How to Be Happy Without Oak Floors

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By LILLIAN SHABEN

Were you ever obliged to move into an old dilapidated house and simply "make the best of things"? If you ever were, you have not yet forgotten the floors. If you were renting the house, your landlord probably thought the floors "good enough", and if the house were your own, you may not have decided that the old building was hardly worth the expense of new oak sister and last summer. Father ahead." So we started in.

Having experimented on a floor two years before with the best of success, we decided to give this floor a similar treatment. This consisted of cleaning, painting, and filling the cracks; then paint the floor, staining and waxing it.

Cleaning cracks is the least attractive part of the whole process. It is also the hardest part. An old, thin-bladed paring knife, and a stiff goose feather are the best tools to use. The knife cleans the cracks fairly well, and the goose quill brushes out the last bit of dust. It is important to get the cracks very clean, because a layer of crack-filler put on over a crack full of dust will soon crumble, and the whole floor will be spoiled.

When the cracks are clean, they are ready to be painted. Very little paint is needed for this. A pint of left-over wall or floor paint will do very well for a large floor. A small stiff-bristled mucilage brush works best in crack painting.

After the cracks are painted and dry, they are ready to be filled with putty. An old knife or a spatula that has been broken off about three inches from the handle is best for this. Work the putty solidly into the crack with the knife blade. You will be surprised to find how much putty a crack can hold, and how long it takes to fill a crack! It develops back bone, wrist, patience, and blisters, so wear old gloves.

We wadded exactly seventeen and one half pounds of putty into that one bedroom floor, but the result was worth the effort. Some people fill cracks with a commercial crack filler without painting the cracks first. They are thus saved the labor of painting, but the expensive filler you use at thirty-five cents per pound wears no better than putty at ten cents a pound. This I found by experiment two years ago. We were buying crack filler for a floor and the druggist suggested that we try painting the cracks and using putty instead of crack filler. We did this for part of the floor, and the putty and commercial crack filler have worn equally well for two years. One of our neighbors used putty for crack filler on unpainted cracks, but after one year, the putty crumbled and fell out. Whether this was due to having the cracks unpainted, or to poorly cleaned cracks, I do not know. At any rate, I can vouch for well cleaned, painted cracks that are solidly packed with putty.

When all the cracks have been put-tied and allowed to dry, the coat of "ground color" paint may be applied. This paint is not the color of dirt, as its name implies, but is a light buff. It isn't the ordinary type of floor paint that wears well and should not be allowed to stand long before applying the final coat of stain.

The stain is a floor varnish stained (Continued on page 10)

Busy Mother, Read This!

By FRANCES THOMAS

Busy Mother, save your eyes, your stitches and your time by reading this article!

Miss Edna Armstrong, who has a degree from the State University at Iowa City, and who is now employed in the Iowa State College Nursery School, has just completed a study of "Motor Control in Young Children as Applied to Dressing." Her conclusions will be of great benefit to many busy mothers and seamstresses who make many children's clothes.

Miss Armstrong made a comparison of the various fasteners used on children's clothing, studying buttonholes and loops especially. To run the experiment, she made six brightly colored jackets fastened with various sets of buttons and buttonholes, both horizontal and vertical, and loop fasteners. These fastenings were located both on the sides and fronts of the jackets.

The 30 children in the nursery school were subjects to the experiment. Each child tried on the jacket and was observed and timed as he fastened it. At the end of the experiment, Miss Armstrong concluded several things.

Playtime at the Nursery School

She observed that in general the children had less trouble with any fastener if it were slightly below the waistline and toward the front. In the fasteners on the front of the garments, no one button seemed easier than another and the loops (composed of bias tape stitched flat) did not seem more difficult than either vertical or horizontal buttonholes. On the side fasteners the larger buttons seemed easier for the children to manage, and here too, the loops seemed just as easy to fasten.

Thus Miss Armstrong concluded that the wise mother would save countless hours of labor formerly spent in making buttonholes, by now placing loop fasteners on her children's clothes. Her little tots will fasten them just as easily and quickly and she will save time and labor for other things.
AFTER Nicholas Appert's invention of canning, saving sailors from the scourge of scurvy by providing them with garden foods and fresh meats, the sea returned the compliment by sending deep-sea dainties to people who live far inland. Today, there are twenty-five varieties of fish products canned, and the housewife finds at least as many more ways of using them.

