

CHAPTER III.

SPRAY WORK, OR SPATTER-WORK.

THIS popular style of ornamentation has become widely known. Many of our readers, undoubtedly are acquainted with it; yet others, with but an ordinary knowledge of the art, are still unacquainted with a few recent improvements that enhance the beauty of the work to a great degree.



Fig. 1.

This mode of decoration may be applied to any material, and upon any color, provided the surface is smooth and even; looking well alike upon ebony of jet black, hard surface, or upon a thin, transparent piece of Swiss muslin; in the one case, the "spray" being made of light-colored paint, or dye; in the latter, of India ink or other dark tint. The ferns, or other leaves, used for this work, must be pressed or flattened; and the foliage best adapted to it are the kinds with deeply serrated leaves, such as Oak, Maple, Fern, Geranium, Vine, Rose, Ivy, etc.; also, the graceful, waving grasses,

and such flowers as Lily of the Valley, Blue-bells and Dicentra; and many of the sea-weeds are particularly well suited to it. A set of table napkins, with tray-cover, etc., are made really elegant by having a small center-piece thus adorned with a monogram, or initial, in the center, and a few sprays of foliage surrounding it, with a little border dividing it from the remaining portion of the article. In Fig. 1 we give a sample of such a set; to form which, pour into a saucer a quantity of good indelible ink, and, having cut out the monogram, or initials, or name, from paper, spread out the article upon a table, or board, and fasten each corner of the paper with needles, or pins, pressed through into the wood, using care that each part rests closely down upon the linen; then, place

around it sprays of ferns, and a few rose-leaves (parts of a spray); then, upon the outer edge, some grasses and ferns, all secured with small needles, or pins, placed perpendicularly; arrange, also, a narrow border, by cutting paper in tiny scallops, with small holes cut at regular distances. The next step is to take a piece of "wire-gauze," or net, or a comb with fine teeth, and, dipping the brush into the ink, rub it gently across the piece of wire, or teeth of the comb, producing a fine spray, which, falling



Fig. 2.

upon the surface, gives a clouded appearance to the material; after thus covering the entire surface, evenly and uniformly, remove *one part* of the rose-leaves; also, a few of the finer parts upon the outer edge, and carefully cast another spray over the surface; after allowing the previous one to dry off, remove another section from the sprays of leaves, and again "spatter;" and then remove the border; spatter lightly, and, when dry, lift the monogram, which will, of course, appear perfectly white.

Fig. 2 shows a design capable of adaptation to various articles, but is especially pretty upon Swiss muslin, for tidies, etc. We recently had the opportunity of examining a set of these, which received a prize at a State fair, as the most beautifully adorned fancy article. The set was colored with India ink, upon very sheer muslin; the edge, in waved lines of ivy-leaves, with berries of deep brown; the centers, all with different patterns, of clusters of leaves and flowers, butterflies, etc.; then lined with thin pink Florence silk, and finished with two rows of narrow, and one wide Valenciennes edging (imitation) formed round the scallops. These tidies were exquisitely beautiful, and well worthy of imitation.

In Fig. 5 is a design for an *antimacassar*, which, being of large size (from one to two and a half yards long), admits of the use of large leaves, and a central group, such as is shown. These Cupids were traced and cut out of paper, and placed in a similar manner to the monogram; then, after raising it as the final step, the shaded parts were put on with a camel's-hair brush, dipped in the liquid used for the spray or spatter-work—sepia, or even indelible ink.

A lovely picture may be made upon white card-board, by proceeding as follows :

Draw a cross, with a graceful vine of ivy running up and trailing over it. Arrange it upon the paper with the parts shaded in observance of the perspective effect. Then cut out all the parts; the vine, the parts of the cross, with the shaded parts upon the body—top and arms cut separately. The cross may be straight, and the arms placed in a horizontal position, or the top of the body cut longitudinally, and the arms placed with the angle slightly acute, as shown in Fig. 3.

The vine, and those grasses, etc., at the foot of the cross, which are to appear in the foreground, should be placed on the card first; then the light parts of the cross cut out, following the direction of the dotted lines; the three shaded parts are cut in separate pieces, and are to be the darkest part of the work, receiving more of the "spray" than any other portion, excepting the ground-work. Shade the whole surface of the card, using the utmost care to have it as fine and granular as the most highly executed photograph; never hurrying over the work, nor taking up too much liquid on the brush, for fear of blotting, and making the dots and specks of uniform size.

