glazed visiting-card, cut into the shape of a music-rack, was also black-varnished, and took it kindly. With an edge turned up and stiffened by the application of the varnish it looked very substantial, and, being pushed between the front and top of the piano while wet, it became fast without further trouble.

The furniture of the room being now complete and put in place, I proceeded to manufacture the smaller articles, which more than anything gave the little apartment a look of being "the real thing."

The mantel-piece was all very well, so far as it went, but it would be perfect with a clock. And this is how I made it. I bought a penny watch as the preliminary move. Then I procured a tiny jeweller's box, whose cover just held the watch, and cut a round in this for the face to show through. After fastening the watch in this position I black-varnished the front of the case, its rims, and the box itself. I then turned the latter upside down, stuck the clock upon it endways, and the varnish when dry held them together as if glued. A piece of paper was pasted over the back to hide the stitches, and the black marble timepiece was placed upon the mantel-shelf.

As no drawing-room is complete without brackets, I made two for the corners and one to hang in a space over the piano. The corner ones I made from cardboard boxes. I measured two inches along and across, cutting

the corner of the box off and leaving about two inches of the sides as support for the bracket. A triangle of silk over the tops and a lace border completed them. In one corner I put two of these brackets, one above the other, so that there were two shelves.

The third bracket I made from a match-box.

No doll of artistic taste could possibly make herself happy in a room without flowers. A flower-stand being an imperative want, I bought a cane for one half-penny and cut from it three lengths, six and a half inches each. Through one I bored a hole with a red-hot needle, and fastened them all together by means of wire, passed first through this hole, and twisted round while they were held "gipsy-kettle" fashion, but meeting higher up. I then black-varnished it, wire and all, as the colour of the cane was not beautiful and the wire decidedly unsightly. A tiny glass bowl with a foot or ledge made the flower-vase, attached to the tripod by chains of gold beads. A ring of these, exactly fitting the foot of the bowl, was slipped round it, and three strands fastened at equal distances to it. To make the legs of the tripod secure I passed chains of the beads through two of them by boring holes near the bottom, and fastened them to the third.

Little antimacassars were made from strips of lace and very narrow ribbon, or insertion and ribbon. One, for the sofa, was of muslin, on each side was a ribbon border and round all a row of insertion edged with lace.

Books and music, like flowers, are absolute essentials. I made an album, and placed upon the piano-rack a waltz, specially composed for the one-octave piano, and written as finely as was possible on little sheets of foreign paper with a coloured cover. The album was manufactured with more difficulty. Two little squares of cardboard were first cut for the stiff covers and then a strip of red plush the same width, allowing for turning in, but long enough to cover both pieces of cardboard, front and back, and to leave over a little space between for the binding of the book. Before sewing this the front of the plush was ornamented with an initial in the centre, worked with gold beads, and a gold bead of the second size at each corner. The cardboard pieces were placed on each end and turned over towards the centre, then sewn down. The album itself was made of little cards stitched together and bound in. Two rows of gold beads were then put down the back to conceal the stitches of the binding, and a tiny clasp, cut from a child's cheap necklace, was sewn to the edges of the album. The pictures having been cut out and pasted in, the book was complete.

And now, having come to the end of my resources, I spent a very little on ornaments for the room, or contributed some from my shelves and brackets. A couple of photographs for the wall were bound with gold paper, and several tiny midget frames had little landscapes, cut from Christmas cards, put in them; candlesticks for the mantel-piece, piano and writing-table, and a pretty little lamp were suggestive of cheerful evenings. Other ornaments were set upon the brackets and table, and a pair of china figures, about two inches high, completed the appearance of the mantel-shelf.

A tea-set on a little tray which looked like silver, and cost one penny, was now set out upon the table. The "cosy" for the tea-pot, a last thought, was made from a bit of blue quilted satin. All was now ready for the mimic occupants of the house. The first, mistress of the domain, was arrayed in a tea-gown; the second, a supposed visitor, appeared in a summer walking costume; and a maid, in a plain gown, cap, and apron, was at hand to attend upon the ladies gracefully seated near the tea-table, while the clock pointed to ten minutes past five!