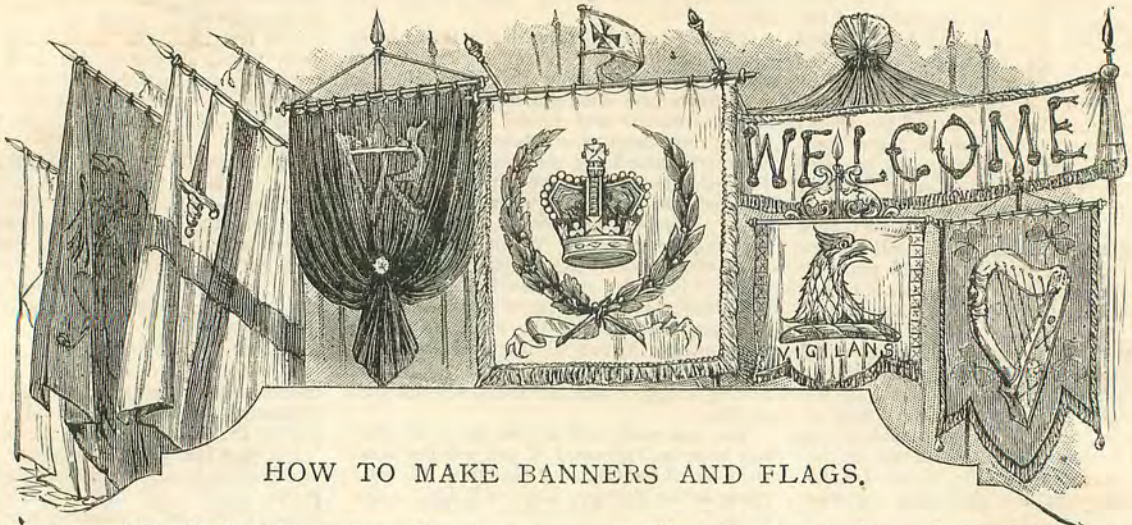


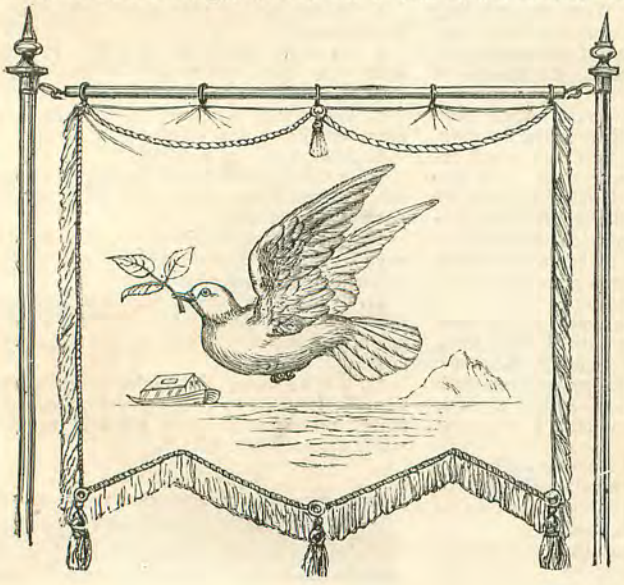
HOW TO MAKE BANNERS AND FLAGS.

In making banners and flags for decorative purposes there are many points to be taken into consideration: the sacred or secular character of the occasion, whether for use out or indoors, and consequently whether the decorations will be fixed in place or carried and exposed to the weather, and if fixed, whether they will be near the eye or at a distance.

