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BONDS**

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... A PROFITABLE OFF-SEASON BUSINESS

WHEN wintry weather calls a halt to regular outside painting operations, many a painter will be able to catch up on the interior work for which his customers have been pressing him for many months. Other contractors, not so situated, once again face the annual problem of what to do with their skill and time during a slack period which may last for many weeks. These painters might well consider the possibilities offered by furniture refinishing, especially in those cases where the paint shop is adaptable to this type of work.

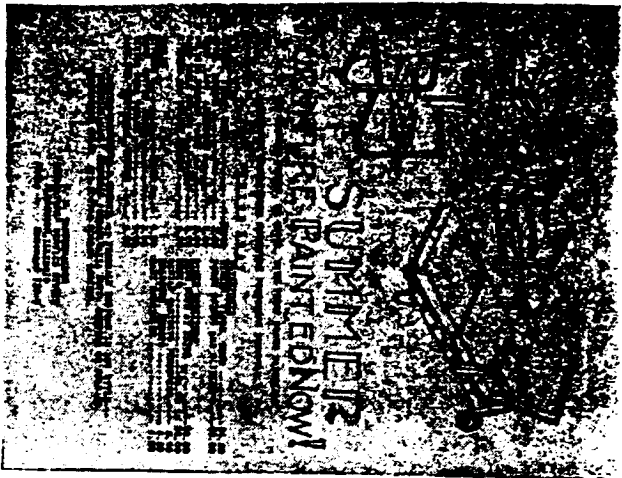
The market for furniture refinishing is practically unlimited for those who sense its possibilities. Homes are everywhere, and all homes have furniture. Much of this furniture has now been in use for a considerable time and is somewhat worse for wear. Furniture that has been moved from apartment to apartment a few times may get a bit scuffed and need fixing up. Changing decorative plans in interiors often calls for new colors and finishes on furniture. Certain changes in color may be needed to unify groups of odd pieces to form a harmonious ensemble.

In addition to this indoor furniture market, there is the field of lawn, terrace, porch and garden furniture of wood, wicker, reed, fibre and metal to consider. This type of furniture needs sprucing up with paint and new color every winter or spring, broken back into its usual service.

A valuable by-product of furniture finishing business is that it affords the painter to on other work—doing some less extensive interior or exterior work. Contracts on small jobs frequently lead to bigger things painter's skill and reliability listed with the home owner.

The man who goes into furniture finishing as a slack season figuring on doing a few extra jobs and the like for a limited number of customers, may well find him for doing volume work in particular if he can fix up and handle the furniture efficiently.

Among the logical prospective refinishing may be listed churches, hotels, golf clubs and Y's, tables, chairs and numerous of furniture in these building poor shape because of neglect and use. Some institutions own maintenance men do the refinishing. But when this is available the management should come a call from the painter. Some selling effort is necessary beginning in order to have a while volume of refinishing work that the people for whom fixed furniture tell others and



This mimeographed circular, about letterhead size, was mailed by a mid-western contractor to a list of furniture refinishing prospects. It brought in considerable business.

you up. If it is possible to do so, it is a good idea to send out a price list to prospects. Making up such a list calls for careful thought, however. One definite limitation to the price for refinishing a piece of furniture is the cost of replacing it with a new piece. Right now, and probably for some time to come, replacement cost is not so much a factor because of the scarcity of many kinds of new furniture. Even so, the regular replacement price of any item should be known and considered when making up a refinishing price list.

The labor and material costs involved in refinishing most chairs of different types are much alike, and the same is true of tables and other standard pieces. The condition and preparation of old surfaces, the necessary repairs such as gluing of joints, and the number of

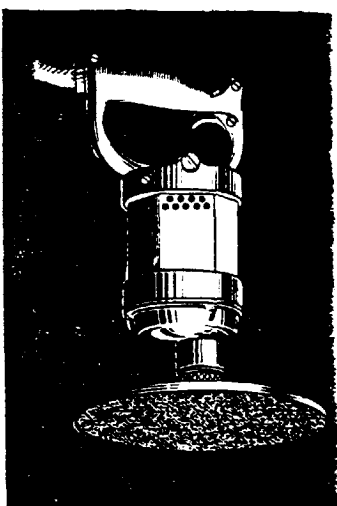
coats required for finishing, all bear on the cost. On some items the costs for preparing, repairing and finishing would be obviously higher than the cost of buying a new piece. In such cases you would not accept the job and would tell the customer why.