The ground-work is an even, light hair-color. Next, proceed to remove the foliage from the back, behind the cross, spitting the entire surface uniformly, again, which will make the foliage the shade of the ground, previous to this application; and the ground one shade darker; then remove the strips, and again shade; then the intermediate foliage, and again shade; then the remaining portions of the cross and the ferns, grasses, and leaves in the foreground, and again shade; when the vine, being removed, will appear upon the merely tinted side of the cross, in pure white; vein the leaves with a fine pencil or pen.



Fig. 4. Initial G.

a wide field for the display of ingenuity and artistic skill in arranging and shading, so as to produce the finest results.

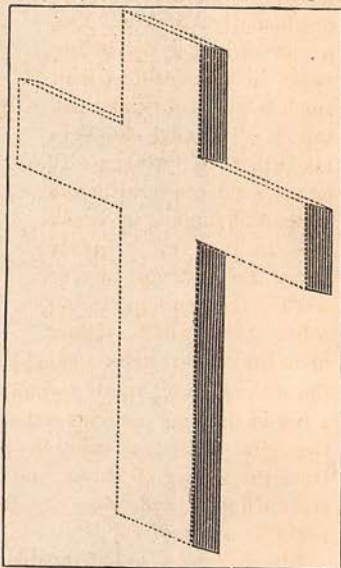


Fig. 3.



Fig. 5.

Upon a bright green ground, this work affords a beautiful means of ornamenting lamp-shades, the foliage appearing in its own natural color; and, where it is desired to have the figures dark, if the sprays are made by "spattering" with light colors, the effect will be found exceedingly fine. We have seen a walnut table shaded with buff paint, and, after drying, varnished with Copal, which was wonderfully fine. The leaves must be veined with the color used for the shading, in all cases, and sometimes fine touches of light tracing are also required.



Fig. 6. Initial F.

As the "*spattering*" frequently soils the sleeves and body of the dress, it is well to protect the clothes by wearing an apron with waist and sleeves, which, as we have previously observed, is a wise precaution in many branches of fancy work.

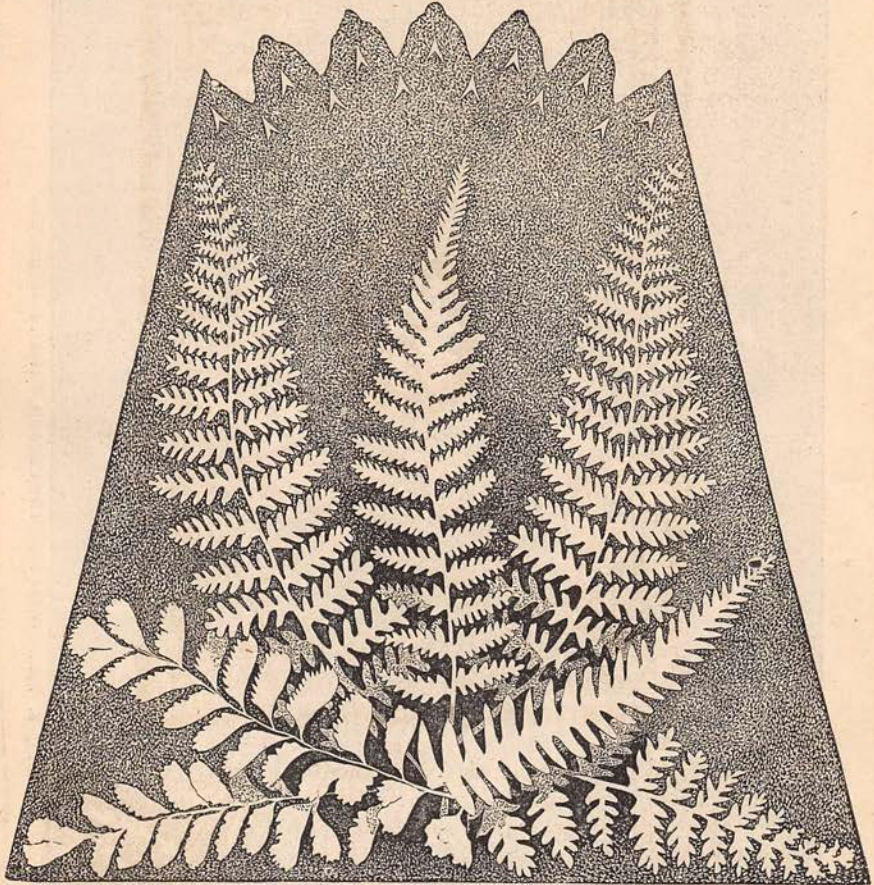


Fig. 7. Section of Spatter-Work Lamp-Shade.

