

## BRUNO TZSCHUCK WHO WON DISTINCTION IN TWO WORLDS

How a Young Officer in the Royal Prussian Army Gave Up His Brilliant Career and His Title of Distinction to Become a Builder of Empire in Western Wilderness of New World

**A** CASTLE in Germany was the boyhood home of a pioneer of Nebraska and Omaha—General Bruno Tzschuck. On a high hill overlooking the town of Alsleben in the province of Saxony, Prussia, stands an ancient castle. It has stood there through the centuries. From that hill it has looked down on many a bloody battle; it has seen the coming and going of generations. Through the varying fortunes of families, parties, peoples, it has stood there where the sturdy, semi-barbarous Frank erected it back in the days of the dark ages when feudalism still existed and when men had to protect themselves by stone walls and deep moats from their fellow men. The castle is said to have been built in the eighth century, when Charlemagne the Great ruled the empire. Twenty-five feet thick are the foundations and upon them rise walls scarcely less thick at the strategic points where an enemy might use battering rams. The walls rise to a great height and are topped with battlements, where, in ancient times, warriors stood and hurled rocks and shot arrows at would-be invaders.

In this historic castle lived at the beginning of the nineteenth century Ferdinand von Tzschuck, chief of internal revenue for Prussia, with his wife, Wilhelmina (Wiermann) von Tzschuck. They had several daughters and a son. The latter, born February 17, 1827, was destined to act in the western part of America the part his sturdy ancestors acted in Germany several centuries ago. The family of von Tzschuck was honored and looked up to in that part of the empire. The father's position under the government brought him a good income and the children had leisure to pursue their education in the best manner. When the boy arrived at school age, he with his sisters was put into the charge of private tutors, where he underwent the strenuous course of schooling which is characteristic of Germany today. At the age of 13 years he was prepared to enter the celebrated Luther college, a royal institution, at Alsleben, where he studied several more years.

### Educated for Army Career

His education was for the army from the first, his father being ambitious to see him wearing the splendid uniform and glittering emblems of the German legions. Accordingly, he volunteered in the Prussian army at the age of 18, and was immediately commissioned lieutenant. There he was associated with many members of the nobility and of royalty, his brother officers. Among these was a handsome young fellow in whose presence all other officers took second place, no matter what their rank or age. This was the crown prince, destined to become the emperor of Germany. To him von Tzschuck often spoke as an officer and they sat at the same mess table sometimes. The young man might have spent all his life as a part of that great machine, the German army. But the blood of generations of warlike Franks and Saxons who built forts and castles in the dark centuries of the past and made war upon their brothers stirred his blood and gave him no peace. Trouble was brewing between Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein, giving bright promise of active service. He obtained leave of absence from the Prussian army and betook himself to Schleswig-Holstein, where he enlisted to fight against the Danes.

At the battle of Idstedt, July 24 and 25, 1850, he was in the very front of the fight most of the time. His experience there was particularly trying. He had been officer of the day just before the battle and had had nothing to eat. When the fighting began he was compelled to go forward at once. All that day he fought with nothing to eat and only some stagnant water to drink. The armies slept on the battle field, and the fighting began again at 3 o'clock in the morning. Von Tzschuck was in command of a company of about 400 men. In the afternoon he was struck by one of the big two-ounce bullets used then, but was saved from death by his belt buckle. The bullet struck the buckle and glanced, grazing the skin and flying off through the side of his coat. The force of the blow, however, knocked him into a gully, where he lay stunned. He regained consciousness and retreated with his company, guarding the rear. When the battle was over he was nearly famished, but the doctor found him suffering with a fever, the result of exposure and the stunning blow received from the bullet. The physician ordered him not to eat anything and all the young officer's protestations regarding his three days' fast availed him not. Thus were tragedy and comedy mixed in the battle of Idstedt.

