

ARTISTIC BEAD-THREADING.

THE fashion that has arisen for bead-stringing has given girls possessed of taste an opportunity of obtaining, at a very small cost, one of the most beautiful objects of personal adornment within their reach—a necklace. Beads are (or may be) among the most fascinating of human productions, and, so far as æsthetic worth goes, run gems very close indeed. Beads are, in fact, artificial gems, and the love of beads may be looked upon as a primeval instinct, for the manufacture of beads takes us back a very long way in the world's history. A young fellow of my acquaintance, who volunteered for the

in the best Venetian beads gives the most brilliant and striking effects, the translucent glass enclosing the metal yielding lovely iridescent colours.

The sketches accompanying these notes will give the reader some idea of the makes and shapes of beads, but alas, the colour, which is their greatest charm, cannot even be hinted at. I have, however written in the colours, so that readers can gain an idea of the various colour-schemes, for it is here, in the combining of colours, that successful bead-stringing is shown. It is by no means easy out of a box of

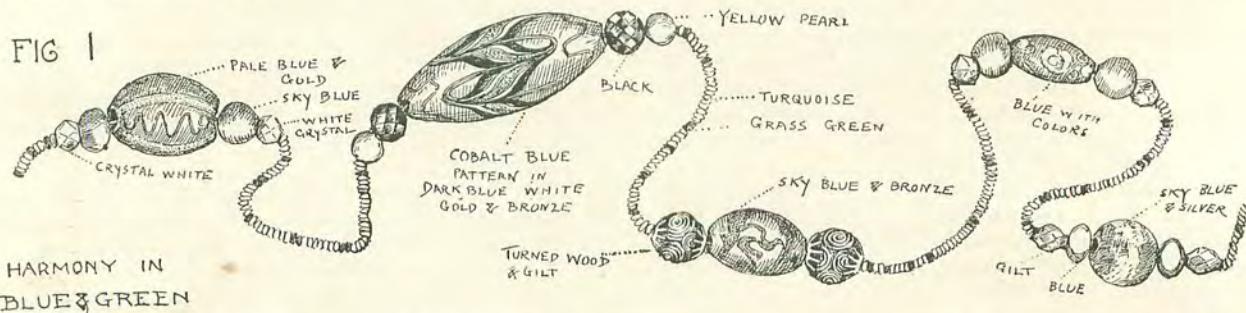


FIG 1
HARMONY IN
BLUE & GREEN

war in South Africa, brought back with him some articles made of beads strung by the Basuto women from whom he purchased them. He tells me that bead-threading is one of the chief amusements of their leisure hours; that they use no needle, yet produce most ornate and complicated effects, showing great executive skill and considerable taste in combining and arranging the various colours. As it may interest my readers to get an idea of these Basuto bead ornaments, I have sketched portions of three necklets. The beads used are the ordinary common glass ones, mostly opaque, which children are fond of threading. Had these

miscellaneous beads to arrange an effective and harmonious necklace. Of course, a girl about to thread a necklace, and who had to buy the beads expressly for the purpose, would naturally select her beads on some well-considered plan, *i.e.*, she would have some colour-scheme in her mind and choose her beads accordingly. I shall direct the reader's attention to the question of colour-schemes in the notes accompanying each illustration, but I may say as a generalisation that a certain tone of colour should predominate in strung beads. We can have a blue, white, yellow, golden brown or other scheme, and yet introduce contrasting colours sparingly so

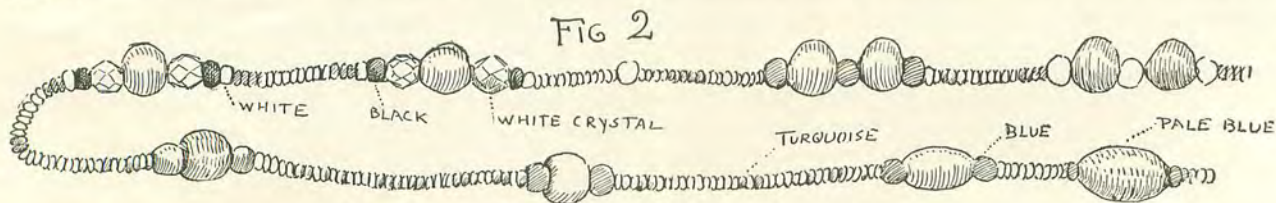


FIG 2
HARMONY IN TURQUOISE

Basuto women the very beautiful Venetian beads to use, which are obtainable in London, they would doubtless produce some striking and original effects.

