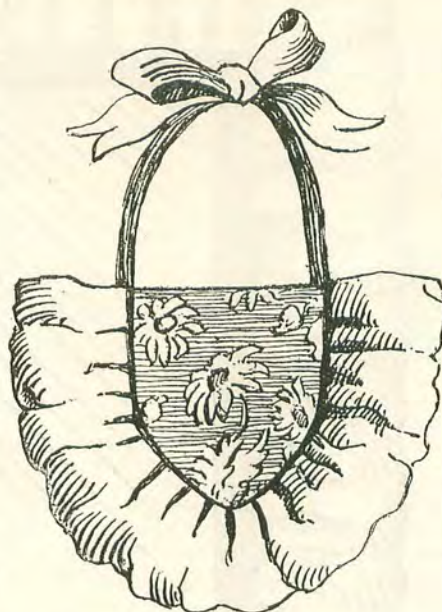


CRETONNE KNICK-KNACKS.

BY DORA DE BLAQUIÈRE.

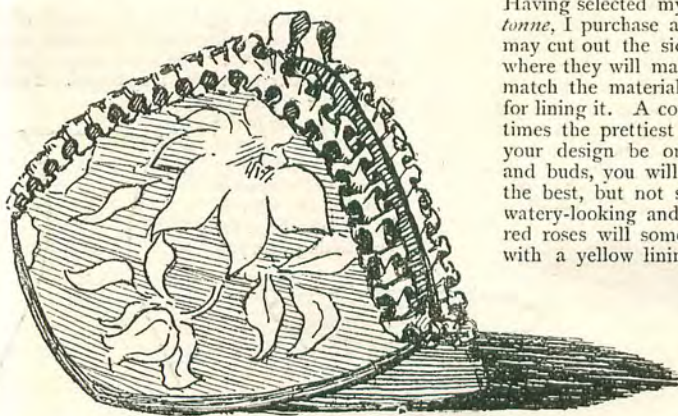
PERHAPS the easiest things to manufacture in the way of fancy-work, suitable for presents—really useful presents—to others, are the many articles which we can make out of *cretonnes*, chintz and sateen. They are all called *cretonne* because I find few people discriminate between them. However, we shall have to do so before we begin to use them; and then we shall see that *cretonne* means a material rather rough on the surface, and thick in comparison with the other two. It is also cheaper, and since its introduction has been a perfect boon to the house-mother, who is obliged to think of her pence and shillings. For myself I prefer chintz, bright and glossy, and so old a material as to be connected with all our visions of delightful drawing-rooms a century or more ago. Chintz has usually a great charm in a country drawing-room, especially one which looks on a garden, and has vistas of trees and distant blue hills. Sateen will, I daresay, be connected in most people's minds with down quilts or *duvets* (as they are called in France) for the prettiest are used to cover them; and also the pillows which are employed on the sofa, when not covered with a more expensive material. I have used all three, and my choice has been generally determined by the prettiness of the design, and the special purpose for which it has been needed. Chintz is rarely available on account of its stiffness; but the beauty of the flowers which one sometimes finds upon it makes it very tempting.

The other material we shall generally need is some thick brown cardboard, and a very strong pair of scissors with which to cut it; or indeed, many people who are accustomed to use a sharp knife will probably prefer it to anything else. But, personally speaking, I prefer the scissors, as I cannot control the knife sufficiently to avoid cutting my fingers,

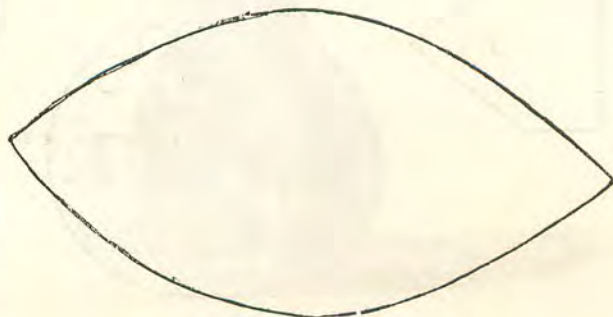


or making useless and wasteful cuts in my material.