### Adventure and Marriage

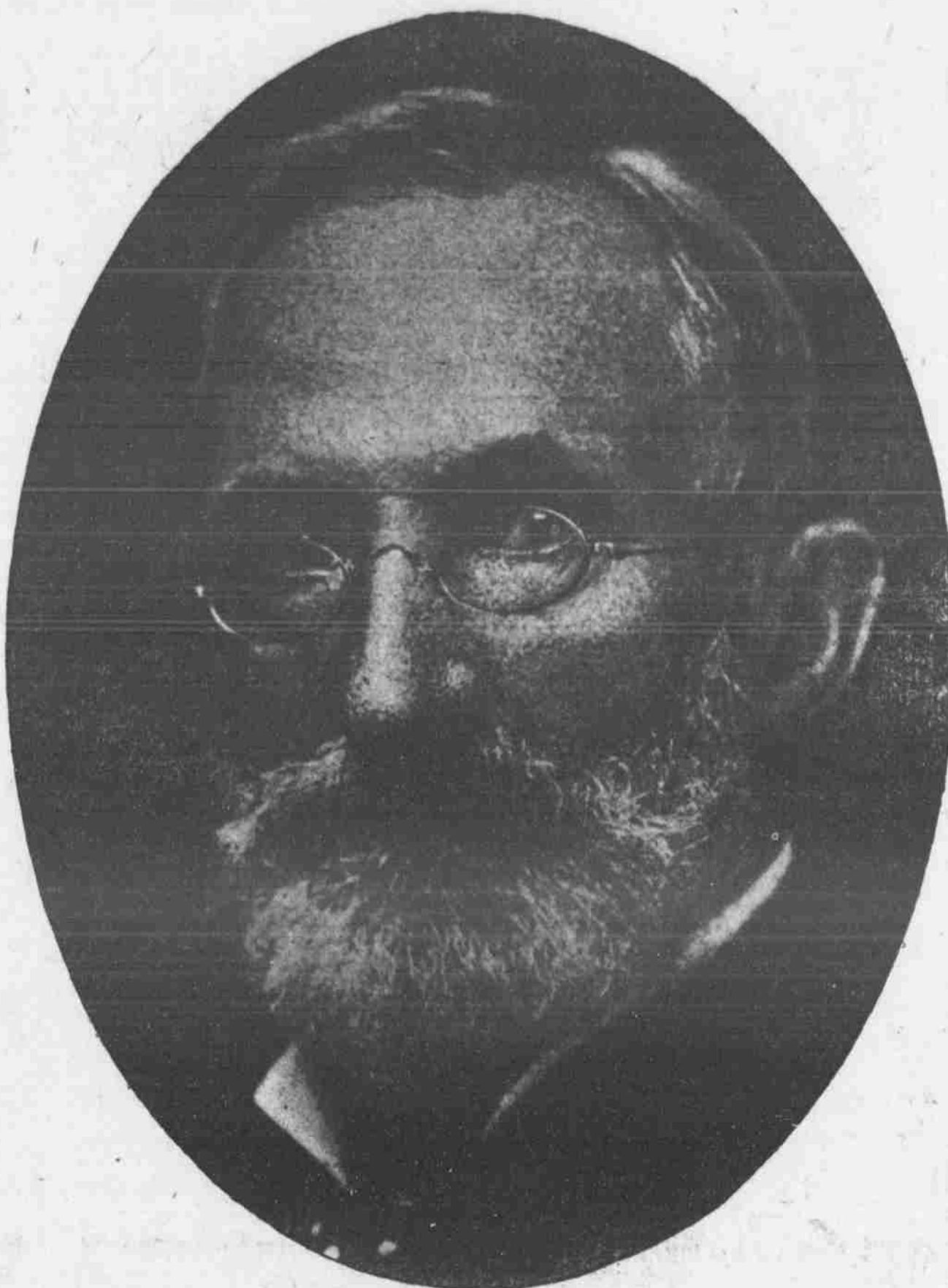
At the battle of Missunda he was wounded in the left shoulder and lay in the hospital from the date of that battle, September 12, until Christmas. He had many adventures in the course of the war and remained with the troops until, in 1851 Austria and Germany stepped in and made peace between the two little countries. But young bloods with fever of battle in their veins were not pleased at the peaceful outlook in the Fatherland. He and three brother officers quickly made up their minds to sail across the Atlantic and see what chance they might run upon in the great unexplored continent to the west. Captain von Tzschuck's comrades in the venture were Count Harpersberg, descendant of the famous house; Captain von Gablin and Lieutenant Schimonaky. They left Bremen early in March, 1851, on a sailing vessel, and after a stormy passage, lasting six weeks, arrived in New York and left immediately for Chicago. In Chicago they bought two horses and a wagon and set out over the trackless prairie for the far west. They were in search of the wilderness, they intended to find it and they did find it.

