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HOW TO FURNISH HOME TASTEFULLY.

The Entrance Hall.

As suggested by "Cousin Kate" in our last number, the furnishing and decoration of a hall is something for special consideration, undoubtedly from the fact that it is the part of a house which creates the first and leaves the last impression on the mind of a visitor.

We all know what great stress has been laid on "first impressions," and perhaps not without good reason, as we are all more or less influenced in these ways and are very apt to pass judgment accordingly. However this may be, it is matter for congratulation that the halls of American houses have come to be considered more than mere entrance ways or vestibules with no special importance or connection with the rest of the house. On the contrary they are now part and parcel of a pretty home, and although no arbitrary rules can be laid down for furnishing or decorating them, fashion decrees that they should be pleasant, home-like, well lighted, and, better yet, one of the living rooms of the family.

This in building new houses is a fact it is well to bear in mind. There was once much waste room devoted to big halls, which required a large waste of heat and carpets, while no one ever thought of sitting in the draughty, dismal, funereal-looking passages. Now in a modern house, there is often to be seen a pretty bay window or cosey recess at one side of the hall for plants and birds, easy chairs and divans, the front door leading out with its large double entrance upon a pretty porch or veranda, which in summer with its vine-covered trellises or climbing roses may be thrown open into one cool, lovely apartment. The stairs run up to a landing, which provides a pretty place for a stained or decorated window. The staircase rails or banister, instead of being a dark, gloomy walnut or stained abomination, is either a

light cherry, oak or even whitewood highly polished.

These last named staircases do not show dust, and are far less care to the busy housewife. The floor is either hard wood with plenty of soft luxurious rugs, or has a pretty bright carpet, the pattern for stairs the same.

This is an improvement upon the regular old style stair carpet, and has always a comfortable, "well-to-do" look, while portière curtains dividing front and back halls give a very pleasing home-like air to a hall. The doors and windows, if of hard wood, should neither be stained nor painted, but simply polished, as the natural beauties of the wood should be preserved. If well lighted, a paper of a rich dark tone is desirable, but if at all dark, it must be assisted to lighter effect by a light bright paper. Terra-cotta shades are much used and are very desirable, either for paper or painted walls.

We will speak next but briefly of

The Dining Room.

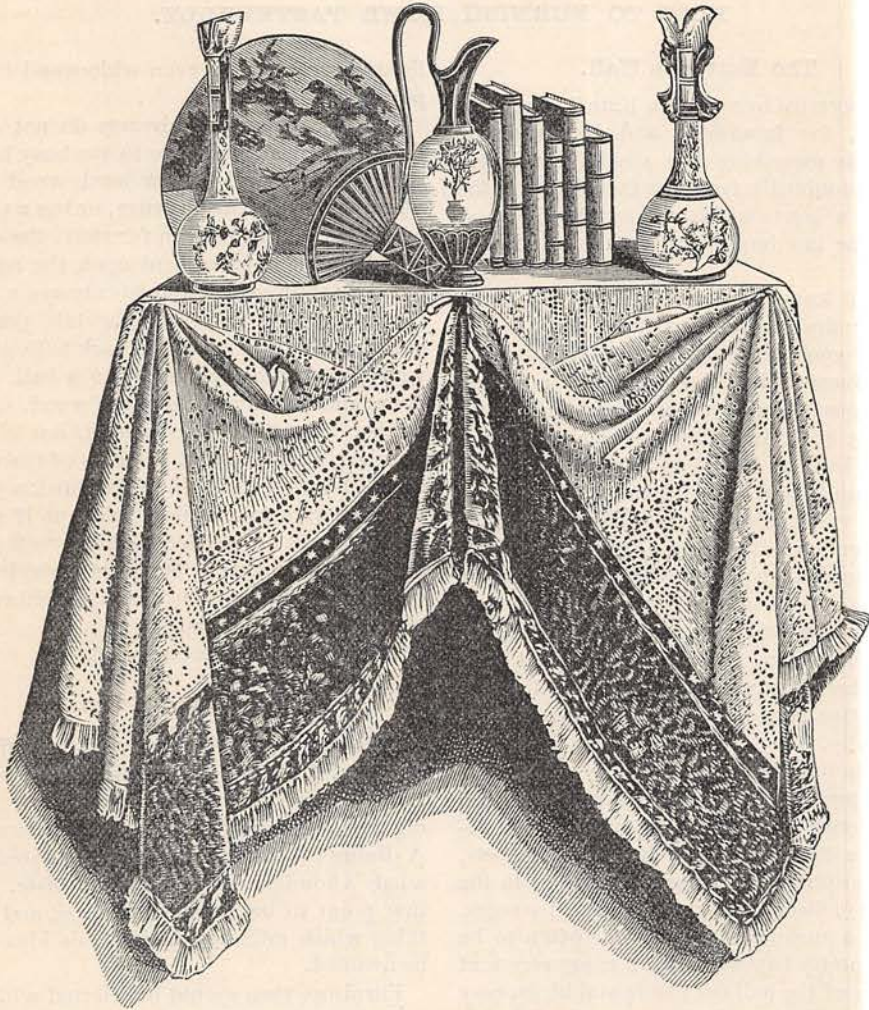
This room should be of a little different character from the other part of the house. It may, if we may so express it, show more dignity and solidity than other apartments. A dining room furnished and decorated like a lady's boudoir is in very bad taste. The first point to be considered is *use*, and anything which militates against this idea is to be avoided.