The first thing we will begin upon is what is called in Canada a "beech-nut basket," on account of its being in the shape of those curious small nuts of the beech tree, which I daresay you know quite well. The illustration of this is so accurately drawn, that you will have no difficulty in copying it, nor in recognising that the design on the *cretonne* should be one in which you can find an entire pattern for each side, if possible; or if not, at least for the two sides that are visible. Having selected my sateen or *cretonne*, I purchase a yard, so that I may cut out the sides of my basket where they will match; and then I match the material with a sateen for lining it. A contrast has sometimes the prettiest effect. Thus, if your design be one of pink roses and buds, you will find a pale blue the best, but not so pale as to be watery-looking and insipid. Dark-red roses will sometimes look well with a yellow lining, and a wood-



A BEECH-NUT BASKET.



brown lining will also look effective with blue, or a green lining with the pink roses may be nicer than the blue.

The pleated ruching is generally made of a woollen braid, which should match something in the pattern of the *cretonne*. For instance, if there be brown leaves, use a brown braid, and I prefer a neutral kind of lining to bright red or a green, unless these hues very much



WORK-BAG FOR STOCKINGS.

preponderate in the design you have selected. If you make a peculiarly grand bag, you must use a satin ribbon; but in general the braid looks quite well enough, and remains clean longer. Of course I need not tell you that in all that you do in the way of *cretonne* work, you will need to have silks, and coloured cottons for sewing, to match your materials. The lining generally has to be considered, and you should devote some care to it, for it is exactly in these small things that the beauty and completeness of your work will lie. Never be guilty in this, nor anything else, of saying, "Oh that will do." In general the very utterance of this phrase means the contrary, and that it will not do at all.

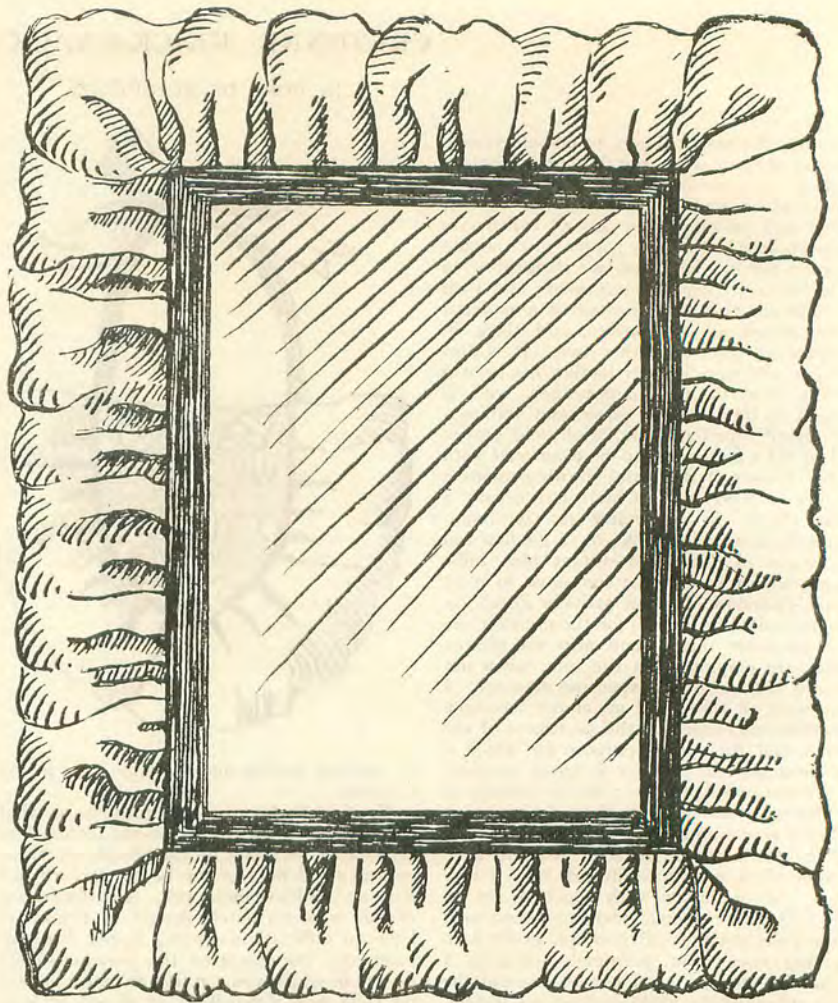
The size of one of the shaped sides of the beech-nut basket is 10½ inches at the longest part by 6 inches at the widest part. If you cut out pieces of cardboard by these dimensions, you will find it easy to shape it afterwards; or still better, make yourself a paper pattern of it, and be sure that you shape it correctly. When you have made your foundation shapes, the next thing is to cover them, first with the *cretonne*, tacking it on, and then with the lining, which you must turn in, to meet the covering evenly, and then sew very neatly, over and over, all round with either silk or cotton to match the lining. Then cover these seams, when you have put your basket together, with a flat braid of the same kind which you have chosen for the *ruche*. I have seen baskets made without this, but do not think they looked neat enough, and besides, the braid forms a kind of decoration. The basket is finished off by two loops of braid. This is a very useful shape for a travelling work-basket, or still better, to hold knitting or crochet.