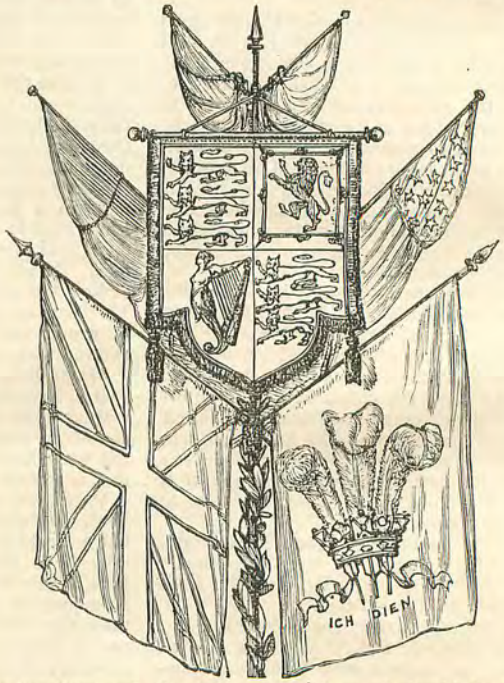
The orthodox material for flags is, of course, bunting, and it answers its purpose well, though in point of expense and substance it may advantageously be replaced by some other materials. Alpaca, for example, may take its place for indoor use, and is to be had in most colours as low as sixpence a yard, which is less than the cheapest bunting, and has the additional advantage of being wider. Glazed lining is often used for small flags, its disadvantages being that it fades quickly, and becomes limp and poor-looking, though there is now a superior make to be had, a yard wide, which has a much better appearance and is more durable than the ordinary quality. In heavier materials, cheap serge, silk, woollen rep, cloth, and cotton velvet are all good, but for rough use nothing takes the place of bunting, which stands rain and sun, sea air and sea water, without appearing any the worse.

For banners, or large flags which have to be carried, the weight must be considered in choosing the material, for when completed and mounted on poles they are surprisingly heavy, and the bearers have a sorry time of it if the route be a long one. For this reason silk is often used; it has the advantages of lightness, a handsome effect, and fair durability.

Perhaps the simplest form of banners for school treats and similar celebrations is made of red bunting or alpaca, joined neatly to the right size, with letters of white twill calico; or, if a ground of another colour is used, the letters should be of red Turkey twill or scarlet flannel, so that if caught in a shower of rain it will be none the worse. The letters are sometimes embroidered, but for common use on a large banner the *appliqué* ones are equally satisfactory, and involve far less work. The same remark applies equally to any emblem or other ornament used.



The size of the banner must first be decided upon, and the bunting or other material cut and joined to the size required. It should then be laid upon a large table, or on the floor, and the inscription arranged and each letter pinned in place. The distances must be measured, as exact precision is necessary. A word as to the cutting out of the letters. It must be borne in mind that enormous size is not the first necessity of clearness and legibility. Simplicity of form and correctness of proportion is much more important. And, again,



in grouping the words the letters of each word should be tolerably close together, but the words themselves a reasonable distance apart.

If these matters are attended to there will be no complaint of confusion or illegibility. When the letters are all arranged they should be first pinned and then firmly tacked in place, so that the banner can be held up and the effect of the letters or device seen before sewing them down more securely. If the result is satisfactory they must be closely buttonholed all round the edge, unless they are very large, when it will be found better to turn under the raw edge and run or hem them down.

If banners are to have a device on both sides, amateurs frequently make them double, so as to avoid the difficulty of the stitching showing through; but with care and management this is not necessary. If it is double, the letters are sewn on each side separately, before the

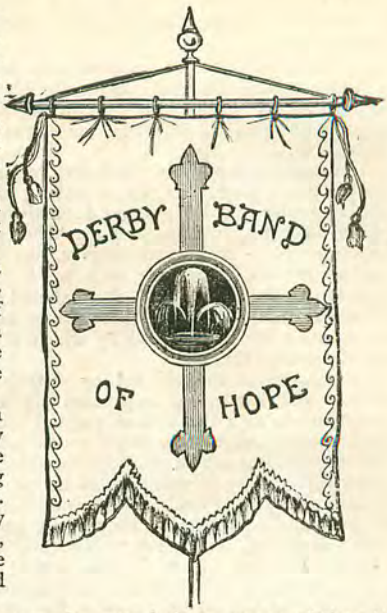
two pieces are joined together, and moderately long stitches put on the wrong side; but if the material is single, the stitches on the wrong side are more important than those on the right. The cotton used must be the exact colour of the bunting and the stitches very small. When one side is finished, it must be turned over, and the device on the other side arranged to hide, as far as possible, the stitches showing through from the reverse.

