

APPLIQUÉ IN EMBROIDERY.

NEW SUGGESTIONS AND EXPERIMENTS.

I TAKE it that to suggest new methods of work and indicate fresh developments is one of the chief duties of a writer on handiwork: at all events that is what I have endeavoured to do in the articles which have already appeared in the last volume of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER. In concluding this series of papers your Editor commissioned me to contribute, I shall experiment with *appliqué* in embroidery, *i.e.*, work in which the whole or an important portion of the design is produced by sewing on or applying another material to the one to be decorated. In this article we will take up designs suggested by plant and insect forms, and in the next and last one those in which animal form plays the leading part. A visit to the collection of old needlework at South Kensington Museum will show that *appliqué* played an important part in much old embroidery, and those readers who are desirous of carrying their work as far as is possible should visit this, or some other good

collection, for many valuable suggestions may be obtained by such a visit. I went to South Kensington Museum more than once during the preparation of these articles, not only to obtain definite material, but also for the sake of the mental stimulus one receives by contact with work of good report, the result of well directed hand-cunning. A visit to a museum is often more useful to the worker for the indirect good, for contact with excellent craftsmanship refines the taste. And perhaps the best use the illustrations I have drawn for these pages will be to my readers is the possibilities hinted at rather than the actual achievement. That is as it should be. You can take any suggestion hinted at by me and develop it for yourself.

One of the simplest forms *appliqué* can take is that suggested by Fig. 1, where well-known leaf-forms are cut out of various coloured materials and applied somewhat negligently—"powdered" over the surface as it were. The

wealth of variety of leaf-forms would make a curtain treated in this way full of interest, while at the same time it might be exceedingly effective. Suppose we chose a deep rich reddish brown or dark olive or myrtle green as the colour of the curtain, and then cut the leaves out of yellow and red materials, suggestive of autumn tints. Here we have a scheme that would be easy to carry out, and those workers who are not very skilful at drawing, might lay actual leaves down upon the material and cut out the *appliqués* from the leaves themselves. I should recommend the reader, however, to sketch the leaves out in charcoal on paper, as you must not get them too small, for *appliqué* is not effective unless bold and somewhat large in design. There are plenty of leaves—such as English chestnut, vine and sycamore—large enough in themselves (if you select the largest leaves you can see growing) from which to take direct impressions. This can be done by taking a little oil colour out of an artist's tube, say burnt umber, and brushing it thinly over a sheet of glass or oil paper and pressing the leaf down on its under side on to the colour. A sufficient amount will adhere to it to enable you to obtain an impression on paper by rubbing over the leaf under some blotting-paper.

Various materials could be used for cutting out the leaves, such as silk, satin, art serge and velvet, and if some have a pattern upon them, the effect will be helped, provided the pattern is not too pronounced. Materials of a damask-like nature, like some of those Chinese silks, with the pattern produced by the weaving, would be very suitable. Both silk, flax and crewels can be used in applying the cut-out pieces, and the shades might vary. The stalks and any veining should also be put in with the outlining colour. Some leaves too might be wrought in outline only for the sake of variety, but these variations you must think out for yourself, for the great thing is to think all the time you are working, to do nothing mechanically, and to be on the alert to take advantage of any suggestions that may come to you. If you wish to add to the richness of the effect, you can work the diaper I have indicated on the background. This should be in a lighter and quieter colour than the outlines, so that it may keep its place and not interfere with the *appliqué*.

These leaves would look just as effective applied to a light material, and in that case the leaves would be dark on light as shown in the sketch.

The sprigs shown in the illustrations are founded upon such familiar flowers as the tulip, iris, campanula and dandelion. Of course they are simplified to adapt them to *appliqué*, for the intricacies of nature could not be reproduced in cut-out patterns, which, in this respect somewhat resemble stencils. As I have said before *appliqué* should be bold and simple and not on too small a scale, therefore keep these sprigs above life-size. Some good suggestions for such designs can be obtained from nurserymen's catalogues and gardening papers, though, of course, I should recommend my readers to make studies themselves from nature. In these sprigs two or more colours can be used. The tulip, for instance, can have the flower cut out of red silk and the leaves out of a green woollen material. In some the flower only might be *appliqué* and the leaves outlined in crewels.

