

Pretty, short curtains for the lower portion of windows are those made of plain book muslin or leno, and horizontally fluted. Of these the selvages should be at the top and bottom, and through the side-hems brass rods are run, which fasten to hooks on the window frame. These curtains are slipped on the rods, *wet from the starch*, hooked at once to the window frame, and regulated and fluted with the fingers, when they dry stiff, and keep their appearance. If ironed and put on afterwards they are never fit to be seen.

Starched articles should never lie very long before being ironed, or they will lose the stiffness. In warm weather, if thus left, they mildew in addition. I should also mention that rough Turkish towels should not be mangled. They are better wrung by hand; but if passed through the machine, they require a great deal of shaking to raise the knots to the proper state of roughness.

Starch made of common wheat flour is sometimes used for stiffening dark prints. This is done with a view to economy, but cannot be recommended, as prints subjected to this process are much less clear-looking than when proper starch is used.

We will now run over a list of articles required for ironing. There must be our ironing board, or clean deal table, covered first with a suitable blanket and then with a moderately fine sheet; a stand or two for the irons; padded holders to lift them with and preserve our hands from being burnt; a board, sprinkled with bath-brick, on which to rub them; dusters to polish with after the said rub; a basin of clean cold water close by to sprinkle or damp an article that may have become too dry; the clothes-horse to hang the linen on as fast as it is ready; and, if you like, a tray on which collars and cuffs can be placed near the fire for a time before they are put away.

I am supposing the irons are at the fire; but I ought to say a word or two about them, as you require various kinds for the work. If there is no proper stove for heating flat-irons, they will be hung on a bar in front of the fire, which should always be made up beforehand, and allowed to burn clear before they are put down. *Never let a fire go low when you are ironing.* Bring the hot coals forward from time to time, and keep adding a little fresh at the back, so as not to smoke your irons. There should be at least three flat-irons, or a box-iron with three heaters, for each person at work. Box-irons are less used than they once were, but they are very cleanly articles, and, for delicate ironing, preferable to the others, as being less likely to scorch dainty collars or muslins.

There should be two box-irons, varying in size, and an Italian iron for frills, each with three heaters. Goffering irons and a little crimping machine are also very useful for flounces and frills. In using the latter care should be taken that the little rollers are not too tightly set—otherwise the muslin will be cut in the operation, as I know to my sorrow. A laundress once sent me a whole set of new underclothing home with the frills looking beautifully crimped. But, alas! when next washed my dainty cambric was all in tiny shreds, having been cut to pieces in the crimping, and all the trimming had to be picked off and replaced. Hand crimping, though rather tedious, may be nicely done with a blunt knife. A silver pocket fruit knife answers admirably, and injures nothing.

Wherever there is much delicate ironing to be done, it may be greatly facilitated by the use of three, differently shaped boards, smoothly covered with double flannel. One should be about eighteen inches long and nine broad. This is for slipping below the fronts of shirts, night dresses, and ornamental chemises, &c.; the second for putting under

white petticoats and the skirts of dresses. It should be narrower at one end than the other, in fact, the shape of a gore; the third, narrow and long enough for shirt and dress sleeves.

And now we will begin by ironing first some collars and cuffs, then a shirt. If you use a box-iron, mind that it is beautifully bright and clean; then put in a red-hot heater with the tongs. Perhaps it will not go in! Never mind. Drop it on the hearth for a minute or two to cool, and then try a second time. Your bit of red iron has given you a lesson on the expansive power of heat, and it will contract again directly by contact with the cooler air and slip in easily. Place it on the stand to let the iron itself heat through; take out your collar, but roll up the rest as before, that they may not dry; stretch and straighten it nicely *wrong side up* on the ironing cloth. Try your iron on something of little consequence, then run it quickly over the collar once or twice, and turn it the right side up. Now press the collar firmly, again and again, till it is thoroughly dry and stiff, lifting it occasionally to let the steam escape below. Your irons should be as hot as it is possible to use them, without risk of scorching the linen. If you only half dry the article, it will turn limp and the surface will be blistered and unfit to wear.

I daresay you may have noticed that when you buy new collars there is a little ridge which looks like a cord between the band and the upper part, and you probably wonder why this pretty ridge disappears the first time of washing and is seen no more. There is really no cord, but the appearance is produced by the deft hands of the London laundress, and requires considerable practice to manage it. The collar must not be run over with the iron all at once, but in two parts, as it were, and very few country laundresses produce the effect or perhaps care to try. You may leave your collars and cuffs flat, if the shape be suitable, or give them a turn round in the finishing, if desired. Take care always to place your irons on the stand whilst you adjust the linen, or your sheet and blanket will soon be scorched and spoiled. A flat-iron should be vigorously rubbed on the board with bath-brick, polished with a cloth, and its cleanliness tested before you begin the shirt. *And be sure you treat the buttons respectfully.* If you stamp the iron on them they will break; if you rush at them violently with the point they will fly off; go tenderly round them and they will seldom want replacing.

