

FANCY-BOX MAKING.

SOME years ago I had the pleasure of visiting the principal manufactories at Birmingham, Sheffield, Barnsley, Manchester, and other places. At a factory in Birmingham, which the kindness of the proprietors enabled me to view, I was much struck with the simple way in which the boxes used in the business were made. I have since then often taught children to make these pretty and useful little boxes, and the work has given them so much pleasure that I venture to think some readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER will find it an amusing occupation for younger sisters and brothers.

The materials required are a sheet of cardboard, a sharp penknife, a foot rule or a T square, a sheet of fancy paper, a sheet of gold or silver paper or of plain coloured paper (such as is used to line work-boxes with), some very smooth paste, and a small brush for it. Something is also required on which to model the boxes; this last is the only thing that cannot be procured quite easily; the simplest way is to get a carpenter to cut a block the size and shape required, oval, round, or square, as you fancy, but of course the block will only do for one-sized boxes. I have generally managed to find some wooden or metal thing that answered the purpose very well. A wooden pill-box makes a good model for a small round box (Fig. 1); some wood bricks out of an ordinary box of bricks gummed together and allowed to dry, can be used for many different shapes, and when finished with, can easily be washed, and return to their proper use. Small tins also make good moulds.

Round and oval boxes are much easier to make than square or angular ones, so we will begin by making a round one, and will suppose that in the absence of anything better, you are going to use a wooden pill-box to work on. The most important thing is to be very exact in your measurements, it is impossible without, to make a neat box.

Suppose the diameter of box to be an inch and three-quarters, cut two rounds of cardboard, to the size for top and bottom of box; to do this, stand the box on the cardboard and draw a line close round it, then cut with penknife close to, but outside line; after making one box you will easily understand that this little margin is to make the edges of the top and bottom level with the side, to allow in fact for the thickness of the cardboard. Next cut two rounds of fancy paper, the line smaller than the pieces of cardboard. Suppose the mould to be one inch deep, cut a strip of cardboard exactly one inch wide (allow no margin); for length you must measure round the outside of your box, but it will probably require to be a little more than five inches and a half long; the strip must meet exactly round box, not wrap over; cut a second strip of cardboard seven-eighths of an inch wide, but nearly a quarter of an inch shorter than first piece. Cut a strip of fancy paper seven-eighths of an inch wide, but half-an-inch longer than first piece of cardboard, be very careful that the edges of the paper are very even, no jags. Next cut some long strips of gold or coloured paper three-eighths or half-an-inch wide.

Now take your mould in your hand and bend the longest strip of cardboard round it; where it meets paste a little piece of thin paper to keep it in place (stamp paper answers very well for this), put the top of the box on, paste one of the narrow slips of gold paper and put round the top of box as a binding (C, in Fig. 1), press it down carefully; put the bottom of the box on in the same way. Be careful that the strips are sufficiently damp with the paste for you to be able to press the creases very flat on the top and bottom of the box. Let it dry a little, then paste and put the strip of fancy paper round the box, taking care that the join which will lap over a little comes on a different side to the join in the

cardboard, put the rounds of fancy paper on top and bottom of box; if your papers are accurately cut, you will have a fancy box with gilt or coloured edges. You must now put it aside to get thoroughly dry (do not dry by a fire), when dry cut round the box one third from the top (see dotted line, Fig. 1). The easiest way to do this is to use a sharp knife. After marking with pencil, remove the two parts from the mould, then take your shorter strip of cardboard, paste all along but only half the width of it, then place inside the bottom of the box (to form C, Fig. 2), letting the join come the opposite side of the join in the outside cardboard, and the paste towards bottom of box; the strip should not lap over. Box and lid are now finished as Fig. 2. An oval box is made in the same way.

A square cornered box.—We will suppose you mean to make a box two inches wide, four inches long, and three inches high; you will cut the top and bottom, allowing the thickness of a line larger than your block, then cut a strip of cardboard three inches wide, twelve inches and a quarter long, bend this round the block and make sure that the quarter inch (as this depends on the thickness of the cardboard) is enough to allow for the difference in the size of the box and the block; it must fit it tightly, the seam coming at a corner, then lay on a board and cut the corners with your knife nearly half through (dotted lines, Fig. 3). Cut the strip of cardboard for lining box two inches and a half wide and twelve inches long, partially cut through corners in the same way, the measurements for the inside like the outside depends a little on the thickness of cardboard used, when the inside is put in do not forget that the join must come the opposite end to the seam in the outside, cut the fancy paper by the same rule as for round box, that is to say just a trifle smaller to allow the gilt or coloured edge to show, except the strip to go round the box, which must always

be long enough to lap over. In placing the cardboard round the model take care that the cardboard is bent to a sharp angle, otherwise when your box is done you may find the lid will only go on one way, the corners not being true. Rub the sides flat with the back of your knife, fasten the corner with stamp paper, put on top and bottom, bind and finish as you did the round box, cutting off lid when thoroughly dry. Hexagon or octagon boxes are made in the same way, but the more angles there are the more measurements and the greater accuracy is required. Pretty boxes may be made by covering after putting on the gilt edges with white or light coloured paper, and painting or sketching on them, or light coloured velvet may be used and painted on. But though paste is best to use with paper, if you intend to cover with velvet, the surface on which it is to be placed, must first be covered with thin glue. Stamp boxes with gilt edges, and a halfpenny stamp on top sell at bazaars (Fig. 5).

This work has the advantages of kinder-garten work in teaching children to use their fingers, and to measure with exactitude, I have found it much enjoyed and much appreciated as a pastime.

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