

the summer, when they are all hard at work for you, gobbling up the grubs and keeping down the blight and burrowing for the wire-worms, and then to leave them to starve when they have perforce no work to do, and are, sorely against their wills, swelling the ranks of the unemployed. I do not mean to pretend that there are not tramps and idlers among them. I am afraid that the sparrows are really a lazy, pilfering lot; moreover, they are poachers and burglars—they think nothing of turning out the swallows from their nests and taking forcible possession; and they are slovenly and untidy, and they live in the most squalid houses. But you cannot hope to get rid of the *residuum* in any large community; and if we all got no more and no less than we deserve, some of us would be in evil case, I ween!

It comes to this, that you positively must keep your birds alive in the winter, during such days and weeks as they cannot get work to do. All through December the birds have been dying in some districts by thousands. It is heartrending to hear of their poor little corpses being picked up—mere ragged tufts of tumbled feathers, with the breastbone sharp as a knife, and the crop utterly empty. Little Billy Barlow told us that he picked up seven dead robins "all of a heap like" at the foot of one of Farmer Goodman's big wheatstacks; and Billy had a theory on the subject. His view was that the robins could always get enough to eat if they tried—"They're a artful bird is a robin," he remarked, with some severity in his tone. "But folks say, and I don't disbelieve 'em, that when the snow lasts, as this do, and all the sand and grit is covered ever so deep, they robins can't get at the little stones!" I objected that robins do not eat stones, large or small. But Billy is a theoretical naturalist and a philosopher, and he was by no means abashed. "No!" he answered, with a look which said, "You don't know everything, for all you're the parson"—"No, but they puts the little stones in their gizzards and they grind their wittles with 'em! And if they can't get the stones, their wittles kind o' chokes 'em!" I hope that boy will not take to vivisection one day in his thirst for knowledge!

Yes, you must feed your birds, and the doing your plain duty by them will not hurt you. You must feed them, and you must give them many meals a day. And this is how you must do it.

When the frost is severe, and the ground is hard, and the snow is deep, you must provide yourself with a vessel of some capacity,

and you must cut up a big loaf into blocks, and you must sprinkle it with barleymeal, as Mr. Johnnie Thrush recommended in one of the newspapers; and you must pour boiling water upon it, and stir it all up till it assumes the consistency of a pudding, and you must add a handful of hempseed. Then you must have a space of two or three yards square swept of the snow, and you must spoon out the delicious mixture, and then you will see what you will see. Moreover, it being after your breakfast, you must gather up all the scraps from all the plates—sometimes a blessed bone, for the dogs don't want *all* the bones; sometimes a slice of bacon, which, if you left it in the dish, would only go to the swill tub and tempt the pig to cannibalism; sometimes a bit of gristle or fat, or a most exquisite morsel of butter which has been left. Then you may cautiously look out of the window and watch. Before many hours you will see a hundred birds all down at once, and the queer ways of the creatures you will find infinitely diverting. The insolence of those starlings, and their voracity, will amuse you; the slyness of the blackbirds, the tender modesty and timidity of the thrushes, the joy of the hedge-sparrows; and the tricks they all play one another—each bird having a way of its own—and the fighting and the secretiveness, and the jealousy and the spite, baffle all description. After a day or two you will find it advisable to have two feeding-grounds at least, lest the starlings get all and the rest get nothing. Sometimes there will be a scoundrel of a jackdaw who will pounce down, before you know where you are, and fly away with the bone or the bacon. And sometimes—but this is a great secret—you will see Mrs. Moorhen or Miss Moorhen, whose home is the lake, or some hiding-place not very far off, make her appearance just to see what there is, and, if possible, to get a taste of the good things provided. All this has to be repeated about luncheon-time, and once again just as the sun is setting. This last meal is a very important one, for starlings go to bed early and get up late; and when they have gone to bed and before they get up in the morning, then is the time for the thrushes and the blackbirds, who sit up late and rise early.