As regards arrangement the sprigs can be powdered over the material at regular intervals, but in the next article I give a sketch of the whole curtain showing one way of arranging them. The syringa and rose, it will be



FIG. 1.

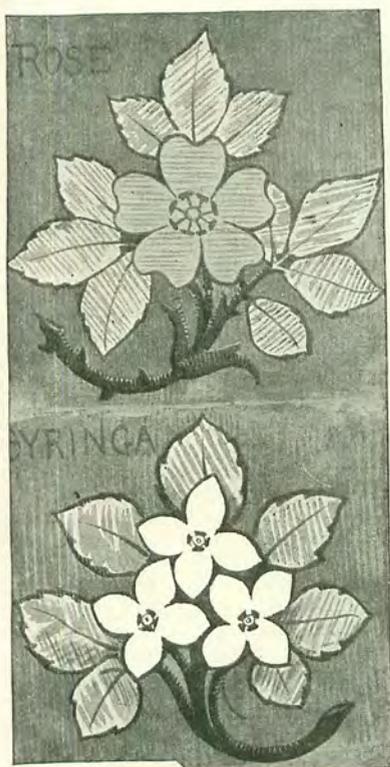


FIG. 2.

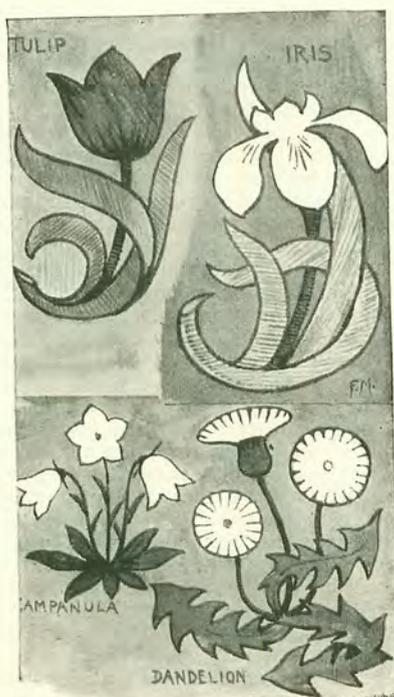


FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

noticed, are arranged on a more ornamental plan, and this ornamentalising should be developed as much as possible, for after all embroidery is an ornamental art, and is very different therefore to printing flowers. You are not copying nature but making designs founded on natural forms, which is a very different business.

The last illustration, Fig. 4, shows a diaper of butterflies and moths, and might form a border to the curtain. I have shown some of

the variations in form existing in these insects, but I have by no means exhausted the subject. Here again figured materials can be employed with advantage, and the brighter in colour some of these are the better. By the way, some of the large firms sell bundles of oddments at a very cheap rate which would come in admirably for this class of work.

I have endeavoured to show the effect of this butterfly diaper on a dark as well as a light ground, and also how the effect may be

added to by introducing a sort of net-work. This, if introduced, should be quiet in colour so as to keep its place, so that at a distance the butterflies are seen before the net-work. The net-work might be developed into a sort of ornamental spider's web, or you could arrange the insects geometrically around a given centre. Portions of figured cretonnes could be used from which to cut some of the insects.

FRED MILLER.

MORE ABOUT PEGGY.

By Mrs. GEORGE DE HORNE VAIZEY.



CHAPTER VIII.

EN minutes later Peggy emerged from behind the cluster of palm-trees, and laid her hand on Rob's arm to accompany him to the refreshment-room below.

"You still retain your old weakness for ices,

then?" he had asked her, and the "I—do—so!" which came in reply was so emphatic that it evoked a hearty laugh of approval. A group of people standing near at hand turned round to

stare with amused curiosity at the tall man and his little partner who were on such good terms with each other, and one or two of the men recognising Rob, bowed to him with a marked air of surprise. Then they passed into a second room, and Peggy was instantly aware that something unusual was in the air, for everyone seemed flocking together in one corner and listening in charmed silence to the sound of one flute-like voice. Peggy had hardly time to catch the sound of a familiar lisp before there came a quick exclamation of surprise, and a radiant vision, all pink and white and glitter of diamonds, glided forward to meet her.

