

# My Lady's Bower.

By ALMA.

## THE ARTISTIC WOMAN.

**W**HAT is it that makes women say of so many other women: "She is so artistic?" Analysed to the last, it amounts to this, that nowadays we have a craving for the new, even for the bizarre. Our grandmothers would stare with horror if they could see nothing "to match" anywhere. If we put our ornaments in pairs, we are without taste; nothing must stand straight against any wall or background; everything must be slightly askew. A drape flung carelessly here, a cushion tiredly reposing there, one-half of the area above the chimney-piece studded thickly with bric-a-brac, or heavily curtained, the other half otherwise covered—all this and so much more of the same description, and our callers admire, go away to imitate, and swell with elation when they are dubbed "artistic."

But consider a moment. Does art aim always at producing a kaleidoscope effect? Is it not rather that what is soothing, pleasing to the senses, that rests the eye rather than attracts the gaze of the curious, the harmonious whole, which should be the end of the woman who is tasteful? Good taste is not altogether imitation. There are women who from their childhood could tie a ribbon knot in a picturesque way, who can throw a drape in just the right folds, who invariably choose the right colour. But most of us can only strive to be faithful copyists. I do not despise the latter. By no means. All are not gifted, and it is only by copying that many learn.

But I have the greatest contempt for the woman who must bedeck her rooms or her person with an imitation that is a freak of the fashionable moment, and who is ready to alter that at the first sign of the next fad. It is this wholesale and unreasoning imitation, done simply because others do it, that make so many drawing-rooms such a curious admixture of the tawdry and grotesque, that transforms a graceful form into a mere fashion-plate. I saw the other day one of our sex wearing a rose pink felt hat, with a dress of a curious shade of greeny-blue. I suppose she was under the impression that rose-pink hats were the order of the day. The effect was—well—modern.

But you, who have no original ideas, you say, "Then what must we do?" Well, I should advise you to select for your rooms, as much as possible, one colouring. Do not choose that which strikes you as pretty; but that which, after you have seen it a dozen times, produces a pleasant sense of rest. Keep to this as much as possible. Of course, it may be brightened by small pieces of another colour; but here, again, only by that which harmonises pleasingly with it. I think none will regret using green of a rather dark shade. It wears well, every way; and can be easily matched. It is a good eye colour, will bear touching by your men folk, and will be found useful all round.

In your personal adornment, you will find the same idea pay. That is, if you cannot often have new frocks and hats, choose for your