

NOVELTIES IN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S GIFTS.



FIG. 1.

THERE is nothing new to be said about the season of Christmas, so I am sure my readers will be grateful if I omit a long preamble and come at once to the consideration of the novelties in needlework which are here prepared for them.

The little handkerchief sachet shown in the first illustration is well worth their attention; when they shall have copied it exactly, it will be evident how easily this pretty variety of work can be adapted to sachets of other shapes and sizes.

The foundation is fraise-coloured Harris linen cut twice as long as it is wide (not less than seven by fourteen inches), to form a square when folded in half. In the centre of what is to be the top part of it is laid, slantwise, a square of very delicate canvas embroidery. These sections can sometimes be bought ready worked, but those who like to do all for themselves, can contrive a pretty ornament from fine *écru* canvas, gold tinsel, and cream and pale fraise silk. The tinsel must be fine enough to pass through the eye of a needle, and is used to trace out the principal details of the design, and near the centre of the one here given, it is the working thread in the simple drawn-work pattern which adds so light and distinctive a touch to the whole.

The canvas is button-holed round the edges of the design with the cream silk in a series of vandykes which, when the embroidery is finished, are cut round as closely as may be without snipping the stitches. The canvas is then laid on the linen background and secured in position by fine stitches of cream-coloured silk or cotton.

Pale green ribbons are carried from back to front of the sachet, crossed at the hinge as shown in the sketch, and left, at the front edge, in two rather long ends, one of which is to be passed through a loop of the ribbon sewn to the opposite flap. The ends are then tied in a generous bow and serve to close the case.

Within is a lining of cream silk and also a pocket, made of some of the same material; a sprinkling of scent-powder can be added if wished.

The sachet is finished off with fraise-

coloured cord carried all round it and twisted into loops at the corners.

Reticules are so universally useful that to describe one needs no apology. Continental ladies use them much more widely than do their English sisters; both out-of-doors and in, and always assorting with their costume; they are as ornamental as they are convenient.

Fig. 2 shows an elaborate one, well suited for a Christmas gift. The foundation is a reticule of dull green bengaline on which is a panel of satin worked in ribbon embroidery. This has for some time enjoyed great popularity, which as yet shows no signs of waning. The specimen before us is worked with shades of blue, pink, green, heliotrope, red and yellow ribbons on a reddish terra-cotta-coloured background. The colours sound daring, but as they were chosen together the effect is very harmonious and the few stitches of yellow silk seen here and there at the tips of the sprays also tone in well. Silk (filoselle) occurs again, used for the stems and centres

of the flowers.

In this rococo work, as it is sometimes called, a difficulty may be experienced in persuading the stitches of ribbon to set with a raised effect instead of sinking down into the satin. Cunning embroideresses now slightly pad each petal and leaf with a stitch of fine soft knitting cotton or tiny cord which is quite concealed by the succeeding stitch of ribbon.

Round the edge of our satin panel a line of fine medallion lace braid is sewn, which should be cream, not dead white in colour.

At the bottom left hand corner are bows and a slight drapery of striped ribbon of



FIG. 2.

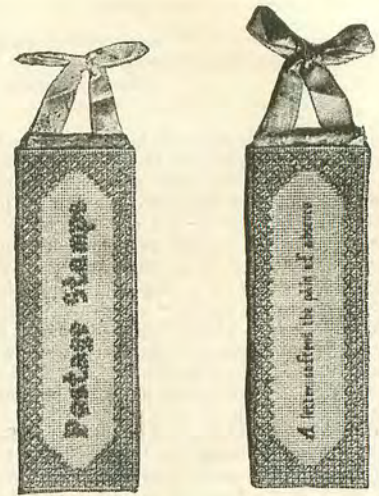


FIG. 3

colours—brown, pink, and faint greenish yellow—repeating and harmonising with those seen in the rest of the work.

Green silk cord is knotted in and out this ribbon and draw-strings of some of the same cord with ribbon ties hanging from them are run through small bone rings beneath the deep heading at the top of the bag.