In Davenport, then a very small settlement, they decided to stop for a time. There they separated for the four points of the compass and there the one of the quartet with whom this story has to do met his life companion. She was Miss Maria Schmidt of Davenport. They were married September 6, 1852, and started immediately in a wagon for the still farther west. They found the Eden which the young Prussian officer had dreamed of. They found it in sight of Nebraska and only a few miles from Omaha. Here they have lived and live today when a busy city occupies the place which they once saw as a wilderness. "Uncle Billy" Snowden, Omaha's first permanent white settler, was still lingering in the east when the young couple made that unique wedding journey across the plains of Iowa. The country had been seen by but few whites aside from the early Spanish, French and Jesuit adventurers.

One day, after two weeks of travel from Davenport, they came upon a deserted log house standing in the midst of such a wealth of verdure and beauty of landscape as they had never seen before. The birds were making merry in the woods, the sun was shining, and a short distance could be seen the gleam of the lovely Missouri as it took its way through this beautiful country to the sea. And the young couple decided to make this their home. God seemed to have prepared even a house for them and this was a good sign. The house was in an unfinished state, but the young man with his ax and other tools soon had it enclosed and their very scant furniture was installed. The husband hunted and fished. They planted a garden and the first settlement was started. This house stood on the Iowa side of the river, opposite Bellevue.

### Takes Up Real Life

Here the independent young man who had exchanged the glittering epaulets and resplendent uniform of a German officer for the rough clothes of a pioneer also dropped that part of his name which, in Germany, meant so much, and became plain Bruno Tzschuck. A mill was being built by Wilson & Williams a short distance from the place where the couple had settled and there the young man found his first work. It was the construction



BRUNO TZSCHUCK.

of the mill race. A great deal of digging had to be done through the frozen ground and there young Tzschuck earned his first money. His wages were "five bits," about 62 cents a day, and no attention was paid to union hours either. Years later when Mr. Tzschuck had become secretary of state of Nebraska, Mr. Wilson, upon whom fortune had also smiled, called one day and the two had a good laugh over the struggles of those early days.

In that same year he met that earliest pioneer of Nebraska, Peter A. Sarpy. He had gone to one of the stores conducted by Sarpy on the Iowa side and there met him.

"He was a little man with a beard, curly dark hair and digni-

fied and commanding manner," says Mr. Tzschuck. "He wore a blue army overcoat and a soft hat when I first saw him there in the big log house, which was both his store and home. He lived upstairs with his Indian wife. He had no children. We became friends immediately. Both of us had been fairly educated and we recognized in each other kindred spirits, I think."

In the fall of that year Mr. Tzschuck accepted a position from Sarpy, moved to his store and took charge of his books. In the spring of 1853 the store was moved to St. Mary, a short distance below Bellevue on the Iowa side. The store was a busy place in those days. It was the gathering point for the men who had taken

the hides of animals from all over the northwest and it was the Wall street, so to speak, of that vast territory. Down the Missouri river the Mackinaw boats would come in the spring and the men who had spent the year out in the wilds would bargain with the great Frenchman for the stocks of hides. Often there were piled in Sarpy's warehouses 5,000 to 7,000 bales of buffalo hides, and each hide was worth from \$5 to \$10. Every spring Sarpy would go to St. Louis and purchase his stock of goods, which was shipped up the river by steamer, the same steamer taking the hides back. Mr. Tzschuck remembers Sarpy with a feeling of real affection.

### Sarpy's Vision of Future

"He was a great man," he says. "He saw the future of this western country with the vividness of a picture. He could describe it in grand language, too. I know he wore a diamond which he said he received from his mother in the following manner: He was on a trip to St. Louis one spring, when his brother told him that the cemetery where his mother was buried would have to be vacated to make room for the growing city. They went out and dug up the decayed coffin and, looking into it, Sarpy saw something gleaming there. It was a diamond which his mother had worn. He reached in and took it out and wore it.

His eyes used to fill with tears as he told me this and then he would go on and picture the future, when he should be buried with the diamond and sometime the people would dig up his body and remove it to another place and make room for civilization to spread its buildings and institutions. And he pictured to himself vividly how someone else would reach in and from his crumbling dust take the diamond and wear it until the wearer, too, should be laid away and dug up and removed and the diamond should go on and on to other hands, while the great civilization spread and cities and towns sprang up upon the broad plains. This was a gentle and poetic side of Sarpy that few people saw and few today know about."