The next illustration represents a bag for stockings, into which we can put those which require to be mended, together with all the requisites for reparation—needles, wool, and cotton-darnings, scissors and thimble. All these it is best to keep together; and in some bags there are small loops for the scissors, and an inside case for needles and cottons. There are two shaped sides, which are about six inches long and five inches across. They are made up exactly as I have described

for the others; the cover of *cretonne* put on first, and the lining afterwards, and carefully over-sewn all round. The puff which goes round is seven inches wide, or perhaps eight, and about three-quarters of a yard in length. It is neatly gathered, and then sewn on the wrong side to each side, a piece of work which requires great neatness of handling. This puffed portion may either be made of the flowered sateen, or a plain one; and the bag itself is often made of brown holland and red braid.

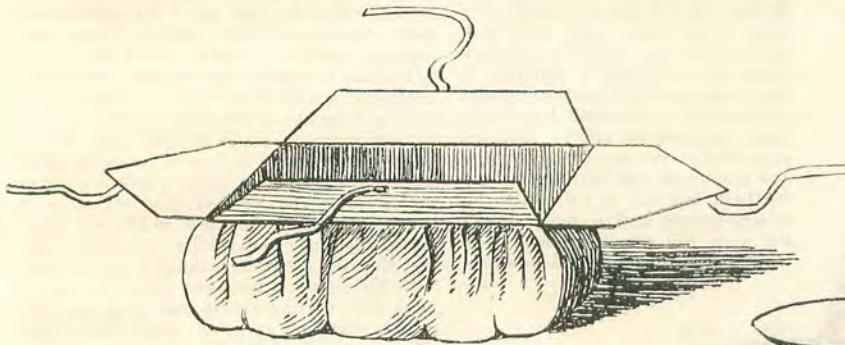
The vase in *cretonne* I saw when in America last year. It is intended for flowers, and has a glass or tin which fits into it, to hold them, and which can be taken out and washed. The vase I saw was made of a *cretonne*, with bright red roses on it, upon a yellowish ground, and it was lined with a red sateen. The method of making-up was that usually adopted, but all the stitching was done on the outside of the jar of course. The size of the pieces of cardboard for the foundation was four and a half inches across for the bottom piece, and fourteen inches long by seven inches at the widest part of the round. If, however, you possess a vase of this shape, I should measure it, and cut out my pattern by that.

