



CONDUCTED BY LIDA AND M. J. CLARKSON.

### A PRETTY BOOK-CASE.—SUGGESTIONS FROM EXCHANGES.

ABOVE every other place in the world home should be the abode of taste and beauty. Odd moments cannot be better employed than in studying how to make it attractive; not by extravagant or pretentious display, but in the many charming ways a woman of taste can devise to represent harmony, refinement and delicate grace, as opposed to over-decoration and false ornament.

A true home has homelike sentiment stamped upon all its belongings, and without being ostentatious it may yet be elegant because of the graceful arrangement of its furnishings and tasteful accessories.

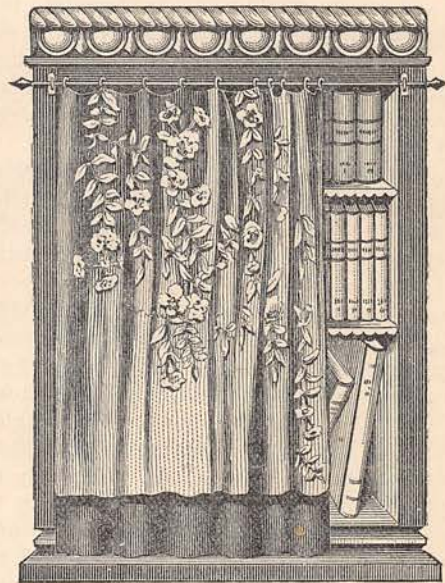
The world judges much of a woman by her surroundings, and it is in her power, in a very great measure, to create an atmosphere of refinement in her home which will exert an influence over its inmates, or guests, of a refining, elevating character.

It is our aim in this department of HOUSEHOLD DECORATION to assist our readers in improving and beautifying their homes, by such suggestions and designs as shall give ample opportunity for the exercise of personal taste in their execution, and yet will help those who are perplexed over such matters, who find it hard to think and devise for themselves. To aid in creating simple, practical, yet elegant decoration, a beauty neither ostentatious nor extravagant shall be our endeavor, and we trust that grace and beauty are charms which will be found in agreement with simplicity and economy, often more pleasing to the cultivated eye than the most elaborate and costly decoration.

Nothing puts people more at ease upon entering a room than that absence of formality and stiffness, that home-like appearance of the furniture, which invites to use as well as to admiration. It is surprising, too, what a little ingenuity, or what is so well expressed in the Yankee word, *gumption*, will do in evolving household conveniences, both ornamental and useful, out of very ordinary articles.

One lady writes that, wanting an easy chair for her sitting room, and not having the means at command to purchase one, she went on an exploring expedition to the attic, where she found tucked away a very large, old-fashioned chair, splint-bottomed, with low arms, very odd and unique, but the seat was broken and the general appearance rather shabby.

We will now give the rest in her own words: "I brought it down stairs into my little work room, where I keep my paints,



BOOK-CASE.

brushes, etc., and where I often take recreation in such work. I dissolved three packages of diamond dye bronze powder in varnish, to which a little turpentine had been added, and with a small, fine brush carefully applied it to all parts of the chair, except the bottom and center of the back; these I upholstered, using heavy ticking, and for the filling, pieces of old, faded and worn comfortables, which are more easily kept in place than materials

used at the upholsterers. I tacked them firmly in place and over them I also tacked a piece of blue satin, on which was embroidered in the center of back and seat a handsome pattern in the satin and Kensington stitch. Across the top of the back I put a piece of dark red plush, three inches wide, and a piece the same width across the front of seat, put on over the satin. As a finish around the seat I fastened heavy fringe with brass-headed tacks about an inch apart. Around the upholstery on the back I fastened a narrow braid to match fringe in the same manner, and my chair is 'a thing of beauty, and a joy forever.'"

Our design this month shows an economical article of household decoration in which an ordinary packing box is converted into a pretty book-case by a little cutting away and fitting in of shelves as shown in illustration. In the absence of such a box, ordinary pine boards can be used by setting them into two uprights, a piece of work almost any one can manage at little trouble or cost. The whole thing is then neatly stained or painted and finished at top and bottom, either with strips of moulding or of Lincaster Walton. A brass rod is fastened to the front, upon which is suspended, by rings, a curtain of suitable texture. Plush is rich and elegant but also expensive. A heavy Turkish satin, with band of plush at bottom, is much more moderate as to cost and hangs in rich, heavy folds. Light fabrics are much used now for such purposes, such as India silk, bolting cloth, pongee, surah or Madras. Our design shows a decoration of trumpet flower in Kensington painting upon golden-olive felting, with a band of plush a darker shade. This may be applied with fancy stitches or left plain by neatly blind-stitching to the curtain, as preferred. Another pretty finish is had by simply slashing the felt up for a fringe, and in this case a gold tinsel cord, looped up at intervals and caught in with the slashed border, is a pretty addition, giving more of a finish with the appearance of regular fringe.

#### Suggestions from Exchanges.

WHAT A WOMAN DID WITH AN OLD-FASHIONED DESK.—I found in the attic of a country farmhouse a writing desk which must have been made in the 17th century; but some one

who could not appreciate its beautiful hard wood had given it a coat of bright blue paint, which, in its turn, had been soiled and battered. But I saw there were possibilities in it, and inquiring its value was told by the owner, whose eyes were blind to the possibilities, that I could have it for two and sixpence. I paid my half crown and had my prize brought home. I first removed all traces of the blue paint by the use of strong old-fashioned lye soap and hot water. There was one draw under the desk and handsomely carved legs. I called in a cabinet-maker who was possessed of some natural ingenuity, and explained to him that I wanted a little book-case built on top and a standard or shelf for the receptacle of books, etc., underneath. The space between the legs was 15x26 inches. I had the shelf 24x8 inches; had the desk been larger, the eye would have had to determine the proportions to have looked well. This shelf I joined to the legs by four carved brackets, seven inches long, joining the legs about an inch from the floor, making the shelf eight inches from the floor. The top of the desk is 28x8 inches. I had two shelves made for my bookcase of the same dimensions. This bookcase is without back or sides, but is simply four standards set firmly in the four corners of the desk top, twenty-one inches high. These the workman turned and fashioned very artistically with a hand-turning machine. There are two shelves—the lower one ten inches from the top of the desk, and the higher one nine inches from this, and two inches from the top of the standards. For this work he charged me five shillings. The knobs upon the drawer were massive, old-fashioned brass handles. These I burnished as bright as gold, after which I gave my desk a very light coat of black walnut stain, and left it a few days to dry. The inside was as nice as could be desired, except the table or leaf, which, when turned down, revealed a plain wood surface. I procured from the cabinet-maker very thin strips of black walnut (no thicker than velvet), two inches wide, and glued a frame of this around the edges of the writing leaf, being careful to have it true and fit perfectly. Then on to the space enclosed by this frame I glued dark red velvet, being careful to have the edges fit it nicely. I never attempted a piece of work which I felt so richly paid me for my labor.

WORK OR WASTE-PAPER BASKET.—This pretty work or waste-paper receptacle is a square wicker or rope basket, which is gilded with liquid bronze. The inside is lined with dark India red cashmere, fluted around the sides, and smooth over a piece of cardboard for the bottom. The front and back are each decorated with a three-cornered appliqué of embroidery and a plush drapery. The outline design for the embroidery is transferred to olive felt, and then outlined in chain-stitch with olive filoselle. A line of metallic cord is set along the edge inside the chain-stitching, and between the outlines the figures are filled



WORK OR WASTE-PAPER BASKET.

with open fancy stitches in tapestry wool, silk, metallic cord, and tinsel of various colors. The felt ground is cut away around and between the outlines, and the embroidery is applied on a three-cornered piece of tinselled Servian linen, which is backed with a white foundation, and bordered with a narrow band of terra-cotta plush at the outer straight edges. The embroidery is set diagonally on the lower half of the basket, the upper half being covered by the plush drapery. The side of the basket is trimmed with cord and tassels of Soudan wool and gold cord. The cord is crocheted. Form a loop of wool and cord together, \* crochet a chain-stitch, draw it out about an inch, put the wool round, pull a loop of the same length through the first stitch, pull a loop through both the loops on the needle, and repeat from \*. The tassels

are made of terra-cotta wool and tied with gold cord, and pompons of the wool are studded about the edges and corners.

A LETTER from one of our English sisters from over the water will doubtless be enjoyed, as it is chatty and pleasant, filled full of useful hints, of which American cousins will doubtless take advantage.

"Once upon a time," as children say, I recollect our old nurse inflicting a long and crushing lecture, the object being to convince my small self that I "could n't have a penny bun for a half-penny." (I concluded I wanted, with the hopefulness of extreme youth, to essay a bargain of this nature.) Now "the man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still." So to this day, I think, using the bun mataphorically, some people go much nearer the performance than others! Surely my readers must have noticed amongst their own friends how some individuals get the utmost effect for their outlay, be it in dress, a pretty drawing-room, an entertainment, or what not; in fact, at any rate, get the biggest penny bun possible for their penny! I really believe I do (and here let me say in advance, that I fear my hints will seem terribly egotistical, a sort of fantasia on my own trumpet); but I think that, for those I most want to help, those who, like myself, have not too much to spend on the mere "prettiness of life," yet like their surroundings to be refined and artistic; who now, perhaps, feel a little hopeless because they cannot afford to buy art pots at 6s. or 7s. each, and artistic draperies at 25s. or 30s.—in fact what children call "really grand things"—and so are rather apt to "let things slide," and thus possibly fail to make their homes as bright and pleasant as they might do with a very small outlay of money, and a little trouble, which is, after all, when spent on one's home, a pleasure. To such readers, therefore, I do not apologize for my apparent egotism, feeling that the fact that I, "Moi qui vous parle," have done the things, seen how they looked, heard how they were admired, is more encouragement to go and do likewise than more elaborate views on art as applied to our rooms.