If you are wise enough to be stirring at seven o'clock in the morning—and in the country nobody thinks any the worse of you for doing that—you will see sometimes eight or ten blackbirds in the twilight, half an hour before sunrise, pecking about under your bedroom window, and evidently expecting their

breakfast. Very soon they get it, and if they don't feel very righteous for their early rising, and regard the starlings as mere sluggards who get more than their due, I am very much mistaken.

But you really must not be content with the general meals; you must cut thick rounds of bread and *put them in the bacon-dish* and leave them there to sop up the gravy, and you must pretend that you cannot possibly finish that bit of plum-cake—oh, to see the way in which those birds will pick out the plums!—and you must set up three wands some six feet high, and tie them together at the top, and you must hang up a cocoanut cut in half, for the tits; and you must, now and then, take a big bone and fasten it in a bush or a tree where the dogs can't get at it; and you must manage to find a handful or two of offal wheat, or you must go craftily into the stable where there are some bruised oats in the mangers; and, in fact, you must go to the length of begging or borrowing, and almost doing the other thing. But you are a very heartless and wicked man, woman, or child, if you let your little birds die of starvation, even though it cost you in the course of a hard winter as much as 5s. or 6s. of extraordinary expenditure.

* * * * *
Gentle reader—and I write for gentle readers—do not set me down as a frivolous trifler because I give some crumbs to the starving birds. Do not join with the Rev. Placid Bland, who is reported to have whispered in his dulcet tones the other day, "If that man had a parish like mine he would have found something better to do than chop up bread for the jackdaws!" Well, well! It's better not to brag of all we *have* to do. Better do what we can, and when we have done all, say, "We are unprofitable servants!" We of the inferior clergy have not our tens of thousands to overwhelm us—I have not one thousand; but it takes a week to visit them from house to house, and it takes more than forty-two miles of walking before I can call upon them all. If I know every man, woman, and child among them, and call them all by their Christian names, it's no more than I ought to be able to do. If I do *not humbly* try to help them in their hour of need, God pardon me—I think He will; I think He would send me His gifts of grief and shame if He found me sitting idle and caring only for the birds. But I remember Him who fed those thousands in the wilderness, and, when they had all eaten and were filled, said tenderly, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

SERVIETTES, AND HOW TO FOLD THEM.

SERVIETTES are very frequently embroidered with crests, monograms, or initials. When this is the case, they should only be folded in such ways as will allow the embroidery to be seen. I have seen them worked (with ingrain cottons) in red, blue, buff, and white. White is perhaps the best, as it looks well with anything, and lasts as long as the serviette. To

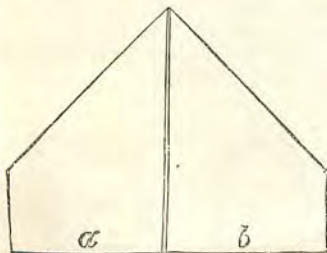


FIG. 1.

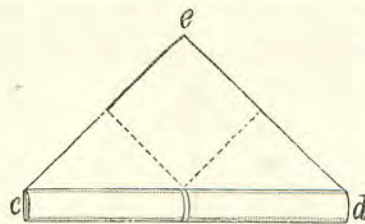


FIG. 2.

fold well, the serviettes must have a little starch in them. Some people like a variety of patterns on the table at the same time; but it is in much better taste to have all the table-napkins folded alike. The following are some of the favourite patterns. I begin with the most simple:—

The Collegiate (Fig. 3).—Fold the serviette in three parts longways; then turn down the

two ends to form Fig. 1; then roll up *a* and *b* from underneath to form Fig. 2; then turn the corners *c d* to *e* at the dotted lines; then turn the serviette over, and you will have Fig. 3. The bread is put under *f*.

