

STAR DRIFT WORK.



THIS is a simple and effective way to decorate shabby furniture, old boxes, and picture frames. Chairs should be treated thus. First scrub them thoroughly all over with strong soda water.

When quite dry, lay on smoothly a coat of enamel, but, if the chairs are not entirely free from all moisture whatsoever, the paint will not adhere satisfactorily. Great care must be taken to slash the brush quickly backwards and forwards as a house painter works, then the enamel flows well together and dries with an even surface. It is also important that no drops should be allowed to stray to the edges and dry there, or the work will have the appearance of an old sun-blistered barn door. While the enamel is still wet, sprinkle it lightly with gold-dust, such as is sold by Italian warehousemen in packets at 4½d each. The best way to distribute this gold-dust evenly is to fill a small dry camel's hair brush with the powder and shake it lightly over the wet surface of the enamel. This process, if performed delicately and quickly, is very effective, and entirely dispenses with the common look which spoils most enamelled furniture. Autumn green enamel looks very well with the gold; white, also, is charming, but would soon look tawdry after a few days of fog.

This kind of decoration would appeal especially to a girl who, arriving perhaps at the end of a large family, has to use in her special sanctum the furniture which has stood the storms of all her predecessors. All that is

necessary in such a case to procure a pretty room, is the permission of the head of the household and the really modest sum of 1s. 3d.

Many a girl suffers from an antiquated looking-glass which is apparently spending its last years of life in her bedroom. These, though possibly ugly, may be quickly converted into something pleasant to the eye by being painted with enamel and sprinkled with gold as above. If it be a large glass, or is cracked, or is deficient in quicksilver in parts, it might be draped over the offending part with a little cheap silk or real art muslin. And let no one think here that I am advocating dust traps, those horrors of good housekeepers, for frequent shakings and occasional washings of the offending drapery will remove all cause of complaint, or better still, prevent it. Any girl may do this much of a laundry maid's work without difficulty by washing out the drapery in her bedroom basin, rolling it smoothly in a towel, and, when nearly dry, passing a hot iron over it. Neither soda nor starch are required for this very simple operation, as the first would remove too much colour, and the other that softness which is essential to all good drapery. The cheapest Pongee silk, that at 1s. 0½d. the yard, even, washes very well, and, in the opinion of some folk, is more silky after the washing than before. It certainly drapes better.

A PRETTY GLOVE AND HANDKERCHIEF BOX.

Star drift work is novel and pretty applied in the following way:—Take a cigar box in the shape of a double cube, strip all paper off it, detach the lid, and thoroughly scrub the whole thing with soda water as in the case of

the chairs and looking-glass. Then paint it all over, inside and out, sprinkling the outside with gold-dust; but on the outside of the lid guide the brush carefully in sprinkling, so that the powder in falling forms the word "Gloves." It is preferable (and easier) that the word should be in a flowing round hand. Then, and this, to my thinking, is the chief beauty of the whole performance, fasten the detached lid to the body of the box with ribbon of a colour to suit the paint, or, preferably, with gold braid. This should be affixed by means of fancy brass nails, at a penny the dozen, and the end of the braid which comes on the top of the lid should be brought to a point with three nails, thus—



Two of these hinges are sufficient, but if three be preferred, a longer one may be placed in the middle, the two others, as before, of equal length and situated about an inch from the end. These hinges, especially in the gold braid, give the box an archaic appearance which is highly pleasing. If the braid be a little tarnished, this effect is much enhanced.

A handkerchief box to match would be done the same way, the shape of the box being a shallow square, with "Kerchiefs" written upon it.

Of course, if preferred, the initials of the person for whom the boxes are intended may be substituted for both "Gloves" and "Kerchiefs."

PAMELA BULLOCK.

BARMAIDS AND WAITRESSES IN RESTAURANTS, THEIR WORK AND TEMPTATIONS.



to the character of the work itself, and the area in which it is performed.

People who would not hesitate to go into the foulest London slums, if, by so doing, they could render help or expose a wrong, would draw a line at entering public-houses or restaurants, and even if they overcame this objection, and went in with a desire to understand the true condition of the girls who serve in them, they would probably accept their first impression and come away with the idea that such nice-looking, well-dressed, cheerful girls needed none of their help and sympathy, nor any improvement in their condition. We need hardly say that this first impression would be quite wrong.

At all events, be the cause what it may, these girls and their work have not partici-

pated in any of the benefits which have been showered upon other classes of girl-bread-winners during the last few years.

Yet of all occupations undertaken by girls for a living, there is none more difficult and dangerous than that of serving at the "bar," and waiting in restaurants, nor any that calls out less the sympathy of outsiders.

Strangely enough all other classes of girl-workers have their friends, advisers and helpers among the good and kind of the "upper ten thousand," as well as their clubs and associations for mental improvement and recreation; these girls, on the contrary, who need them most, are of all bread-winners the most lonely and friendless, and were it not for one or two ladies who devote their lives to their service, I do not know to whom they could turn for sympathy and advice in their many and serious difficulties.

We do not doubt in the very least that work is honourable, but we do see that work differs widely in character; some of it being quite simple and demanding only ordinary industry, time and attention, while other, on the contrary, is so complex, so exhausting, so beset with difficulties, and exposed to temptation, that we wonder sometimes where the honour comes in.

Such is the work of barmaids and waitresses, and the marvel is that girls can be found to do it, yet there are many thousands so engaged, not because they like it, but because they know no other way of gaining a living, not only for themselves, but for those

depending on them. Many of them come from the country, having been brought up in country inns kept by their parents; a large number are farmers' daughters, and some have even been governesses, while not a few are the daughters of clergymen and solicitors.

Some of them pathetically said to me, "The lives we live were never meant for girls to endure; we are regarded as mere machines for bringing money to the firms, not as living creatures with feelings that can be hurt and bodies that can be worn-out."

One girl with whom I spoke said with tears in her eyes, "The modest, well-behaved ones among us suffer most; their lives are one long torture."

The condition of barmaids and waitresses varies according to the houses or firms by whom they are engaged, some of whom feed and lodge the girls well, and allow them sufficient leisure for the exercise of mind and body, and still more, by their careful supervision they minimise the temptations to which the girls are exposed. Naturally, these employers form a very small minority. There are certain temperance restaurants in which the girls are fairly fed, paid, and housed, and where they are less exposed to temptation than those engaged in restaurants that sell alcohol.

But there are conditions and serious evils which belong to all houses alike, whether they be licensed houses, temperance restaurants, railway station restaurants, or hotel restaurants, and when we learn what these are, we