Furniture then should be selected with this end in view. Chairs which combine comfort with durability and beauty are the most desirable. The leather-covered backs and seats are for this reason the best. A deep maroon-tinted morocco makes a very handsome covering of this kind, and the whole scheme of color can be carried out to harmonize with this feature. A substantial extension table *en suite* with the chairs, that is of the same wood, and a sideboard or buffet complete the

regular set. It is surprising at what really low figures these dining room suits may be had, whereas a few years ago, none but the wealthier classes thought of owning such luxurious appointments.

The sideboard is the most important piece of the set, the best designs now showing a

mend the now popular and handsome over-mantels, where there is a fireplace in the room, and every modern-built house should have one, if not more. This is a chimney-piece and over-mantel combined, instead of the old-fashioned mirror, and should be of the same wood as the furniture, and the nearer



ARRANGEMENT OF DRAPERY FOR SHELF.

back divided into several plates set with beveled mirrors, which reflect the plate and china very handsomely.

A massive, beautifully carved buffet is to be preferred to the lighter more fancy ones, with their doll-house shelves and numerous brackets. Instead of these we would recom-

mend the style of the sideboard the better. It is a sort of repeat of this piece in fact, but is differently proportioned and may be more elaborate without any violation of good taste. As suitable wood for dining room furnishings we admire most antique ash, cherry or mahogany. In considering the

decoration of walls, the height of the room should be taken into account; if the walls are extremely high they may be divided with good effect by the usual dado, filling and frieze, but if low it is better to dispense with the dado, and use a deeper heading or frieze.

The coloring should be regulated by the height and general character of the room. If well lighted it will admit of rich effects in gold and dull reds, peacock blue and terracotta, which are generally the most likely to give satisfaction. If, however, the room is unusually dark, lighter, brighter tones should be chosen.

A ceiling paneled out with wood mouldings and either painted or papered is very handsome and rich in effect, or if there is a plaster moulding this may be colored in harmonizing tints, and the wall simply papered or painted in some soft corresponding tint.

We will speak next of the

Reception Room or Parlor.

But very briefly, as our remarks are general and intended as useful in a suggestive sort of way, and in answer to the many queries we have received upon this subject.

In speaking of a parlor we are reminded at once that this is the place where the mistress of the house reigns supreme, or should do so at least, as this is certainly her prerogative, and it is here she can make her taste more decidedly manifest. Generally speaking, the aspect of this room should be bright and cheerful, breathing an atmosphere of geniality and suggesting all the amenities of life. It is the domain of relaxation and sociability, where one is supposed to drive dull care away, and to beguile the time most agreeably. The general treatment of this room therefore should harmonize with this idea, and should be light, delicate and graceful, well calculated to refresh the eye and stimulate the imagination.

There are now any variety of pretty wall papers suggestive of all sorts of pleasant sights and sounds and imaginings. It is not at all necessary to resort to the stiff patterns of scroll and bouquet or geometrical designs, which once disfigured the walls of so many homes, and were then all the rage.

The set, conventional patterns have given way before the more artistic and graceful designs, which neither tire the eye nor detract

from the beauty of the refined and tasteful interior.

The walls should be treated in a way to harmonize with the paper chosen, while the important and oft-recurring question "what is the best furniture to place against such pretty walls" is very easily answered. Shun a regular suit of parlor furniture, as you would the paper of the last decade, or if you happen to have one, vary it by a number of occasional chairs, corner pieces, that are odd and pretty, ottomans, window seats, large easy stuffed "sleepy-hollows" and Turkish divans.

The same sort of liberty now prevails with respect to tables, all sorts and sizes and shapes of fancy stands and tables being combined with the other pieces of the regular set.

A cabinet of some kind commonly called a *chiffonier* is well adapted to display pretty bric-à-brac or art treasures generally, and therefore a most desirable addition to the fittings of the room. Nothing could be more attractive than the pretty mahogany or rosewood cabinets, which can now be had at less cost than an old-fashioned cupboard or bookcase of hard wood, which now looks ugly in comparison. As to the upholstering of the furniture that must be decided by the taste and means of the decorator. Silk is doubtless the most beautiful, but is not so good to wear as the more durable tapestry, all-wool or *petit-point*, which are in excellent taste. *Petit-point*, a combination of silk and wool is especially to be recommended where economy is desirable. As for carpets, Axminsters, Saxony velvets or Brussels, all come in excellent art colorings, and at such prices as to suit all pocket-books.