The parts of a shirt should be ironed in the following order:—Back lap, saddle, neck-band, or collar, sleeves, cuffs, front—for which use the flannel-covered board number one—front lap, then finished and folded. The final folding of most articles may be very neat or equally clumsy. Look at specimens done by a first-class laundress, study and copy, which will be better than pages of printed instructions.

In ironing skirts and dresses do them in the following order:—Bottom hems, tucks and flounces, sleeves, body or band, lastly, rest of skirt, using shaped board.

After rinsing delicate prints or muslins, let them lie for a few minutes before starching in clean water in which an ounce of Epsom salts has been dissolved. This is a little secret imported from France and has been successfully used by a very superior laundress of my acquaintance, who finds that it fixes and brightens colours, and improves the general appearance of prints.

The many beautiful, printed cotton fabrics now in use should, if possible, be made up in such a manner that they can be ironed on the wrong side. They should not be rubbed with soap, but washed in a lather made with boiled curd soap. Woollen stuffs of very good

quality, such as French merinoes, will bear washing; but dresses should be taken to pieces and hung out dripping from the rinsing water. It is, however, no economy to wash really good stuffs, and poor and mixed fabrics will not bear it. It is far better to send them to one of the large dyeing and cleaning establishments; the appearance will amply repay the cost, if the articles be worth doing at all. Sateens and prints which are tumbled and creased, can be thoroughly renovated by ironing them through a damp cloth, in the same way as black silk after sponging, or merinoes after washing.

In THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER several different recipes for washing lace have already appeared. To any possessor of really valuable lace, who has had no experience in cleaning such a delicate fabric, but who desires to experiment upon it, I would give the same advice as the celebrated *Mr. Punch* did to persons about to marry—"Don't." By valuable lace, I mean Brussels, the various kinds of points, Honiton, &c., &c., which require very delicate manipulation. Maltese, Cluny, Torchon, and others of a comparatively strong kind of thread, are easy enough to do, and I will give you my method of getting them up; but by all means send costly lace to a professional cleaner. It costs very little, comes back exactly like new, and may be done time after time without injury. I have a beautiful piece, only thirty inches long, of rare old point, which cannot be reproduced in these days. It went to Brussels a short time ago, with two little rents in it; it came back so well repaired that the places where they had been were not to be discovered by the naked eye. The mending, cleaning, and postage both ways cost about two shillings; the lace itself is valued at twelve guineas.

A Honiton lace-maker to whom I entrust lace of that description sends hundreds of pieces weekly to be cleaned in Devonshire. I cannot tell the process, but the result is perfection. He says the hand never touches it in the cleaning, and no person could tell it from new unless it has been once washed by an amateur beforehand.

The pretty, frail, and so-called "cheap" laces used at present are really very expensive; many will not bear washing, and are not worth the cost of cleaning.

(To be concluded).

A GRAMMAR OF EMBROIDERY.



WE have for the benefit of those of our readers who seem still to find many obstacles in their way towards success in embroidery, summarised, in the form of rules, the various principles to be observed in crewel work, together with the methods of enlarging any design and transferring patterns upon the material to be worked; and we believe that if the rules given below be read in conjunction with the articles on the subject which have appeared from time to time in these pages, no girl ought hereafter to fail for the want of knowing what to do and how to do it.

I.—Success in embroidery is only to be achieved by understanding what can best be done with the

materials employed, and realising the limitations the art places upon you. Bear in mind that you are an artist, working with dyed worsteds or silks instead of pigments, with a needle instead of a brush, and upon an already coloured material instead of a plain canvas, having to effect by a multitude of stitches what could perhaps be done by one brush mark. Bearing this in mind, it follows that to attempt to produce the same effect as in painting is impossible, the needle being not nearly so pliable as a brush, and dyed threads being less easily intermingled than pigments. This will answer the inquiries of some of our readers who ask "how to foreshorten a flower and make it look natural." But our advice is—do not do it.

2.—Embroidery must be kept much simpler in character than painting, it being impossible to produce with a needle and thread the complicated arrangements and difficult drawing easily obtained with colour. A reference to the accompanying illustration will explain what we mean. We have shown the flower in three different positions, and though the drawing has been simplified so as to make it possible to produce the effect in embroidery, it will readily be admitted by all workers that the full flower is more easily worked, and more effective, than either of the foreshortened ones.