Perforated cardboard is no longer considered fit only for the use of children, but is returning to favour and worked in very much the same way as of yore.

Fig. 3 illustrates two sides of a modern stamp-case adapted from an old-fashioned model. The finest make of card must be asked for, and the best quality. Two pieces, each measuring about five by two inches are required for such a case as this; also some blue filoselle, very fine steel beads, and a short length of blue ribbon. The border design is the same on both sections of the case, and in the centre of one piece are the beaded words, "Postage stamps," on the other side, "A letter softens the pain of absence." This motto is written finely in silk, the small characters being but two, the tallest capitals five squares high.

When both sides are worked they are sewn together round the edges with blue silk taken over and over very evenly through each of the outer holes in turn and so as to form little straight stitches on one side and slanting ones on the other.

Inside the cover is an oblong paper envelope cut with large flaps to contain the stamps and backed with white card to give it substance. Card and paper are bound together with blue ribbon at one end, and a bow of the ribbon is added to be used in pulling the envelope out of the case.

This may seem a simple piece of work, but it needs more time and attention than might be thought at first.

In Fig. 4 I show quite a new kind of work. It is suited for doyleys, chair-backs, cushion corners, and many other articles which I could not give completed, as I wished my readers to see the needlework in detail. It is lace braid embroidery on net and worked as follows. The patterns are lace or braiding patterns plainly traced with black or dark blue lines on firm white linen.

Over this coarse *écru*-coloured mosquito net is tacked, the pattern of course showing through this. Narrow lace braid, of the width indicated by the double lines of the design, is tacked down with large stitches of white cotton to both net and linen until the whole design is traced out.

Then, with cream-coloured linen thread, the extreme edges of the braid are neatly stitched to the net alone, so that when the tacking threads are removed the linen pattern is secured at the edges of the work only. At

this silk will be required to cover the ground sufficiently. The white is very pleasing in effect against the *écru* net and lace braid.

When the darning is completed the work can be freed from the linen pattern and the final decoration added by sewing down small sequins at intervals all along the course of the braid. Any coloured spangles can be used, but two kinds are usually chosen; blue and green hexagonal ones are seen alternately in our model. Each sequin is sewn down with a small white crystal bead which adds much

are then outlined with button-holing in pink flax thread, the stitches being put fairly closely together. When the whole work is thus over-sewn it is to be cut round, and where necessary the centres of the scrolls also taken out. The open-work band thus made is tacked on to a plain collar covered with silver grey silk and kept in place by French knots in golden terra-cotta flax thread made at intervals all along the centres of the scroll-work. This completes the embroidery, except that here and there a few lace bars made in pink flax

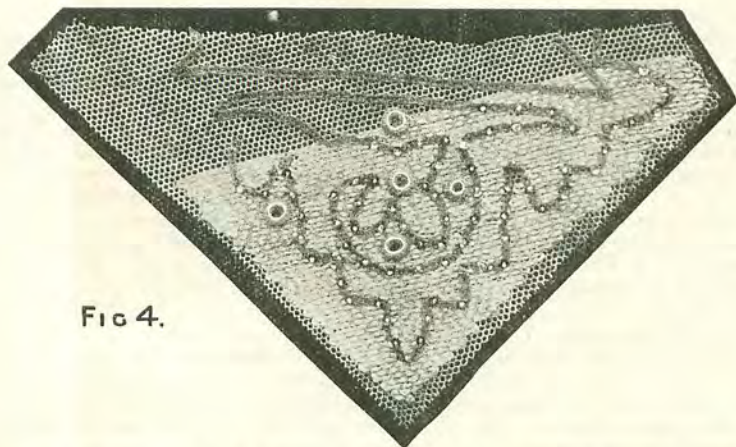


FIG 4.

