

DO-IT-YOURSELF



By J. RALPH DALZELL

More and more modern homemakers are overwhelmingly in favor of clear, natural finish for many pieces of their new furniture because the beautiful grain patterns and wide variety of subtle colorings in most woods provide decoration as nature meant it to be. Natural finish assures ease of maintenance and lasting protection, both of which delight homemakers. Unpainted furniture is relatively much less costly to buy, and the new natural finishes are inexpensive and easy to apply, without the necessity for tedious rubbing. As indicated by the picture, natural finish can be applied to unpainted furniture right in a living room and without mess or inconvenience.

New Problems Face Mother Of Today

NEW YORK (UPI) — The fact that she will live longer, and has completed her family earlier, has created a new problem for the modern mother.

That's according to "Work In The Lives of Married Women," just published by Columbia University Press.

Statistically, here are reasons behind the "new" problem:

—In 1900, the average American woman had a life expectancy of 64 years. Today, chances are that she still will be alive at 75.

—Fifty years ago, the average American mother had her last child at age 32. And the "baby" didn't marry and leave home until about 10 years before the mother could be expected to die.

—Today, a mother has completed her family at age 26, and this youngest child enters first grade when Mom is 32, leaving her comparatively free to do as she wishes.

It adds up to the modern mother's dilemma: How can she use the next four decades of her life so that they will be of greatest benefit to her family and to herself?

The problem was discussed during the National Manpower Council's study of "Womanpower" last year. It is further explored by some of the nation's leading authorities in this new book.

According to the book, there are many reasons why a mother whose children no longer require her full-time care may choose to work. Chief reason is her desire to help her husband provide a higher standard of living for the family.

According to Mrs. Katherine B. Oettinger, chief of the children's bureau of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, there should be no guilt complexes about mothers' working.

In the book she notes: "It is not the amount of time spent with the child, but what happens during that time that really matters, so far as parent-child relations are concerned."

To be entirely satisfactory, a natural finish should be composed of a foundation that fills and smooths all of the microscopic hills and valleys in the surface of wood, and two coats of a finish that is hard and tough enough to resist abrasion and wear, yet flexible enough to prevent cracking and chipping. It should be full-bodied to produce a beautiful finish that takes advantage of grain patterns and coloring in woods. For the foundation and finishing coats two new products are especially useful for amateurs, Pryme and Fabulox.

For soft and close-grained woods, the first step of a natural finish project, such as the table shown in the picture, consists of sandpapering all surfaces using either 3-0 aluminum oxide or garnet finishing paper. This process should be continued until the surface of the wood feels as smooth as satin. Use a dry cloth to remove all sanding dust.

The foundation coat is then applied. Use a two-inch brush and spread liberal amounts on all surfaces. Do not dilute or thin the foundation coat, and allow it to dry until hard and not tacky. Then sandpaper all surfaces using either one of the finishing papers mentioned. Continue the sanding until surfaces are again smooth. Wipe off all sanding dust.

Then apply a liberal coat of the finish. Do not dilute or thin it. Allow it to dry for at least eight hours. Very light sanding is now in order. The final step consists of applying the second coat. By this time, the piece of furniture will have an appearance to delight any homemaker. Allow to dry for at least 12 hours.

For open-grained hardwoods, the finishing procedure is the same except that two coats of the foundation should be used with a wood filler applied between coats. Apply filler as directed on its container. All natural finish products are available at paint and hardware stores.

As an added service to readers, you are invited to send specific inquiries about natural finish for unpainted furniture, for previously painted furniture, for new and previously painted floors, for new and previously painted cabinets, doors, desks, woodwork, shelves, bookcases, paneling and counter tops, along with suggestions for the care and cleaning of floors. Address the author at Suite 605, 10 De Sable Road, San Mateo, California.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q.—Can you give us an idea for color when we repaint our house? We live in the country.

A.—Among the color combinations that are pleasing is a yellow house with a bronze green roof. Plant a thick hedge of yellow flowering plants around your green lawn. Select hardy varieties which bloom all summer.