The Neapolitan (Fig. 4) is folded thus:—Fold the napkin in three; then turn the top fold back on itself; turn the serviette over, placing it so that the four thicknesses are from you, and the two thicknesses near you; then fold as in Figs. 1 and 2, and turn over to find Fig. 4.

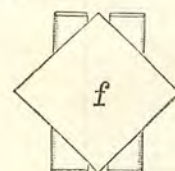


FIG. 3.

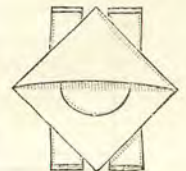


FIG. 4.

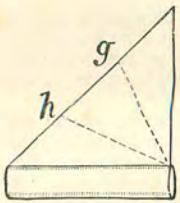


FIG. 5.

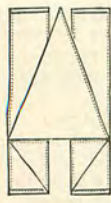


FIG. 6.

The Cinderella (Fig. 6) commences like *The Collegiate* (Figs. 1 and 2); but instead of turning *c* and *d* up, put them together and fold at the dotted lines *g h* in Fig. 5; turn the rolled pieces out and produce Fig. 6

the other end of the serviette back at the dotted line, and fold the two remaining corners down at right-angles; next fold the piece below the corners up to *o* (Fig. 11). Take the serviette in your hand, tuck one end into the other, and make Fig. 12.



FIG. 17.

folding three times, as at the dotted lines, so as to make four times in all; then turn each of the remaining corners a little bit the reverse way; pull up the lily petals. The centre ones

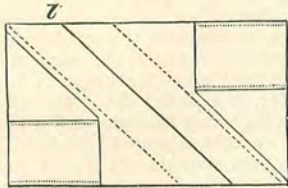


FIG. 7.

The Mitre (Fig. 9).—Fold the napkin in three; fold the two ends over, and turn the corners of the ends back, as in Fig. 7; then double the napkin back at the line *i*; then turn the two parts up at the dotted lines—

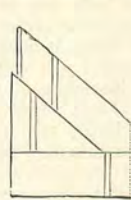


FIG. 12.

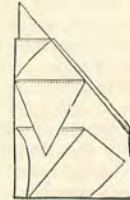


FIG. 15.

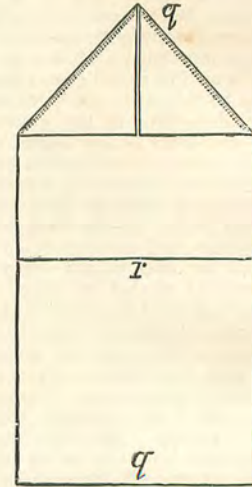


FIG. 18.

stand up, but the outside ones are turned backwards a little, as Fig. 17.

The Casket (Fig. 21).—Fold the serviette in two; double down the four corners so as to make points at *q q* (Fig. 18); fold the two

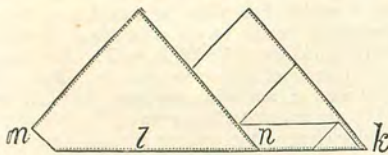


FIG. 8.

the left-hand one from before, the right-hand one from behind—and you will have Fig. 8. Then take the serviette in your two hands; turn the point *k* under *l* and *m* and into *n* for Fig. 9.

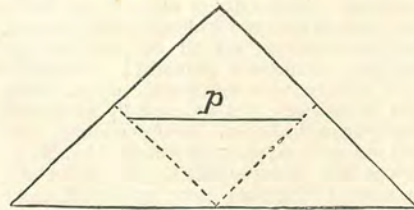


FIG. 13.

The Lily (Fig. 15).—Fold the serviette in two cornerways, as Fig. 13; then turn up the two corners at the dotted lines; then fold up the corner of the square at the line *p*; and then turn the points over, as Fig. 14. Tuck one of the lower corners into the other, as Fig. 15.



FIG. 9.

