

flummery," while he resolves all over again, and for the one thousandth time, to found an asylum for incurable faddists—with his wife a charter inmate.

Now, what is it that is wrong with his wife's ideas in regard to beautifying the home? Is it not simply the fault that many others have; the failure to understand that the floor is intended to be walked on, and is not to be considered only as so much space upon which to crowd spider-legged chairs, unsteady stands, and easels which topple over almost at a breath; that the ceiling is to reflect light, and is not merely a something from which to suspend an expensive chandelier, and that the wall is to serve as a background or setting for guests as well as pictures, and therefore should be subdued in color, so as not to obtrude itself upon one's notice, and should not be over-crowded with pictures, or brackets with draperies, or cabinets filled with bric-a-brac.

It is the excess of ornament, no less about a house than a person, that fatigues the eye and distracts the mind. About half of the useless lumber in the way of fragile brackets, cheap ornaments, conglomerate pictures, throws, tidies and flimsy scarfs, now disfiguring our houses should be relegated to the attic; the good etching or water-color or engraving is worth a van-load of common stuff, and would cost no more. A few exquisite forms and fewer colors, a restriction of cheap and lavish ornamentation, a chaste individuality in selecting every article of furniture and decoration for its fitness for its environments and its use, and we shall begin to understand the true art of decorating the home, than which, of all industries among women, none is of more importance.

As I have already stated, such knowledge is not intuitive, but is easy to be obtained by an actual study of the technicalities of the profession, or by a habit of observation that amounts to the same thing—in a woman at

any rate, who acquires so much by absorption. The woman's building at the Columbian Exposition (the design of a woman and the best expression of elegance, harmony and beauty, with its exhibition limited to work done by women alone), was in itself, in the region of art, a great inspiration and incentive for women.

Since that Exhibition, women, generally, are giving more attention to decorative art, and the women of our country are taking it up as a profession, but unfortunately they so far have been obliged to go abroad for study. It has, for some years, been the custom with London firms to receive women to study the art of furnishing and decorating, the apprentice to remain from three to five years with the firm; and, in consideration of the time and trouble taken by employers in conscientiously educating their pupil in the mysteries and technicalities of the profession, one hundred pounds premium is required. This seems an unreasonable exaction on the part of such firms, for the experiment of teaching women has proven that they are more apt than men; that they have a keener moral sensitiveness to beauty, a quicker eye for color; that their sense of artistic proportions is equal to man's; and that they have, with these qualifications, an unbounded and unflagging enthusiasm, which, carried into the pursuit of any trade or profession, and coupled with the persistent effort said to be closely akin to genius, is almost certain to bring success.

Women studying decorating and art furnishing are required to learn all about the various materials used for all kinds of artistic work. They must know the newest designs for wall papers of both home and foreign productions; they have to familiarize themselves with furniture of all kinds and styles, including mantel-pieces, the fitting up of grates with tiles and brasses; they must know everything knowable about carpets and draperies, art em-