

strips of cut cloth, pale blue or pink cloth hats, or indeed any kind of hat so long as it is flat. The flowers must be laid perfectly flat on crown or brim, and when wings of birds are used they should follow the outlines of the hat on the brim. One word about materials. The hairy Zibeline certainly comes first for street wear, but for smart toilettes, and for those who can afford it, velvet is the correct thing.

I think our artist has been most happy this month in the sketches of tailor-made costumes; they are *chic* and elegant as well as seasonable. What could be more tempting than the gown of light green Zibeline on the figure on the right hand? It is trimmed with straps of dark brown velvet; the bolero is effectively finished with *l'art nouveau* buttons. The centre figure has a coat and skirt with extremely smart-shaped revers and basque, and

double-flounced skirt. Very many stitchings are used and narrow straps of deep sapphire velvet to match the blue frieze of which the costume is made. The figure on the left hand wears a sacque coat and skirt of deep soft Tabac cloth trimmed with double straps of darker silk, stitched, with brass buttons and deep sable collar, cuffs, and muff.

In the other page of illustrations the figure on the left side wears a short coat of caracul, with revers and cuffs of sable, and a caracul and sable muff, a brown cloth dress with velvet bow and insertions. The hat is of dark brown velvet with pheasant breast plume. The figure on the right wears a grey cloth pelerine trimmed with chinchilla, a skirt of grey cloth with satin bands, a grey felt hat with ostrich feathers and rosettes, and a boa of mink fur with long ends.

## A CORNER CUPBOARD.

I DARE SAY many of my readers have seen those coal cabinets, the front of which let down, somewhat as in my sketch, when the coals are wanted. The article I have designed, and which, so far as I know, is original, is intended to fill a corner close to the fire-place. In fact, in rooms where there is a chimney breast this corner coal-cupboard could be stood in the angle made by the chimney

breast and the wall. Another one for other purposes—boots, etc.—could occupy the other corner. Corner cupboards were very popular in the old days, and are still often to be met with in cottages, and where space has to be economised there is much to recommend corner cupboards; moreover, they are picturesque in appearance.

Now as to their construction, which is very simple. First, get out the angle pieces, which serve for the bottom and top of the cupboard. The size will depend upon the depth of the cupboard, and will be in shape a right-angled triangle. These pieces should project some inch and a half or so beyond the door or front, not only for the sake of appearance, but in the case of the piece forming the base

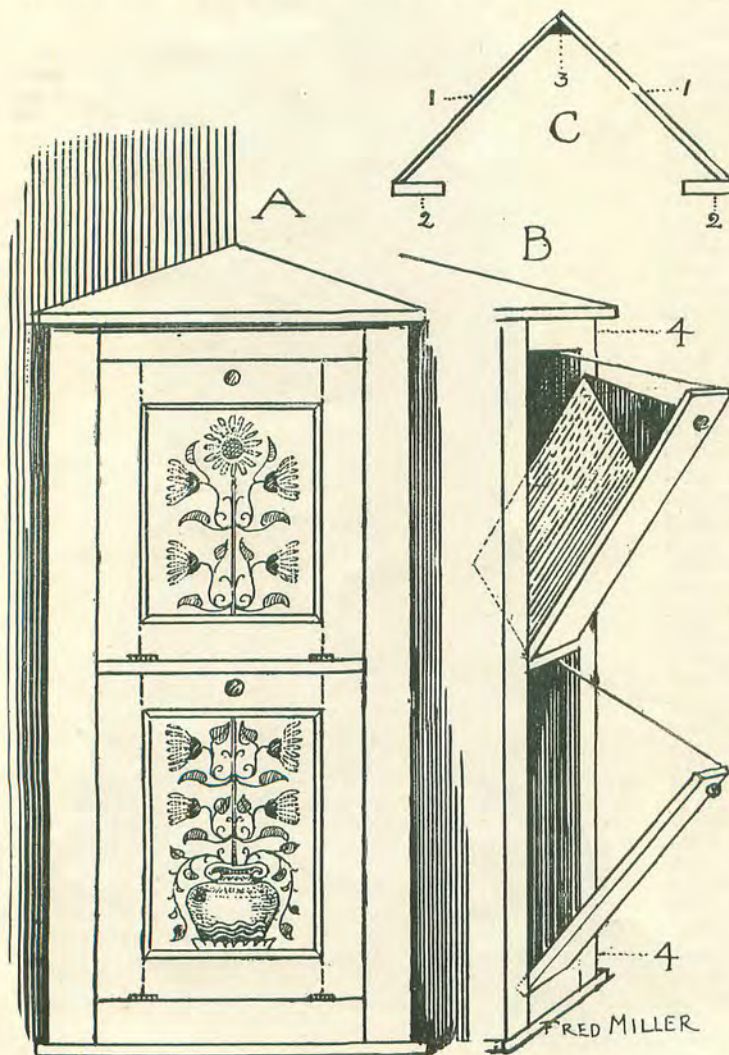
it will give rigidity to the cupboard, and help to keep it from falling forward.

