

## PATCHWORK AND POIRET

(Continued from page 15.)

membered treasures for the use of the spare-room guests.

"Betty," said I, when we were snug in bed. "Do you really like your painted furniture better than these mahogany chairs?"

"Of course not," she replied, promptly, "no more than I like old Mrs. Bates in her high-heeled shoes, short skirts, and false hair better than dear Aunt Martha in her plain black dress and cap and shawl. It's just the spirit of the age, the love of change. And if you re-furnish every year or two you can't afford anything good."

NEXT day Aunt Martha showed us her log-cabin quilt and the geometrical print ones in red and white, or white and dotted blue. She showed us quilts of woollen patches, others of silk and velvet and then, hesitatingly, she drew one from the topmost shelf.

"I'm almost ashamed to show you this. I made it for my trousseau, but everyone laughed at it so I put it away. Not even my husband saw it." Aunt Martha unfolded a white cotton quilt decorated with sprawling, irregular sunflowers.

"It's wonderful," cried Betty, "a regular Poiret!"

"A what?"

"Poiret is a great French exponent of modern design," explained Betty. "This looks like one of his productions."

"If you really like it, dear, you're more than welcome."

"Oh, if I had only seen it a week ago!" wailed Betty. "It's quite clear to me now that my furniture should have been green and the walls peacock blue, but next time I decorate—in a

year or two—I'll colour everything to suit the quilt, if you're sure you don't mind giving it to me."

"You re-decorate every year!" exclaimed Aunt Martha.

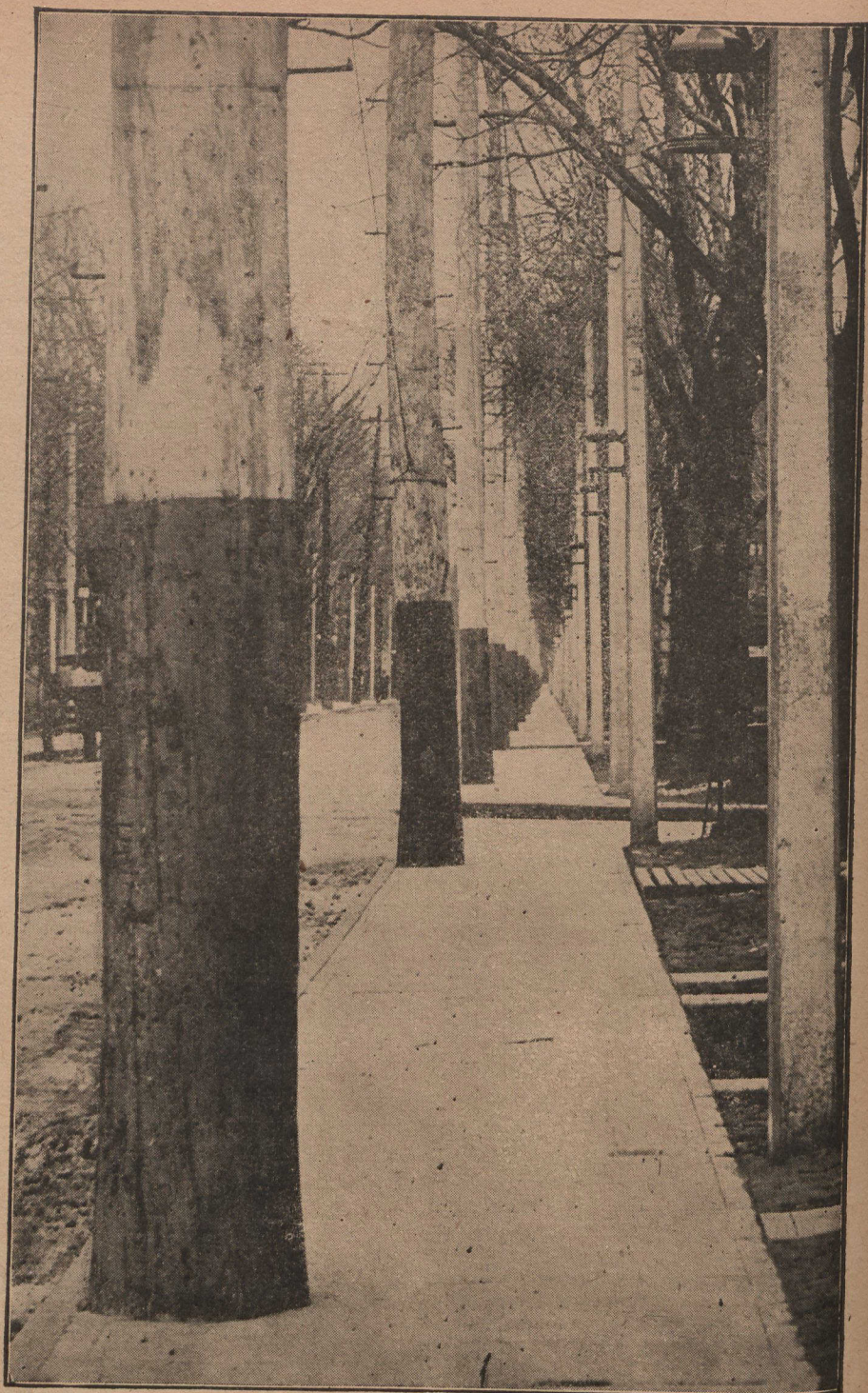
"Well, not every year, but one grows so tired of the same style—it's the same in clothes. I get cheap materials, and do the painting myself, so it doesn't cost much—but what I really want to complete my present scheme is a crazy quilt made of very large patches all the colours of the rainbow."