The Archbishop's Mitre (Fig. 12).—Fold the serviette in half; fold a hem an inch and a half deep under one end, and turn a three-quarter-inch hem over at the other end; next turn down the two corners with the wide hem at a right-angle, as in Fig. 10; then double

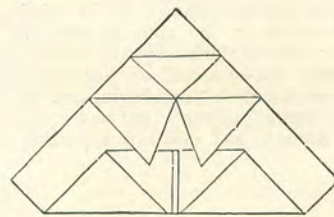


FIG. 14.

The Water-Lily (Fig. 17).—This pattern requires the serviette to be rather stiff. Lay the napkin on the table, and fold the four corners into the centre (Fig. 16); repeat the



FIG. 19.

points over so as to touch the line *r*; you will then have a square which you must fold backwards at the line *r*, so as to leave the points outside. This makes Fig. 19. Then push in the corners *s s* until you have a triangle (Fig. 20); then take the upper corners *tu*, double

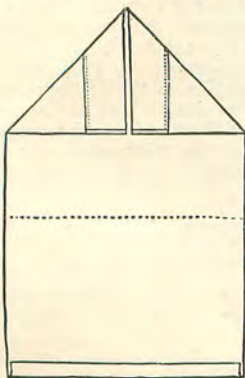


FIG. 10.

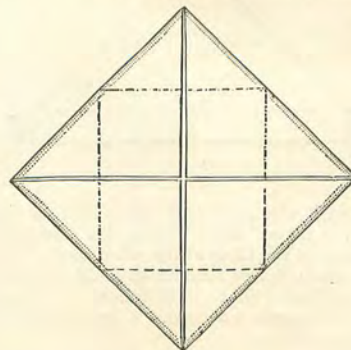


FIG. 16.

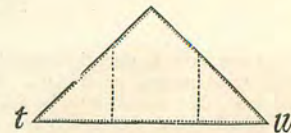


FIG. 20.

at the dotted lines, and put *t* into *u*; turn the serviette over and do the same with the two remaining corners; stand the casket up and put bread under it. For the square casket (Fig. 22), double the point in at the back and pull the top out square.

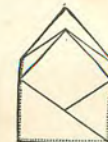


FIG. 21.

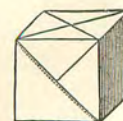


FIG. 22.

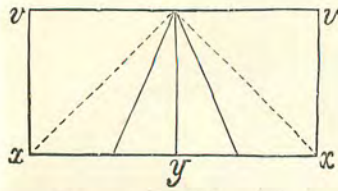


FIG. 23.

The Pyramid (Fig. 24).—Fold the napkin in four; then double half of it down (Fig. 23); tuck the corners v into the dotted lines; then fold the two top corners x to y ; turn the serviette over and fold the remaining two x 's in the same way, which will make Fig. 23 (A); bend the four points at the dotted lines, two one way and two the other, and stand the pyramid up like an extinguisher over the bread.

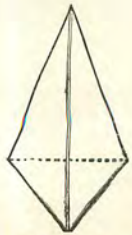


FIG. 23A.



FIG. 24.

The Muff (Fig. 26).—Fold the napkin in four (square, not cornerways); then place it as in Fig. 25, with the four corners at the bottom; roll up the corners one after the other until you have four rolls, the first of which must come just beyond the middle; then fold the two sides under at the dotted lines; turn the serviette round like a muff, and push the point z under the rolls to make Fig. 26.

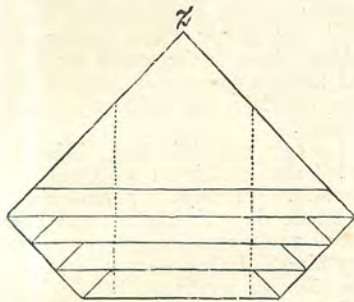


FIG. 25.