"It's Mawiquita! It is! Her own little self! A hundred welcomes, Peggy!

I've just returned to town and was coming to see you to-morrow, the vevy first thing. Lady Norton—evewybody—please excuse me for wunning away, but Miss Saville is my vevy deawest fwiend, and I have not seen her for four whole years, so I weally must take possession of her at once." Rosalind flashed a glance round the group of deserted admirers, and swept along by Peggy's side, smiling down from her superior altitude, and indulging in a string of demonstrative welcomes, at which Rob scowled with heavy eyebrows. As for Peggy she could only stare, and gasp, and stare again, and blink her eyes to discover if this vision were a veritable piece of flesh and blood, or some beautiful princess out of a fairy table, who would

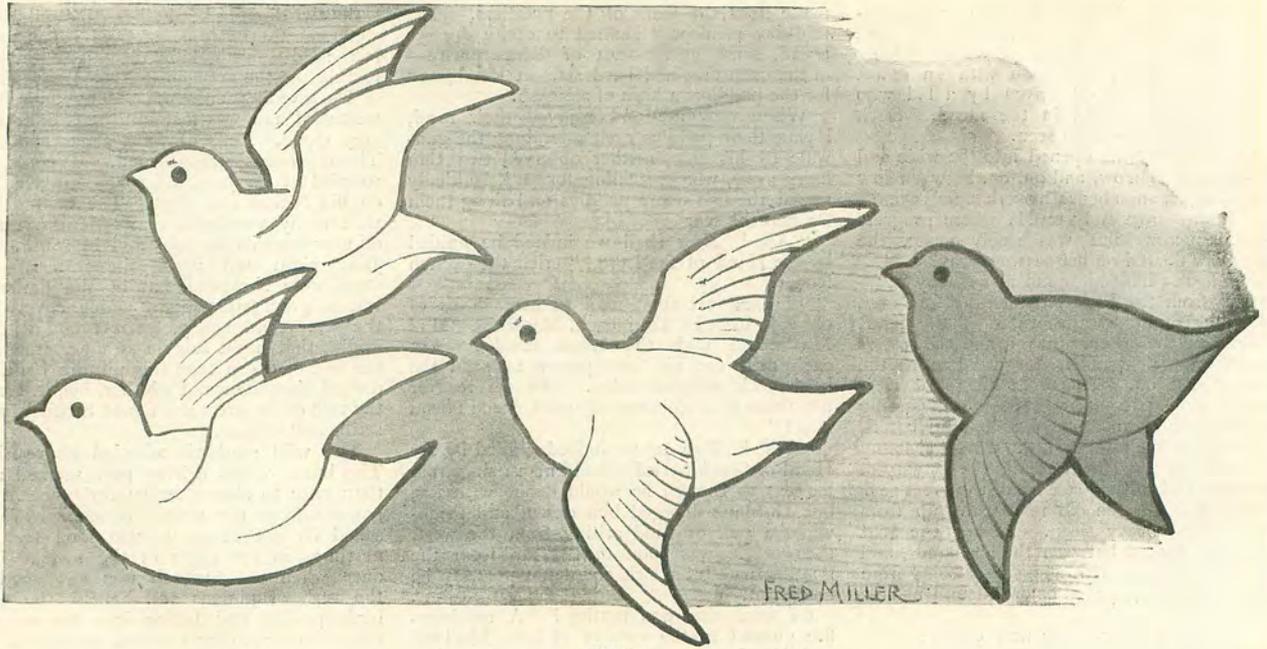


FIG. 1.

