

flushed red with dismay, and stared down at her cut fingers with an air of shocked surprise.

It was really too aggravating, and even placid Maud felt aroused to irritation, but it is difficult to upbraid an offender who is herself overcome with penitence, and who lavishes such violent reproaches upon her own head, as Nan now proceeded to do.

"Oh, mussey me, I thought they felt queer! They are cut all over. Lockjaw, I suppose. I shall never be able to speak distinctly, and have to push all my food between my teeth, like poor Jane Smith. Oh, Maud, Maud, I wanted to help, and I've only made things worse than before. I always do. Do please scold and get cross. Don't look so wretched. Abuse me as I deserve!"

"What's the good?" sighed Maud dismally. "You didn't mean to do it, and it's done and can't be undone. Come to my room and I'll bandage your hands. I'm not afraid of lockjaw, but you can't go about any longer like that. Then we must get a clean cloth and begin again."

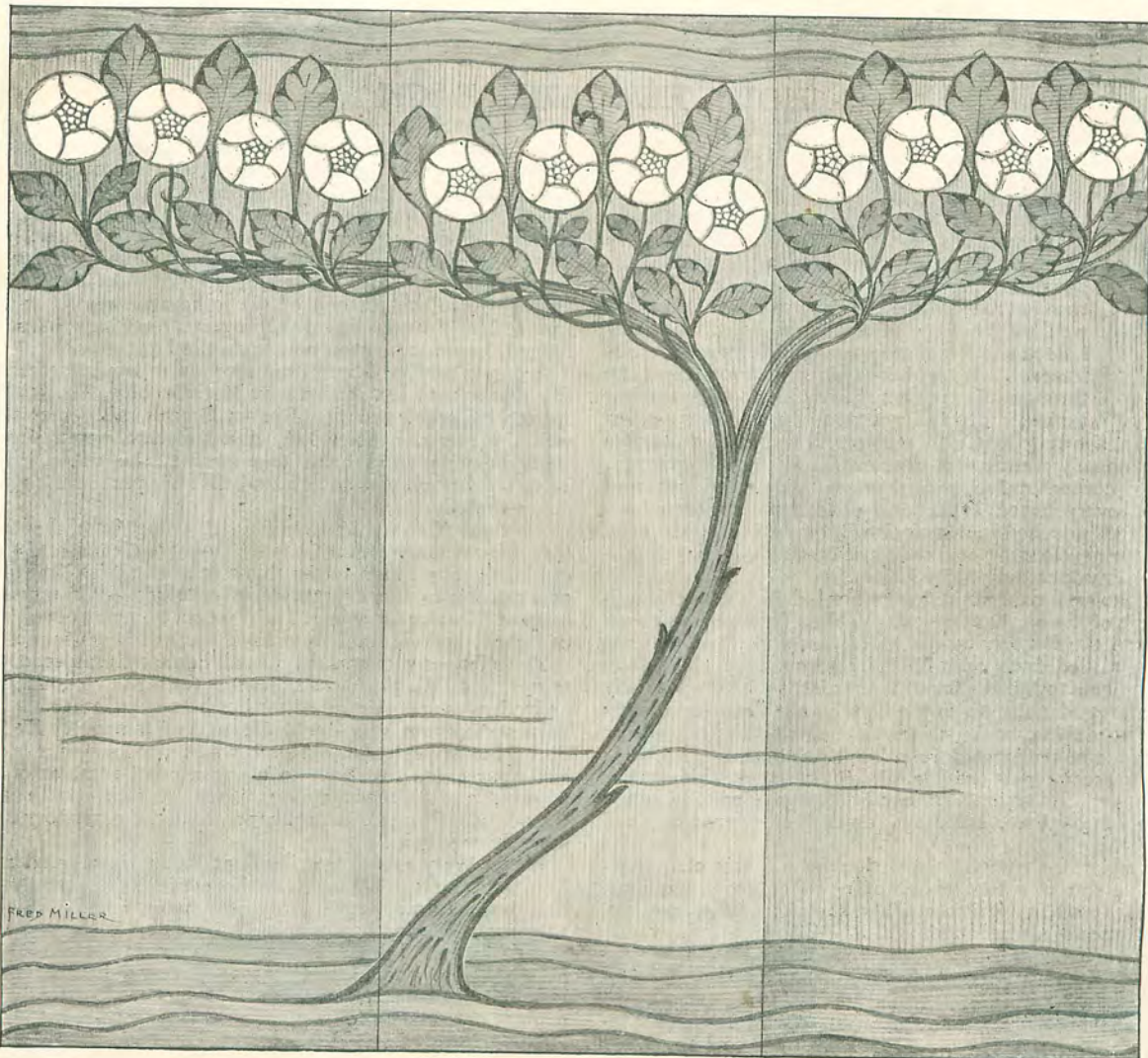
Poor Maud! She set her lips and went through the new duties without shirking or skimping, resolutely avoiding a look into the garden. There was no chance now of being able to join Ned before dinner, and as soon as the meal was over he would be obliged to hurry off to catch the last train. After all the longing and expectation, it seemed as though she were to meet with nothing but disappointment.

