

CHRISTMAS IN THE SHOPS

By Emma M. Hooper

OUTSIDE of the large circle who are able to purchase costly Christmas gifts there is a constantly growing class of people who prefer to give, as well as to receive for their holiday presents, something at once useful and ornamental. Articles of this kind are almost unlimited in their variety, and are nowadays to be found in the greatest profusion in the shops. Nothing pleases the average woman more, as a gift, than some article of personal adornment, which she has long desired but never secured. Personally, my belief is that every one should give to her or him self, at the Christmas-tide, a present of some article of luxury, which at any other time would be numbered among the unattainables.

GIFTS USEFUL AND ATTRACTIVE

SOME years ago the jobbers and retailers of dry goods conceived the clever idea of putting up as Christmas gifts cotton and woolen dress goods in lengths sufficient for the making of a gown. What gift can be more acceptable to the ever-saving mother than such a dress length in a pretty soft gray, warm brown or black mixed serge, hop-sacking, Henrietta or bourette goods, with all of the linings included neatly and daintily tied up? Then, too, black silks and satins are in fashion again, and from olden times a favorite present from a thoughtful husband has been a "best black silk." As men know very little of the value of dress materials I will tell them that it is not a wise policy to pay less than one dollar and twenty-five cents a yard for a black silk, and better to pay one dollar and a half or one dollar and seventy-five cents, and that sixteen yards are necessary. Small boys like articles of apparel, as handkerchiefs, neckties, a suit of clothes or a new hat, and they are certainly more sensible presents than the pounds of sweets that children are invited to consume each Christmas. Between intimate friends and in the family presents of this kind are in good taste, but do not give a mere casual acquaintance the white silk stockings which your friend who loves dancing would be delighted to have. Boxes of a half dozen hose—black, tan, brown, white, gray and lavender—to match afternoon or evening dresses, are always appropriate as holiday gifts. But when you give anything of this kind see that it is very nice and something that the receiver would not be apt to indulge in. Furs are very stylish and both a luxury and necessity. It is easy to imagine the delight of any woman who should receive a long cape of mink, astrakhan or Alaska sable, or a collar and muff. The new collarettes are so quaint with their long ends, like the old-time victorines, that every young woman's heart will long to own one. A society girl will appreciate an evening wrap of ermine, and every woman has a fondness for sealskin. It is well when giving such expensive presents to arrange for the privilege of exchanging them.

SMALL GIFTS FOR ALL

IT would not be holiday times without increased sales in the handkerchief departments. Sometimes I think that every man, woman and child must have this article given to them at Christmas-time. The selection runs from a printed cotton handkerchief at four cents to an embroidered one for seventy-five cents, or a real lace at five dollars or more. The latest novelties in this line are the silk lace and Lorie Fuller, or shaded linen designs that show changeable colors and are very odd. The silk lace models are from fifteen dollars and have a Japanese silk centre, with a deep lace border in silk, showing duchesse, Spanish and point patterns. A box of six narrow hemstitched at three dollars is an always welcome present. Be sure that the hems are narrow, and buy the same for the special man friend, who likes them fine and with a long, slender initial, at about five dollars for the half dozen, inclosed in a neat box, or better yet, make a sachet for them. Never buy a cravat for a man, unless you are quite sure that he has blind faith in your taste. There are handsome driving gloves with reinforced palms that a man likes, and suspenders silk-worked and inclosed in pretty boxes. House jackets and slippers are standard presents for men, also silk umbrellas, the latest having natural wood handles, picked out or banded with silver, and a steel rod so that they can be rolled in a small compass and used as canes. Black or white silk mufflers, to protect the chest when worn with a dress-suit, are shown.