People of every race live in the United States, and they have brought their liking for their native foods with them. Consequently we have "finnan haddie," French Caviar, sardines, and anchovies from the Mediterranean chiefly as appetizers in various recipes for hors d'oeuvres. But much of the fish labelled "imported" comes from under the jurisdiction of Canada, with which country the United States has a friendly agreement about fisheries. Canned haddock, cod, herring, mackerel, sardines, shad, and shellfish are largely east coast industries; salmon and tuna fish are canned chiefly on the west coast.

In all fish lore the sardine has the most curious history. Guilio Tonin, an Italian, began preserving pilchard minnows on the island of Sar dinia about 1530. He called them "sardine." France, Spain and Italy began to put up these minnows too, and small sprats as well. In Norway they can musua and sild fish and call them sardines. In Maine and in Japan the fish used are small spratting; in California, a species of pilchard, and in other countries various kinds of small fish. It will be seen that there is no such fish as a sardine. As a matter of fact, the kind of fish canned as sardines does not matter much; the quality depends on the way they are canned. They must be handled with great care. The little fish are so delicate that the general procedure is to bohead, clean and wash them, fry them in deep fat, drain, pack them carefully in flat tins, and fill the tins with olive oil.

Oysters, so often the housewife's stand-by for a cocktail, soup, or scallop, are put up chiefly in Maryland, down the Atlantic coast to Florida and around the Gulf of Mexico. Along the north Atlantic coast they were once abundant, but now must be artificially cultivated, and fresh oysters bring such good prices in eastern cities that it does not pay to can them.

Who has not tasted, and asked for clam chowder? Three kinds of clams are packed. The hard and soft clams of the Atlantic coast, and a Pacific coast species, the razor clam. Shrimps, crabs, and lobsters make the fisherman's dream come true, and the housewife's most attractive and nutritious salads. Shrimps are canned chiefly in states bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, where they are abundant. Only the tail is eaten. Canned crabs come mostly from the Norfolk and Virginia coast and from Japan where crabs are plentiful and the people work for small wages to can them.

Lobsters are caught in traps or pots along the North Atlantic coast, and brought alive to the canners, boiled for about thirty minutes, and their meat taken from the shell in large pieces as possible.

Only beginning has been made along the sea coasts of America in preparing and canning anchovies, although these beautiful, small fish, blue-brown and silvery white, are abundant along our coasts. The Mediterranean is famous for anchovies, the industry of picking and spicing them being mainly carried on near its shores.

A final application of wax makes the floor easy to care for as a waxed floor can be easily cleaned every day with a dustless mop. The finished product is particularly clean and attractive looking and well worth the time spent upon it. The total cost of finishing this 18 x 23 foot floor was:

- 17 1/2 lb. putty @ 10c ........... $1.75
- 2 1/2 qt. around color paint @ $1.25 3.13
- 2 1/4 qt. stain @ 1.50 ............ 5.63
- Wax ................................ 1.35

Total ................................ $10.66

A thin coat of wax applied about twice a year to the worn spots, will keep the floors in good condition.

We were so well pleased with this floor that we treated the stairway the same process, and put rubber mats on the steps. As a result, the stairway looks well and it can be cleaned without raising a cloud of dust on sweeping day.

The kitchen floor was a special problem. In some places the boards were worn thin, and here and there were knotholes in the boards too, to be worn down to a level with the rest of the floor. These knots were cut off with an old plane. Layers of newspapers judiciously placed on the floor a fairly even surface and we covered the whole with linoleum. The linoleum in turn, received a coat of natural color floor varnish and the whole kitchen looked transformed.

The largest item of cost in treating floors this way, is the labor expended. It would be a rather lonely task for one person, but two can have a rare time working together, and in the winter when the "men folks" haven't anything to do, every floor in the house could be transformed in two weeks.

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the color of different woods. I used walnut stain. This applied over the buff ground color gave a pleasant, medium brown. The varnish is rather heavy and so I found it a good plan to paint two or three boards the full length of the room instead of painting several boards for two or three feet at a time.

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As a Man Thinketh

If you think you are beaten, you are! If you think you dare not, you don't! If you'd like to win but you think you can't, It's almost certain you won't! If you think you'll lose, you've lost! But out in the world we move as in a dream life's battles don't always go to the strongest or fastest man! But soon or late, the man who wins is the one who thinks he can.

—Author unknown.