The top might be half-inch stuff, while the bottom might be three-quarter. The wood for the back could be three-eighths inch (these measurements refer to the thickness of the wood), and if not got out in one piece, must be jointed with glue, or match-boarding which is ready tongued and grooved could be used. A reference to the plan C will make it clear how the woodwork fits together. The sides 1, 1, will be screwed or nailed to the top and bottom, and as the uprights 2, 2, have to fit against the sides 1, 1, they must have the front edges planed to the necessary angle, or they would only touch just at the corners, instead of the whole thickness of the sides.

The shelf or division in the middle of the cabinet upon which the doors work should be got out at the same time as top and bottom, but as it is not to project it must not be quite so large. This will materially strengthen the cupboard, as the sides can also be nailed or screwed to it. French nails, by the way, should be used, and holes made with a fine bradawl, so that the nails can be driven straight.

To strengthen the cupboard, angle blocks, 3, could be glued inside. See that your glue is boiling hot, or it will not stick properly.

The strips at top and bottom (4 in Fig. B) can be glued and screwed in position. See that they are correctly got out, so that they fit close to the uprights in front and don't yawn. The doors should be panelled as in a room door, but this is a complicated piece of joinery, so, for those who want



A CORNER CUPBOARD FOR COALS AND LOGS.



simplicity, the plan will be to get out a frame, something like a canvas-stretcher, and then glue this down on to thin panels, the size of the outside of your frames. American white Bass wood should be used for these panels, as it is free from knots, and is nice for painting or decorating.

Brass butt hinges, which must be sunk, will have to be screwed on to the bottom of the doors and cupboard, and small catches with knobs at the top of the doors to keep them closed. These can be purchased at a good tool or metal shop. Brass chains would be better than cord for keeping the doors at a certain angle when opened. There is a disadvantage in fixing them at the top as I have indicated in sketch, for they are more in the way there.

Such an article as I have schemed could be made at home, or if there are no brothers to assist, then a carpenter would get out such a thing at a small cost. The coal shoot could be made at an ironmonger's of sheet iron, the

shape of D, *i.e.*, just smaller than the inside of the cupboard, and by having two holes made with screws to correspond screwed inside the door, it could be removed to be filled, and then hung on the screws, and while at the bottom it could rest on a block of wood.

Now as to finishing the cupboard from the outside. If the wood is good and nicely finished up, it might be stained and polished with beeswax dissolved in warm turpentine, but if the wood is not so good, then it would be better to paint it some nice colour. It would require two good coats of paint, and it could then be finished with enamel.

The decoration of the panels should be some rather severe treatment of foliage as I have indicated, put on in flat tints, or it could be stencilled. Those who are skilful enough might paint the panels with flowers and birds, while those who fear to venture on hand-work of any kind could fill the panels with Japanese gilt leather paper

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## SHORTHAND AND TYPEWRITING CLERKS.

IN days long since gone the Preacher warned his son that "of the making of books there was no end." The nineteenth century has added its testimony to that of the previous eighteen that the Preacher was right. A very large proportion of the books made is of a fictional character, and efforts after original plots are many and ingenious. There is one theme, however, which never seems to grow old. It is the self-sacrifice of women. It varies with the years, its form changes, but we can always see the woman sacrificing herself in some way or another for the good of those she loves. In these days of competition, when the struggle for even a bare existence is so keen, the heroine of a novel is often the breadwinner of the family. The father, a hard-worked, worried business man, dies, leaving his wife and children totally unprovided for, and the eldest daughter, or the one with most energy, nobly steps into the breach. Without any previous training or experience, she invariably succeeds—if not at first, at any rate in a few months. In a short time she is earning enough to provide for the family—large or small—in addition to herself.