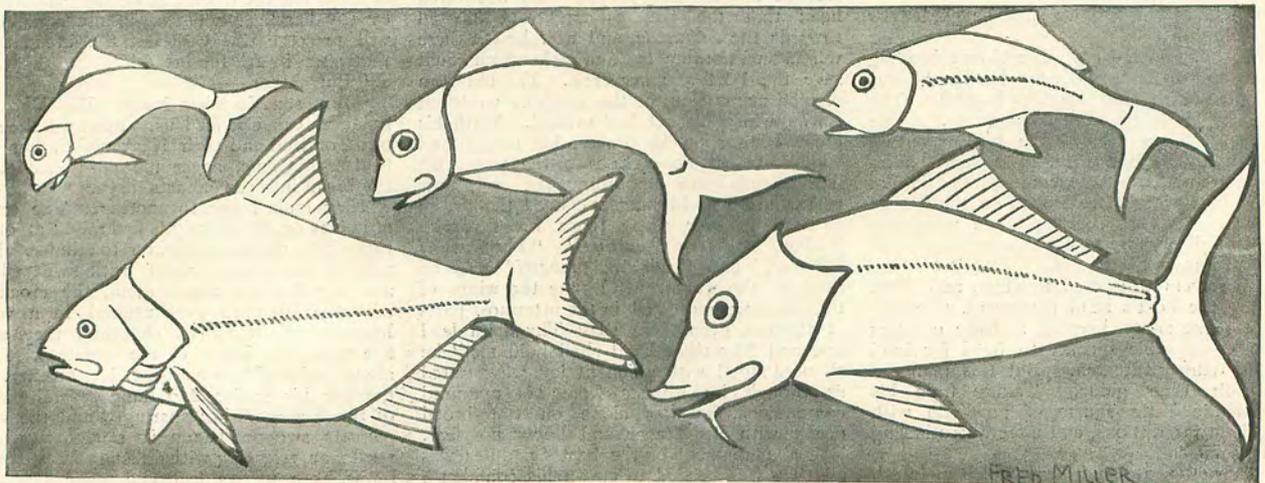


FIG. 2.

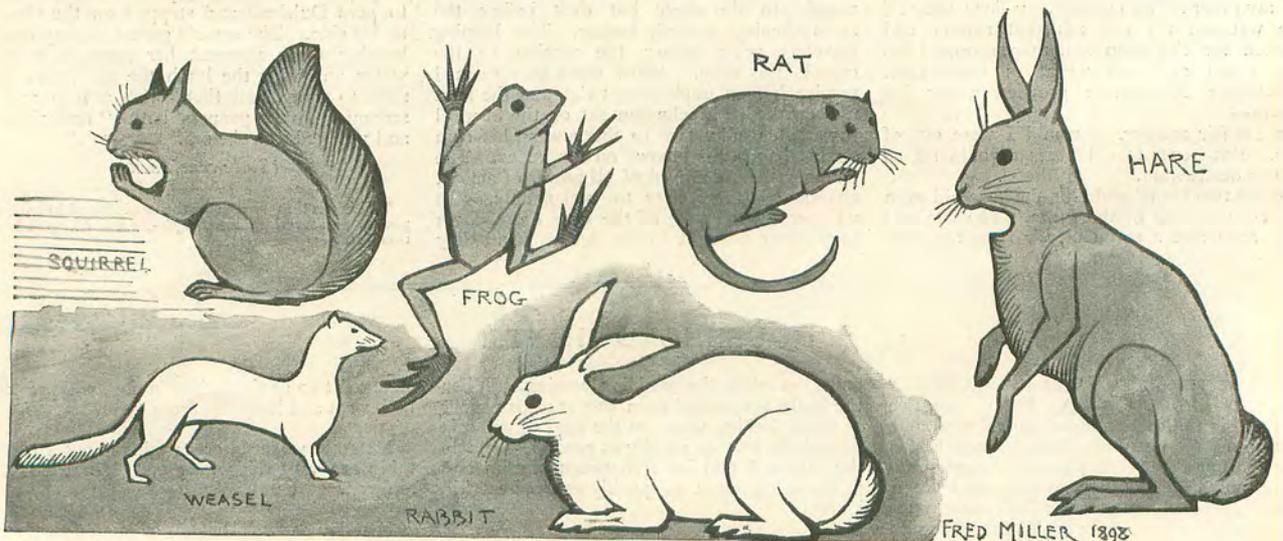


FIG. 3.

ANIMAL FORMS IN APPLIQUE, AND HOW THEY MAY BE ARRANGED.