How often one comes across a friend vaguely dissatisfied with her room, yet doing nothing beyond feebly adding a framed pho-

topograph here, or a vase there, to improve matters—first, because “It would cost so much, you know;” and, secondly (if a temporary residence), “It isn’t worth while.” To the first objection I assure my readers that *much* may be done for £2 or £3 to make any room (already furnished, of course) striking and artistic. To the second objection (especially to those who lead a wandering life) I advise no one to listen. In my roving married life, had I done so, I should never have had an approach to a home for the last twenty years, instead of a series of happy home-like memories of all our various resting places, and I might even have arrived at the stage of a strong minded friend (also a soldier’s wife), who assured me she “was quite happy anywhere with a blotting pad and a penny bottle of ink.” I admired (in a way) her philosophy, but not, oh! *certainly* not, her dismal room.

To return to my subject. If it is your lot to live in one of the formal, “cold colored,” dull-looking rooms, the most fortunate of us may be sometimes doomed to, with large round table in the center, the usual expanse of mirror over the mantel-piece, green reps (or some other “horror”) as curtains, sofa, suite of furniture, etc.; set to work at once, put curtains (I prefer them only just below the window, and a draped box seat in each window) of the striped Eastern-looking, double-width material sold at about 1s. 9d. the yard. Only have these on one side of each window; on the other a curtain of soft, creamy Madras muslin, with three-inch falling frill of the same at the edge, and looped back with a wide scarf of that delicious, soft, buttercup-yellow material so like China silk (except in price). Then boldly take down the large mirror, have it placed about three feet from the floor (at the end of the room if a square room, at the side if a long, narrow one), drape the top and one side with any art material, arrange a group of the creamy, graceful, dried palm leaves on the other, just straying on to the glass here and there; below the mirror have a deal shelf covered with bronze-green velvet, and gathered 5-inch frill of the same along the edge, on this place a small palm, gild a common red pot saucer with gold bronze, and drape the pot with a terra-cotta silk handkerchief, or use a good sateen for this. Fill up the shelf with pretty framed

photographs, a Japanese hand-screen or two, some little art pots, etc.; then push your couch (which I am assuming is one of the long, square-looking ones) in front of this. Of course the height of your sofa must regulate the placing of the mirror; throw one of the cheap Indian striped dhurries over the sofa, and a couple of cushions, with “saddle back,” or other artistic covers. Stand a red milking stool with tall palm, the pot draped with a bright handkerchief, at one end of the couch, a little table with pretty nicknacks at the other, a cheap eastern rug on the floor, and you will not know that part of your room. I long to illustrate my article with rough sketches, but, alas! that may not be.

Now push the center table boldly into a corner, cover with a square of the “stripe,” (failing a better cover); place a tall pot—even the homely glazed brown one, with a yellow scarf twisted around its neck, is not to be despised—fill it with Pampas grass and bulrushes; or, if you have *de quoi*, with boughs of pretty evergreens, this group makes a good background and breaks the angle of the corner; fill up the front of the table with photographs, art pots, and the divers cheap artistic odds and ends of the day.

Now for the denuded space over the mantelpiece. Buy two of the very solid and well-made oak book-shelves (mine are about 21 x 26 inches), have two shelves and pierced ends; cost 1s. 11d. each. Get any working cabinet-maker to fit you a small, flatly-framed mirror between the two (mine are twenty inches apart); then paint shelves, mirror frame and all, a dull Indian red (a little copal varnish mixed with the color is an improvement, but enamel glaze would be still better); at the back, to fill in between the shelves, fix rich red and gold Japanese paper, pasted on millboard for strength. Now fill with bits of old china, or, failing that, some of the charming cheap blue and white, or effective red, blue and gold oriental porcelain, now to be bought almost everywhere, and you have a really artistic and pretty little overmantel for about 14s.

Another arrangement of three of these little shelves, with a tawny plush curtain over the middle one (forming a useful place in which to keep any odds and ends), makes a useful little drawing-room bookcase; most of us know a friendly upholsterer, who will

give, or, at worst, sell cheaply, artistic bits of plush, brocade, etc., of which, using the common Japanese hand-screen as foundation, one can make lovely objects for wall decoration. I hang my old miniatures, enamel snuff boxes, old watches, and so on, upon the plush part of some of my fans, and they are much admired. I will gladly describe them to any one.

I feel I am leaving the center of the suppositious room very bare all this time; but, as every room in these enlightened days has several little tables about, it need not long remain so, and, space being limited, I can only add I will gladly answer any questions, or give advice as to improving rooms, where to procure artistic materials, etc., in these columns.

ONE of the best methods for giving light and richness to a somber apartment, is to fit a screen which can be covered with hangings of soft or brilliant coloring. Suppose it is a north room with dark wood and blue furnishings, all of which have a cold look except in midsummer. A frame of ebonized wood or bamboo may be procured, or, if strict economy is desirable, a common clothes-horse with the panels covered on either side with thick brown linen, neatly fastened with brass-headed tacks. The linen is then to be painted over with dull olive green, the colors to be mixed with a good deal of drying oil or turpentine, and the surface covered through four or five shades. The inside of the screen is to be finished in the same manner.

In the meantime the decorator has procured enough thin India silk, or the twilled, richer fabric, to make a little more than three breadths, long enough to reach twice the length of the frame, and run them together. The color must contrast with the prevailing shade of the room, either a deep, dull orange, or light rose pink or light crimson. The decorations are simple, and are only attached to

the ends, which ought not to be exactly alike. They may consist of three or five rows of gleaming metal rings or crescents or coins nearly touching each other, fastened with gold-colored silk. The whole is then lined with muslin or lining silk as near the color of the outside as possible.

When finished it is to be thrown over the top so as to fall in graceful forms, like a scarf, over two of the panels in such a way as to nearly conceal the body color, in easy plaiting at the top. It can be attached to the frame here and there by small pins made invisible by the foldings. The coins or rings will keep it in place at the bottom.

The third panel, or folding, is to be covered almost entirely with a Japanese kakomono, or wall hanging, one of those fine semi-transparent gauze or silk materials on which birds or flowers are painted in circular or oval panels. It is to be lined with soft, white muslin and fastened by means of tacks or pins to the middle of the panel.

The effect is singularly cheerful and graceful. The screen, arranged to shield a closet door, or set in a dark corner, makes a point of light which alters the entire character of the room. If it be an apartment seldom used, the scarf and kakomono can be folded and laid away when not needed.

A richer screen could be made by painting the linen or canvas with yellow and white, making a kind of straw color, and having the frame to match, or else procuring a screen of the plain, solid bamboo. On this arrange, scarf-wise, a breadth of wine-colored silk with dado of velvet to match at either end and half a yard deep. This velvet may be embroidered with ribbon or chenille in rose, pink, pale yellow and white, or decorated with coins and crescents. In draping, the richness of material allows little chance for folding at the top, but stiffness is obviated by having one end considerably lower than the other. A kakomono finishes the third panel.



and black. The same colors can be used for the tree trunks.

For the lights in windows use white, yellow ochre, vermilion, and madder lake.

The figure of the old man is painted with white, black, Vandyke brown, raw umber, and burnt sienna. The bunch of fagots with white, yellow ochre, raw umber, and a trifle black. The grasses in foreground are a yellowish brown, requiring white, raw umber, burnt sienna, yellow ochre and black. Lay the colors in freely at first, using large and medium-sized flat bristle brushes. The finishing may be done with red sables, or smaller bristles.



TAMBOURINE DECORATION—"BIRDS AND ROSES."

As tambourines, handsomely decorated, make very choice Christmas gifts, we present another, with design of *Birds and Roses*. It will be found, when decorated in color, very

bright and attractive, a charming ornament, either for the wall, or hanging from an easel or screen frame. The scheme of color for this design is as follows:—A sky ground with fleecy clouds; birds, a deep yellow with black wings and heads; roses also yellow with deep orange centers.

To paint the roses, use for the general tone, white, yellow ochre, light cadmium and ivory black.

The soft gray shadows, or half tints, will require white, light cadmium, madder lake and black, adding raw umber and burnt sienna in the deeper accents.

Paint the lights with crisp touches of white, light cadmium, and the least trifle black.

For the centers use light and medium cadmium, white and black, with touches of burnt sienna, madder lake, and raw umber. The green leaves may be painted with white, cadmium, Antwerp blue, madder lake and black, using burnt sienna and raw umber in the shadows. For the lighter yellowish accents, use Antwerp blue, cadmium, and white, with a trifle vermilion and black. The branches are painted with white, raw umber, cobalt, light red and black, and lighted with yellow ochre and burnt sienna. The birds are painted with white, deep cadmium, and madder lake, toned with ivory black. The black heads and wings with ivory black, madder lake, a little cobalt and burnt sienna.

We trust that many of our readers will avail themselves of these designs and instructions in their Christmas work and, we are gratified to learn from so many quarters that our illustrations have proved so great a help and have been put to practical use in so many instances.