Courage and craftiness were also part of Sarpy's nature as Mr. Tzschuck shows by this story:

"The Sioux came down and drove the Omahas to a refuge among the willows along the river bank in the winter of 1853-54. Word came to Sarpy that there was danger that the trading post which he conducted on the Nebraska side would be attacked. He determined to go over and protect it. He knew no fear. Well, I said I wouldn't let him go alone and I went with him. It was night when we got to the other side and left our boat. We had to go through the underbrush by a path quite a distance and we didn't know where the Indians might jump on us. Old man Sarpy ran ahead quite a way and would keep talking to me in English, raising his voice high. I couldn't understand this action. I thought he must be crazy. But I found later that he did this to let the Indians know that we were white men. They did not attack us. The next morning we found two Sioux braves who had been scalped during the night."

### Some Frontier Experience

Narrow escapes were the rule rather than the exception in those days, and young Tzschuck had his share of them. Once he was nearly burned up in a prairie fire. It was in 1855. He had led a party from Bellevue to the Elkhorn river, A. D. Jones leading another party at the same time from Council Bluffs, the object being to see which was the best route. Mr. Tzschuck arrived with his party on the steep bluffs overlooking the Elkhorn late one afternoon. He and some others started along the bluff to find the best place of descent, and while the others were thus occupied darkness descended and they were unable to find their way back. They accordingly lay down wrapped in their blankets and slept. Mr. Tzschuck was awakened by something cold in his face. It might have been the muzzle of some animal. He was wide awake in an instant, looked about and was dropping asleep again when he felt a hot breath of something sweeping from windward. At the same moment he saw a red glow and was horrified to see a prairie fire sweeping down upon them and less than a mile off. With a shout he aroused his companions and at the same time lighted the grass around them in several places. It burned rapidly, but the great fire was approaching more swiftly. It was a race that involved their lives. The breath of the approaching fire grew almost unbearable as they secured the horses, blindfolded them and got into the space which Mr. Tzschuck had burned off. There they crouched close to the ground, while the flames swept roaring over them. What it was that awakened him Mr. Tzschuck does not know.

Late in 1855, the territory of Nebraska being open for settlement, Mr. Tzschuck left the employ of Sarpy and took up a farm on the Nebraska side of the river. There he lived for twenty-five years, made many improvements and had it in the highest state of cultivation when, in 1880, the Missouri river took a fancy to it for a river bed and in a short time had swept it away. Mr. Tzschuck then moved to Omaha, where he has resided ever since.

He made frequent trips to Omaha when it was first settled. On one of these trips—in 1856—he took out his papers of citizenship. Judge Fenner Ferguson represented the United States here then. To him Mr. Tzschuck went. He opened his court room, purposely for this sudden rush of business. The papers were duly made out, signed, witnessed and sealed. Mr. Tzschuck was the first man to receive his citizen's papers in an Omaha court.

When the civil war broke out Mr. Tzschuck offered his services and was appointed captain of engineers on the staff of General Fremont. He was stationed in St. Louis for a year after his appointment, serving also on the staff of General Halleck. At the end of that time, congress having failed to make any provision for the payment of engineers in the army, he resigned and returned to his farm.

### Activity in Politics

He has always been active in politics and a power thereof. He was elected to the legislature in 1873 as a representative at large, his district covering more than half of the state. His opponent at that time was Experience Estabrook. In 1875 he was elected secretary of state, which office he held two terms and filled with ability and judgment. While secretary of state he also became adjutant general. He was acting governor during a considerable part of his term as secretary of state owing to the absence or illness of Governor Garber. There was no lieutenant governor at that time.

General Tzschuck was supervisor of the national census in Nebraska in 1880. He was appointed United States consul to Vera Cruz, Mexico, in 1882, by President Garfield. The appointment was made just before the president's assassination and was ratified by President Arthur. He was elected state senator from Douglas county in 1886.

Four of the children of General and Mrs. Tzschuck are living and all reside in Omaha. They are George B. Tzschuck, treasurer of The Bee Publishing company; Mrs. A. L. Meyer, Miss Agnes Tzschuck and Mrs. C. H. Gerber.

General Tzschuck still receives a pension from the German government in recognition of his services back in the '40s. He belongs to an association of officers who took part in that war. Out of 1,700 only twenty-two were still living in January, 1906. General Tzschuck is still in excellent mental health, though his physical being is sometimes racked by the pains of gout and rheumatism. He sees and hears as well as any young man and his memory of events, dates and names is truly remarkable. At their home, 119 South Twenty-fifth street, he and Mrs. Tzschuck celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1902.