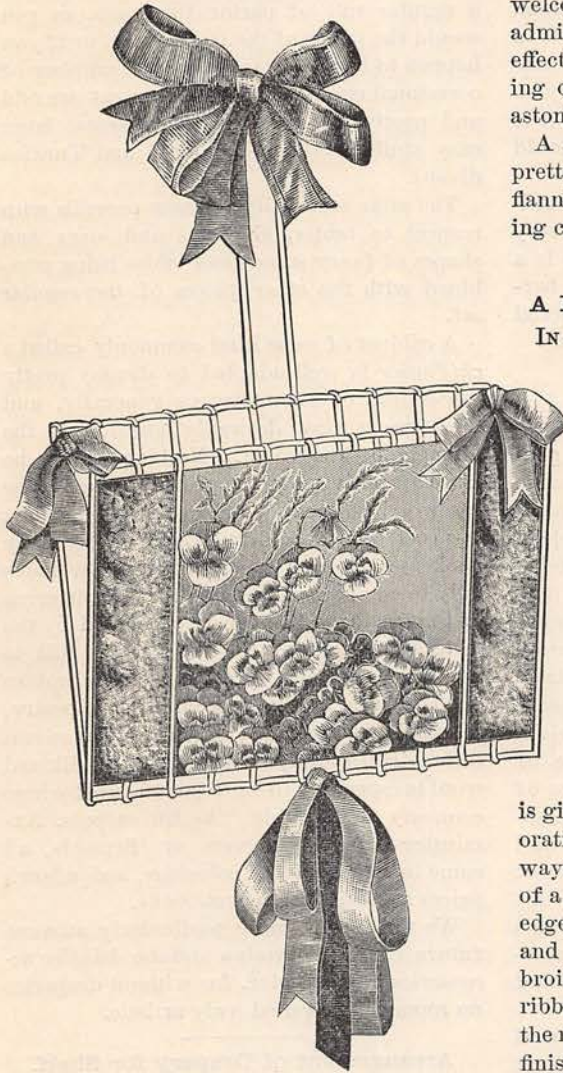
We shall speak more particularly at some future time of curtains and the daintier accessories of the parlor, for without draperies no room can be called truly artistic.

Arrangement of Drapery for Shelf.

ONE tires sometimes of the straight valance for mantels and shelves, so that a pleasant change to a pretty drape is a relief; besides this the handsome table covers to be had now at such reasonable figures may be put to such a use with excellent effect. One must cut it in halves to be sure, but there are plenty of uses to which the other half may

be devoted, as cover for bureau or side table, upright piano, single folding bed, etc.

Our illustration shows how one of these fancy covers may be artistically draped upon a shelf, contributing not a little to the grace and elegance of a room. Of course the



LETTER OR NEWSPAPER RACK.

richer the material used the handsomer the effect. If preferred the material may be purchased in goods of suitable width and a handsome border sewed across the front. Borders may be purchased for this purpose, being much used now for curtains, drapery

headings, trimmings, etc. The material should be soft and pliable to drape gracefully, plush velours, raw silk, silk tapestry, or for a bedroom Canton flannel, sometimes called American plush, are very rich in effect. These Canton flannels can be had now in such excellent grades that they are gladly welcomed by those whose means will not admit of anything expensive; indeed the effects attained by the use and artistic draping of even such humble material is truly astonishing.

A drape of some plain material is very pretty edged with a border of the figured flannel, which is shown in the most charming colors and designs.

A Novel Letter or Newspaper Rack.

IN August last there appeared in the Magazine a description by Mrs. J. B. of a letter or paper rack made from an ordinary wire broiler. This has been a source of amusement to some readers, of ridicule with others, and of interest and curiosity with the remainder; but we think that those who have seen one of these articles tastefully decorated will have their contempt turned to admiration. Our illustration will give a better understanding of this matter than a mere verbal description.

A broiler is selected the requisite size and one of the upright handles filed off, after which the whole article is gilded with the best liquid gilt. The decoration may be carried out in a variety of ways; that shown in our illustration consists of a square of white satin or mole-skin plush, edged with bands of gold plush at each side and decorated with painting. The sides of broiler are held together with ribbons, and ribbon bows decorate the handle and finish off the rack below as here shown. Another pretty finish for bottom is a row of the crochet rings, described this month in department of *Home Needlework*, with tufts of silk tied through each ring. These should match the ribbons and bands at sides in color. The panel of satin and plush should be neatly wadded and lined, then slipped between the wires of the broiler and fastened securely at the corners.