The handkerchief-case is a very useful and pretty novelty. I saw this also in America; indeed, with one exception, all my selections come from thence. This article may be made of any material, and more costly if desired than *cretonne*, but the latter answers well and looks very pretty. The design explains itself sufficiently, and consists of two sides, two ends, which constitute the flaps, and a foundation on which the puffed sides are sewn, which must be covered exactly as the flaps are done. The length of this was about ten inches by five inches wide, but the dimensions are not a matter of importance, as many people would perhaps like to have a larger one. The width of the puffing is from six to eight inches, and the length; and you will require the size of the foundation, and then

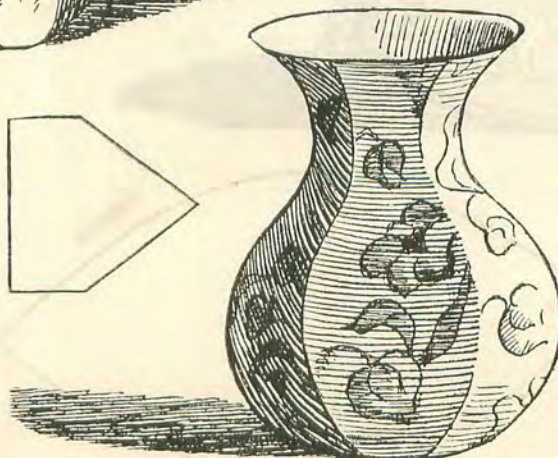
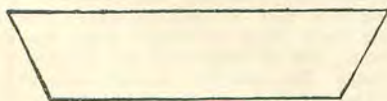
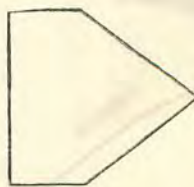
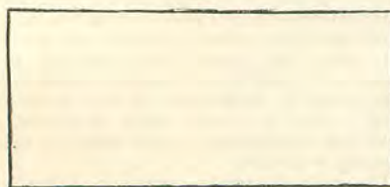


FRAME OF CRETONNE OR SILK.

to allow as much again for the length of the puff. It must be lined with the same sateen as the other pieces. The top is supported and held together by a wire foundation. This, if you have a pair of pliers, you can make for yourself. But if not, you must pay a visit to the nearest workman who is likely to make it for you, taking with you

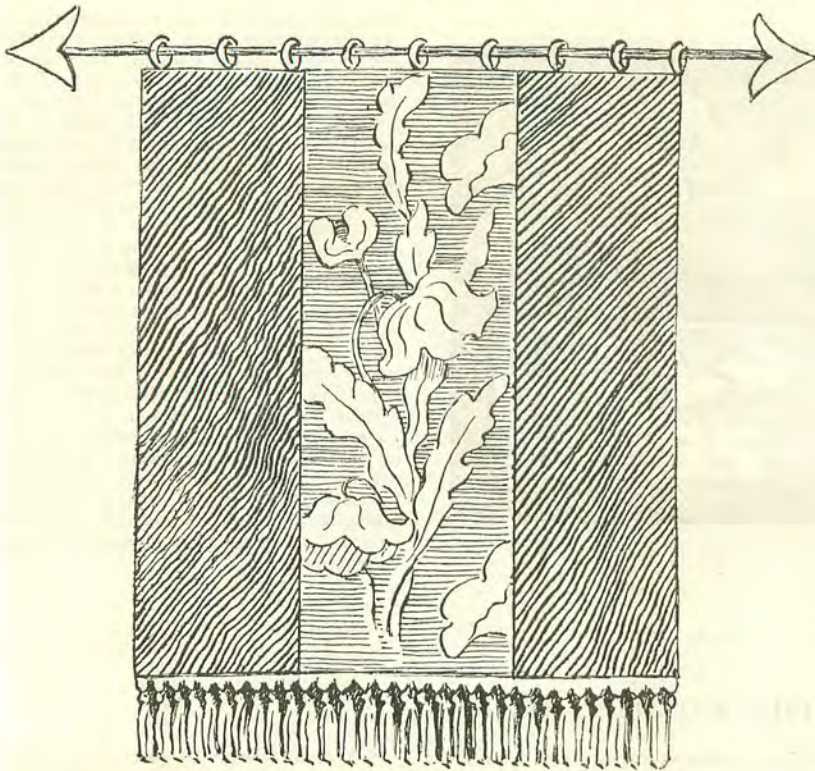


HANDKERCHIEF-CASE.



A VASE IN CRETONNE.





HANGING BAG FOR A DOOR.

the paper pattern of the foundation-piece, and having the wire bent to the square shape of that. A good strong wire is needed, and you should get it well joined. Your puffing is gathered over this, but first I should cover it by winding some tape or strips of cotton round it, so that you may be able to sew on the flaps securely. This shape of case is a change from the old-fashioned handkerchief-satchet, and holds the handkerchiefs more easily.