The effect of spatter-work varies with the texture of the material on which the spattering is done, and with the depth of the shading. If it is done on card-board, it is very pretty for lamp-shades, or, when the card-board is exactly the right size, it looks well inserted in the panels of white doors in country houses. Done on light shades of velvet, silk, or cloth, it is very pretty for sofa-pillows, chair-bottoms, pin-cushions, or even neck-ties. These fern-forms look well on



Fig. 8. Spatter-Work Design for Cushions, Screens, Portfolios, Etc.

any of the pretty white-wood articles now so common in our fancy-stores—glove-boxes, fans, table-mats, paper-knives, fire-screens and card-baskets. After the spattering, these wooden articles may be rendered more serviceable by a thin coating of gum-shellac dissolved in alcohol. On damask, the fern-forms are beautiful for table-mats, or on squares of Swiss muslin, bordered with fringe, for tidies. On white muslin pin-cushions and toilet sets, especially if they are lined with colored silk, the effect is charming. In fact, there seems to be no end of the uses that may be made of spatter-work. Some prefer to use violet, green, purple, or red ink, instead of black. For things that need to be washed, indelible ink may be used, but it is hard to work with, though, of course, more satisfactory in the end. In making a card-board lamp-shade, you may first cut the pattern in paper from any shade you prefer. Some are cut in a single crescent-like form, and others are made of six pieces of the shape given in the illustration. The pieces may be scalloped at the top and bottom, and small holes punched at the side edges, through which to pass ribbons for lacing them together. Sometimes it may be easier to bind the edges of the card-board and overhand them together, though lacing is prettier. It adds very much to the effect to cut two rows of little V-shaped slits around the upper and lower edges of the shade, letting one V come in the scallop, the other about half an inch below, and on a line with the lower point of the scallop. When these are cut, press the point of the V in, so that the light may shine through.

Often, on wedding-cards, envelopes, or in magazines, we can find very pretty initial letters or monograms; these may be cut out and employed in the same way as the ferns. If you have to design the initial-letter, make the edges resemble those of ferns as much as possible. These, or the monogram, will often add very much to the effect of the glove-box, tidy, cushion, lamp-shade, or, indeed, any of the fancy articles of which I have spoken. Should you want merely a letter without shading around it, cut out the form carefully, and spatter in the stencil that is left. This, you see, works like a regular stencil-plate, and, with indelible ink, is a very pretty and easy way of marking linen. After you have used this stencil for spattering, it will be useful to keep for marking letters for embroidery.

THE PRESSING OF THE LEAVES.

Almost any sort of foliage may be selected, excepting large, thick leaves. For pressing, place the fresh leaves and twigs between sheets of gray blotting-paper, or between the leaves of a book, curling the stems into graceful tendrils as much as possible. The leaves and branches must be removed and put in other dry places, three or four times, leaving an interval of twenty-four hours between each time. This is done, in order that they may become quite dry; for only then are they fit for use.

SPATTER-WORK DESIGNS.—HOW TO PREPARE THEM.

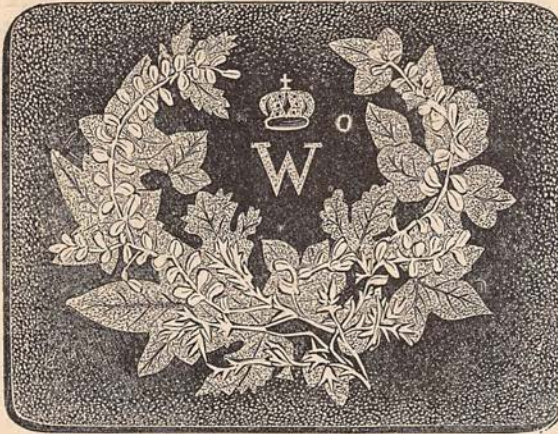


Fig. 9. A Roll-Mat.

applied to it, and it is produced by a graduation of tints, from black to lightest gray.