#### NOVELTIES IN DECORATION.

**W**INDOW BLINDS and curtains occupy the attention of artistic housewives. The white muslin and lace curtains, that have shaded drawing-room windows for so many years, always put up in the same way, and always conscientiously renewed at stated intervals, are now no longer the height of fashion, though they are still seen in houses

where the last "new thing" is not seized upon with avidity, and where the mistress is reluctant to espouse novelties which do not please her, and is—may we say?—old-fashioned.

Thin, colored Indian silk curtains, in a pale shade of terra-cotta, china-blue, or olive-green (especially the first) are to be seen in draw-

ing-room windows, secured by brass rods, fastened to the woodwork. They are narrow, and sometimes tied in the center with ribbon or velvet bows. The upper part of the windows is open to the light, but shaded by the ordinary blinds, or by a deep valance of embroidered linen or muslin, sold on purpose. The fancy India muslin curtains are popular, and so are colored canvas ones and fancy canvas, with broad lines of tapework. If the curtains are attached by rods to the high sash of the window, ordinary curtains split in halves are sufficient, and less than half of the length of ordinary ones is required, so that they are economical wear. I allude principally to the usual French windows, opening in the middle. Of course, two curtains to each window are necessary. Where unsightly objects are to be hidden from view, the fancy muslin curtain, which are quite thick enough, such as the Beypore, and other oriental named ones, in colors, are suitable. The fancy canvas curtains, which are soft and wide, with different designs running over the surface, can be had in terra-cotta, olive-green, lemon, and other shades. Some string-colored canvases of quite different make and much coarser, stiffer ground, have stripes at distances composed of half-inch lines of woven cotton resembling tape. Colored silk handkerchiefs of oriental manufacture are much used for keeping back these fancy curtains, orange and light terra-cotta being the favorites. It is not unfrequent to see a London house with these colored handkerchiefs in each window from attic to basement. In a drawing-room, paper Japanese fans are sometimes pushed into the handkerchief and opened, spreading out against the curtain. Curtain bands of colored plush, set in gilt mounts like little fans, with a hook and eye to fasten them together behind the curtain, are very fashionable. Broad sash ribbon, tied in a bow, is often seen, and it is not an unknown thing to see black ribbon used when the family are in deep mourning.

Little tables of all shapes and sizes are now scattered over rooms, the newest being the handy little so-called "tuckaways," which fold up flat, and are so light that they can be conveniently carried about. Many amateur artists paint them with enamel paints, or with a floral design on one-half of the table. These and others are popular wedding gifts.

Then there are the imitation Morocco or Turkish table stands, intended to support a round Benares brass tray. Anyone who has visited the East will know the kind—standing low, with the legs or supports (there are six or eight) carved in a style resembling balls strung together. These fold together, and render the whole movable. Sometimes a circular piece of wood is made to fit on instead of the Benares tray, and form the table top. The hour-glass table is a revival of a fashion of many years ago, which elderly people would remember, and which was chiefly confined to bedrooms. It is a table covered with Roman satin, a pretty cretonne, or the furniture of the room, nailed round the circular top and base of the wood, and tied in the center with a broad sash ribbon finished off in a bow. They are of various sizes, but none exceed the circumference of an ordinary round table. They are higher if they are intended to stand by a bedside, or lower if used as a drawing-room elbow table for holding trifles. The ribbon bow is often of two colors. The tables can be had now at upholsterers, uncovered or covered, at moderate cost.

Carved oaken milking stools are the last fancy in that line, apparently mellowed with time, and solid and antique, as if from some ancestral home. There is a great feeling for antique treasures now for wedding presents, such as carved oak corner cupboards, cabinets, quaint lights, Sheridan and Chippendale furniture, etc., and, of course, these are greatly appreciated by most people, especially those with prospective homes.

Bellows are still much in vogue, but they are more used now for dusting china than for encouraging desponding fires. Some pretty ones have groups of gutta-percha or leather fruit or flowers on them, colored with enamel paints, according to nature.

The black satin panel screens, with raised gilt Japanese birds and flowers, are popular, owing to the small sums at which they are sold. They are small and large, and with two, three, or four panels. The small double panelled ones will be pretty and useful bye-and-bye for hiding an empty grate when fires are no longer required. A novelty in screens are those with flaps or pockets on the outside panel, for holding cabinet and larger photographs. The panel may be covered with

diagonal cloth, Roman satin, or plush, and the pockets to correspond, or of rather broad ribbon velvet, drawn tightly across slanting-wise, and stitched at one edge, to form a pocket for the photographs. It is just a fancy, and is usually arranged by the owner of the screen, with the pockets nailed by small tacks to the framework. If it is possible to remove the panels from the frame, the work is easier to accomplish. Single panel screens are adapted for photograph holders in the same way. Many people do not now work separate panels for tall screens, but one large piece of material, with a bold, effective design, and throw it over the screen. Occasionally two pieces of work are thus displayed, one on each side of and pinned to the screen. The piece falling over the top is caught up in festoons to look well. This is a good plan, as the piece of work serves as a quilt or portière when it has done sufficient service on the screen. The curious oriental embroideries in deep red and yellow, with inserted pieces of glass or talc, which have lately found their way to England, and have been seized upon with avidity as novelties, are often shown off in this way. They are also used as coverings for sofas, or curtains for draughty doors. Boot receptacles in bamboo, or common deal laths of wood, covered with diagonal serge, are among the novelties. They have three shelves inside, and a door to open. This door has a panel of the serge, worked in crewels with some bold floral pattern. The whole is very ornamental. The average ones stand twenty-eight inches high, and about eighteen inches broad. The top serves as a table. Shelves for boots and shoes are often placed between the legs of a toilet table, with occasionally the addition of a deeper covered one for bonnets and hats. The toilet drapery is of brocatelle, good velveteen, a pretty cretonne, or Japanese printed cotton, made to open up the middle of the front, edged with a cascade of rather deep cream furniture lace of an effective design. A frill of the same falls round the edge of the table.

Some sachets have the tops ornamented with close-set rosettes of colored ribbon, usually to the number of sixteen, in rows of four. All sorts of colored narrow ribbons can be used up. Brush covers and pin-cushions are also ornamented in the same

way. Pillow and sheet shams of pale blue, pink, or yellow silk, according to the prevailing color of the room — or of white silk or satin with gold braid, Valenciennes lace, and a large monogram in raised gold thread in the center of each, have also recently been sold at bazaars, as they are in use in many richly appointed houses. They are, of course, only laid on by day. Lace is run round, and also inserted, and the monogram is large and beautifully embroidered, sometimes with small colored flowers. The lace may be Torchon, Valenciennes, or guipure d'art.

In a room where space is limited the back of a cottage piano may be converted into a receptacle for all sorts of knick-knacks. A curtain or drapery of any effective material is first attached, and this is looped up, left hanging, or arranged according to the exigencies of the situation. A shelf is placed some way down the back, with a festooned valance, and on this stand up photographs in frames, and any pretty trifles in the way of ornaments. Then below are suspended small pictures and other things, and at the base is a box with growing plants, and at each end a tall uprising bush of foliage, grass, peacock feathers, or rushes. In windows, where space permits, two or even three shelves may be fitted in, the upper one cushioned for a seat or used as a stand for flowers, and the under ones for books and odds and ends. In a bed-room this will be found very useful for boots and shoes of all kinds. Photograph frames of rough rounded wood about two inches wide, or of notched twigs, either painted brown and varnished, or gilded, are novel. They are hung up by colored ribbon.

A novelty for showing off photographs, whether cabinets, promenade, or even larger size, and mounted groups or views, is on an easel of tolerable height made of deal, and afterwards painted black or in imitation wood. An ordinary sheet of very thick card-board, measuring about twenty-four inches long and nineteen inches wide (the usual dimensions), is covered with some material such as crimson or orange-green velveteen or cheap dress fabric. Then three rows of ribbon, two and one-half inches or three inches wide, are stretched across at distances as tightly as possible, and firmly secured to the back of the card-board. One piece of ribbon is at the base, and the other two at a distance



of four and one-half inches apart. These are then feather-stitched near the lowest edge to form receptacles for the photographs, which drop in, and stand up against the card-board. Afterwards two corners of plush, one larger than the other, are put on across the right-hand corner low down, and the opposite one on the top of the card-board. These are merely for ornament, and can be worked with a floral design, a slanting signature, or painted in oils on some other material than plush. The lowest corner should measure fifteen inches in length, across the card-board, and the upper one about six inches. When this is all done, take a piece of lining of some kind, turn in the edges, and sew it neatly at the back. Some discretion must be exercised as to the putting on of the ribbons, and the securing them to the material in front, as some photos are higher than others. Pins could be put in first, just to judge of the requirements. When all is finished, then rest the card-board on the easel, put in the photos, arrange a silken scarf in a loop, round the top of the easel, pass it behind the card-board, bringing it out on the left side, and then drape it across the base to the right. Thus, with no great amount of trouble or expense, a very ornamental drawing-room knick-knack is presented.

A pretty new fashion is to have the enlarged fac-simile of a signature or Christian name cut out in silver or gilt, and attached to a plush photograph frame, a blotting book, photo album, or work bag. Some of the brooches with names, lately so general, or the monograms off velvet pouch bags, are now adapted to these purposes. A plush frame containing a young child's photo, with its pet name cut out in raised silver letters, and nailed on across one corner, has a pretty effect. They are also to be seen in bone,

ivory and wood. Fretwork frames with little doors, on a back-ground of plush or velvet, are pretty.