Their bead-work, as may be estimated from the sketches, are often elaborate arrangements and show considerable ingenuity in the way they link them together.

In obtaining the best results with beads two things are indispensable—pretty beads and a pretty taste. As regards the beads, there is an enormous selection to choose from at any shop where beads are a speciality. The colours are most varied and gem-like, and the use of gold and silver

as not to upset the harmony; but the general effect of the necklace must produce a oneness, *i.e.*, golden brown, blue, etc., and not a mere jumble of opposing colours.

An important point to be observed in bead-threading is the spacing of the principle beads, for the best effects, it seems to me, produced are those in which large beads, or at all events more important beads, occur at regular intervals. It is customary to produce the effect by repetition, *i.e.*, beads of the same shape, size and colour recurring at regular intervals, as in Fig. 5, but a very good effect can be secured by stringing beads of various shapes, provided the spaces

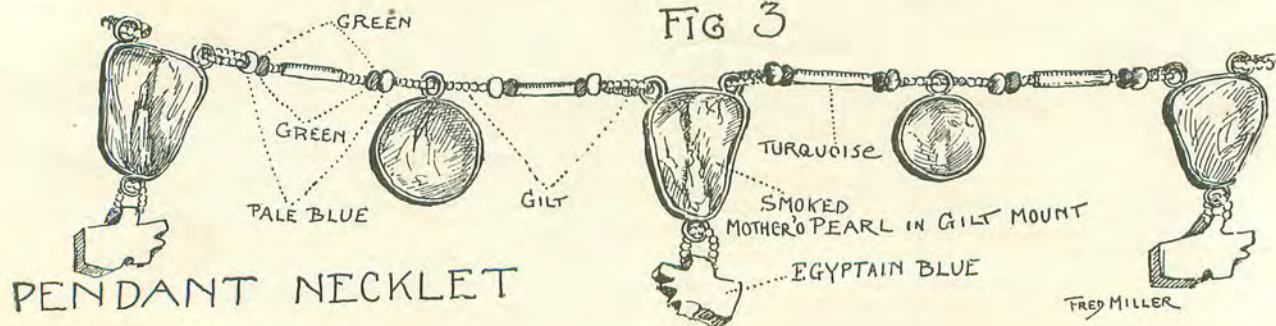


FIG 3
PENDANT NECKLET

FRED MILLER

between are, to a great extent, repetitions of each other, and that the important beads are arranged so as to balance one another. Such an arrangement is seen in Fig. 4, which is part of a necklace composed of various-shaped beads which I obtained as samples of the various makes that are to be purchased.

It is customary, as it certainly is effective, to have a pendant attached to the necklace to form a sort of centre. It may be a sort of tassel, as in Fig. 4; a large beautifully-coloured bead, as the large oval one in Fig. 1; a copy of an antique, as in Fig. 5; a piece of mother-of-pearl in an ormolu setting with a porcelain pendant, as in Fig. 3.