VARIETY is essential to decoration, and I shall devote this article to giving suggestions as to carrying out animal forms in *appliqué*. Just as the sprigs in the former article were greatly simplified, to fit them for this method of reproduction, which meant leaving out a good deal of detail, so in a bird the general lines, the essential features, can be retained, while the wealth of detail has to be sacrificed. But what we leave out should only enhance the features we retain. Take the flying birds, which can form a frieze to the curtain. These are greatly simplified, as is evident, if you refer to Fig. 1, and yet we tell no untruth by what we omit. All the movement necessary in the act of flight is suggested (or can be), and to do this nature has to be followed very carefully. Some artists are able to suggest all the action of a figure in just a few lines, while others highly elaborate their work; yet the few lines may be more significant and mean more in one man's hands than the most finished drawing by another draughtsman. It is really very difficult to suggest all that is essential in a few lines, for it means that we must put the exact value on every line we do put in if our work is to tell as we desire. There is quite as much in realising what to leave out as in knowing what to put in. I have indicated very little work on the birds, only a few lines on the back of the wings and the eyes, as so much may be accomplished by the outline alone, and our aim should be to make the outline tell the story.

The fish again, Fig. 2, were treated in a similar way, as much of the effect as is possible being obtained by the shape itself, which is as it should be in *appliqué*. In the case of these creatures of the deep we can select fish which in themselves are ornamental like the gurnard and John Dory, but all fish are ornamental and come well in *appliqué*, especially if treated light on a dark rich ground. A good natural history will supply the raw material, and the point to be observed in adapting fish or other forms for *appliqué* is to get the effect as much as possible by the shape and put as little work on the *appliqué* as possible, for as soon as you are tempted to put in detail the danger is that you get rid of the simplicity, which is so effective, and get a busy but confused result. Keep therefore a great restraint over your hand and resist this inclination to crowd your work with detail. These remarks apply with equal force to animals, and in the sketches, Fig. 3, I have endeavoured to obtain the effect with the outline, though occasionally it is necessary to indicate some inner form. In the rabbit and hare, for instance, the thigh and shoulder are outlined and the "smellers" put in. I have also indicated a way of suggesting the furry nature of the coat in front by adding a few lines to the outline, but I am not sure that it would not be more effective to resist this inclination to be naturalistic, and only go for the shape of the creatures.

As regards the colour of material for these *appliqués* it seems to me better to be frankly decorative and cut them out of some cream or whitish material, or if the material itself is very light, out of a slightly darker material, say of a brownish tone, but I would not get too much contrast between the material and the *appliqué* unless the ground is distinctly dark, and then I would have the *appliqués* light or even white.

I have endeavoured to give some idea of the effect of a curtain ornamented with *appliqué* in the sketch, Fig. 4, but it must be remembered that no drawing can give the effect of needlework, and as I want to keep the designs very distinct, I have made little attempt in this direction. I think it would look well to make up the curtain itself of three colours, a pale blue for the top upon which come the birds, a straw colour, greyish white or pale pea green, for the centre portion, and dark indigo blue or blue green for the lower part. Where the joins come it would be well to work some simple ornamental borders in crewels or flax, as also at the edge and bottom and top. To emphasise the decorative character of the *appliqués*, it will be seen that I break some forms over the joins, as the bird's wing at the top and the rat below. This arrangement seems to me to "tie" the various parts of the curtains together, but, in carrying out work, the designs one makes on paper generally require modifying while the work is in progress, so I would not advise my readers to be bound in any way by what I have suggested in the sketches. Treat them rather as raw material than as designs to be accurately copied.

I would keep the animals rather under than over life size. They are sufficiently emphatic as forms and do not need further attention being called to them. The outlines should, I think, be dark, for they are wanted to tell at a distance. In the case of the fish on a dark blue ground, the outlines might be in deep red by way of contrast, and in the case of the birds in ultramarine blue. I have indicated lines suggestive of conventional clouds and water, somewhat after the style of Japanese work. If put in, do not let them be too

pronounced in colour, and do not introduce too many. If the outlines to the *appliqués* are in silk or flax, then use crewels for the sake of contrast.

It is hardly necessary to say that any of these designs could easily be adapted to other kinds of needlework, for coarse outline embroidery, for instance, on flannel.

Books of Japanese designs, such as can be purchased at certain art booksellers', would be of great help in making original designs, for these Easterns have carried decorative art in a direction undreamed of by us Westerns and in some respects further.

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FIG. 4.