

"He cannot possibly be left," said the medical man. "Is there no one, Mr. Field, who can undertake to see after him?"

"No one that I know of, sir," Field made answer. "We are his nearest neighbours—we and that drunken old Barmby and his cripple wife."

"No relation that could be sent for?"
 "No," rejoined the other. "His son, the only relation we ever heard of, is away soldiering; he has heard nothing of him this twelvemonth past, and it's my belief that anxiety is at the bottom of this illness."

The doctor shook his head.
 "It will never do for him to be left alone," he said; "and though it is dangerous to remove him in his present state, better to have him up to the infirmary—"

"Oh! father!" interrupted Susan. "Never! You surely would not let him be taken there?"

"Why not?" demanded Field, angrily. "There are plenty as good as he—"

"Oh! it is not that," cried Susan, scarcely holding back her tears; "but, indeed, oh! if it were you, father!—and he should not be moved, doctor says."

"Decidedly not, if it can be helped," said the doctor.

"Then surely I might—oh, father, don't forbid me now; indeed I can, and not neglect home neither."

"Thank you, my good girl," said the doctor, hastily putting in a word, as he laid his hand on Field's shoulder. "Forbid! of course you won't forbid; and with such a nurse it will go hard but we'll save the old gentleman yet."

John Field grumbled to himself, but he felt there was nothing for it but to submit.

Susan acquitted herself marvellously well of her various duties. She managed always to run in home at the hour when her father required his meals, and, in point of fact, nothing needful was forgotten; but her cross-grained parent never failed to impress upon her the fact that he suffered.

"A bright idea, certainly," he would say; "that I am to make shift, and do without this and that, all for an old fellow who thinks himself so much better than us all, and turned up his nose at such a girl as my Susan—a lady born she might be, too, for that matter."

(To be continued.)

USES FOR SHELLS AND SEA-WEEDS.



HERE seems to be an instinct innate in every mind which prompts one to pick up shells when staying at the sea-side. While taking a walk upon the sands, if we see a pretty shell, an impulse bids us procure it, though we have to jump over or wade through a pool for it, and

we know it will be of no use whatever when we have it.

Usually we are tired of carrying our treasures trove, all wet and sandy as they are, before the walk is over, and we throw them back on the sands again with something of relief to be rid of them. Should we manage to convey them in safety to our lodgings, they are laid aside and forgotten till an unpleasant, fishy odour reminds us of their existence, and they are cast away with disgust.

Now, this is a great pity, as even supposing one is not ambitious enough to attempt a collection properly arranged and named, still the most unlearned can make very pretty objects with shells and seaweeds. Collecting shells is a delightful occupation when there is some definite end in view, and the hope of securing fresh varieties adds a new zest to otherwise aimless walks.

A sufficient variety for our purpose can usually be found along the edge of the tide with no other equipment than a basket or one of the little wooden pails without which no child is content. The advantage of a basket is that it saves the trouble of washing the shells separately, a tedious operation in a large collection. By occasionally dipping the basket in the water, the mud and sand will wash through and leave the shells clean. If this be done, however, a small box should be carried, in which to keep any small specimens that might slip through the basket during the washing process.

One needs to be a little more adventurous in collecting sea-weeds. The delicate kinds can only be found in perfection by following the retreating tide step by step. When it is at its lowest ebb, particularly after a storm, you will find a rich harvest of sea-weeds and corallines, chief among the former on our English coasts being the beautiful red rhodospirans.

Most of the red and some of the green sea-weeds lose their bright colour very soon if exposed to the sun and air, changing to a dirty-white hue. It is necessary, therefore, to collect them as soon as possible after they are deposited by the tide. The bright-coloured lichen-like sponges, so tempting to the inexperienced, which are to be found in the pools at low water, are quite useless for ornamental purposes, as they lose their colour directly.

The different sorts of coralline, common on all our coasts, are very suitable for decoration; one of the most abundantly met with is the sea-hair coralline, so called from its form of growth, in tufts like bunches of hair. Another common one is the sickle coralline; both of these, with any other variety, and all the stiff, bushy sea-weeds that can be found, will be very useful.