A little elaboration of this simple *appliqué* is to edge each letter with narrow braid, running the two down together. If the ground be red and the device white, the braid should be yellow; and this, too, may be used for any flourishes with which the capitals are elaborated. For this purpose, narrow tracing braid is sold in gold, or gold mixed with a colour, for about a halfpenny a yard. Another plan is to cut out two sets of letters, one set larger than the other—say half an inch every way, and of a contrasting colour; then the smaller ones are stitched on to the larger, so that there is a rim of the colour showing all round. It is true that "colour upon colour" is bad heraldry, but it is, nevertheless, very effective.

If worked letters are preferred to *appliqué*, the easiest method is to cut them out first in paper, or, better still, calico or twill, and arrange them as for *appliqué;* then work them over with yarn, in long, slanting stitches, like satin stitch, only that instead of being worked right through, only a few threads of the material should be taken up at either end of the stitch. If the stitches look loose, they must be caught down here and there with cotton of the same colour; but, as said before, another material laid on is recommended for large banners.

Thick worsted fringe, of the same colour as the bunting, should be stitched along the bottom of the banner, and a large tassel, similar to those which used to be seen on curtain bands, fastened at each corner, and sometimes a cord to match is festooned along the top. As to the mounting, poles and all their appurtenances complete, can be bought at any of the shops where school furniture and decorations are supplied; but a carpenter would perhaps make them at a less cost. Two light poles are required, with ornamental heads, after the style of bedposts, and a cross-bar with two hooks screwed into it, to which to attach corresponding rings at the top of the poles. A number of curtain-rings are stitched along the upper edge of the banner and slipped over the cross-bar, or they are sometimes replaced by loops of strong braid. A ring is fastened at each side of the lower edge of the banner, through which the side-poles are slipped before being attached to the cross-bar. A cord and tassels hanging down between the banner and poles makes a good finish.

Two ends of wide braid, or "holdfasts" are fastened to each pole, to be held by extra men, walking before and behind the bearers, for greater security on a breezy day; but this precaution would not be necessary if the banner were small and light.



These large banners are sometimes made of much more expensive materials and with more elaborate workmanship; but the simpler and less expensive ones do quite as well, if not better, for carrying in processions where they are not seen closely, and a good broad effect is the object sought after.

Their size is purely a matter of taste and convenience; two and a half yards long by one and a half deep is a fair average size, but they are often made larger than this.

Bannerets, being much smaller, and consequently lighter, require only one pole, fastened by strong cords to the cross-bar. These poles are generally either stained or painted, and the head should be either of metal or turned wood.

As these usually come nearer the eye, it is no waste of time to bestow more trouble on needlework for them. Sometimes they are most beautiful specimens of embroidery. A very good one of this description was recently seen in a church, placed there in memory of a departed friend. It was of rich crimson velvet. In the centre was a crown worked in gold thread, with a cross in silver thread passing through it. These were encircled by a wreath of olive leaves, cut out of olive-green satin, and *appliqué* on the velvet. It was lined with crimson velvet, with a stiffening of buckram between back and front, and was bordered with rich crimson fringe.

On such and similar bannerets, various kinds of needlework may be employed with the happiest effect, with the exception of the ordinary crewel, or stem-stitch, which, though often used, is too flat and monotonous to be effective. But the basket-stitch, various kinds of couching, straight stitch, and the French knot are all very useful for either mottoes or devices. Satin stitch is used for small devices on flags which are to be ornamented on both sides, as the right side and the reverse of this stitch look alike; but of course it must not be employed for lettering, as it would read backwards. As to materials for this style of embroidery, all varieties of thread are used, according to the description and quality of the groundwork. Silk, gold and silver thread, arrasene, tapestry, and other wools, all are suitable.

If the banner is made of any rich material, such as plush, velvet, or satin, and is to be embroidered with gold or silver thread, it is best to work the pattern on strong linen or holland, and then cut it out and *appliqué* it in place on the banner with sewing silk. This is very often done even when common materials are used, as the danger of puckering is avoided, and the pattern stands out better.

