

multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and singing, 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men.'" For one brief moment the pearly gates were ajar, and Earth looked into Heaven.

The shepherds stood amazed, and gazed with wondering, awestruck eyes at the shiny messengers of joy above them, around them, and in their midst, while through the silent midnight air rang forth that glorious song, like only to that first song of joy unheard by mortal ears, when "the stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy."

The wondrous harmony grew fainter, and then ceased. The light faded, the darkness fell again, and the angels were gone away from them into heaven. Then the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass."

Down the hill they hastened, hurrying in the darkness over the rough stones in their path,

across the valleys, over the streams, heeding nothing, nor caring how they stumbled and fell, bruising their tired feet against the rocks; on they went with haste, speaking, perchance, not a word, but with burning hearts desiring to see that wondrous thing; onward they hastened, till now for a moment they slackened their pace at the foot of a rising hill, and drew their breath. The night was passing away, and a faint shimmer in the east heralded the coming day. Then the shepherds went on; they climbed the hill, up the stony path, and entered the little city or Bethlehem; along the crooked, straggling street they went; they passed the silent, slumbering dwellings, and now they drew nigh the place—the place the angel had told them they should find. They stood on the threshold, and silent, wondering, paused.

Far away in the east the dawn was breaking; over the grey expanse of heaven was spreading a soft and tender glow; the little

clouds caught a tinge of golden light. Nature was awaking from her sleep. The night had flown, the sky was now aglow with flame, the sun was rising, rising over the hill, and as the shepherds held their breath and paused, he rose, and with a mighty bound o'er earth and sky he rushed before them in a flood of glory, and did homage to the *Sun of Righteousness*, his Lord and King!

The shepherds stood one moment more, then turned and entered in.

Cradled in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, with His holy mother praying near, there lay the Heavenly Babe—such was the sign. On their knees they fell, and, bathed in the glory of the golden sun, they worshipped and adored.

O angels and archangels, prophets, saints, and martyrs; O striving, struggling children of men; O erring souls and sinners, lift up your hearts!

"We lift them up unto the Lord!"

HOW TO MAKE PRESENTS FOR THE POOR.

By JOSEPHA CRANE.

CAST-OFF clothing is constantly given by the charitable, either directly to those poor with whom they are acquainted, or else to societies which undertake to dispose of what is sent to the best advantage. Here are a few suggestions which, if acted upon, would very much enhance the value of your gifts, if you are among those who wisely dispose of what they find no further use for, instead of hoarding it up in obedience to that detestable saying that if you keep a thing seven years you will find some use for it. Probably you will; but the clothes will not have improved by keeping, and storing up a lot of old things that have been worn does not seem as if it would be quite a wholesome plan.

Before you give clothes away you should mend them up a little. Poor people, curiously enough, mend and repair clothing very badly as a rule; and even if they do it well, they have less time than you in all probability have, and the chances are very great that if you send them in an unmented state they will be worn as they are, and slatternly habits thus fostered.

I strongly deprecate the giving away of old finery to very poor people. Now do not misunderstand me, and imagine I wish the poor never to have anything pretty. I desire nothing of the kind, and the extremely ugly clothing of the British poor always strikes me in most unpleasing contrast with that seen on foreigners of the same class of life. The latter, however poor, has a certain element of picturesqueness about it, and it is seldom as dirty and frowsy as are the habiliments of an indigent materfamilias of a London slum. While regretting that this should be the case, I still would discourage their being given dresses which have been smart and pretty when new; hats with old feathers and limp artificial flowers; torn or tumbled lace, and things of that kind. Remember that, particularly in the case of young girls, the wearing such tawdry finery may do much real harm. It may make them attractive in the streets, and that in itself has its obvious dangers to girls in that class. It also encourages, or even begins, the taste for fine things; and that again is an evil often ending in wages—even character—being spent and sacrificed in the endeavour to procure them.

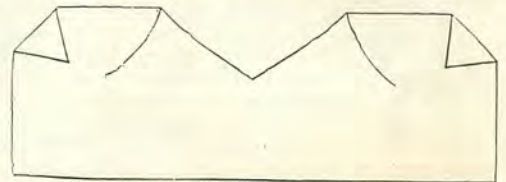
The expenditure of a very little time and trouble will enable you to alter and modify

many a piece of shabby finery, and turn it into what is useful and yet not necessarily ugly. Take off the limp feather or flowers, and put a bow of ribbon in its place; take the lace off the dress that has done duty at some garden-parties, and, if very smart in itself, do not give it to a very poor person, but cut it up, if you can, for the wear of children.

If you have old boots to give away, you can get them mended roughly and cheaply by some cobbler, and thus made serviceable for immediate wear. It is not at all necessary to have this done as if for your own use, but for a small sum patches and mendings can be done to which the poor will find no objection.

Now if you wish to make a very useful thing for giving away, you will find that you can utilise pieces of stuff, etc., in the manufacture of habit-shirts, made of serge, etc., and lined with flannel, the whole being bound all round with braid. Our elder readers will remember quite well the habit-shirts of their youth—a V-shaped arrangement which used to be worn with the collar and made of cambric. Now

the armhole. *These are warm and comfortable*, and can be made in several sizes; but



they are better suited for the wear of children than grown persons.

For all that you make for the poor you should have good patterns. I have often seen underlinen intended for their use made in such extraordinary shapes as only to be suited for very phenomenal beings. Let the sewing be strong and good, and remember that in the use of the poor the clothing has rough wear, and requires to be able to resist it.

Invalids find that a "nightingale" is very useful to have. It was originally invented by Florence Nightingale for sick soldiers in the Crimea, hence its name. Two yards of flannel are required, and it is made after this fashion—



The slit in the middle forms an opening which goes round the neck, tied together with strings. The armholes are made by turning over the front corners. Nothing can be simpler, and for wearing in bed it is most comfortable—often far more so than a jacket or shawl.

It is not known by all that brown paper is a non-conductor of heat, and that it therefore can be turned to excellent use in forming warm quilts for the bed. Lay the paper between layers of any material you like—Turkey twill, as bright and cheap, being a very good thing to choose.

These are mere suggestions. If you have the knack of making the most of things, and turning odds and ends to account, you can out of scraps often thrown away make some very nice articles, which will make excellent presents for the poor.



this same thing, made much larger, and in some warm material, will be found most acceptable to wear under an old shawl or jacket. They are often of use to children, and can be made in all sizes. They can button down the front, and between the back and front pieces you can sew a piece of braid or elastic, through which the arm passes, and which serves to keep the whole in its place.

For those who are not very skilled knitters, very easily-made vests for children can be made by two square pieces of ordinary knitting in wool, joined together at the corners by a narrow band of crochet or knitting forming