WHAT YOUNG WOMEN LIKE

OF course they like flowers and confectionery, and in giving the latter, which is one of the few things that may be accepted with propriety, it is less expensive to buy the bonbons separately and put them in a pretty basket tied up with gay ribbons. Kid gloves, in eight-button suede for dress wear, and four-button piqué for every day, in tan, brown, dark red, blue or heliotrope for the latter, and cream, pale green, mode, pearl and lavender for the former, can never be given too freely to young ladies. Half a dozen becoming veils—brown, black, cream, black and white, etc., with borders and without—form an uncommon and very useful gift in these days when a person is not well dressed for the street without a veil. There are many fashionable articles of neckwear that form a dainty finish to a toilette, such as shoulder-cape fichus, collarettes, lace and feather boas and chiffon jabots. Girls like all these pretty things and many cannot afford them. An odd silk waist in changeable colors and a dainty silken petticoat will also make useful gifts. Discover, if possible, what your sister, mother or friend is really wishing for, and even if common sense sometimes points out its absurdity to you it will be well for you to gratify their wishes. Many housekeepers make a fetish of pretty things for their table, and to such give some of the lovely sets of table centres and doilies. These come in hand-embroidered German linen and spachtel work (an open or cut work border), showing yellow, blue, green, white, pink or red embroidery. The doilies to match are from three dollars a dozen, and the centre from one dollar and a half. Buffet scarfs, carver's cloths and tea-tray covers of linen are also acceptable gifts.

SIMPLE EVENING GOWNS

DURING the holidays there are usually many festive gatherings for which young girls desire neat, pretty and inexpensive gowns. In color have them ivory, cream, Nile green, pinkish lavender, corn yellow, rose pink, turquoise blue or delicate old rose. In material there are plain and crinkled thin wool crépons at sixty-nine cents to one dollar, and albatross at sixty to eighty-five cents, both double width. Then at one dollar are striped and pin-dotted taffeta silks in changeable effects, twenty inches wide; plain Japanese silks, twenty-four inches, at fifty to seventy-five cents, and at one dollar, twenty-seven-inch Japanese silks in tiny changeable stripes. As low as fifteen cents there are pretty, soft cotton crépes in all of the evening colors that closely resemble the silken crépes of a more expensive quality. Black silks are very fashionable for young matrons, and trim with écu lace, jet galloon over bands of cream or Magenta satin, or velvet in Magenta, pale leaf green, old rose, turquoise or bright reddish purple. A dotted black satin, at one dollar and twenty-five cents, for a brunette of thirty years, is made for a Christmas dinner dress with a full bell skirt, three and a half yards wide, trimmed with two tiny folds of satin, headed with an erect ruffle of bright cardinal velvet at the bottom and five inches above the knees; pointed basque, elbow sleeves and draped collar of velvet, also a bust drapery from the armholes, tied in two pointed ears in front. Finishing the sleeves and edge of the basque is inch-wide jet galloon. A blonde of twenty has a pretty dancing dress of white Japanese silk at fifty cents. The accordion-plaited skirt is twelve yards wide before plaiting. The short sleeves are also plaited and the low, round waist is almost without seams, having a berth of open white guipure lace over green or blue satin, and a pointed girdle to match, as well as tiny bands on the sleeves; white gloves, shoes and hose. One of the betwixt and between girls of twenty-five wears a thin crépon in pearl gray, with a half-low, round waist, full bell skirt and elbow sleeves. A twist of bright old rose velveteen, a lovely quality at one dollar, trims the bottom, with donkey-ear bows heading it here and there; at the knees have a second row if the wearer is tall. A twist of velvet finishes the sleeves at the elbows, and a crush belt of the same has the ear bow at the back; a circular berth of the velveteen trims the neck, and pearl suede gloves are worn.

Cotton crépes make up prettily with full skirts trimmed twelve inches below the waist-line with a double box-plaiting of No. 16 single-faced satin ribbon. Have a belt of the same ribbon, with a rosette and two long ends on the left side. Add three bands across the bust, all centreing together at the centre under a rosette; band and bow on the short or elbow sleeves above a ruffle of *point d'esprit* lace.