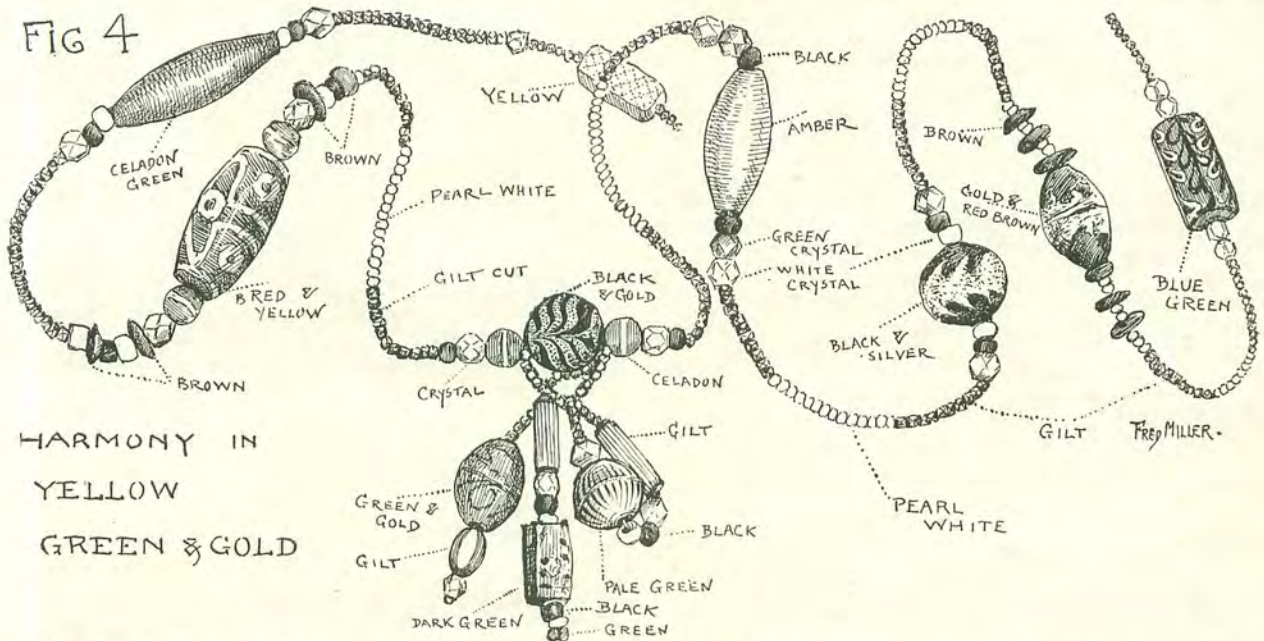
Beads are sold in strings and vary greatly in price according to size and make. The large Venetian beads vary from a penny to sixpence each. The small beads,

Fig. 1 is a portion of a chain composed of handsome Venetian beads with small turquoise ones, with an occasional green bead forming the intervals. Thus a harmony in blues is secured, and yet yellow and black beads are used as *blocks* to the large centre bead, with white crystal ones in other cases in conjunction with sky blue ones. The box-wood turned beads were some old ones that the threader had by her, and, being of a golden brown colour with gilt shields harmonised very well with the prevailing tone of blue. Gold, except in some of the large beads, is kept out of this scheme.

Fig. 2 was strung for a little girl and was kept entirely in blues—turquoise, sky blue and sparrow-egg blue. The black and crystal beads were introduced as a centre, but could be left out if desirable.

Fig. 3 is based upon the ancient Greek method of

FIG 4



HARMONY IN
YELLOW
GREEN & GOLD

even the gilt ones, are quite cheap, so that the beads for a really nice necklace could be purchased for five shillings, including dentist's silk for threading them with. This silk should be employed double and well waxed before it is used.

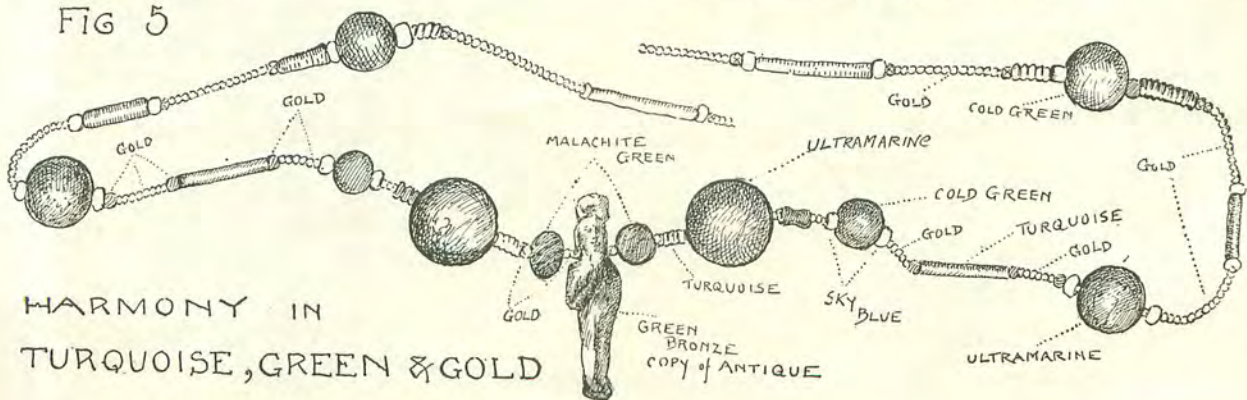
The holes through the large beads are large enough to allow of the small beads passing through them, so that the threader must be careful to have a *block* bead against the large ones to prevent this happening. Some bead threaders use gut. This is strong and does very well.