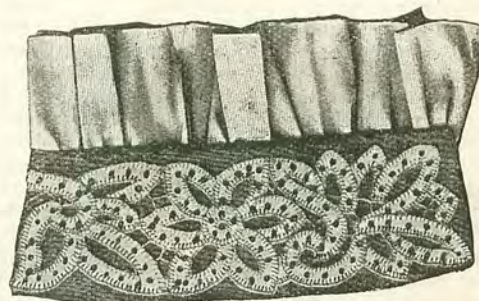


FIG 5.

intervals upon the design circles are marked. These indicate the positions of small rings or moulds which are supplied with the patterns and other materials all ready covered with *écru* cotton. They, like the braid, should be first tacked merely through both linen and net to secure them in the right position, then stitched carefully all round to the net only. The entire background of the net is worked over with white crewel silk, carried, in darning fashion, alternately over and under the meshes. In the coarser makes of net a double strand of

to the bright look of the work. This style of work is not very ambitious, but is quickly executed and very effective. The linen patterns can be used several times for different pieces of embroidery.

The last illustration (Fig. 5) shows a dainty collarette. It is made of cut-work executed on white linen. The linen, a fine make of which must be chosen, is first stretched in a frame. The shape the collar is to be traced upon it and within this the scrolls which form the design. All the outlines of the pattern

thread are thrown across the larger spaces to connect certain portions of the design.

The collarette must be neatly lined with pink and grey shot ribbon and a deep frill of some of the same be added at the top as a finish. The collar is closed by small hooks and eyes.

This style of work is very effective and by no means difficult to execute. Whatever colours are chosen for it must be carefully selected.

LEIRION CLIFFORD.

SISTERS THREE.

By Mrs. HENRY MANSERGH, Author of "A Rose-coloured Thread," etc.

CHAPTER XII.



W HITSUNTIDE fell in the beginning of June, and as Hilary went a tour of inspection round the house and grounds, she was proudly conscious that everything was looking its very best. The rooms were sweet with the scent of flowers; the open doors and windows showed a vista of well-kept lawn, and in the distance the swelling height of mountains, beautiful with that peculiar rich, velvet green which can be seen in no other country in the world. Who would pause to notice the deficiencies of curtain and carpet, when they could look out of the window and see such a scene as that? As for the garden itself, it was a miracle of beauty—the flowering trees were still in bloom, while the wild roses had thrown their branches high over the tall fir trees, and transformed the drive into a fairy bower.

Hilary had special reasons for wishing everything to appear at its best today, for two visitors were expected to arrive by the afternoon train, Miss Carr, and the crippled author, Henry Rayner himself. Half-a-dozen times she made a round of inspection, each time finding some trifling alteration or addition to make to her preparations. At last all was ready; the tea-tray laid in the drawing-room; her own white dress donned, a bunch of roses pinned in her belt, and there was nothing left but to wait in such patience as she could command while Lettice and Norah exchanged glances of approval.

"Doesn't she look nice?" they whispered, and, indeed, Hilary was looking her best this afternoon, with the pretty flush in her cheeks, and her eyes alight with excitement. A few minutes after six o'clock the fly drove up to the door, and there sat Miss Carr, in her fashionable London bonnet, and, beside her, Mr. Rayner, pale and delicate as ever, but looking around him with an air of intense delight in the beautiful

surroundings. Mr. Bertrand was on the front seat, and Hilary came forward to do the honours with much less confidence than she would have shown six months earlier.

"My dear, good child, have you any tea? I am perishing of thirst!" cried Miss Carr, loudly. She was so bustling and matter-of-fact, that she was the best remedy in the world for shyness; and Hilary led the way to the drawing-room with recovered equanimity. She had only had time for a quick hand-shake with the other visitor, but the glance which had been exchanged between them was delightful in its memory of past meetings—its augury of good times to come.

"And here are your other big girls. Dear me!" said Miss Carr, bestowing a hasty glance at Norah, and staring hard at Lettice over the edge of her cup. "I remember them all in long clothes, but I shall make a point of forgetting them soon if they go on growing up like this. There is a limit to everything—even to the memory of an old