

Making the Old Parlor New

How tired she was of the prim parlor with its greenish cast of wall paper and carpet, and the faded green cambric shades that since her earliest recollection had served to shut out the sunshine, and to give a bilious complexion to such guests as were formally entertained. The cane seat chairs, and hair cloth sofa, the two starched tidies, the motto, "Home, Sweet Home," over the high, bare mantel, even the oval-framed pictures served to irritate her as she looked about.

But a week ago she had returned from a visit to a city friend, whose artistic rooms made the home parlor seem more stiflingly unpleasant than ever. She threw up the shades, opened a window and in came a cool, north wind, bringing sweetness of clover fields over which it had blown on its way from the reservoir of sun-dappled hills. "Such beautiful hills!" "This room needs the 'outdooriness' first of anything," she said.

A moment later came her mother, amazed at seeing every window of the sacred apartment open, the sun streaming in, and Carol perched on the sofa arm. "What are you doing, Carol?"

"Doing interior decorating with fresh air," said Carol. "Mother, I want you to lend me this parlor."

"Lend you this parlor?"

"Yes, to make pretty, like Rita's."

"Oh," Mrs. Haven comprehended now. "But, my child, pretty things cost money."

"I have ten dollars."

"Yes, dear, but ten dollars would do so little."

"X stands for the unknown quantity," said Carol, gaily. "Given—a new, old-fashioned room, a girl with an artistic eye, and an X, and the result will be the envy of all this country round."

"Well, you may see what you can do, but you won't spend anything."

Looking about with a sense of proprietorship, Carol decided that the dark green and salmon of the carpet harmonized well with the wall paper, which was a pattern of loosely-sketched brown daisies on a silvery green ground. The carpet itself was not bad, the figure being a small lattice work, with leaves struggling through it. She felt a new satisfaction in the high-ceilinged parlor, with its handsomely cased sumnertree and corner posts.

That afternoon she made a trip to the village seven miles away, coming back with a large packing box, and many mysterious bundles. For ten days she spent her spare time in the parlor, which she kept locked to everyone. And when at last the door was opened to the family with an invitation to "walk into my parlor," the room seemed transformed, indeed.

"How did you do it?" cried Jim and Patty.

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"I don't see but two things that I know," said her mother. "The marble-top centre table and grandpa's picture."

"I hope you haven't run into debt, daughter," said her father.

"Not a bit of it," replied Carol; "I just waved my magic wand, and presto—changed that lot!" First, were the shades. They were nice ones, but I got them for fifty cents apiece, because there were some tack holes in them, and they were sold as damaged. The drapery curtains cover the holes and are of scrim at five cents a yard—12 yards for the three windows. The poles are cheap, and they are pretty—stained pine at 25 cents each. The windows took \$2.85 out of my X. I paid a quarter for the charming artotype of Bouguereau's "Fisher Girl," in the old motto frame over the mantel, and the rest of my money went for cretonne and paints. The bookcase was given me where I made my purchases—it is a packing box into which I fitted shelves, painting it in white and gold, as I did these chairs and this little stand which I dragged from the attic. The mirror I took from my room and gave its tarnished gilt frame a coat of white with gold tracings all over it, and the motto frame is also enameled, as you see."

"But the rugs, the bookcase curtain, the stand cover—"

"Oh, mother mine, you ought to recognize the stand cover as the little shawl Great-Aunt Martha gave to wrap about my infant shoulders on occasions of state. The bookcase curtain is that old shawl of yours, which I said I might make into anything I liked. The rugs are our worn-out lap robes. As for the good bits together, and put pinked red felt on for an edge. The headrest and cushion for the rocker are made of what was left of the shawl, and the other chairs are seated with cretonne such as I used for the sofa. The two gorgeous fans on the mantel were given me by Rita before I came away. The tea pot and china, the glass bookcase are what belonged to Grandma, and have been hidden away as choice ever since I can remember. The pink rose bowl on the centre of the table I bought while I was with Rita, and the plush photograph case and the tiny easel on the square stand, she gave me also; now doesn't X stand for the unknown quantity in something besides algebra. And haven't we a pretty parlor? But there is one

thing I shall insist on, mother—that you shall come in here and sit a while every day as tribute to my genius."

A Useful Addition

In almost every home there is an old-fashioned, odd bureau like the one shown in Fig. 1. Such a piece of



furniture is serviceable for the drawer room it affords, but it is awkward in appearance, and is not as useful as it might be were such an addition made. It is shown in Fig. 2. Place a post at each corner as high as the



original height of the bureau, with end, front and rear pieces connecting their tops and with a piece, for the insertion of hooks extending from rear post to the other as shown. Now cover top, ends and back with some pretty figured cloth, and tack the edges at the corner posts carrying the edges around the posts in front and tacking them out of sight. Stretch a wire at the top in front and hang the pretty curtain upon it. The top of the completed device will then make an admirable closet for hanging hats, and a great many other of the smaller articles of wearing apparel.—Mac Lincoln, York Co., Ont.

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