I must begin by confessing that I have usually seen an old and shabby picture frame used for this *cretonne* one which I have illustrated, as a foundation, and this is probably its true value, in helping people to make old things look new and bright. But there may be more aspiring minds amongst my readers, and they may prefer to make the foundation frame themselves. In this case it can be made with a wooden back, the ordinary picture-frame back, if strong enough; or even a millboard back, and a front of the same, cut out to a similar shape, as shown in the sketch, so as to form the framework of the picture. The black band may be of velvet, or may be an ordinary black or black and gold beading, which can be purchased by the foot (in length) from any picture dealer. One frame of this kind that I saw was of yellow silk, and had a black velvet band; and this I think had a very effective and pretty appearance and was a novelty to me. Engravings and photographs look best in these frames, and they require a rather dark wall as a background. They go beautifully with black oak furniture, and the idea may be used in many other ways, for the small china shelves, book-cases, and hanging brackets of all kinds.

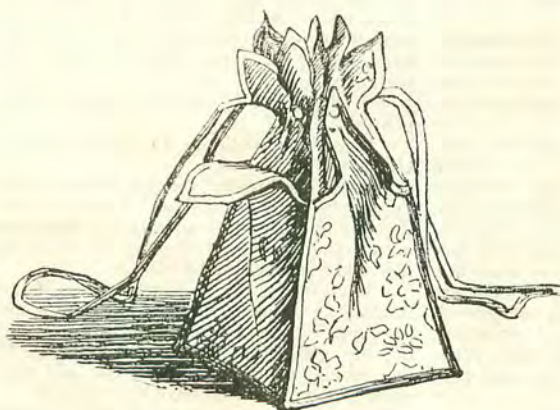
I found my next a hanging bag, used for drawing-room dusters in the drawing-room, or for hanging behind the bedroom door for soiled handkerchiefs and collars. It is a very pretty ornament for doors and is in no one's way. It is made of a breadth of very pretty *cretonne* and two breadths of velveteen, and it is lined with a sateen to match the velvet. The fringe should also match. It may open either at the back or at the top, but there is

generally a small opening left at the right-hand side of the *cretonne* in front; at the upper part, just enough to slip in the hand. It is finished with brass rings at the top, and a small brass rod with ends as well as hooks to screw into the door. These can be found at the ironmonger's. One bag that I saw had a stair-rod fitted to it, and also the stair-rod clips as well. In a country where the shops are often a long way off, people become very clever at adapting everything to their use, and it takes a very great difficulty to prevent them carrying out an idea.

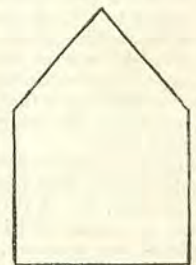
The next thing is a real travelling workbag,

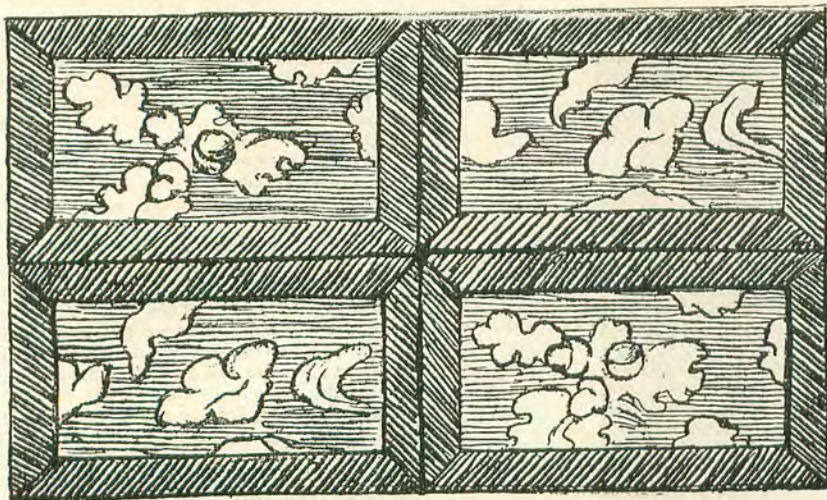
which is so yielding in its nature, that it will slip in anywhere, and hold anything in reason. The materials required are a narrow binding ribbon, and either a pretty sateen or cotton of any kind, or even a silk or satin. My original bag, which was bought in Paris, was of a greenish brown colour, with gold embroidery on it. About eight yards of ribbon are required and about a yard of material. The shapes of the design are thus measured. The foundation is five inches square. The length of the long side is eight inches by five, and the shorter one six inches by five. These sides must be bound at the top to begin with, and then the sides bound together. The bottom square is put in last. Then comes the string casing, which must be twice run round, and lastly, the two strings which draw up on opposite sides are run in with a bodkin, and tied neatly.