A shop set up for the refinishing of furniture must be warm, dry, clean, well-lighted and well-equipped in order to do the work promptly and efficiently. The arrangement will have to conform to the size and shape of the room available, of course, but the essentials are shown in the shop plan on page 82.

Generally it is wise to divide one large room into three sections. One would be used for repairs such as gluing, smoothing, stripping off old finishes, and cleaning. This section should have a tool bench, shelves and cupboards for tools and materials, and by all means, a low bench on which to stand the chair, table or other piece being worked on. A low bench of this type will save energy and avoid a lame back.

The middle division is for painting, varnishing and staining. While it may be a bit smaller than the other two, it should be lighter, preferably with a skylight or electric lights of sufficient brightness. A low turn-table on which to place the piece being finished is necessary, as is also a paint mixing bench with scales, tools, shelves and drawers for colors, liquids and other materials. This room must be well ventilated and an exhaust fan is highly desirable.

The third compartment in the ideal layout is the drying section. It should be as large as possible. It should have heating devices that can warm the room to at least eighty degrees and, like the painting room, this one too should have good ventilating facilities. Paints, varnishes and enamels dry by oxidation, as you know. When the air in the room becomes saturated with the fumes of drying coatings, the drying action is slowed down until the old air is forced out and a fresh supply with more oxy-



A disc sander, or spinner, is a handy tool to have around the refinishing shop.

gen is admitted. Thus, a fan in the ventilator helps speed up the drying. Dust must be kept out, of course, so baffles or screens should be placed over the openings where air comes in.

A word about repairs. It is generally wise to agree to make minor repairs on furniture, such as gluing loose joints, tacking down loose strands of fabric or cane on wicker chairs, adding new knobs, recovering seats with artificial leather, etc. Of course, such repairs add to your costs and must be figured in your price, as would extra decorative touches such as stenciling and the application of decalcomania designs.

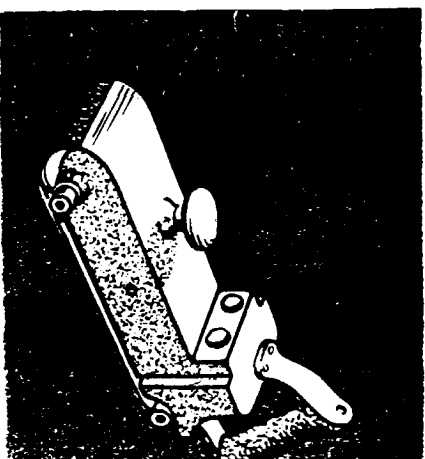
Taking up refinishing operations, preparation of surfaces naturally comes first. It rarely is necessary to remove all the old coating right down to the wood except on table tops. Furniture having a "natural" finish or a stain or varnish coating usually presents a sound surface to paint over, after careful sanding to remove gloss and surface scratches. Deep scratches or dents and old finishes that are badly chipped or cracked need more drastic treatment, of course. In these cases the surface should be stripped down to the stain at least. The point to keep in mind is that all the old material need not be removed except where it is in bad shape. Simply sanding and putty-filling may level the surface sufficiently for painting.

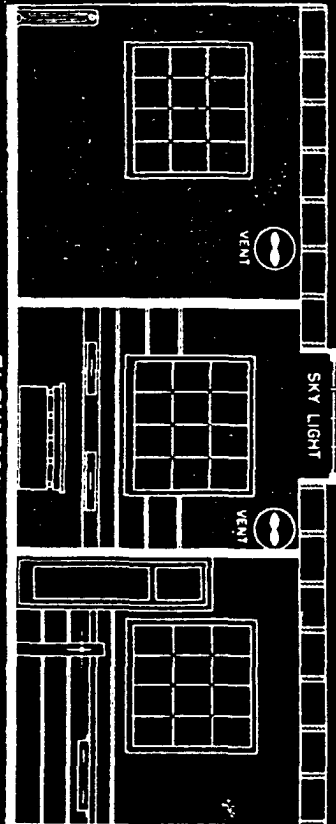
Old painted or enameled surfaces that exhibit scaling should be stripped down to the bare wood to insure having a sound foundation for the new finish. One absolutely necessary first step on all furniture that is to be refinished is to wash it well with naphtha, benzene or white gasoline (being careful of fire) to remove all trace of wax. Furniture polishes usually leave a wax coating on which new coats of paint or varnish will not dry properly.