## Novelties in Season's Wall Paper

**A** FAMOUS woman mathematician once said that her first interest in the study of mathematics was aroused by the geometrical figures on the wall paper of her room when she was a child and that to that papering she attributed her following of the science. Not many of us can attribute an interest in anything so worth while as mathematics to the influence of our wall papering, but we can at least trace nightmares and shudders to the awful scrolls and monotonous figures that used to climb over the walls of the rooms in which we had our being as children. Some of those paperings we used to have to live with day after day and stare at drearily through spells of mumps and fever were a weariness and affliction to the eye. Now we are beginning to know better and to use more discriminating taste in choosing our wall paper.

The child's nursery of today has papering in soft, harmonious tones with borders of Mother Goose pictures or fascinating friezes that tell stories. We no longer choose our wall papering from a sample book of fifty or a hundred bits of garish, heavy patterns that the paint dealer keeps on hand. There has been a revolution in the wall paper business. Men of artistic training and good taste and judgment have gone into the trade and they have introduced the best things from abroad, reviving fashions of decoration centuries old, introducing softer tones, fewer, better colors, monotonous, and reproducing in paper, frescoes, tapestries and paintings from the palaces and great houses of Europe.

Every distributor now has at hand samples of a wide stock he can order immediately from the large central distributing houses. We have borrowed the best things that other countries had to offer in the way of ideas and have originated some of our own that compare creditably with those imported from Europe.

About two years ago a young dealer with ideas of his own evolved the plan of cutting out borders from flowered or figured paper and applying them on solid or monotonous paperings. The other dealers stood by and laughed at the experiment, considering it

radical and impractical, but it caught the popular favor and now the style is in great vogue and popularity. The original plan has been varied and changed in different ways and some beautiful effects have been achieved.

The new thing this year is to cut out the design, both top and bottom, which gives more the effect of a fresco. In the earlier patterns the design was cut out only around the bottom, so that the appearance was much more like wall paper than painting, as the newer treatment suggests. One of the best designs in this style of paper that is shown is a paper in dull red with monotone figures and a Navajo border representing an Indian shawl, festooned at intervals and caught with shields, spears and feathers. At the bottom is also a small border introducing the same colors as the top border. This is one of the new ideas in papers, to use a border at the bottom as well as at the top, giving a better finish to the room. Where there are flower borders at the top the effect is that of a few scattered flowers having fallen from the garlands above.

There has just been imported from France special designs in sections, representing baskets and delicate festoons of flowers in an embossed papier mache effect that is to be applied to any kind of solid wall. The colors are very delicate and soft and suggestive of French taste.

An exquisite paper designed especially for a boudoir is in pale blue satin strip and has about the top a border of flying cupids and garlands of pink rosebuds that has the perfection of a painting. It is only this year that machines have been devised that could reproduce figures. Until now the machines were not steady enough to print the figure perfectly and a strange looking effect was obtained, but with the new process the figure is reproduced with all the exactness of a painting.

The kindergarten idea has entered largely into the nursery paperings and the most delightful effects have been produced. Chickens and birds and dogs and all kinds of animals and figures are cut out and applied at intervals to the walls, usually so as

to tell a story and appeal to the imagination of the child. The dog is represented chasing the cat from the bird it is about to swoop down upon, or a hen is pictured saving her little chicks from a rabbit. Sometimes the story is told only once or is repeated so seldom as not to become monotonous.

There are all kinds of good borders in poster effect, the goodnight border showing a procession of small girls and boys in their nightgowns bearing their candles on the way to bed; the playtime border, showing children in various attitudes of play.

The factories and designers have managed these borders so that the same idea is not repeated at the monotonously short interval that it used to be in all wall papers. Frequently there is an interval of eighteen or twenty feet before the same figure is repeated and often in a whole room there is not repeated at the monotonously short interval of good designs.

The hunting scene borders have had a great vogue, especially for country clubs and hunting lodges. There is a marine border that is one of the best of the newer border designs, showing a sweep of the sea, the rocky shore and a few ships, the effect being that of a tapestry or fresco.

One of the most attractive things in the new designs that an exclusive dealer in wall papers is showing is a metallic-looking embossed Viking border in bronze and bronzes, a copy of an old English tapestry. This design is only for those who can indulge their taste in decorative art, for the price is \$10 a yard. It has been chosen for entrance halls and libraries of several country homes.

A border papering designed especially for the young boy's room, the boy whose love of Indians and prairie life is at its height, is a Remington frieze representing an Indian fight, with all the life, action and good color of the Remington pictures reproduced in the frieze of paper. The border is meant for a room with walls in burlap or burlap effect and the side walls are separated from the border by a black tape studded with brass tacks.

The Tekko paper, a lustrous paper that (Continued on Page Four.)