The Fan (Fig. 27).—Fold the serviette in four (longways); then fold it across the breadth, commencing at one end and folding from and to yourself in folds nearly two inches broad when folded; hold the serviette firmly in the left hand with the end with the two doubled edges up; then with the right hand pull down the inside folds to make right-angles with the top; turn the napkin in the hand, and do the same with the inside folds on the other side. This should make two rows of points, one point coming between two others, as in Fig. 27. The serviette must then be



FIG. 26.



FIG. 27.

put in a hock glass or tumbler. The fan must be folded with the greatest neatness and exactitude, or it will look very bad.

The Cardinal's Hat (Fig. 30).—Fold the napkin in four; lay it with the thick double edge at the top; fold down the two top corners; then fold up two of the bottom corners like the dotted lines in Fig. 28; the

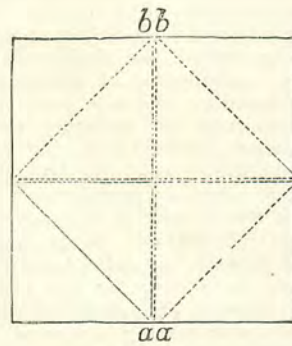


FIG. 28.

two remaining corners at the bottom double up underneath; then bring the points a —that is, on the top of the two corners you have just doubled under—to b ; turn the serviette over and you will have Fig. 29; fold the sides over at the dotted lines; then double in the middle to bring the top and bottom points together,

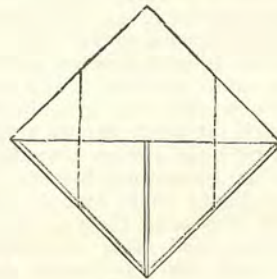


FIG. 29.

as in Fig. 30. Place the bread in the place for the head, and stand the serviette up.

The two following (Figs. 32 and 34) are very pretty for dish napkins.

Lay a serviette out flat, and fold the four corners into the centre; then double the points back to the edge of the square, as Fig. 31;



FIG. 30.

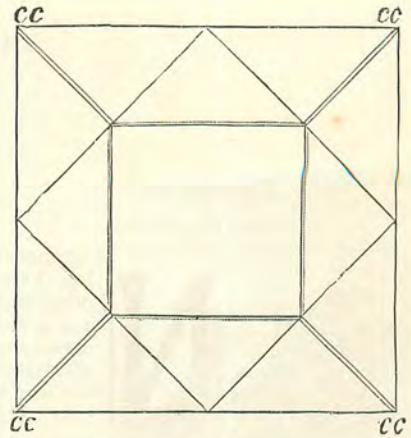


FIG. 31.

then double the four corners c into the middle, and fold the corners back to the edge, as in Fig. 31; then double under one corner on each side and you will have Fig. 32.

Fig. 34 (*The Greek Cross*) is particularly pretty for serving little things on. To fold it,

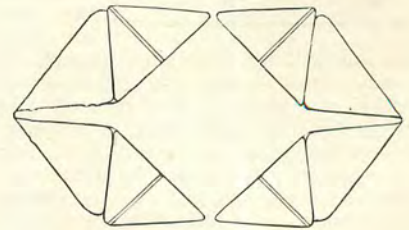


FIG. 32.

commence by folding the four corners into the centre; do this a second time; then turn the serviette over and fold the corners into the centre of the side now uppermost. This will make three times that you have folded, twice on one side and once on the other. Next

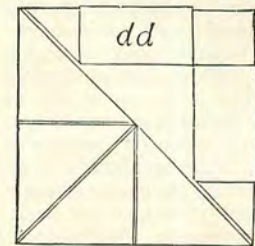


FIG. 33.

raise the corners last folded one by one; open them in the centre, and lay them back, as d in Fig. 33. Turn the serviette over and once more fold the four corners into the middle, when Fig. 34 will appear. Anything to be served is put under the four points in the centre.

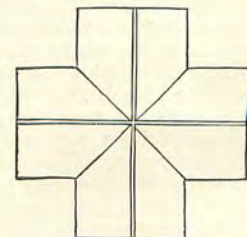


FIG. 34.