It may be interesting to mention here that

these corallines, popularly called, and formerly supposed to be sea-weeds, are in reality not so. Each delicate hair-like branch is composed of a series of cells, and each of these is occupied by a tiny living creature, which may be easily seen under a microscope of moderate power. The little inhabitants are generally already dead when the coralline is found on the shore, and from its structure it soon dries and is more lasting in colour and form than most of the sea-weeds.

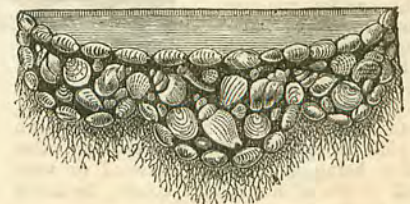
The true sea-weeds will, some of them, require pressing in the same manner as ferns and flowers previously described, otherwise they cockle up and lose all their beauty when dry. Any which appear quite limp when taken from the water should be so treated, but before pressing, they must be "floated out," as the process is called. It is done in the following way:—First wash them in clean water, then take each piece separately, and lay it on a plate of clean fresh water, when it will spread out and expand as in its natural state. Take a piece of stout white paper, slip it underneath the sea-weed in the water and gradually withdraw it, arranging the little branches meanwhile with a camel's hair brush, if the movement through the water displaces them at all. They must be put in press between blotting paper, and in a few days will be found dry and adhering to the paper.

On some parts of our coasts nothing but the commonest and plainest kinds of shells are to be found. These should not be neglected, however, as they may be made quite beautiful by rubbing with emery and water. After several applications of this they are finished off with rotten-stone and oil, applied with chamois leather. The process will generally produce a fine polish; but the natural state of the shell, if the pretty ones can be found, is decidedly preferable to any effect obtained by artificial means.

Another way of beautifying shells, such as mussels, some sorts of top-shells and others, is to put them into a cup of vinegar and water, which in the course of a few days will eat off the rough, dingy exterior, and disclose a surface of mother-o'-pearl. They must not be left in too long, nor should the solution of vinegar be very strong, as in either case the shell will dissolve and crumble away altogether.

I have made several exceedingly pretty brackets in the manner to be described, and I am sure that any who follow the directions will be pleased with the result.

Procure some strong mill or cardboard—an old dress box will do admirably; cut out a piece in the shape of a half-moon, the size being regulated by the position to be occupied by the bracket. This is for the top; then cut out another piece for the front, which must be the same length as the rounded part of the top. The lower edge should be shaped in some way, such as is shown in the picture.



A small strip for the back may be added for the sake of giving additional firmness, but it must not be as deep as the front, or it will show, and look very unsightly. Cover the top with coloured velvet or silk, and then stitch the parts firmly together. Make a hole for a nail in the back piece, or else add two little rings at the top to hang it up by.

The bracket itself must be perfectly finished



before the ornamentation is begun, as if anything be left till afterwards the shells are likely to be knocked off.

Liquid glue is best to use, and a rather small brush will be necessary.

I put first of all a row of sprigs of coralline all round, projecting over the edge of the bracket, forming a fringe. Then a row of one variety of shells, such as small whelks or cockles, all round inside the fringe of coralline. After this border, a sort of groundwork of the larger shells should be made, leaving the interstices until the last to be filled in with tiny shells and morsels of seaweed. The lovely little pearly galeonna, and the bright pink trough-shells will be at once chosen for these purposes. Should there be a scarcity of bright-coloured specimens, and the bracket looks dull and flat, some little pieces of lichen may be introduced with great advantage; they are of all shades and hues, and can be found on the trees in most country places. They look so much like seaweed that no one will detect the difference, and they add the little touches of colour here and there which are necessary to brighten up the whole.

A favourite, though old-fashioned, way of using these "spoils of the sea" is to take a very small wicker basket, cut it in halves lengthwise, and stitch or glue it on to a piece of cardboard, the hollow side of course inwards. Then fill it with dried or pressed seaweeds, arranging the colours and forms as tastefully as possible, and fastening each piece with gum, either to the basket or to the cardboard, as the position may require. I should have said, however, before the basket is attached, that some sprays of seaweed may be "floated out" on the card, round where the edge of the bouquet is to be. This forms a border and facilitates the arrangement of the rest of the bunch considerably.