LAYING ON THE COLOR.

For this, a brush (a nail brush with a handle is the best; the brush, however, must not be arched) is requisite, and, also, a fine tooth comb. Rub in a saucer the India ink with water, until it has the thickness of thick ink; this operation takes several hours. Then dip the brush into the ink, quite flatly, so that only the tips of the bristles get wet, and beat it out well so that no moisture remains in it; holding the brush, bristles downward, over the work, in the left hand, pass over it with the comb in your right hand, so carefully, that the fine, black rain descends almost without noticeable effect, on the work. Always begin at the center of the work, where the color is to be applied darkest, and proceed carefully towards the edges, which must have a lighter tint. The comb may be passed somewhat more forcibly over the brush, when the ink in the latter is almost exhausted. Of course, the brush must be repeatedly dipped into the

ink, performing the beating-out process every time. The finer the black points descend on the stuff, the more beautiful will the effect of the work be. As already mentioned, the black rain must be allowed to descend almost imperceptibly on the foundation. If, nevertheless, too large a black spot descends anywhere, cover it, by means of a very fine brush,



Fig. 10. Inkstand.

with *white* paint. When the grounding is completed, remove the leaves, place them in books, as heretofore, and then, with a fine brush and India ink, mark veins, tendrils, etc., on the work. Fig. 8 serves as a model for the outlining of veins, etc., but the worker's invention can not fail to apply what is requisite

for the completion of this beautiful piece of work. As foundation, gray (ecru) satinnet is much to be recommended.

Fig. 9 is a pretty roll-mat, which is spread out, and can be rolled up; it will be found a beautiful receptacle to hold leaves that have been gathered on some excursion, and dried for remembrance. The monogram is cut out of paper, and tacked on the wood in the same way as done with the leaves. Our model measures nine inches in width, and ten inches in length.

Fig. 15 is a screen, made with a bracket saw, and ornamented with pressed foliage, and spatter-work. This pretty screen is composed of five slats, each eight and two-fifths inches long, and three and three-fifths inches wide, which are connected with bows of ribbon, passed through holes bored for this purpose. The slats are cut into a pattern, at the top and bottom, by means of a bracket-saw, and decorated in the center with spatter-work. For the latter, besides the usual dried and pressed leaves, butterflies may also be taken. When these are raised from the wood, mark the outlines and veins with India ink, and cover the whole with a layer of Copal varnish. The carved parts must remain white.

Fig. 16. The model consists of an eight-sided, wooden plate, surrounded by a black margin, one-fifth of an inch wide, edged with gold. The decoration of leaves is arranged in two layers. The upper layer is

sprinkled in the usual manner by means of a comb being passed over a brush, with India ink first, then with gold ink. The lower layer, the one first tacked to the plate, is sprinkled with gold ink, and, when the foundation shows a somewhat dark tint, it is removed; leaves and branches are outlined with a pen,



Fig. 11. Lambrequin.

dipped in gold ink. The mat is polished by means of a careful application of Copal varnish.



Fig. 12. Tablet.

leaves, and ivy branches tastefully arranged. The work is executed with brush, comb and India ink in the usual manner. When completed, the lambrequin is lined with gray cambric, after which the binding is put on all around.

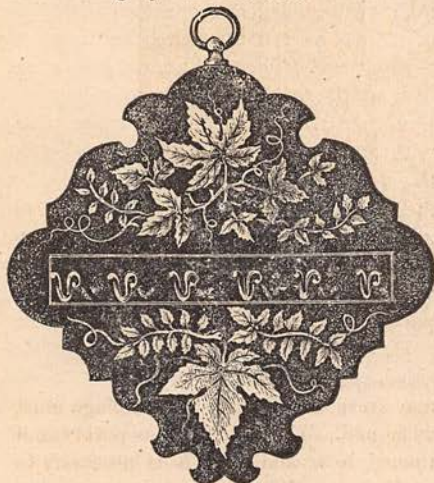


Fig. 13. Key-Rack.

marked with India ink, and a slight shading will improve the look of the drawing.