(To be continued.)

## AUSTRIAN NEEDLEWORK.

THE idea for the illustration accompanying these notes was suggested by some embroidered wall-hangings in the Austrian pavilion at the Paris Exhibition. The room was panelled, each panel being some twelve feet or so high, and the design was carried over from one panel to another. The stems and branches were made a marked feature. Branches can always be made a leading *motif* in embroi-

dery, as much ingenuity can be shown in the way these are employed in the design. This is markedly so in such a plant as the wild rose, and those readers acquainted with the decorative work of Burne-Jones and Morris will remember how skilfully the trailing stems of the wild rose are made use of, compelled to play their part in the general scheme. The great difficulty all amateur designers have



to overcome is to get away from nature, to show ingenuity, fancy, imagination in weaving the subject chosen into a design. There is an overmastering disposition to be too natural, to copy nature literally instead of merely working out ideas suggested by her. It is the feeblest proceeding in needlework to reproduce a bit of nature as faithfully as may be. For one thing, the needle is a poor tool to employ for the purpose, not being nearly so expressive as the brush, for instance. Whatever may be said of the design here given, it can claim to be far removed from naturalness; yet nature is not lied about in the design; nothing impossible is there.

The Austrian example, being on a very large scale, was treated with great boldness, considerable use being made of *appliqué*. The leaves, for instance, were cut out of one piece, and the background worked in a dark colour. The *appliqués*, instead of being worked at the edges, were outlined with a narrow kind of tape. This had a very striking appearance which it is impossible to convey in a drawing. Indeed the look of needlework can never be conveyed in a design, consequently what is apt to seem very poor and tame on paper, may look quite rich and full when carried out. This should always be borne in mind when judging of a drawing for needlework, a fact I have reason to lament, seeing how much I have drawn for the needle. What I admired about the Austrian work at the Paris Exhibition was its simplicity and boldness. There was nothing small and finicking about it. The braiding, too, gave it a character which is such an important factor in all work and one so difficult to secure. This braiding was also

used in lines, as indicated in the sketch, to suggest ground and sky; in quite an ornamental way of course. The flowers, as will be perceived, were highly ornamental in character. The material was a light warm grey ribbed silk, and the leaves were the only dark bits in the scheme. Just as I took the idea from this Austrian example, so my readers can use my drawing to suggest an arrangement to them, rather than follow what I have given them. Were I to be carrying out the design on a large scale, I should certainly not be bound down by the small sketch, for many alterations and improvements suggest themselves during the progress of the work.

The design could easily be adapted for a curtain—it is shown as a threefold screen in the sketch—by making the main stem follow the front ledge of the curtain, and the foliage portion would then come to the left and right. If the design be worked on a dark material, say a deep blue or green, then let the design be wrought in tones of reds, russets or yellows. Don't go in for colouring it as though you were painting a picture, but as an arrangement of charming tones, harmonious as a whole and at the same time effective as a decorative scheme. The same remarks apply as to arranging a decorative scheme of colour, if wrought on a light material. These stems could be light russet brown, the leaves soft greens, and the flowers white or pale rose with dark russet centres. Don't let there be a sudden jump between the colouring of one portion and another; rather let the colours slide into each other as it were.