3.—It is, as a broad rule, advisable to show flowers as much as possible in full views, rather than inside ones, for the reason given in Rule 2. The utmost limit to foreshortening is attained in the Narcissus design, anything more complicated than this looking merely a confused mass when worked.

4.—The amount of shading that should be attempted in embroidery is only so much as shall throw any prominent part into relief, without producing a muddy or dirty effect when viewed a little way from the eye. Do not attempt to get the effect of distance, as in painting, and for this reason keep the drawing as flat as possible, not allowing one part of the design to overlap another more than is necessary. It will be noticed that the leaves of the Narcissus in the illustration only cross each other occasionally, and it is only necessary, therefore, at these crossings to mark the light and shade strongly.

5.—The direction which the stitches should take depends very much upon the object worked. The lines in the drawing show the most effective way the stitches should run. In the narcissus flowers they follow the length of the petal, while in the anemone, the petals being so much smaller, they run across. We may mention that the Japanese, most dexterous embroiderers, as our readers are aware, generally work their flowers across, keeping the stitches parallel; but the difficulty

attending this mode of treatment is, that unless each stitch be kept its proper length, the drawing of the flower is lost. In working the leaves let the stitches as much as possible represent the veins as shown in the anemone. In long leaves like the narcissus, the direction of the stitches may be varied, to give relief to the work, as it does when one leaf falls over another.

6.—It gives a more finished appearance to embroidery, especially in delicate designs, if the whole of the work be outlined in the appropriate colours, afterwards filling in the spaces with the suitable stitches. By so doing the drawing is better preserved than if the outline be omitted.

7.—In choosing the colours of your crewels and silks, be guided more by the colour of the material you are working upon than the natural tint of the flower you employ in your design, your object being to add beauty to something presumably already beautiful; in fact, to decorate something already existing. Therefore, don't let your embroidery clash with the

material it is upon, but rather seek to make them harmonise and fit together as though they were made (as indeed they were) for each other.

8.—A colour is greatly affected by contrast, and for this reason always put the material to be worked side by side with the crewels, to see that they harmonise. The force of this rule can be better realised by taking three surfaces, say, white, black, and blue, and having chosen what looks to be a nice green crewel when viewed by itself, work a small leaf on each of the three materials. It will be found that the colour will look much darker on the white ground, much lighter on the black ground, and quite dull, perhaps, on the blue ground.

9.—Those who are unable to enlarge a design without resorting to some mechanical means will find the following method, termed "squaring," advantageous. Suppose, for instance, the design of the narcissus has to be enlarged to twice its present dimensions. Divide the illustration into half-inch squares, by drawing parallel lines at right angles to each



DESIGNS FOR CREWEL EMBROIDERY.

other at distances of half an inch. Then on a piece of paper mark off the same number of squares, only at distances of *one* inch. It will now be easy to fill in each square with its appropriate portion of the illustration, and if this be done accurately you will have a *fac-simile* of the design, only twice its original size.

10.—To transfer a design upon a fabric or other material. Having made your drawing upon tracing paper, prick it over with a needle (a darning needle is better for the purpose) on the *wrong* side of the design. When this is done, turn the design over on its *right* side, when the pricked holes will be found to be uppermost. Then if the material be dark, have some powdered chalk in a piece of old stocking or muslin (or, if light, powdered charcoal), and without allowing the tracing to move, go over every part of it with the powder bag or "pounce," as it is called, and the powder passing through the holes will leave an impression behind it. Mark this over with Chinese white or Indian ink, to fix it to the material, and the design is now ready for working.

We may here remark that the design of the narcissus flowers would make a handsome book cover, worked on plush or silk, and it would improve the design to bring the leaves two or three inches lower than in the illustration. The anemone would do for working on a cardcase or other small article.

FRED. MILLER.

THAT AGGRAVATING SCHOOL GIRL.

By the Author of "Wild Kathleen."



CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN Josephine had entreated to be allowed to search for that dreadful slug, Miss Rowe contemptuously replied,

"You! Of what use would you be, except to knock the ink over, or throw a table down! Why, you could not find your own book yesterday when it was right before you on the shelf."

"That is true," murmured Josephine, humbly, and then a bell was rung, and one of the servants was sent up to look for that troublesome slug.

"And please find me my dear little box, too, please," added that irrepressible new pupil; "Miss Rowe has dropped it somewhere."

"And bring it to me when you find it," commanded Miss Rowe, magisterially.