A more useful employment of shells, and one, therefore, more to be recommended, is in the conversion of a small wooden box into a pretty work or trinket box. The inside will first require to be lined with silk or coloured material, and the lid attached more securely. Two little hinges may be bought for a trifling sum, and fastened on with tiny nails, or two or three little slips of cloth will do instead of orthodox hinges. A loop of ribbon should also be fastened to the front of the lid, that it may be opened without touching the shells. If they are well glued on, however, they will stand a good deal of wear unless really roughly handled. They are fastened and grouped in the same way as on the bracket. If the box be intended for a present, a pretty idea is to arrange the initials of the recipient in pink or white shells on the lid, the letters being edged with seaweed or very small shells of a different colour, to make them show up well.

The tiniest shells of all may be reserved for the making of birthday and other gift cards; they would be quite lost if employed on any larger objects, but come in beautifully in a wreath of fine and delicate sea-weed on a card of this description, which will form a pleasing memento of a summer holiday at the sea-side.

THE WEDDINGS OF THE WORLD.

A WEDDING IN EGYPT.



TORCHES USED AT A WEDDING.

THE beauty and charms of the women of ancient Egypt are gravely recorded in history and sung in poetry, and modern travellers have been as earnest and elegant in admiring their descendants. Their accomplishments

first recognised in ancient Egypt. Hermes, the great founder of its government and laws, decreed that a man should have but one wife. Diodorus, who wrote his history of Egypt about forty-four years before the birth of Christ, says that anciently the marriage contract was regarded amongst the Egyptians as one of grave importance, in which the husband pledged himself to yield implicit obedience to the wife, and she, as solemnly, promised to place his claims upon her love and fidelity before all other claims, including those of her children, should their union be productive of a family. It is most probable that the occasion of ratifying such a contract was, even in the earliest times, accompanied by some festive, religious, or legal ceremonies, but if so, we have nothing to show what they were. The barbarous conquerors who destroyed the written records of old Egypt have left us nothing belonging to those early times but monumental hieroglyphics. I can only tell you that the bride wore a wedding ring, that in their matrimonial unions ties of consanguinity were disregarded, and that marriages between relatives were frequent and common.

How superstition and polygamy dishonoured and degraded the female sex in Egypt is another and a later, and yet a very ancient, story. What the result was is a lesson too sad to be dwelt upon—the pages of Diodorus which chronicle it seem to be written in blood and tears—and that influence, alas! is still in existence.

Passing along the downward course of Egyptian history, we come to the Egypt of a hundred years ago, and enter, by virtue of our invisibility, a great place of public assembly for women—the bath—into which, while they are present, it is death by the law for a man to intrude.

We are in the midst of a noisy crowd of women, old and young, laughing and chattering and talking of their domestic or private affairs, all proudly displaying their fine clothes and jewellery. A great number of active little children are romping and playing with the slave girls in their midst. The mistress of the ceremonies is settling a dispute between some

rival beauties; the attendants, accustomed to the noise and confusion, run here and there to take this or fetch that, render assistance in one place or supply refreshments in another. The humid air is heavy with perfume, and here and there the smoke of burning incense ascends.

Some are richly attired in muslins and silks interwoven with threads of gold, rich European brocade, and the flowered stuffs of Aleppo, with trimmings of choice furs, &c., and with head-dresses heavy with pearls, jewels, flowers and small golden coins. Others are stripped for the water and putting on their



A SHELL TRINKET BOX.

were music, dancing, and singing. They had an extravagant love of jewellery. They had their picnic parties, they paid house-to-house visits, they frequented the fashionable drives and promenades in their handsome chariots, and they carried the arts of dress and the toilette to an extreme never since exceeded. They were fond of gardening, practised gymnastic exercises, played games with balls, embroidered, and did various kinds of work with their bronze needles. There is no reason for believing that they did not make excellent wives and mothers.

The social and legal rights of women were