Q.—We have found that wood often splits near the edges when nailed. How can this be avoided?

A.—Either use hardwood plywood or drill small nail holes through the wood before driving the nail.

Q.—How can we clean our knot-pine paneling?

A.—Wash the surface with steel wool dipped in turpentine.

Wood Waste Disposal Plan Now Outlined

OREGON STATE COLLEGE — The smoke and cinder "fallout" nuisance that comes from sawmill wood waste burners can be materially reduced with improved burning operations but the ideal answer to the problem is utilization — not burning — of mill wood leftovers, a new Oregon State College research bulletin reports.

About 30 to 50 per cent of every log run through a sawmill is left over material—slabs, trim, bark, sawdust, edgings and shavings. Much of this is now going into the burners but in the future it should go into the profitable manufacture of wood products, the bulletin notes.

Sawmill owners pay for the entire tree and entire utilization should be the ultimate goal, according to the researchers.

The study of air pollution problems connected with wood waste burning and wood residue utiliza-

tion is being conducted by OSC engineering and forestry staff members under a U.S. public health service grant.

A report of work to date was published this month by the engineering experiment station and copies are now available from the college on request. Authors are R. W. Boubel, Martin Northcraft, and Milosh Popovich, engineering, and Antone Van Vliet, forestry.

Proper regulation of air intake is important in reducing objectionable smoke and cinder discharge from the tepee-type wood waste burners, field studies made in the Springfield - Eugene area show. Burners having excessive overfire air because of buckled plates, cracks, and oversized air openings had excessive smoke and cinder output. Tangential inlets of overfire air helped in promoting proper combustion and cutting fall-out of unburned materials.

Keeping grates free of ashes and clinkers, having a good fire started each morning before the mill begins operations, and keeping the burner in good repair are other smoke-cinder saver suggestions.

The OSC workers are currently running studies on burner size requirements for different size mill operations.

Elimination of burners through complete utilization of the logs will not come soon or easily but steady progress is being made in that direction, the OSC workers report in the bulletin.

Use of the wood residues varies from area to area depending on local uses and products and the market situation.

Sawdust, for example, finds use as fuel, as an agricultural mulch, for briquets, wood flour and sweeping compounds. Coarse residue is finding use as fuelwood, hog fuel, chips, lath, cut-stock, edge-glued stock, and charcoal. Technological advancements may bring new uses for all of the different leftovers, including use of bark in wax or cork or the use of sawdust in pulp, insulation, or ethyl alcohol production.

Various problems involved in utilization — economic considerations, transportation, etc.—are discussed in detail in the bulletin as a guide to mill owners in building improved utilization practices. The other section of the 96-page booklet deals with improved operation in the waste burners.

Stamp Draws High Praise

Secretary of Agriculture Benson had a compliment for another government department today. "The Post Office Department," he said, "is making a valuable contribu-

tion to the protection and wise use of America's woodlands by issuing a forest conservation stamp."

As announced recently by the Post Office Department, the new 4-cent stamp will be issued October 27, at Tucson, Arizona, on the 100th anniversary of the birthday of Theodore Roosevelt, one of the earliest forest conservationists in this country.

During Roosevelt's administration more than 148 million acres of public domain lands were put into the National Forest system now administered by the Department of Agriculture. He urged wise use of forest resources, the key note of present day conservation.

"This will be the first forest conservation stamp ever issued in the United States," Secretary Benson said. "It is a salute to public and private agencies working for forest conservation. I believe it will encourage them to increase their efforts. It will also remind people that they have a job to do on their forest land: Planting trees and managing their timber as a perpetual crop."

Tucson was chosen for the first day issue because the American Forestry Association, one of the leading agencies in forest conservation, will be meeting there at that time. This organization worked for "saving the forests" before the forest reserves were established, and continues to work for better forestry and forest fire protection, Secretary Benson said.

The attractive yellow, brown, and green stamp, 84 by 1.44 inches in size, will depict in a vertical design the major forest conservation features—wise use of timber, watershed protection, home and shelter for wildlife.

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