TRIMMINGS NOW WORN

VELVET is undoubtedly the most popular trimming, especially in the purplish red Magenta, leaf green, black, brown and reddish purple. Good velveteen is used in the same manner for all dress accessories. Satin antique is a heavy velvety satin also worn for dress and hat trimmings, but is too expensive ever to become common. Plain and changeable satin, taffeta and bengaline are the favorite trimming and combination silks. The newest thing in this line is the *bayadère*, or cross stripes in black and white, for vests, skirt ruffles, sleeves, etc., or an entire waist, with a black silk, satin or wool skirt. Cream and écu lace insertion applied as bands on the material or over satin has a decided share of public fancy. Then there are ready-made band trimmings of white or écu lace insertions over black satin ribbon in different widths for skirt and waist decoration. A pretty gown to give a brunette who is blessed with considerable color is a bright red cotton crêpe, with a full yoke of black silk muslin; low, pointed waist, full, elbow sleeves and skirt of the crêpe. Jet galloon trims the edge of the basque and sleeves and jet fringe finishes the low neck. The skirt is trimmed with a ruffle of black silk muslin, headed with a band of jet. Black gloves, shoes and hose and a red fan would complete the gay but inexpensive toilette. Ribbon, satin and moiré, is still a stylish trimming. Moiré in piece goods is a late revival that is taking well for dresses and combinations. Lace will be worn through the winter on house dresses. Very open jet galloon is laid over colored or contrasting satin, and trims silk or fine woolen gowns in cross bands or down each gored seam of the skirt if the wearer is short; on the edge of slashed, umbrella or pointed basques; as a belt, cuffs, collar, outlining a yoke, etc. Both extremes are met with—elaborate trimmings lavishly worn, and a quaint but stylish simplicity. The materials for any one of these gowns with any of these trimmings will make a useful and most welcome Christmas present, and one that will serve to keep you long in the memory of the girl whom you have so thoughtfully remembered.

IN THE JEWELRY STORES

SILVER reigns for many fancy articles if not for coin. Souvenir spoons are still popular, and the latest represent the owner's favorite flower enameled in nature's coloring. Bowknot, heart and serpentine knot pins, chatelaines, holding from one to twenty little accessories, hairpins, bonnet stick pins, photograph frames, ink-stands or desk sets, clocks, brushes, combs, scissors, thimbles, hand glasses, pin-trays, pin-cushions, in fact, every known article for a bureau, may be found. Whisk brooms, pocket match-safes, key-rings, shoe-horns and buttoners, glove boxes, buttoners and stretchers, jewel cases, paper-cutters, bookmarks, change purses, mounted kid and leather pocketbooks and card-cases in cream, blue, tan, gray, black and soft green, are all to be found in bright cut and the softer finished silver. Rings have become quite popular as Christmas presents. Fifteen dollars will buy one containing either a diamond, pearl, cat's-eye or opal. The stones are very small, of course, but the settings are neat and appropriate. Enamel flower brooches and stick pins, gold thimbles, sets of three white enamel or gold studs for shirts or blouse waists, belt and shoe buckles in silver or gold, pencils and pens, a seal, tiny pearl or diamond ear-knobs, string of gold beads for the neck are offered in endless variety, and the inexpensive pieces are as dainty as those of greater value.

FINISHING THE LIST

I MIGHT continue this list indefinitely did space permit, but I shall conclude by reminding the seeker of gifts that books were never more attractive nor less expensive in price. Books of standard reputation and those gotten up for the season are sufficient to make a lover of them happy. Christmas cards have apparently died out, but each Christmas books bloom anew. A small etching or choice print, framed in enamel, dull silver, oak or French gilt, will make a present that will please for many a day. Pictures are now as reasonable in price as they are attractive in appearance. A feather, lace or gauze fan, with shell or pearl sticks, is never anything but a welcome present, and a rose bowl of cut-glass, a long-stemmed vase of green or amber colored glass, or a jar of rare Satsuma, Dresden, Claisonne or Royal Worcester ware will gladden the heart of the artistic woman whose tastes soar above her pocketbook. Bits of rare china are loved by all women. One of the prettiest and most useful gifts for an invalid is a tea and toast set of a large plate having a sunken place for the cup to rest and a square for the toast, so that neither fall around the plate when taking the luncheon in bed.

Give with a cheerful heart; give with the pleasant word that makes any gift precious in the sight of a friend, who will value it for the loving intention and not for its intrinsic worth.

EDITOR'S NOTE—Miss Hooper's answers to correspondents, under the title of "Hints on Home Dressmaking," will be found on page 34 of this issue of the JOURNAL.