Fig. 18 represents a very pretty box to contain ribbons, laces, jewels, and the like. Our model is two and four-fifths inches high, eleven and three-fifths inches

Fig. 11 is made of white cotton-satin, bound with gray silk ribbon. It is twenty-one and three-fifths inches long, ten inches wide in the middle, two and two-fifths inches wide at the sides, and cut into scallops around the bottom. The decoration consists of various kinds of

Fig. 12. The pretty tablet our engraving represents is of wood, oval in shape, provided with metal handles, and having a margin four-fifths of an inch high. It is decorated in the center by a pretty bouquet, produced by an arrangement of a double layer of leaves. The process has already been described. It is a most beautiful way of putting dried leaves to use.

Fig. 13. The outer edges of the key-rack are each six and two-fifths inches long. We remind our readers that the leaves which are to have the lightest tint, must be tacked on first. The outlines of the leaves, veins, and stems are to be



Fig. 14. Paper-Cutter.

long, nine and three-fifths inches wide, and the cover which is connected with the box by means of hinges, has a rim, lapping four-fifths of an inch over the box. The box is made of card-board, lined with white glazed paper, and covered on the outside with wood-colored paper. As the corners are connected by means of bows, holes being bored in them for the purpose of passing the ribbon through, this box is quite easy to make. A similar bow, drawn through the front rim of the cover, decorates it in front. The sprinkling-work is executed in the usual manner.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE FOLIAGE ON THE FOUNDATION.

For the latter, satinete is in most cases taken, stretched in a frame, and the foliage gracefully arranged thereon. The arrangement is left entirely to the

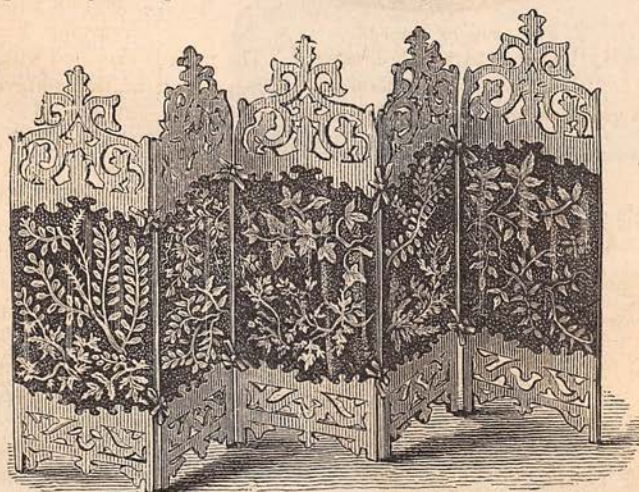


Fig. 15. Table-Screen for Lamp.

worker's taste, though our engraving may serve as a model. The foliage must not crowd each other, nor too much of it be used, so that the various parts stand distinctly forth with spaces between them. Now and then it is necessary to cut away a few twigs or leaves from a branch. When a satisfactory arrangement has been attained, the leaves are fastened with fine sewing-needles to the foundation, then tacked on with very fine thread. While doing this, care must be taken not to sew *through the leaves*, but close to their edges, through the stuff;

the *former*, in order to preserve the leaves for further use, the *latter*, because the thread, lying on the stuff, would, after the application of the spatter-



Fig. 16. Mat.

work, present the appearance of a white line. Where the *latter*, however, can not be avoided, as for instance, in the tacking on of fine foliage where the thread passes over several stems at once, the white line is obliterated with a fine brush and India ink, after the completion of the work.

PORTFOLIOS FOR PRESSED FLOWERS, GRASSES, ETC.



Fig. 17. Glove-Box.

Figs. 19, 20, 21 and 22, represent the covers and interior of some pretty portfolios for holding flowers, grasses, ferns, or papers. They are constructed of fine white card-board, and

the outside cover is ornamented with spatter-work.

Arrange the leaves, in as pretty a group as your taste will find possible, on the outside of the two covers; tack them on with very fine needles, and then proceed with the sprinkling.

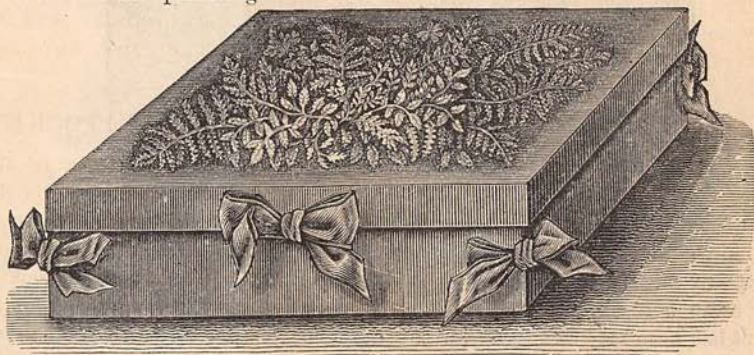


Fig. 18. Toilet-Box.