FRED MILLER.

## HOW HE CAME BACK.

### CHAPTER II.

**T**HE night passed slowly by. Amelia Primrose lay awake hearing, but not counting, the hours as they struck, for the past fifty years were swallowed up, and she was again the light-hearted merry girl whom Frank loved. She rose betimes. Like the wise woman she looked well to the ways of her household, and now indeed she felt there was double cause for carefulness. With her chintz gown drawn up through the pocket holes, her soft grey hair tucked away under a mob cap, and her sleeves rolled up, showing a pair of still pretty rounded arms, she made a comely picture of a gracious English gentlewoman.

Every corner and cupboard must be turned out and scoured, every board, table, and chair must be scrubbed, beeswaxed, polished to distraction, though the solemn orgy of the spring cleaning was only just concluded—but then—was not Frank coming home?

Mistress and maid worked together indefatigably through the hours of the bright spring day. Miss Primrose had been bidden to the Rectory for a dish of tea, and when twilight fell she sallied forth with Eliza in attendance across the playing fields to the Rectory. Her pattens clattered briskly on the flagged path up to the door as she impressed upon her hand-maiden, amongst other stringent injunctions, the importance of seeing that John Thomas started to fetch his mistress precisely as the church clock struck the quarter before nine. Eliza took off her hood and cloak, twitched her cap into place, smoothed down her over-skirt, and departed.

Miss Primrose entered the parlour in a flutter of importance, for she was the bearer of news of great moment. She had timed her arrival so that she should find the rest of the guests already assembled. The Rector's ruddy countenance beamed hospitably under his white tie-wig (which was, as usual, somewhat askew) as he came forward to greet her.

"Ah, and how fares our dear friend, Miss Primrose, to-night?" he said genially. "A little bird has whispered to

me—though perhaps I am betraying a confidence even in saying so much—that Mistress Primrose has tidings for us."

Miss Primrose paused, before she took his hand, to curtsy deeply, as she had been taught to do fifty years before, at Miss Fulleylove's School for Young Ladies in Exeter.

"Sir," she said, "you are not mistaken. I am the bearer of news—most interesting to me, and I think I may venture to affirm, to one or two others present. Our old friend, Mr. Francis Spencer, proposes returning to Sewell; indeed, he must be even now upon the high seas."

A gentle and well-bred little murmur of applause greeted this statement: Dr. Harkaway, Mrs. Grubbe, Mr. Riddell, Admiral Yorke, and the Rector himself, all remembered well the gay debonaire lad, and presently reminiscences were being poured forth one against the other. Miss Primrose herself was so agitated that her part in the games suffered sadly.

"I think," she said tremulously, rising from the table, "that if my manservant is here" (everyone knew and spoke of him as John Thomas, but this was one of Miss Primrose's concessions to the exigencies of gentility)—"if my manservant has already come, I will return home at once, if the company, and especially our kind host, will excuse me."

The company expressed its willingness, tempered with regret, and Miss Primrose, finding that John Thomas had arrived, was soon equipped for her homeward walk.

John Thomas was decidedly out of temper. He had timed his arrival at the Rectory so as to ensure a leisure half-hour or so in which to enjoy a good tumbler of egg noggin, and a comfortable "dish of talk" with Mrs. Barber, the Rector's housekeeper, and the repository of all the village gossip.

He felt very much aggrieved at being thus haled away from his comfortable seat in the corner of the settle. It had been raining again, and the path was muddy and slippery, while in the kennels at the side a rushing stream poured away. John Thomas strode forward, swinging his horn lantern, and Miss Primrose pattered behind, rather breathless between agitation and haste. Presently she said, "There seem to be many people astir to-night. What is the reason of it? I have seen Nancy White, and Joe