My last illustration is quite Canadian, I am told, in its origin, and it may be so; but it is very difficult to say where anything does originate in these days. So I will leave the question open, only saying that I have never seen these pretty and oriental-looking table-cloths anywhere else. An old table-cloth, if clean, may be used for the foundation-cloth. It may be faded and well-worn too, without anyone's seeing it, as it is only, after all, the foundation. When you have acquired this, you will have to take it as a guide for the size of your squares. Their usual size, however, is about a quarter of a yard square, unless you choose to adopt the shape shown in our illustration, which is long, about six inches by ten, but the square shape is rather the best for making-up. I always purchase several separate yard lengths of various *cretonnes*, half a dozen or more varieties, and if it be yard wide, you should have sixteen squares for each yard you buy. You might begin with four yards of four different patterns that you think would go well together. Yellows and reds there must be in abundance, and a paler yard to make a change, but the colours must be rather evenly distributed, not intense dark, nor vivid light. Cut your material into squares, we will say, and begin to lay them on the foundation, edges to edges, flatly, and tack them firmly round each edge. The black lines that you see are simply black woollen braid, of which you will require a whole piece, which I



TRAVELLING BAG FOR WORK.





TABLECLOTH IN CRETONNE AND BRAID.

CHAPTER II.

SHIRLEY ELTON was gone, and the light had died out of Allison's days. All that was left her was the memory of the parting and his last kind words. He had spoken cheerfully in order to dispel her gloom, and when he had seen the tears she could not repress, he had stooped and kissed her, for nobody was nigh. Moreover, he had detached a little golden heart from his watch-chain and placing a tiny spray of forget-me-not gathered from the river's edge, within it, had put it in her hand—to keep for his sake.

"If I can ever be of service to you or your family, you have my address and know where I am to be found; do not hesitate to ask it. Good-bye, dear child."

That was a very different Allison the artist left behind to the girl she had been when he first came to Rivermead.

Then, she was an innocent, light-hearted girl, whose highest ambition had been to settle down contentedly in that cottage on the hills and make Dan Humphrey the happy man he expected to be.

Now, no careless merriment called the arch dimples of her cheeks into play. Her looks were sombre, her dark eyes heavy with the gloom of inward trouble, her thoughts a tangle of hot emotions, in which rebellion against the unkind fate which had made her what she was and seemed likely to keep her so, was strongest. She separated herself from the company of all who loved her, and passed hours in solitary wanderings and profitless communings with self in her own little chamber, answering unwillingly to any call upon her services.

Her mother was patient, but the ferryman grew angry and often launched into reproachful language.

Matters being in so unsatisfactory a condition, Carne and his wife took counsel together, and came to the conclusion that it would be advisable under the circumstances to hasten the wedding-day in the hope that Allison would come the more quickly to her right mind. The ferryman undertook a consultation on the subject with Dan and returned from his errand elated with success.

Dan was only too pleased that his marriage

should be hastened rather than delayed, as he had begun to fear might be the case. There would be one more lamb for him to tend, one, too, that he was longing to take into his strong arms and shelter in his bosom. He was oppressed, however, with a fear that the girl might be unwilling, but Carne combated this doubt with some amount of bluster.