There is a great fashion for quaint old oaken corner cupboards, and many an old store or curiosity shop is ransacked to find the desired article. The unvarnished ones are considered more *chic* than the glossy dark ones. The mahogany ones, with glass doors, are not so much the fashion. Wide Oxford frames of unvarnished oak are adapted to bed-room pier glasses, with a support at the back, like an easel.

A fashion which has gained favor with some is to gild boudoir doors, and fill in the panels with pieces of old carved oak, fitted in. This has a good effect in wall cupboards, shutters, or the back of a cottage piano. The backs of blotters and albums are also ornamented thus on a back-ground of velvet.

A useful corner table can be made of deal on three legs, covered with diagonal serge, Roman sheeting, or plush, with a deep hanging valance, worked with some floral design. Any carpenter would make this at small expense, and when the legs are painted and the top covered it fills a corner admirably, and is an ornamental receptacle for books or ornaments. It can be made to fold up and the legs to unscrew for travelling.

Corner brackets can be made and trimmed in the same way, and it is not unusual to see one, or even two, Bulgarian chairbacks utilized as a valance. These embroidered scarfs also look well draped over a toilet mirror and table, or over a door that has been fitted up as a china cupboard and lined with velvet. In the country they keep clean for a long time, though the same cannot be said in a town. A rich orange sateen is rather fashionable for toilet drapery, or as scarfs for looping back curtains.

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APPLIQUE figures, cut from cretonne, on felt or momic cloth, can be treated in this way: First, cut the figures from the cretonne, and then place them on paper and trace their outline, after which cut out the paper figures and paste them in any form that you choose on the felt, cloth, or whatever material your cover is to be made of. You may have them

in rows across the front, or in a border around the edge, or in corner bouquets, or in a wreath in the center. After arranging the paper flowers, you put the cretonne once over it and hem-stitch them around with black silk or any prettily contrasting color. Line to cover with silesia, and if a finish is needed you may put a cord or fringe on it.



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CONDUCTED BY LIDA AND M. J. CLARKSON.

DESIGN FOR PORTIÈRE. — FOLDING SCREEN. — CRETONNE APPLIQUÉ. —  
DECORATION OF LINEN.

TO improve the appearance of home should be almost a sacred duty, for when we come to follow out the peculiar thread of circumstances woven into life, we find that much of goodness, of happiness, of domestic peace, is wrought into its warp and woof by the little things which have a tendency to make home attractive.

Who will not admit that a cheerful, beautiful home has not an influence upon character; that one's surroundings have not, to a certain extent, the power to elevate and refine the heart and mind, or to brutalize and deaden the sensibilities, as the case may be?

It is our purpose in this department of the MAGAZINE to suggest, each month, ways and means of making home beautiful, and we shall try to make these suggestions of practical use to our readers.

One sees much now-a-days about household decoration which is wholly impracticable because either too costly or elaborate, generally requiring the services of the professional decorator. This is mere "castle building" with the majority of our readers, but to be able to exercise that ingenuity which makes a little go a great way, and to bring in a ready tact and good judgment in lieu of expense,—why, who does not know that tasteful ingenuity has an actual money value, in fact often goes farther than a full purse without it?

We have often noted this fact in our observation of different homes and housekeepers. One friend whose resources are limited, but whose faculty for tasteful planning and contriving is something quite extraordinary, might afford the sisterhood of anxious housewives much practical information, did she but edit a department of household economy. Her home has always a charming freshness, simply because by a judicious disposition of the old things, she is able to invest in many little elegancies which are tasteful

and new; for beautiful things are not always to be made of odds and ends; these, it is true, help to economize in a way which admits of some outlay in pretty, new articles which must be free from all suspicion of vulgar wear.

Our illustration this month shows an original design for a *portière*, one of those pretty substitutes for the prosaic door. In fact, a door often opens in an inconvenient place; or between adjoining rooms can be dispensed with to great advantage as regards tasteful effects.

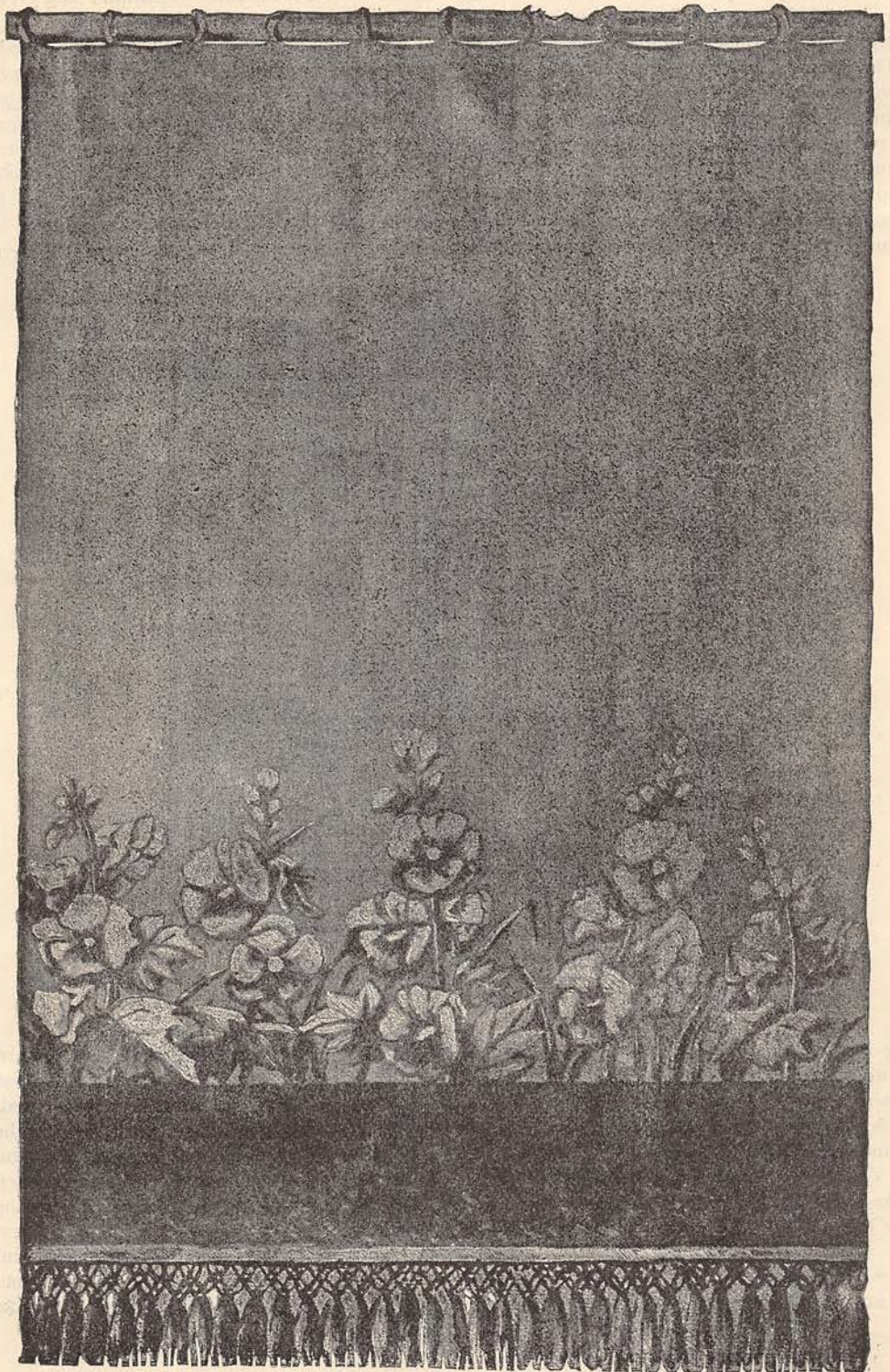
Drapery seems indeed the very embodiment of poetry. Who does not feel this in Poe's description of the "silken, sad, uncertain rustle of the purple curtain," or in Longfellow's "pleasant mansion," where

"Unwonted splendors met the eye,  
Panels, and floors of oak, and tapestry.

The French, whose artistic furnishings are often the envy and the admiration of the fashionable world, understand well what an important adjunct drapery is in obtaining tasteful effect. So we sound the praises of the *portière*, glad to see it gracing American homes.

A simple curtain hung from a rod by rings, which can be pulled back and forth at pleasure, is to be recommended. That shown in our illustration (*see frontispiece*) is of lustrous Nile green sateen, or satin sheeting, with a band of gold plush at the bottom.

The design of *hollyhocks* is painted, appliquéd or embroidered, as suits the fancy or ability of the worker. A combination of painting and embroidery described in our last number can be carried out successfully with this design in the following manner: The upper part of shrimp pink, with a broad band of Nile green extending about one-third of the way up. Upon this is sketched or stamped



DESIGN FOR PORTIERE.

the design of hollyhocks. The flowers are then sewed neatly around the edges and the green fabric cut away from the design, allowing the under pink ground to show through. The flowers are now shaded with dye, or water colors, and when dry the edges can be finished with floss or arrasene. The leaves are simply tinted upon the green ground, and outlined with floss or arrasene. Sometimes gold thread is used in the work for outlining, but we think the natural colors more artistic and in better taste. These same ideas may

cost. The design should be carried out in the natural colors, the same attention being given to shading, etc., as in plain painting.

