

I do not think you will wish me to give you all my ideas as to furnishing, but perhaps one or two hints may come in useful. For floor covering for your sitting-room, I think you will find the cheapest and prettiest is a large square of Moonj matting. The red, blue and cream colours are bright and cheery, and the matting is easily kept clean and wears splendidly. You can stain the floor all round, dark, or light oak, as your fancy directs. For the bedroom floor a square of carpet is preferable, and this can now be had in very pretty artistic shades, and very cheap.

Your bedroom door will probably be placed in one corner of the room, which only leaves you three corners at disposal. Of these three, I would suggest making hanging dress-cupboards out of two, and a washstand of the remaining one. The dress-cupboards are made thus: get a good-sized shelf, fixed to the wall at a height of 7 feet from the floor, and just above the skirting-board have another of the same size fixed. Under this last, you can keep boots and shoes. From the top shelf a serge or plushette curtain should hang, which will effectually keep out the dust. The hooks for dresses are placed on the side supports of your bracket shelf. I daresay you will not have time to embellish your curtains, but I have seen very pretty art serge embroidered ones, which were the work of leisured fingers.

Now for the washstand. Get the same carpenter who puts up your other shelves to place at the right height for comfort, a strong shelf wide enough for one or two basins and ewers. The larger you can allow this to be, the more comfortable you will find it. A curtain ought to hang from this shelf too, in

lieu of a cupboard door, and, if you are pressed for space, hang a looking-glass in the angle of the wall. Your toilet brush-bags can hang one on each side, and save the purpose of splashes as well.

I have left the beds to the last, for I think you know my views on that subject, and I cannot too strongly urge you each to have your own bed. You can get most comfortable ones at a very moderate cost from the Standard Folding Bedstead Co. They are easily fixed, well ventilated, and during the day, hook up on the wall, leaving plenty of space in the room. I have not mentioned the chest of drawers, as you will have to decide about that when you find what your funds will allow. But there is one necessity, namely a dressing-screen. This you will find such a comfort, and if you buy one of the pretty Japanese ones for 9s. to 10s., you can use it in either room as desired.

You will, by matting over the scullery, be able to make that your bathroom, and will find it very handy and much more convenient than having a bath in the bedroom. Your cooking utensils, I fear, I have not time to mention, but I know your mother will see that you have all you need, and so I will only finish my long letter with a few hints which you must take in good part, as beginners in your new and fascinating housekeeping.

1. Arrange to have your milk and bread brought regularly. You are sure to find a dairy near where they will serve you sufficiently early in the morning.

2. *Do not neglect your regular meals.* You will find it an excellent plan to take it in turns to "housekeep." In the morning, the one who makes the beds and does up the rooms,

might prepare the breakfast while the other goes out to provide for the evening meal. I imagine you will lunch in the city, so that supper will be the meal required. And I trust you will always see to it that you have a substantial, but digestible supper, as soon as you can after returning home.

3. See that your lamps, candles, etc., are always clean and ready for use, and matches handy. There is nothing so dismal as to come home to a dark room or rooms and grope about for light. It is unlikely you will have gas, in a flat such as I have described, though you may have the "penny in the slot" arrangement, and this is a great convenience.

4. See that your drains, sink, etc., are always well flushed and kept perfectly sweet and clean. If anything seems out of order, go at once to the agent and have the matter seen to; it may be very easily remedied.

5. Be very careful to leave your sanitary dustbin ready, on the days when it is cleared, and see that all refuse is carried away. The most absolute cleanliness is needed in such close quarters, and by attention to this life may be as healthy and is certainly as pleasant in "your flat" as it could be in your own home.

P.S. I don't think I have been nearly emphatic enough about the need for care in arranging your meals. Be sure to take a good breakfast, and try by all means to have a good, wholesome evening meal. Never fall into the habit of living on sausage rolls and pork pies, and tinned meats. You both know something of cookery, therefore learn more, if you can, by practising for "each other's" benefit, which after all is the truest "altruism."

(To be concluded.)

A MINISTERING ANGEL.

By JOSEPHA CRANE, Author of "Winifred's Home," etc.

CHAPTER I. IN THE FENS.



EW places, by way of contrast, as regards scenery, could have been greater than when I came straight back from the school where I was educated in lovely Lausanne to Anderby Hall, our home in the Lincolnshire fens. I had not been at home, even for the holidays, for three years, owing to my having measles or something or

other that prevented my travelling. Two years ago I came back not to return, for my school-days ended on my nineteenth birthday. My mother had died quite suddenly two years before, and since then Aunt Elsie, father's eldest sister, kept house for him. Then she became very ill, and the doctors had little hope of her being anything but an invalid for the rest of her life, so my home-coming to be the active head of the house seemed just in time.

Our home is a very large, rambling old house, very much out of repair, and with large gardens stretching at the back, and a short lawn in front, the gate opening on to the village road. We are eleven miles from a

railway station, five from anything that can be called a town, and beyond two or three families who live within a few miles of us, and about two in the village itself, there is no society at all. From my bed-room window I can see miles and miles of fenland stretching to the horizon. The fens are intersected by canals, and here and there are tiny villages and a church spire.

Dolly, who is thirteen, and Bess and Anne, who are twins of nine, go to a school kept by two maiden ladies in the village. The children of the doctor and clergyman go there, and, considering how remote we are from civilisation, it is fortunate to have a school at hand, for father says he doesn't wish them to be far away, and prefers this school, which, for the country, is wonderfully good.

It was my great wish to go and be trained for a nurse, and I think father would have let me do this later on had not mother died. But now, as he says, my duty is clearly to be at home. Perhaps, when Dolly is older and able to take my place, there may be a chance of my going.

Last week a very delightful thing happened. I had a letter from Maggie Anderson, who had been to stay at Lausanne once during the holidays. She was a sister of Madame Chaudet, whose school I was at, and it was her telling me a great deal about hospital life, where she had just begun her training, that gave me the wish to be a nurse. She wrote from her London home, for she had lately been ill, and the doctors wanted her to have six months' rest; and when I told father, he said that I could invite her to come and stay here if I liked, and that it would be company

for me, for he had to go to America on business, a brother of his having died there lately, and he might be away three months or more.

"You would enjoy that, would you not, Nell?" he asked, for father always loves to please us.

"Yes, father, it would be lovely; I hope she can come," I answered, and, to my joy, I found she could, so the morning father sailed from Liverpool for New York, I went to meet her at the station, and was surprised to see how white and ill she looked.

She is several years older than I am, and a very delightful person. The children took to her, and Tom, our one brother, who is eleven, voted her a brick.

"Now, Maggie, while you are here I am going to pick your brains diligently," I said to her the day after her arrival, and she laughingly said she gave me full permission to do so.

"As there seems no chance whatever of my going to be trained as a nurse, and here, of course, there are never any ambulance or home-nursing classes, I don't see how I can get any practical knowledge of nursing," I remarked, "and I long to learn all I can on the subject."

"Every woman should know certain rules about nursing, and how to carry out a doctor's orders," said Maggie, "and I will tell you all I can."

"You know sometimes I go and see the poor people in the village, and often and often I have wished I knew how to make them more comfortable and give them hints about treating the sick; only I did not know what to say and do."