An inexpensive variety of cloth of gold is made now, which can be bought for seven and sixpence a yard. This is excellent for monograms, crests, coats of arms and so on, cut out and *appliqué* on another material. Silver cloth, also, and white velvet are much used, but it will be understood that these are only applicable for the de-

coration of churches or houses, and cannot be used for banners required for outdoor demonstrations.

An exquisitely delicate banneret was made of white velvet, *appliqué*, and embroidered with gold and silver cloth and thread, and edged with gold fringe; the reverse was of crimson silk.

The shape of these bannerets is very various. They may be oblong, triangular, or oblong with the lower edge rounded, pointed, or vandyked, in fact the variety is almost endless. They are sometimes edged with worsted fringe, like the double banners, sometimes with braid. If worsted or silk fringe is used, there should be a tassel at each corner, and both fringe and tassels must match the cord by which it is suspended from the pole.

Besides these embroidered or *appliqué* banners and bannerets, large ones are frequently made with the devices painted upon them in oils; and by this means much more elaborate designs can be produced than in any other way. These painted banners are not so durable as the other kinds, as the paint is apt to crack and peel off, but they last a good while with care, and are very effective. It requires some practice to become expert in painting them, as fine work is entirely wasted. They must be done in bold strokes, for effect at a distance, in the same way as scene painting. If banners are to be seen closely, some form of needlework is greatly preferable; painting is only recommended for those to be carried in outdoor processions, or hung up at a good height in schoolrooms.

Very durable banners could be made by the tapestry painting which is now so fashionable, though not quite so brilliant in effect at first as oils.

But perhaps some of our readers are complaining that we tell them *how* to make, but not *what* to make; and certainly the choice of a suitable design is often the greatest difficulty of all.

Girls' first essays in banner making are generally for Sunday-school use, or Band of Hope. In either case the bearers will probably be boys, so the banner should not be too large. If a double-poled banner, two yards by one and a half is quite large enough; if a single banner, it should be about a yard and a half by one yard.

Probably the name of the school or society will be on the one side in large letters, and for the sake of clearness it is better to have nothing else on that side at all, unless the school has a badge of any kind, in which case it can be embroidered in the middle, with the inscription above and below it. On the other side there can be either a painted design or a motto, encircled by a wreath of leaves. Bands of Hope or other societies generally have some emblem which would occupy the reverse side of the banner, but if there is none, the ingenuity of the members must be exercised to find a motto short and to the point. "Touch not, Taste not," "Union is Strength," "Dare to do right" are some of the most commonly used for temperance societies, and short texts of Scripture, such as "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," for Sunday-schools.

The principles for making flags are so much the same as for banners that it is hardly necessary to give any special instructions, but as they are used on different occasions there is less scope for imagination, and a greater necessity for copying a good model correctly.

It is important, too, that the flag should be selected with some regard to its being appropriate to the occasion, and not only for the sake of the colours being pretty or the designs easy to copy. I once saw a house decorated profusely, in honour of some of the Royal family who were to pass that way, with large yellow quarantine flags, which was certainly not a pleasant welcome to the neighbourhood. There was no illness in the house, but the lady proprietor happened to have a quantity of yellow material, and, being entirely ignorant of the significance of the flag, she thought she could not do better than cut it up instead of buying fresh bunting.

In street decorations, all kinds of English flags are used, in addition to the pennons and streamers, which look gay, but have no particular meaning. Foreign residents in England display the flag of their own nation, and, if the demonstration is in honour of a distinguished personage from another country, his national standard should float side by side with our own.

The easiest way to obtain a copy for these national flags is to buy a sheet of the "flags of all nations," such as appeared in *The Boy's Own Paper* not long since. This will give the forms and proportions better than any description could do. The general rule as to size is that they should be half as deep as they are long. For small ones the bunting may be purchased ready stamped with various designs, but buying it by the yard it can only be had in the plain colours.