Double, triple and quadruple necklets are very effective. They can be produced by simply winding a long chain so many times round the neck, but there is this disadvantage, that the hoops tighten round the neck after a little time of wearing. By having a watch catch and a ring (see Fig. 7) each necklet keeps its place.

forming a necklet by having a series of pendants strung on a chain. Mother-of-pearl is by its iridescence very beautiful and harmonises in a blue scheme. These pendants of various shapes set in ormolu can be purchased where beads are obtainable.

Fig. 4 was made practically out of a number of sample beads, and the difficulty here was to give a sense of harmony and unity to the whole. My chief object in sketching this is to let the reader see the many shapes and makes of beads which are obtainable. The brown flat beads are really seeds taken off a Basuto necklace. These dark brown beads gave a certain "barbaric" quality to the scheme which was helpful. Black beads were also introduced to the same end. The general tone of colour of this necklace is a rich golden brown.

FIG 5



HARMONY IN
TURQUOISE, GREEN & GOLD

Fig. 5 was strung by Miss Pocock, who has gained some distinction for this work. The blues, turquoise and green, with the small gilt beads as a filling, yield a most harmonious result, and evince a very nice taste and discrimination on the part of the threader. Personally I am particularly fond of all shades of blue and turquoise in beads, and the latter in this necklet are imitations of ancient Egyptian beads. The green beads are between *terre verte* and cobalt green. The beads varied very much in tint and gave the chain a very beautiful appearance.

This variation in the tint of beads yields a far more beautiful result than if the beads were uniform in tint. In this scheme every tone of blue could be seen, and yet, viewed as a whole, one only saw a beautiful harmony in blues.

Fig. 6 shows how a triple necklace could be arranged. The inner chain might be composed of round beads, the middle of square and oblong ones, but the chains should be in harmony as to colour, *i.e.*, all of them should be affiliated in tone, and not one blue, one yellow, and one some other colour.

Many girls will find old beads lying by in drawers. Those boxwood beads in Fig. 1 are some very old ones, yet they come in well. Shells and pieces of coral can be introduced into a scheme with excellent effect.

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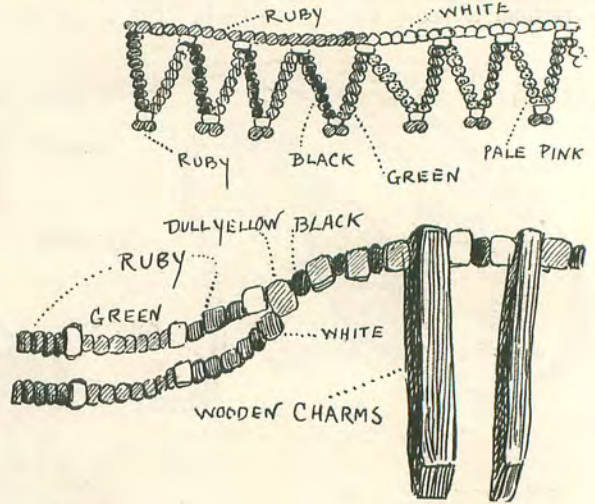


TRIPLE NECKLACE

FIG 7



BASUTO WORK



BASUTO WORK