A young, inexperienced girl reads many such stories, and she imagines them all virtually true, or only a very little overdrawn. She does not know that in real life girls in a similar position are seldom so fortunate.

A girl left upon her own resources will find that, after she has considered every situation open to her, one of the best and easiest to enter is that of a typewriting and shorthand clerk. Of course she will need a little capital—sufficient to support her while she is preparing for work—but the course of study is not prolonged. Six months of steady application to work at a good shorthand school is sufficient to fit any ordinarily intelligent girl for a situation as a shorthand and typewriting clerk.

Equipped with the knowledge she gains there, she can hope to live independently of outside assistance and save up for a rainy day. At first, of course, being inexperienced, she can only obtain a small wage. With fairly satisfactory certificates, however, 12s. to 15s. a week is easily earned.

After a year's experience a girl's wage is just what she makes it. If she is careful and painstaking and attentive to her employer's interests, she will become a valuable clerk, and so be able to earn a larger salary. The number of advertisements for typewriters is a sufficient proof that there is a great demand for them. The supply is equal to and frequently exceeds the demand, but it is not of a sort that satisfies the demand. Business men, who have learned by experience what the ordinary typewriting girl is, are very eager to engage one who has made it her chief aim to be thoroughly proficient. Such a one frequently earns from 25s. to 30s. a week, and at the same time has good hours—*not* more than seven or eight daily—and a fortnight's holiday every year.

Of course it must be understood that such a position is only obtainable by an earnest worker—one who not only has made it her aim to know her business perfectly, but

who besides is trustworthy, quick, and obliging. A clerk who is unwilling to oblige her employers—and there are many occasions for so doing—will never become invaluable to the firm. Consequently, as employers usually express their satisfaction in a monetary way, the clerk who objects to doing a little extra work or staying half an hour later in the evening will not receive a rise of salary or a present at Christmas.

A shorthand and typewriting clerk can add very much to her value by becoming mistress of one or two European languages. Of these naturally the two most important are German and French—more especially the former. It will easily be understood that a knowledge of the pure classical French or German is not so useful as an intimate acquaintance with the colloquial and commercial forms, trade terms, etc. A letter from an English to a French firm is not by any means the sort of composition a girl is taught at school. It may be asked, then, "How is one to obtain a good working knowledge of a language for commercial purposes?" The answer, of course, must vary with the individual case, but generally I might suggest that the language can best be acquired by studying for a time in the country, lessons in English, etc., being given meanwhile to solve the question of bodily support. Failing this, lessons might be exchanged with a German or Frenchman eager to be initiated into the mysteries of English. Let the knowledge be acquired as it may, its possession is important. It is often the "open sesame" to a good position in one of the great London or provincial hotels, where foreigners are constantly coming and going, and where the foreign correspondence is a matter of much moment. A lady clerk in such a position not infrequently has a salary of £2 or £3 a week, and of course, being well equipped for her work (no others need apply), earns it quite as faithfully as her humbler sisters their more modest wage.

It has been urged by some that when a girl has mastered the theoretical and practical parts of typewriting and shorthand, and is ready to begin her life-work, it is very difficult to get a suitable situation. There is a certain amount of truth in this, and for the information of those ignorant of such matters it might be stated that nearly all the big typewriter-manufacturing firms keep a list of those who use their own special make of machine. Often it is to these city merchants apply when they require a typist. Most of the schools, too, undertake to recommend successful pupils to situations. In these cases, however, if the pupil so recommended is engaged by the firm, she agrees to pay her school a certain commission, generally five per cent. on the first year's salary. Answering advertisements in the daily papers is the plan usually adopted, and one open to all. It is besides, as a rule, the most satisfactory, and though a clerk must make up her mind to some disappointments and difficulties at first, there is no doubt that if she is determined to earn her bread in this way, with training and experience she will most surely succeed.