When the foundation is dark enough, carefully remove the leaves, and mark

the outlines and veins with India ink. Careful smoothing over with a paper-cutter on the wrong side of the card-board, will obliterate the mark left by the



Fig. 19. Portfolio-Cover.



Fig. 20. Portfolio-Cover.

needle. The two covers are now lined with moire paper, and cut smoothly off, all around. Insert leaves of blotting-paper. The flowers are preserved as in a herbarium, sewed to the leaves, and marked with dots, and placed where picked. The Portfolios can also be made more useful and ornamental as covers for writing paper, correspondence, and a scrap-book or album for pretty pictures. Fig.

22 represents the interior of one, with sketch of the leaves, their fastening, etc.

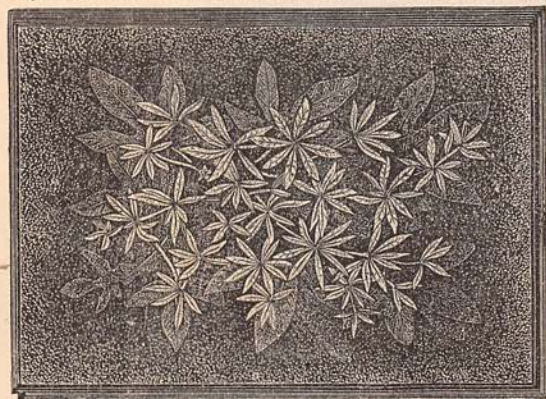


Fig. 21. Portfolio-Cover.

NEGLIGE POCKET.

The back part of the pocket is covered on the outside with gray linen, and lined at the back with white linen. Two pockets also are set on the back part. These are not lined, and are decorated with some pretty design in

sprinkling-work, for which dried leaves, etc., are used in the manner already

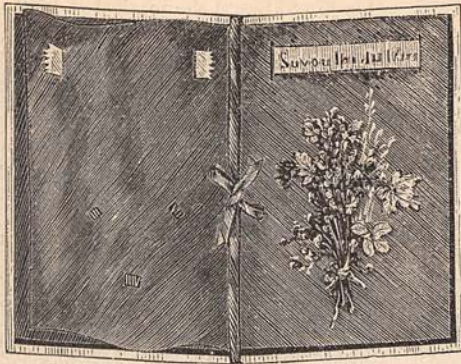


Fig. 22. Portfolio.

familiar to the reader. The lining and covering, on the back part, are connected all around by means of button-hole stitches. The little watch-pocket is edged with black and white braid all around the larger pocket beneath it, only at the top. The whole is trimmed all over with twisted white fringe one inch deep, with a white and black heading. A fancy hook is attached to the top of the pocket; on this the watch is hung, while the chain drops into the little pocket. A loop at the bag serves to hang up the pocket, which is very handy beside a bed.

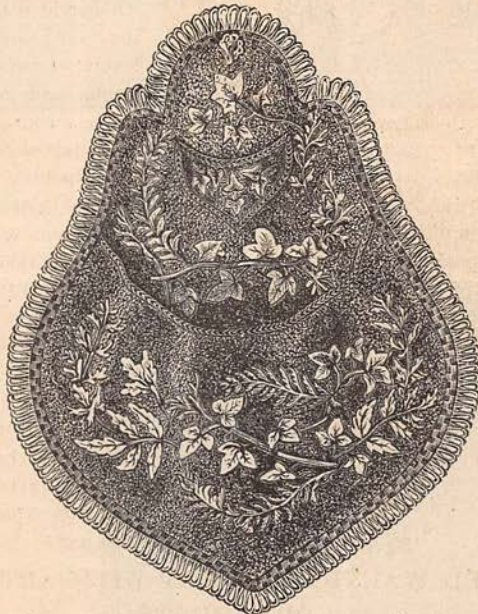


Fig. 23. Neglige Pocket.