"The girl must do as she's bid, or I'll know the reason why," he said. "She has been fashious enough of late, and 'tis time that this is ended and no more trouble made."

If the ferryman expected to find his daughter amenable when he made known the decision that had been arrived at, he was disappointed. Allison's face turned of an ashen white at the announcement, but she said nothing. Her eyes, however, flashed ominously and she set her lips tightly. The symptoms betokened mischief. Leaning carelessly against the open cottage door with head tilted back, she beat a tattoo upon the brick floor with one foot.

"Well, Ally?" questioned her mother gently.

"Have you nothing to say?" queried Carne, raising his voice.

"Only this," replied the girl without looking up, "that it's too soon. I promised for the autumn, and now you and—Dan have been laying your heads together to make me marry him at once, and I will not."

"Hoity-toity!" exclaimed her father roughly, "we give ourselves airs do we, and set ourselves agen lawful authority, but 'twon't do, my girl. Dan and me, we've made up our minds, so married you'll be and took good care on, come this day four weeks."

It was unwise to bring the shepherd's name forward. Allison's eyes blazed, she lifted her head proudly, and replied in defiant tones—

"I've made up my mind too, and I say I will not marry Dan Humphrey this day four weeks."

This said, she walked in stately fashion from the kitchen, went upstairs and shut herself into her own room.

Carne and his wife looked at each other in some dismay.

"Think she means it?" he asked of his wife presently.

think costs under 2s. the piece, and this you must lay over the edges in long lines across and across in lattice fashion. With tacking secure the places where they cross, and tack the braid down, so that you may sew it on the machine at each edge. You must do this perfectly evenly, without any wrinkles or tucks, or the effect will be spoiled. When finished, the cloth is bound round with braid, and decorated with a hanging tassel at each corner.

I think this is almost the cheapest tablecloth for either dining-room or drawing-room that can be made, as it does not cost more than five shillings when finished, and may cost less if you watch your opportunities at sales and pick up a remnant of sateen or *cretonne* here and there. The oriental effect is very strong, and if seen for the first time it is impossible to discover of what it is made, without a careful examination.

Some workers embroider rows of coral stitch on the black braid in yellow, or silks of several colours. This makes it very effective, but increases the cost and trouble of making. Rows of herring-boning in colour also look well, and the machine-stitching may be done with yellow silk.

"THE GOLDEN HEART."

"Aye, she means it—just now," said the mother, resuming her darning with nervous fingers. "Ally is wilful. When she takes a notion in her head it's like to stick there. You didn't do a clever thing, father, to bring Dan's name into the business. Any girl of spirit would mislike to hear that her lover had fixed the day for marrying without consulting of her."

The ferryman was ill-pleased to be put in the wrong, and unwilling to admit that he had made a mistake, wherefore he worked himself into a rage, brought his big fist down upon the table with a bang, and swore that the thing should be as he willed, that he had done the fixing, and what was the good of being a father if he was not to be obeyed.

The logic was unanswerable, and like a wise woman Mrs. Carne held her tongue; but by-and-by she crept upstairs softly to try what a mother's gentle powers would do to bring Allison to reason, but as she was not admitted and could extract no answer, she was forced, unwillingly, to give up the attempt.

That night, Allison slept not at all. She was planning how to escape from what was threatening, and at length conceived the wildest scheme in her disordered brain. The execution of it seemed simple enough to her, and before morning she had begun to carry it out.

While father and mother were wrapped in peaceful slumbers, she made her slight preparations and stole noiselessly out of the house. In her purse she carried all the money she had earned as the artist's model; round her throat, suspended by a ribbon, was hung the precious golden heart, and folded carefully, for safety, an address written upon a leaf torn out of Shirley Elton's pocket-book.

When Carne and his wife descended that morning and found none of Allison's usual duties fulfilled, nor herself anywhere to be seen, they stood bewildered.

"She has overslept herself," said the mother, and ran upstairs to her daughter's room. She found it empty. The bed had not been slept in, and pinned to the coverlet was a scrap of paper on which a few hasty lines had been scrawled. With difficulty, in her agitation, Mrs. Carne at length deciphered their meaning. The purport of the message