Removal of old paint, enamel or varnish may be accomplished in several ways. Often the quickest way to get a proper refinishing surface on table tops is to employ a power driven belt sander. A disc sander, also called a spinner, is as effective as the belt sander but the circular plate sands across as well as with the grain, thus scratches that are left by the disc must be removed by working with the belt machine or by hand, when the new finish is to be varnished natural wood or a color stain. These scratches are of no concern when the finish is to be paint or enamel.

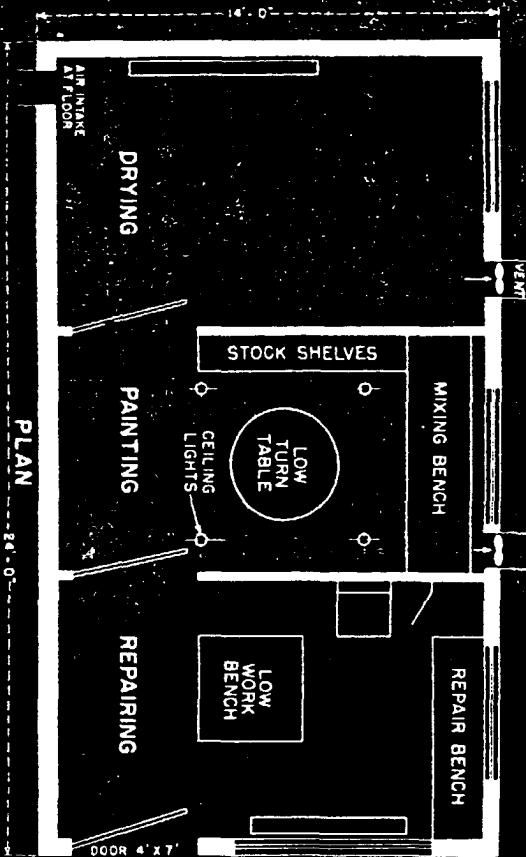
Stripping off the old finish with a liquid or paste remover is satisfactory too, but takes longer than with a sanding machine. If a wet remover is used, however, the resulting sludge should not be removed with a scraper. It is better to take a wad of Number 3 steel

Furniture refinishers find this portable belt sander useful in removing old finishes.





ELEVATION



wool, dip it into a very strong Gold-Dust-hot water solution and scrub off the sludge with that. Water should not be used on veneer surfaces, however, as it may soften the glue used for bonding. With the furniture cleaned, sanded

and otherwise properly prepared, the actual refinishing can be done. For a paint finish on wood from which the old finish has been removed, start with a rather thin priming coat made by re-

duce Dutch Boy Soft Paste White

heating, and filled with two or three hundred gallons of hot lye solution (a pound of lye to the gallon of water), for quick and efficient removal of old finishes. Old coatings come off in an hour or so after immersion in the tank. The furniture then is thoroughly rinsed, allowed to dry and then refinished.

Lead with turpentine. Allow this coat to dry hard, then apply a coat of good quality hard-drying prepared enamel. Frequently the furniture must be given only two coats to come within the price limit. For the finest type of work, however, the refinishing would consist of a white lead priming coat as noted, a body coat of enamel undercoater and a finish coat of enamel.

A metal furniture usually has not had a rust-proofing primer applied to it by the maker, so refinishing jobs on metal pieces usually call for the removal of rust as well as the old paint coating. When the metal has been made clean and bright, apply a priming coat of Dutch Boy Semi Quick Drying Red Lead and follow with the other paint or enamel coats suggested for wood.

If the furniture is to be given a varnish finish, once the old coating has been removed, apply a first coat of stain and follow with two coats of varnish, with proper drying intervals between coats. Sometimes a coat of clear varnish followed by a coat of clear varnish gives the finish desired. It is always a good plan to give a varnished surface, and some painted or enameled surfaces, a coat of auto body wax to protect it.

If the refinishing of school desks, hotel furniture, and the like is done on a real volume basis, special apparatus such as large wood or metal tanks can be rigged up, with a steam coil for

A cardinal principle in any and all furniture refinishing is to produce a smooth, tough, hard finish. Smooth, so the finish will look well; tough, so it will not chip, crack or wear easily; hard, so that the piece can be set upon, if a chair or bench, without danger of stickiness or of paint coming off on clothing.

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For every mile he drives this truck, Jacob Berger, Oliphant, Pa., painting contractor, gets a lot of publicity for his business. His favorite brand of paint is Dutch Boy, and it is bound to be seen by many people. Mr. Berger makes the most of this excellent advertising opportunity by keeping his truck well painted and plainly identified.