"Thank you," said Nellie, contentedly, "I shall be so much obliged to you if you will take care of it for me, for I am sure if I have it I shall break it or lose it now that it is empty."

To this speech Miss Rowe vouchsafed no notice whatever. She went off to watch the search, which, however, resulted in nothing but the finding of Helen's box. Whatever became of the slug, it was never again seen by any of the inmates of Crofton House. For many days Miss Rowe would not enter her sitting-room, and for many weeks whenever she sat there she had an uneasy sensation that a slug was endowed with breath strong enough for her to be sensibly conscious of feeling it on her neck preparatory to the advent there of the creature itself.

I fear that it need scarcely be said that Miss Edison was delighted at the non-discovery of the insect's hiding-hole.

"If I felt any compunction before," she said to Josephine, "at having kept the thing to tease her with, I felt none, I can tell you, when I heard the answer she gave to your kind offer to help her. How could you be so—so stupid? I beg your pardon. I don't mean stupid in the way you call yourself so, but stupidly good to give her such a gentle reply?"

A faint flush overspread Josephine's pale face—

"Miss Rowe was quite right. I am dreadfully stupid at finding things. It was because she was so troubled I could not help wishing to help her. But it was foolish, I daresay, for me to offer. And if not," she added, in a low, gentle tone, "if not, you know, we who love our Lord have to remember that when we are reviled we revile not again."

Helen gazed at her companion for a few moments in silent amazement. Then she said shortly—

"Those are the sorts of things that I shall never remember."

CHAPTER IX.

TWO WAYS OF PUTTING IT.

HELEN EDISON had been a schoolgirl for two or three weeks when one morning she, with eleven of her companions, were gathered together for their history class in the back room. Josephine Bell was one of the number of the class, and Miss Rowe was holding it. Helen had one of her touch-me-not looks on her face, as Milly Wilmot used to call them, when even that careless piece of merriment herself did not care to be too free with her clever companion.

"Look out for breezes," muttered Milly to her next neighbour, as they sat awaiting the governess.

"I have just been thinking so," whispered back Rose Trew, following her companion's glance at Helen, who was sitting very erect, with folded arms, and the generally laughing eyes bent gravely on the carpet.

Helen Edison's first unfriendly impressions with regard to the young teacher had developed into an intense dislike,

which was fully reciprocated, and the last two or three days a new element of discord had risen up between them in the shape of poor Josephine.

Miss Rowe had received instructions, like every one else about the place, to be very gentle and forbearing towards that eldest but most ignorant pupil, and accordingly she refrained from reproofs or punishments for the invariably imperfect or half-done lessons. But the short laugh or few cool stinging words with which she vented her biting contempt were much more cruel than any open reprimands could have been, and generous-hearted Helen Edison had begun to feel them as keenly as the unfortunate girl herself at whom they were directed. A few days since she had taken upon her to prevent the sneers, to some degree, by hastily giving answers to questions addressed to Josephine, and no amount of angry prohibitions or fines on the part of Miss Rowe, nor grateful but tearful entreaties from Josephine, had yet prevailed to check her. This was the state of affairs, unknown to Miss Crofton, that Wednesday morning when Helen Edison sat looking her haughtiest, and Miss Rowe entered the book-room and took her seat with her most resolute expression on her face. No wonder that observant members of the class were able to prophesy that the following hour would not flow on altogether smoothly,

However, for some little time all went well. Josephine was, of course, at the bottom of the class, and when at length her turn came, the question put to her happened to be one that she could answer. Miss Rowe raised her hands with mock admiration.

"Girls, girls," she exclaimed, "we must chalk it up! Miss Bell has actually given a correct reply—an absolute fact, although almost past belief."

A little half-nervous laugh from two or three pupils who stood greatly in awe of the stern, strict governess greeted this speech, while a painful flush burnt in Josephine's usually pale cheeks. Helen Edison flung up her head, and her crimson lips parted suddenly; but ere she could find cutting words to match her feelings, she caught so imploring a gaze from the poor victim, that she changed her purpose, and shut her mouth more quickly than she had opened it.

"If you have anything on your mind you wish to say, pray say it, Miss Edison," said Miss Rowe, sarcastically. "It is a pity, you know you said last week, to be too prudent."

"I know it is a great pity to bother one's head with too much learning," answered Helen, coolly; "and so, as we evidently shall not get through much above half our history lesson to-day before Professor Smith comes, I wish I hadn't studied it."

"If you would study your own language, and learn to speak it like a lady, it would be well," retorted the governess, angrily. "You will have the goodness, to write out the word 'hadn't' a thousand times this afternoon. Perhaps that will satisfy your fondness for the compound. Miss Wilmot! Attention, if