For readers not familiar with the brush, and whose pocket books are not long enough for expensive embroidery, we give, this month, a very charming style of ornamentation for all sorts of articles of home decoration. It is what is known as cretonne *appliqué*, and the screen shown in illustration is one which took a prize at an art exhibition in Baden, Germany. The foundation was light



FOLDING SCREEN — CRETONNE APPLIQUE.

be carried out for a table scarf or valance, and if a thin material, such as Persian silk, is used, a row of drawn work where the green silk joins the pink at the upper edge is very handsome.

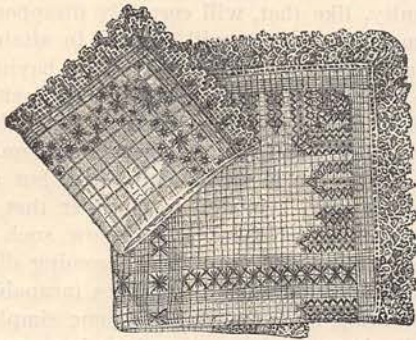
The design as given here is very suitable for Kensington painting and satin sheeting, or Turkish satin is a very pleasant material to work upon in this manner. If properly done, this painting can be made to imitate heavy embroidery at less than one-fourth the

blue satin sheeting, and the trees, birds, flowers, figures, water, etc., were cut out of the cretonne, which is sold by the yard. Landscape designs are not to be had in the American cretonnes, but very artistic and beautiful designs come in the imported French goods. These are arranged according to the taste of the worker, each piece being at first tacked with thread in its proper place, and afterward worked around in simple outline, or button-hole stitch. The stems and stalks

of plants can be worked or painted in, and the veins of the leaves can be put in with gold thread, or worked, or painted, according to fancy. A cotton canvas can be had now, in different colors, which can be used as a ground, where satin sheeting or similar fabric is deemed too expensive. Even crash has been used with good effect.

Speaking of this last named material reminds us of a work which is being revived of late known as "the art of filling up grass-cloth linen," such as is used for domestic purposes.

We reproduce, from *The Season*, two very pretty specimens of this work, which is simply towelling, with the checks filled up with simple embroidery. It is then used



DECORATION OF LINEN.

as stand covers, splashers, bags, tidies, and for various other purposes. The several patterns and figures will of themselves suggest different ways of working. A fast-colored linen embroidery floss is needed for this work, which can be had of J. F. INGALLS, publisher of this Magazine, in the following colors: écu, light and dark olive, light, medium and dark blue, white, light and dark yellow, light and dark pink, red, and different shades of brown. Several towels joined together with

strong antique lace or guipure netting serve for a handsome table cover. The whole should be edged with lace or netting to match the insertion.

Where it is not necessary to wash the articles, colored crewels can be substituted for the flosses for chair covers, cushions, etc., and will be found very pretty work for the children of the household, who have learned to handle the needle skilfully.

WE append the following well timed remarks from an English journal:

"It is only within quite a recent period that the stigma has been removed from the bulk of 'ladies' work,' that it was neither useful nor ornamental, and it cannot be gainsaid that this charge was, in numerous instances, a perfectly true description. Happily, under the better influences at work in the present day, this reproach is rapidly being removed, and ladies are realizing the true conditions attaching to art work.

The adornment of the household is peculiarly a woman's work, and the ideal household of the past, where the women of the family spun the linen and made the garments for the household, and with their needle and their fingers, added to these the further duty and pleasure of covering the bareness of the house with examples of their taste and skill. Even now, in the presence of the widely diffused knowledge of drawing and ornamental art, there is a lamentable want of perception, and a preference for showy articles rather than for sound good ones. If we can only educate the public to see and apprehend what is right for right's sake, then there is a chance of the revival becoming a great reality, and not merely a name. Anything, therefore, that tends in that direction should be welcomed and supported."

**CLEANING SILVER WARE**—Silver and plated articles should be placed about ten minutes in the hot water in which potatoes have been boiled, with salt, and then be rubbed with a woolen rag, and rinsed in pure water, when

the articles will not only be free from tarnish, but perfectly bright. Potato-water that has become sour by standing several days answers still better, and is also excellent for cleaning articles of steel, and glass bottles.

# INGALLS' HOME MAGAZINE.

VOL. I.

LYNN, MASS., APRIL, 1888.

No. 6.

## ECONOMICAL FURNISHING.

TO be able to fit up a home in reasonably good style for a modest sum, is one of the most valuable faculties; indeed that kind of ingenuity that utilizes the materials at hand, making a little do the work of a great deal, has an actual money value in producing good general effects; as in the hands of a person with such gifts, five hundred dollars will accomplish better results, and give more comfort, than a thousand dollars can be made to do where one selects indiscriminately, and because the articles chosen happen to strike the fancy.

The transforming and renewing qualities of paint, paper and kalsomine are well known to the majority of persons, but many do not know the ease with which they are applied, and the small expense in money that is required if a little tact and judgment are used in their management and handling.

Some months since a lady, who does a great deal of artistic work, designing, sketching, and the like, after a wearisome search for comfortable apartments, resolved to try and fit up for herself the rooms that she could not get already fitted for any price within her means. The upper floor of a wide, old-style three-story house was selected for the purpose. It was somewhat removed from the fashionable quarter, but yet in a thoroughly reputable street, and easy of access by several street-car lines. There were two large rooms, front and rear, and two hall bed-rooms, both accessible from the large rooms as well as the hall. They were wide and roomy, and had each a large window, and a transom over the door. Between the large rooms were clothes presses, with ample cupboard and drawer-room, and doors opening through the clothes presses between the rooms connecting them in the usual manner. There were green outside blinds

and small panes of glass, although the entire windows were quite large. The walls were roughly plastered and kalsomined, and the wood-work, although plain, was solid and substantial. The floors were rough and uneven, and, in common with the other woodwork, were a good deal the worse for wear and time.

It was an unpromising place, and only a woman with tact, patience and genius would have had the courage to attempt a reformation in its appearance.

Fortunately the occupants of the house were good-natured, and did not object to the noise and confusion consequent upon a little repairing. A carpenter was called in who repaired doors, blinds, sashes and woodwork generally, and also drove in the nails and planed down the unevenness of the floor. Less than a day's work put that portion of the premises in good order. The ceilings were replastered where the plaster was loose and broken, then a thick coat of very light greenish-gray dry-sized kalsomine was laid on, and the upper portion of the walls of the large room received a coating of the same, only a shade darker.

A dado of gray and gold paper was put around the large rooms, and a neat, inexpensive paper was selected for the bed-rooms.

The wood-work was painted in the two colors to match the kalsomine, and the floor was stained walnut-color around the edges, as rugs were to be used on the large rooms.

The place was now ready for the furnishings, and the entire cost of the materials and work, aside from the artist's own and a woman in her employ, was less than \$25.

Spring roller shades the color of the walls were put up at the windows, the entire set of six costing less than \$5, and walnut poles

were adjusted at the windows and over the doors, at about fifty cents for each one.

The front room floor was covered with a handsome Turkish rug, already on hand, and the various artistic belongings of the owner were arranged about the room. A covering for the back room floor must be provided, and, as that was to be the general utility room and workshop, a rag carpet of light color and excellent quality was selected for the purpose, at a cost of sixty cents per yard, one yard wide. As it was coming warm weather, the bed-room floors were covered with matting, and a strip of carpet was laid in front of each bed. The matting cost about twenty-five cents per yard, and the carpet was selected from remnants at about sixty cents per yard for really excellent tapestry Brussels. As the bed-rooms were small, it was desired that a cheffonnier of fair size would be more desirable than a dressing-case, and would give more drawer room for the space it occupied.

The wash-stand for each room was entirely home-made, but served its purpose very well at the most trifling expense. A dry goods packing-case, about twenty-six inches wide, of the same depth and about forty inches long, was set upon one side, and the cover removed, leaving an open front. Four blocks, each about four inches square, were placed under the corners, and fastened by strong nails driven through the boards of the box. In these blocks holes were made and into them ordinary iron socket bedstead casters were fitted. The result was an easily moveable box or cupboard, with twenty-six by forty inches top surface, and the same space in shelf room on the bottom inside. It was

lined with plain cambric, about the color of black walnut, and covered with a section of oil-cloth exactly the size of the top, fastened down with small tacks. A curtain of gray felt, with a bold design in golden rod, cat-tails, and long grasses painted in oil, was fastened by small tacks from the upper edge of the box, and fell slightly full, nearly to the floor, entirely concealing all but the lower edges of the casters. The curtain was in two sections, and met in the middle of the front, falling together by its own weight. A large square cover with a border to match the curtain, was spread over the top, and held in place by a few fancy brass nails. An ornamental towel rack was fastened by small screws to one end of the box, and this article of furniture was ready for use, and was a great improvement on the store-bought wash-stands in its greater extent and size. A linen cover was provided, or large mats, upon which the various toilet articles were set.

A receptacle for soiled handkerchiefs and collars was crocheted in the form of a large pocket, and tacked to the inside of the box, and work-baskets, boxes, and various useful articles found storage on the broad space at the bottom. In favor of this stand it may be said that, after using it, the owner preferred it to anything of the sort, even a handsome one with a marble top. It is much more agreeable to use, and altogether more roomy and comfortable, as well as less noisy, and with less danger of breaking heavy pitchers or bowls by careless or hasty handling.