Flags, such as the American, consisting of stripes, are made of strips of bunting joined together, and not laid one upon another. They must always be the same on both sides.

To be quite orthodox, they should have a cord run through the hem round the edge, which slightly stiffens them, and prevents them hanging quite so limp.

Any figure, such as a lion, crown, or star, must be carefully cut out, first in paper, then in bunting, and the edges tacked under all round, and then run on to the flag.

VARIETIES.

Cheap Soap.

"Have you never observed," says Sydney Smith, "what a dislike servants have to anything cheap? They hate saving their masters' money. I tried this experiment with great success the other day:—

"Finding we consumed a great deal of soap, I sat down in my thinking chair and took the soap question into consideration, and I found reason to suspect that we were using a very expensive article when a much cheaper one would serve the purpose better. I ordered half a dozen pounds of both sorts, but took the precaution of changing the papers on which the prices were marked before giving them into the hands of Betty.

"'Well, Betty, which soap do you find washes best?'

"'Oh, please sir, the dearest, in the blue paper; it makes a lather as well again as the other!'

"'Well, Betty, you shall always have it then;' and thus the unsuspecting Betty saved me some pounds a year and washed the clothes better."

Cultivated Minds.—The mind of man, like any soil, rises in value according to the degree of its cultivation.

Saving Everything.—Woe be to her that says everything that can be said.

Nature and Art.

Art lives on Nature's alms—is weak and poor;
Nature, herself, has unexhausted store.

Heavenly Promises.—It is only when our path leads down into some dark gorge of trial, where no sunbeams fall, that we learn the worth of the lamps of heavenly promise. Their beams shone dimly as we walked in the sunshine of human joy and strong earthly hope; but now in the darkness they flash out in brilliancy and change night into day.

The Maxims of Saint Theresa.—Do not be curious about matters which do not concern you. Say no evil of anyone but yourself, and do not listen to any. Never ridicule anyone. Do not contend in words about things of no consequence. Do not exaggerate. Assert nothing as a fact of which you are not sure. Give no hasty opinions. Avoid empty tattle. Do not draw comparisons. Do not be singular in food or dress, and be not loud in your laughter. Be gentle to others and severe to yourself. Speak courteously to servants. Do not note other people's faults. Note your own faults and their good points. Never boast. Never make excuses. Never do anything when alone which you would not do before others.

Love and Jealousy.—Jealousy is always said to be the offspring of love. Yet, unless the parent makes haste to strangle the child, the child will not rest till it has poisoned the parent.

Writing with Ease.—Hardly anything is so difficult in writing as to write with ease.

In Eager Haste.—The great cry with everybody is "Get on! get on!" just as if the world were travelling express. How astonished people will be when they arrive in heaven to find the angels, who are so much wiser than they, laying no schemes to be made archangels!

On the Stream of Time.—Thought is the wind, knowledge is the sail, and mankind the vessel.

Look to the Light.—Children always turn towards the light. O that all of us would in this continue to be like little children.

Friendship and Malice.—Friendship closes its eyes rather than see the moon eclipsed, while malice denies that it is ever at the full.

Double Acrostic.

A king, who seiz'd a foreign kingdom not his own,
For nearly twenty years he wisely rul'd it well;
In after years his grandson boldly claim'd the throne,
But, far less fortunate, ere many months had flown,
Resisting an invader, in the strife he fell.

1. Here once dwelt Saxon thanes; and Saxon hands
A fortress rais'd upon a green declivity.
Now, on this spot, a splendid ducal palace stands;
And here a hapless queen, bereft of crown and lands,
Pass'd many restless months of sad captivity.

2. The name of Her who led a persecuted life,
Because her kinship with the king too closely lay;
Fear'd, lest her name should prove the rallying point for strife,
Denied the love of him who sought his cherish'd wife,
In prison pent, her gentle spirit pined away.

3. How many heroes this one Scottish House doth yield!
Martinique, Afric, India, China, Syria, Spain.
Th' intrepid soldier, daring death in ev'ry field;
Th' historian, who his calm impartial pen doth wield;
The scholar, with his thoughtful, calculating brain.