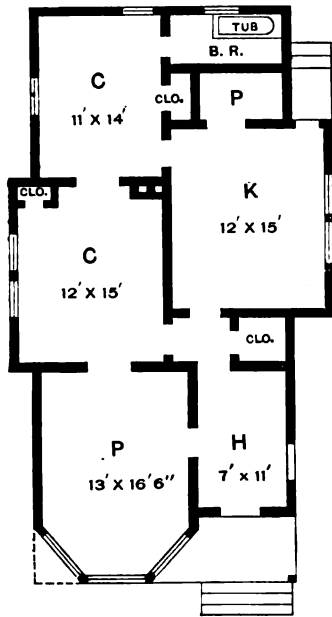


CORRESPONDENCE.

Houses for Workingmen.

From MINERVA PARKER-NICHOLS, Philadelphia.—In the January issue for this year, page 11, is presented a floor plan of a house submitted by "A. J. E." of New Orleans, La. I wish to suggest an improvement on the one published and submit the inclosed. I think even a workingman would object to a house where the kitchen could only be reached through a chamber, or the bathroom through the kitchen.



Floor Plan of Workingman's House as Modified by Minerva Parker-Nichols.

The house was also, I think, lacking in closets. The arrangement which I show makes the chimney available for both chambers as well as the kitchen. I would also suggest roofing the front bay or porch under one ornamental gable, thus avoiding the cuts in the roof, which, I think, add more labor than beauty.

Shingling Hips without Weather Boards.

From W. B. W., St. Johns, N. F.—In answer to "A. W. P.," whose inquiry relative to shingling hips without using weather boards appeared in an issue of the paper for last year, I send the following, which represents the practice in this section. In Fig. 1 the hip shingle is shown with the grain

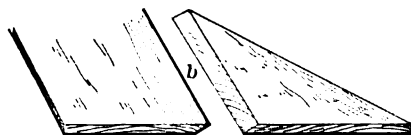


Fig. 1.—Hip Shingle, Showing Bevel.

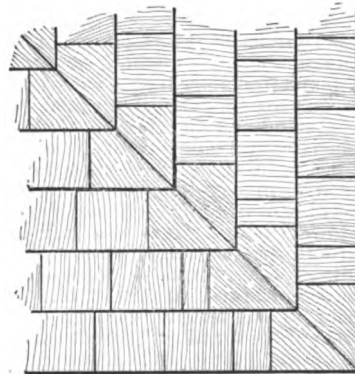


Fig. 2.—Appearance of Finished Roof.

Shingling Hips Without Weather Boards as Practiced in Newfoundland.

running parallel with the hip of the roof. It will be noticed that the shingle is cut on a bevel in such a way that the second one can be nailed down on it tightly as the work progresses. The letter *b* represents the upper side of the hip shingle, while the second one, or that at the left, is beveled on the underside to suit the hip shingle. Fig. 2 gives an idea of the appearance of the

single hip when it is finished. I never use tin shingles, nor place felt underneath. I do not remember of a job executed in this manner giving out, and I have been at the trade something like 11 years. Neither have I heard of a hip shingled in this manner proving at fault until the whole roof needed repairing. The saddle boards, as shown in the May issue of the paper, appear to me to be out of place. The clean roof looks best. I would like to hear from some of the other readers of the paper concerning the method of shingling here shown. Split cedar shingles will last about 30 years if properly put on.

Hardwood Finish.

From R. C. S., St. Louis, Mo.—Will some one give me information with regard to hardwood finish, especially how to finish oak in natural and antique?

Note.—In reply to our correspondent it may be stated that there are various methods of finishing oak in the manner indicated. According to one authority a very clever imitation of general antique may be obtained by staining the filler with equal parts of Vandyke brown and charcoal, using about one part of the colored to four parts of the light. Another method of giving oak an antique appearance is to make use of hardwood with as full and open grain as possible, in order to secure a fine effect. After this has been sandpapered a priming is prepared made of one part of japan, one part raw linseed oil and one part rubbing varnish. Drop into $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon of the liquid 1 pound of commercial corn starch and then add about $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of some good dry burnt Turkish umber. Apply to the job a good flowing coat of this priming. Let it stand until it is set and then take a broad putty knife and stick it into the grain, working the knife crosswise of it. Let it stand a little while and wipe with a rag, taking especial care to clean out all the corners and get the work into as good shape as possible as regards having the grain well filled. When perfectly dry give one coat of rubbing varnish pre-

the single exception of leaving out the burnt Turkish umber.

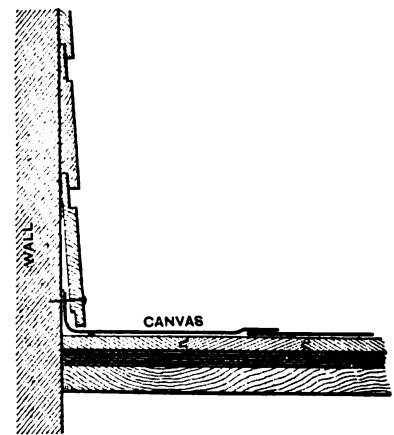
Another method of securing very pretty results in oak finish is to spread on the surface of the material a concentrated solution of permanganate of potash and permit it to remain until the desired shade is secured. A few experiments on a piece of wood will readily determine the proper proportions to be employed. When the shade wanted has been obtained, the wood is carefully washed with water, then dried, oiled and polished in the usual way.

Designs for Writing Desks and Secretaries.

From R.—Will some of the practical readers of the paper give me their ideas on writing desks and secretaries?

Leaky Porch Floors.

From W. S. G., Sanel, Cal.—I notice in a recent issue of the paper a letter



Sketch Showing Method of Treating Leaky Porch Floors Adopted by "W. S. G."

from "D.," Trenton, Tenn., asking for information about leaky porch floors. I will explain how I have successfully treated similar cases, and I suppose we have more wet weather to contend with in this part of the country than in any other. I take medium weight sail cloth, paint the under side of it, and raise the lower board on the wall next to the porch floor, as indicated in the sketch, which represents a section through the wall and porch floor. I turn the edge of the cloth up under the lower board, so that the water will not get in behind it. Then nail the board firmly to the wall. I next ascertain where the edge of that strip will be on the porch floor, and lay another strip down, tacking the first one over it, allowing 2 inches for the lap. The construction employed is shown in the sketch. A point which it is desirable to emphasize is that the lap should be well painted when the cloth is put down. After the work is well finished I take a sprinkler and dampen the cloth as nearly uniform as possible, so as to make all parts dry evenly. Just before it is thoroughly dry I give it a good coat of thin paint. The next coat of paint I thicken a little, while the third and last coat I make very thick. I have used this method both of the ways spoken of in the paper. I trust this will prove of some benefit to "D." in weighing it with other answers.

From E. A. V., Plainfield, N. J.—In answer to "D.," of Trenton, whose inquiry appeared in a recent issue of the