Over the stand hung a large mirror, and on either side of this were double brackets, holding various ornamental and toilet articles.

[Concluded in our next number.]

**BALL FRINGE.**—To make the small worsted balls used in furniture fringes, proceed as follows: Cut two circles of cardboard the size of a quarter, with a hole in the center, pass the wool over the edge of the two circles, put together, and through the center till it is quite filled up; then cut through the wool at the outer edge, and pass a piece of thin twine between the two cards, tying them tightly, tear the card away, and shave the little ball

with a pair of sharp scissors. An easier way, but the balls are not so thick or firm, is to take a thick skein of wool, tie it tightly at intervals, cut it into short lengths with the tie in the center, and shave it closely.

**SHELVES** covered either with velvet or Canton flannel, are now placed over ever door in the house to hold china and bric-à-brac. The effect is charming.

# HOUSEHOLD DECORATION.



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CONDUCTED BY LIDA AND M. J. CLARKSON.

## ECONOMICAL FURNISHINGS. — (Continued from April Number.)

“ANOTHER home-made convenience was a box about twenty inches square, set upon casters, and with a hinged cover. It was covered with cretonne, laid on in small perpendicular plaits, fastened at the bottom by brass nails, and finished at the top with a full box-plaited, pinked-out ruffle of the same goods, that set up even with the edge and concealed the joining of cover and box. Inside were separate pockets for shoes, slippers, rubbers and leggings, while the middle of the box contained a basket for shoe brushes, polish, and like necessaries. The cover was stuffed with sea grass and covered with cretonne, and a band of furniture gimp put on with brass nails finished it very neatly.

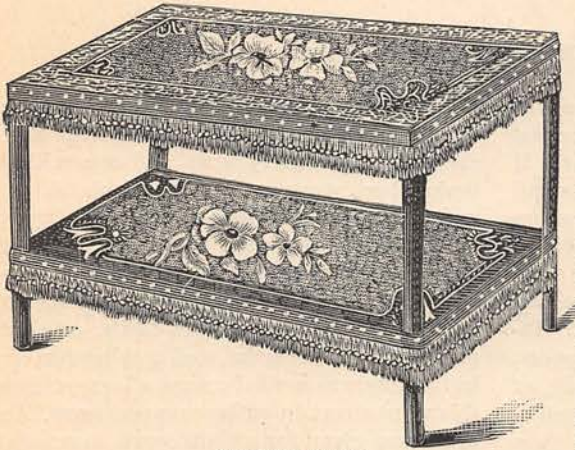
“This box proved so convenient that it was almost immediately duplicated as a receptacle for hose as well as for fancy work, odds and ends, bundles of pieces, and the many small conveniences for sewing, for which women never have enough room. The entire cost was not over seventy-five cents each, aside from the work. It was necessary to add to the number of chairs, and a couple of oak-framed, perforated seat and back chairs were purchased at a storage warehouse for seventy-five cents each. Cushions were made of dark-blue cashmere, the remnants of a dress, and were fastened to the chairs by sewing through the holes in the back and seat with doubled and twisted drugget cord, in a shade of golden yellow, the twine passing entirely through both cushion and wood, and following the pattern of the perforations on the blue surface of the cushion in the yellow of the cord. Yellow ribbon bows were tied on the corners at the back of the chairs, and the frames were gilded by the artist herself. The amount of admiring comment bestowed upon the work when finished would have repaid the effort tenfold, even without the fact that the chairs were voted by far the most comfortable seats in the place.

“Several other chairs that were in a semi-invalid condition were refitted with new carpet and upholstery seats, and one with a broken back was sawed off even with the seat and full-cushioned, and a row of deep fringe put all around the seat. The lower ends of the legs were sawed off, and a charming half-high stool was the result. A handsome rocker and easy-chair were a part of the original possessions of the artist, and nothing further in this line was needed except a lounge. For this want a certain outlay was necessary. An order was given for a plain couch in muslin. This, in fair quality of material and well made, was to cost \$16. A cover of linen was put over it for the summer, with the idea of having it handsomely covered for the coming winter's use. For the many tables necessary for the variety of work to be done, equally economical provision was made. Several kitchen tables with maple frames, stained walnut color, were ordered at \$1.75 each. The tops were covered with dark-green felt, and drapery curtains of the same material, with a little dash of color in painted autumn leaves for borders, were tacked around the back and ends. Small, round-headed brass nails were used, and the draperies were set outside of the over-lapping cover of the top. The front, where the worker sat, was open, and at either end of the table underneath were rows of shelves, that depended from the sides of the frame. These were found of the greatest use in holding materials and cases for colors, brushes, pencils, and the like. The shelves were made of boards, such as those upon which dress goods are folded, and were substantial enough, and at the same time very easy to work, the last being an important item, as they were all put in place by the artist, who was less a woman of muscle than of brains.

“The draperies for front windows were of Madras muslin, embroidered with gold



floss, and cost about \$8 for the two windows. They were not, of course, very elegant, but they were quite good enough for the place they occupied. The rear windows were draped with printed *etamine*, in cream ground, with bright flowers and vines. The



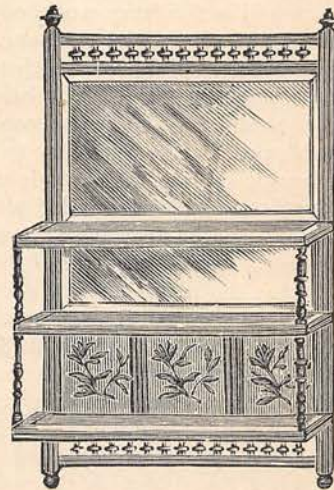
LOUIS XIII TABLE.

goods cost but fifteen cents per yard. Fancy woven *etamine*, in cream-white, costing sixteen cents per yard, and plainly hemmed at top and bottom, was put up for summer hangings over the doors. Some pieces of worsted work were used to cover large foot-cushions that were filled with sea-grass, and had bows of bright ribbons, of odd colors and patterns, set upon the corners. A large easel held a fine picture, and a length of Japanese silk in fancy colors was knotted about the top of the easel, and draped on either side of the frame of the painting. There were grates in the rooms, and on cool days a cheerful fire burned there."

All this is a pleasing picture and, although our readers may not be able to carry out all these suggestions to the letter, there are yet enough so practicable as to effect a veritable transformation in many an ugly apartment. There are correspondents who write that they have husbands, or sons very handy with cabinet tools and bracket saws, able thus to make almost anything suggested, if only the ideas are furnished. One lady writes: "My husband has a fine kit of tools, and is very ready at turning, carving, and various sorts of cabinet work; what can you suggest that is pretty in the way of household decoration to which he can turn his hand?"

We give this month two eminently practical designs, one of a Louis XIII table, which is composed simply of two ordinary pine shelves with legs smoothly turned. The shelves are neatly covered with plush, ornamented in the center with an embroidery design. In our illustration there is a conventional braiding pattern, worked in Japanese gold thread, around the edge, but this is left to the taste of the worker, and the center may be painted instead of embroidered if preferred. The edge may be finished with a gimp headed fringe, secured with nickel or brass headed tacks, or a beading of Lincrusta Walton makes a neat finish. This table can be ornamented with drapery as suggested above if it be preferred.

Our second suggestion is a small cabinet composed of a mirror framed in, as shown in illustration. This cabinet has sections for three tiles, and three shelf projections. We have seen several made by an amateur workman, with most elaborate carvings, but this is so simple as to require less experience in cabinet work.



SHELF CABINET WITH MIRROR.

The tiles may be hand-painted upon porcelain, brass, or Lincrusta Walton, or may be had already decorated, or in hammered metal.

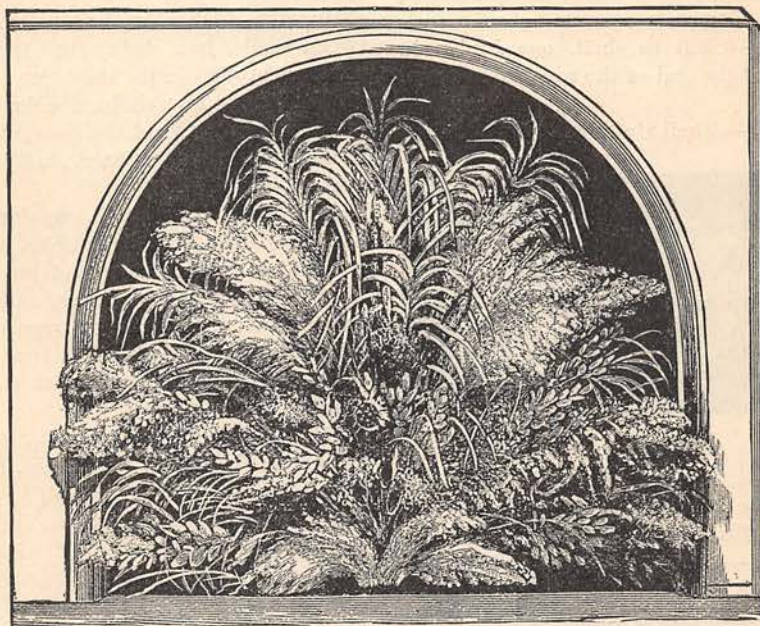
Altogether this makes a very handsome addition to parlor, studio or dressing room, or will serve as a most charming overmantel

where one is wanting. If put to the last mentioned use it should be made to correspond in width with the mantel or chimney projection.