"Then follow me." Aunt Martha led us to her own room and spread out the quilt that lay folded at the foot of her bed. Betty held her breath, for here was the very thing she had been craving! Aunt Martha plainly had an eye for colour, and the skilfully-blended pieces that formed the quilt were of silk and satin of the finest quality, joined together invisibly without the customary feather stitching. We recognized the dove-grey wedding-gown, and Aunt Martha pointed out other pieces of historic interest.

"I suppose you wonder at my using that piece of black silk . . ."

"It was an inspiration!" interrupted Betty; "the modern scheme of decoration calls for a dark accent."

"It was my first black silk, and I was so proud of it, for then I knew that I was really grown up. This blue silk belonged to my first party dress and this plaid silk was your mother's, Betty's mother had one just like it. Grandmother is responsible for the brocades—aren't they wonderful? The skirts, could certainly 'stand alone,' as they would say. This pink belonged to my little girl who died—and this!" Aunt Martha sighed. "The lavender



This street didn't want to be ugly, for you can see real trees in the background, struggling hard to be seen. But they were simply choked out by the huge poles, miles of which some inartistic company insisted on planting. Why should this be allowed in a big city, when underground cables could be easily laid, and where there should be plenty of space for live trees?

satin was part of my trousseau and the white was my wedding-gown. I love this quilt. There is not a piece in it that doesn't mean something to me—but if you like it so much, Betty . . . after all I can't live forever!"

"I wouldn't take it for worlds!" cried Betty. "To me it is only a colour-scheme, but it is the history of your life!"

"Well, perhaps when I'm gone, Betty, dear."

"No, Aunt Martha, you mustn't. Not unless I get very much wiser. I can work out the same idea in cheap materials and when it is soiled and faded, I'll be quite ready for something new. Don't you think so?"

But Betty is young and her visit to Aunt Martha's made her more thoughtful. When Aunt Martha's quilt comes to her—please God, not for a long time—I think she will have learned to cherish it.

## CLEAN THROUGH TO BUFFALO

(Concluded from page 22.)

we came to the bridge. Long seas of vapour rose from the haunted reaches of the Niagara. Just as our coach got to mid-bridge, when the doors of the buffet might be opened, when the orders were all in, when those who would have gone to bed stayed up that they might have one little drink, a long, bridge-shaking freight came on the bridge, and our engine, like a balky horse, stopped again to gaze at the strong, thundering beast that had such power to move things. There we stood for nearly half an hour while the crew doped her up as best they might for the

home stretch from Bridgeport to Buffalo.

And at last we came in, conscious as never before, some of us, that Canada is surely in a state of war when we haven't enough man-power left outside munition factories to keep our railways from reverting to the conditions of a hundred years ago. In a journey scheduled by the time-table to take three hours and forty minutes we had lost just five hours and twenty minutes. We leave it to railway experts to compute how far that train must travel in order to be on time just twenty-four hours later.

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