#### Fire-Place Screens.

FOR fire screen stove ornaments, old paper shields or screens might be cleaned up and used as a foundation whereon to artistically arrange numerous specimens of field grasses, introducing in some a few everlastings and other cornflowers (artificial ones would an-

illustration for one of these handsome screens. Pampas plumes and dried ferns and tropical grasses may be introduced, with some of our native dried flowers and pretty autumn gatherings. Grasses dampened and sprinkled with flour, gilded and bronzed leaves and ferns, a sparkle of iridescence here and there, all this is left to the fancy of the decorator in composing such a screen. This is a great improvement upon the painted or papered fire-board, and is a fashion very popular abroad, but is fast gaining favor in this



FIRE-PLACE SCREEN.

swer), with very good effect. A small mirror might be inserted in the lower part or attached, and with a few rush-like grasses or transfers around the edge, and some swans on the surface, would form quite a real pictorial-looking scene under the clever manipulation of some artistic fingers. Of course the grasses, etc., would require fixing in small bunches with a strong needle and thread (or fine awl and flax), beginning at the top, and overlapping their stems as the work progresses downward, to keep all neat and conceal the threads. Seaweeds, corals, sponges and shells might also be similarly arranged.

A beautiful arrangement is shown in our

country where fire-places are again coming to the front.

If you are a thrifty housewife, you should have a rag-bag, and I will tell you how to make one. Take a strip of material the size of an ordinary chair-back, linen or woollen stuff will do; embroider it at one end and fringe it, turn over the other and work it to match, so that two rows of fringe and work appear one above the other. Sew a piece of muslin at the back to make the bag, and some rings at the top through which run a cord; hang it inside a cupboard, and put in your rags. If you do not want them or the money, sell them for the benefit of the poor.

**USEFUL HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS.—DECORATION OF A GYPSY TABLE.**

THE economical ways and means of beautifying home are greeted each month with so warm a welcome that we shall make it our aim to present something of the kind frequently, although not exactly of the description advised by a certain writer, who suggests that "when chairs are scarce soap boxes and the like may be covered with silk plush of a handsome shade," which he adds "make quite stylish looking seats," or yet of another correspondent who carefully describes the decoration of a wood box and a coal scuttle. We hope on the contrary that our hints may never be frivolous or impracticable, but that good sense as well as good taste may always have control of this department.

An exceedingly pretty table is made from any old stand with two shelves, or may be constructed after the manner of one described in our last number, simply covered with a dark olive felt, the edge of each shelf finished with a macramé border and fringe of the same color. This is applied with gilt headed tacks, or sewed to the felt covers.

Another suggestion for a nursery, or for the children's rooms will be acceptable doubtless to many. Where walls are bare and unsightly, but pictures cannot be once thought about, because of the expense of framing, they can be simply nailed to the walls, and finished by tacking around them a neat lin-crusta border which can be gilded or bronzed, and the cheery look imparted to the hitherto bare room will astonish and please both big and little folk. Pretty chromos and cards, engravings, drawings, water-color sketches, can be used in this way, where they would otherwise be thrown aside as useless. Even a frame made out of heavy brown paper, crimped in the pretty ways learned by the children in the Kindergarten, are better than no frames at all, and in this case the little ones themselves may be taught to help improve and beautify home.

Another pretty suggestion where there is no dado or over-mantel in parlor or sitting room, is to obtain a number of palm leaf fans, say seven or nine, an odd number is needed. Paint part of these a delicate pink or blue, or any color to harmonize best with



DECORATION FOR GYPSY TABLE.

the furnishings of the room, and gild the remaining three or four as the case may be. Now arrange them alternately along the back of the mantel, tacking in place, lapping each one over the stick of the next, towards the center from each side. From the center one

remove the stick and place so as to hide where the other sticks meet in the middle, or else place a large bow, or pompon in the center. No one who has not seen this palm leaf background for mantel, would dream how really pretty it is. If there happens to be a recess between the mantel and corner of room, as is so often the case, fill with shelves and suspend some pretty curtains from a pole with rings or hooks, in front of the shelves. When the curtains are drawn together, it gives almost the effect of an entrance into another room, and seems to increase the size of the apartment, as well as to add to its grace and cheerfulness. A large room is always improved by some tall objects of interest, as a tropical plant, or palm in a high vase or jar. Tall stands for these plants are now much used, and umbrella jars and drain pipes are decorated for such purposes.

Rugs are indispensable accessories to a well furnished apartment, and there are so many ways of making these useful articles now in imitation of the oriental luxuries of the kind, that no woman with much leisure time on her hands need be without them.

There is an inexpensive material now which has quite an elegant appearance when thrown over a sofa or used as a portière, or anywhere where soft, rich heavy drapery is needed. It is a silk and wool plush-like fabric, 54 inches in width, alike on both sides, yet costs but 89 cents per yard. It is almost heavy enough for rugs if it were not inclined to curl at the edges. The colors are rather quiet, dull in the sample, yet the effect in the piece is rich and elegant. This fabric is known as "Smyrna Tapestry."

Another article for economic decoration is the double-face Canton flannel, known as American plush, in grounds of gold, olive, blue, wine, cardinal, etc. This makes a rich drapery, considering its low cost. A lovely design shows a golden olive ground, with large pink cactus blooms, and palm like foliage. This is but 52 cents per yard, 54 inches wide, is fast and durable in color. For those with whom expense is of less consideration, the Turcoman and Roman draperies average from \$7.00 to \$30.00 per pair, and make very handsome hangings. Few of them will stand a strong light, yet the better quality will not fade enough to look dull or

shabby. They give better satisfaction as door or shelf drapery than for window hangings, on this account.

The whole appearance of a room is so affected by its draperies, that one cannot be too careful in making a choice of fabric. Soft material is always to be preferred to that having the least suspicion of stiffness; a fabric which "will stand alone," as the over-wise clerk blandly informs you by way of recommendation, is of all things to be avoided. But another time we may have more to say upon this subject of drapery, which is so important, adding as it does so much to the cosiness and home-like aspect of a room.

"K. F." asks if we will tell her how to adorn a little gypsy table. As a response to this request will be of general interest, we give here an illustration which will enable any one to decorate one of these little tables in a graceful manner. A width of plush, pongee, velvet, or any rich, soft fabric, is required. The quantity must be determined by the size of table, and fullness, and length of drapery. This is carried across the front and looped up carelessly at the side as here shown. Small pleats may be laid so as to bring the material into the right position, but these are covered with a generous bow of rich satin, or gros-grain ribbon. Ribbons are also tied where legs of table meet in the center, and a fringe at the edge, and fall of drapery, completes the finish.

The design of Autumn leaves may be painted or embroidered, as suits the fancy. There is also a very novel method of decoration, very pretty, yet not generally known. A plastic material is moulded into the forms of leaves, flowers, etc., by use of moulds similar to those of wax flower models. These are steamed and applied to the fabric, the steaming causing them to adhere to it. They are then painted after the manner of barbotine ware or relief decoration, and the work being thus raised from the ground, gives a rich and novel appearance.

The leaf design thus modeled, and tinted in bright colors on a ground of deep pomegranite or wine plush, will be charming enough, we are sure, to delight those who are the most difficult to please. This design may also be carried out in the alliance work described awhile ago in the Magazine.

# HOUSEHOLD DECORATION.

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CONDUCTED BY LIDA AND M. J. CLARKSON.

## INEXPENSIVE CONTRIVANCES FOR HOME FURNISHINGS.—DECORATIVE HINTS, ETC.

THERE are few of our readers, doubtless, who do not at times tire of their regular routine of work, and whose fingers do not tingle with a desire to get at some home-made knick-knacks which do not demand too elaborate work, nor too great an expenditure of time or money. To such our columns now offer many tempting possibilities, as we are constantly encouraged to believe by our host of correspondents, nor do we imagine that idleness or *ennui* will find any place in our busy household. Suggestions for work and decoration are forthcoming each month, and hereafter we propose to answer some of our inquirers more at length through this department, where queries are of interest to the general reader.

"Ruthie" wants to know now she can make a plain old-fashioned room look cosy and modern with her own hands, and at not too great an outlay. First of all, she has an old mirror, a good plate glass, but the frame is shabby, and the veneering chipped off in places. This, she wishes to hang horizontally over her mantel, but it is hardly long enough to look well, and besides there is the frame. Now all this is easily remedied, as the frame can be covered with a pretty lincrusta border, setting in at each corner a square medallion of the same, the whole to be ebonized and picked out in gilt. The mirror is now a handsome ornament, and can be placed over the mantel, but not in the middle; hang instead so that the space will all come at one side. Up this vacant place next arrange a set of pretty wall brackets. These can be made at home, or if "Ruthie" can afford it, she will do well to purchase a set of Japanese shelves or brackets, in ebony and gilt, or gold lacquer. Filled with pretty ornaments, they will make a most attractive addition to the mantel. Now at the other side over the glass drape a pretty Madras or India silk scarf. This, if wide enough, can be suspended from

a slender brass rod above the mirror if preferred, looping back at the side opposite the brackets. The mantel should be draped with a harmonizing color. A pair of satin, or plush covered bellows makes a pretty ornament to hang at the side of mantel. This can be painted or embroidered, and finished with a full rich bow of ribbon. A palm-leaf fan, handle uppermost, covered with satin, and having a bag sewn on to hold a dust brush or broom, makes a pretty companion to the bellows. The bag may be of figured India silk, lined with cambric or silesia, sewn on full to the edge of the fan, and left open at the top just below the handle. An elastic is



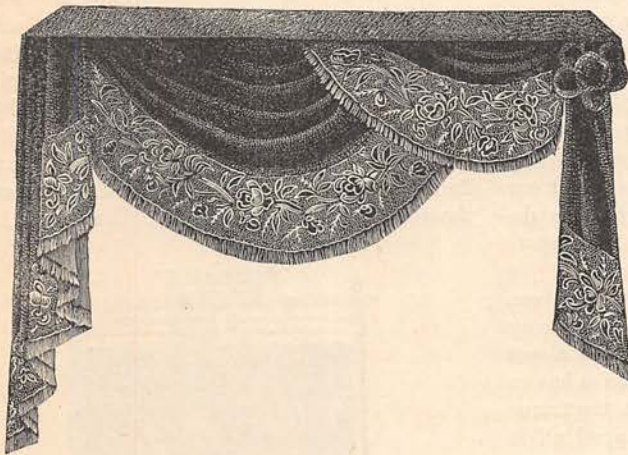
SUGGESTION FOR A SCREEN.

run in with a frill or ruche to hide it. Look up some pretty receptacles for growing ferns or foliage plants; old jars, little oyster

kegs, even small butter firkins and pails have been converted into pretty articles for use as well as ornament.

Paint a color that will harmonize with the furnishings of the room, and as "Ruthie" is handy with the brush, she can decorate with bright designs, such as poppies, yellow daisies and golden rod, wild asters and carrot, sweet briar or single Scotch roses. These will help to fill odd corners and bare places.

Another pretty fancy is to fit a handsome wall-pocket, with a tin box to hold an ivy, which will grow in dark corners, and can be trained over pictures and door mouldings with very pretty effect. We once had one with several branches, trained around three



DRAPÉ FOR MANTEL OR BRACKET SHELF.

three sides of a room, making a charming wall decoration.

We suggest this to "Ruthie," especially as her wall paper is a dull and undesirable pattern, and she cannot renew it at present. If she does not mind driving tacks in the wall, she can train it very artistically, using the double matting tacks, being careful to give the branches growing room.

An ordinary pine easel can be transformed into a handsome holder for a picture or a large portfolio, by enamel, bronze, or lin-crusta. Sometimes the common easels are covered neatly with plush, making very handsome pieces of furniture at a trifling cost, as the amount of material required is small, and an easel when neatly covered in this way, is rich enough to grace any room.

Smaller easels are made of rough sticks, rustic fashion, then gilded or bronzed.

A screen always contributes much towards the attractiveness of a room, besides breaking the monotony of the wall paper or set furniture. Suitable suggestions have been given in our columns of late, and we show another design for an inexpensive one here, which is simply mounted with curtain holland, and decorated with a moonlight scene, either in monochrome, or subdued gray tints. For this procure the gray-green holland, which gives a tone of itself for the ground or local tint. The frame in this instance is a gilded bamboo, but a less expensive one can be made at home by clever hands. The moonlight scene can be painted from directions given in February number of *Brush Studies*.

We give also a suggestion for a pretty mantel drape, where the plain straight valance is not desired. The material is plush, with a band of a contrasting shade, painted or embroidered, as shown in illustration, and edged with a narrow silk twist fringe. A rosette of the plush is added at one side, while the other is draped in box and side pleats. The arrangement is simple, and unlike the stiffness of the more formal Vandyked lambrequin. The top of mantel

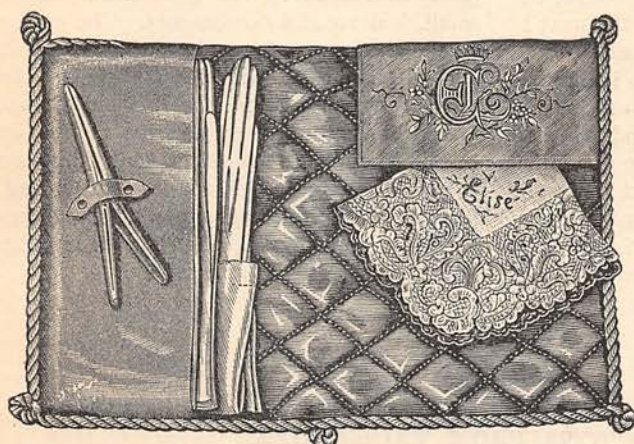
and border stripe may be of the same shade of plush, while the drape itself is another color, or a darker shade of the same color.

#### Decorative Hints.

TERRA cotta panels are very pretty framed in plush, using a rich terra cotta shade, deeper than the panels. The frames for these panels can be made of wood, about four inches deep, and the panels put in at the back to give the necessary depth or sunken look. The whole is suspended to the wall either by hooks, or by a bow of broad, soft ribbon of a harmonizing color. These panels are also handsome hung over a mantel, or at the sides over flat projections. Any carpenter, or person familiar with the use of tools, can frame the panels.

It is a very pretty fancy to cover the ordinary pottery flower jars with moss, secured with a string tied tightly around the flower pot in several places. The moss will last a long time and gives a window a very pretty, bright appearance. One of our readers sent us recently some specimens of moss which would be very beautiful for this purpose, and much better than the imitation article sold at the florists.

TAMBOURINES are mostly painted in oils as the easiest method, but, if plenty of body color is used, there is no reason why water-colors are not suitable to the parchment. It is not absolutely necessary to decorate the woodwork, but it is an improvement to paint



SACHET FOR GLOVES AND HANDKERCHIEFS.

round with a wreath of flowers or distinct bouquets, with birds or butterflies. The tambourines are used to hold letters ready for post, or any cards or notes; they are hung against the wall for ornamentation. Now the latest thing is to fill them in with a silk bag and use them for a work bag; cords, tassels and ribbons are tied to the surrounding holes to make them prettier. Occasionally a network of ribbons is made to meet together in the center.

FRENCH FANCIES.—One of the materials of the day appears to be pongee silk. Everybody almost seems to be buying it for purposes of all kinds, decorative and personal, and pongee silk, though up in the world,

appears to be lowered in price, for the time, to add to its universal popularity and ready sale. Certainly the aprons of it are dainty and pretty; the sashes for both small and grown-up girls, dressy and becoming; the draperies for pianos and valances, tablecloths, cushions, cosies, and, lastly, the whole costumes of it, are both artistic and graceful, so that pongee silk is not to be looked upon slightly, though it may not please the taste of those who prefer richer materials, after the style of "silks that stand of themselves." [This silk can be had of J. F. INGALLS' Supply Department, of this Magazine.]

A SOMEWHAT novel way to trim a table scarf is to put three-cornered pieces of silk or satin on each end. Have these pieces half a yard deep at the longest side, in the corner embroider a spray of flowers; where the satin or silk ends joins the center part of the scarf, put a row of fancy stitches. A dark crimson felt scarf with one end light blue, the other crimson shaded to brown, is very handsome.

BE sure and read the page that gives the Special Wholesale Price List of Fancy Work Materials.

#### Sachet for Gloves and Handkerchiefs.

A VERY pretty novelty in the shape of a sachet for gloves and handkerchiefs, appeared lately in the *London Queen*, which we think will please lovers of dainty fancy work. It is thus described:

The outer covering is of rose-colored satin, on which an appropriate ornament has been painted. Blue satin forms the lining, which is quilted over a thin layer of scented cotton wool. The pocket for the gloves is made of cream satin, with a strap for the glove stretcher on top. The same satin is used for the handkerchief pocket, on which a monogram has been embroidered. Front and back of sachet, thus prepared, are joined and edged with a red silk cord.



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### A Pretty Bag for Holding Cabinet Photographs. Dust Bag. Table Scarf, Etc.

A PRETTY rack for cabinet photographs, stereoscopic views, etc., is made in the following manner: Take a small wire broiler or toaster, and bend the handles down on the outside until they form supports, and will permit of the boiler standing when opened so as to form a pocket. Now gild, bronze, paint, or leave it plain, as your fancy dictates. Open it wide and measure the length from one side to the other, also the width. Cut a piece of cotton wadding the exact size, and cover it with satin on both sides and when it is all neatly finished, fold it across the middle. Set the broiler up in position and slip the satin in; fasten it at each of the four corners with silk thread sewed over and over around the wire. A bow of ribbon placed at the joining of the handle to the sides is an improvement. They can be made very elaborate or otherwise, to suit one's taste and pocket.

Another way of using broilers for fancy work is to get a very large strong one and make a wall pocket of it. Do not bend the handles down, and in place of lining it, weave ribbons in and out of the wires on one side, using two contrasting colors of ribbon, about two inches in width. Place the broiler against the wall, and let the side with the ribbons fall forward enough to form a good sized pocket, the ribbons must then be carried across the ends and fastened securely to the back. Place bows of ribbon on the handles; hang on the wall, and you have a strong, elaborate-looking wall pocket, at a small expense and a little trouble.

I recently saw a beautiful duster bag, which was worthy of a place in any parlor. The materials were a strip seven inches wide by twenty-four inches long, of fine heavy bed-ticking, striped with quarter inch stripes of blue and white, tinsel cord in several shades (about a yard of each shade), red,

blue and yellow embroidery silk, a strip of cardinal red satin of the same dimensions as the ticking, a large ring to hang it by, one dozen small crescents and half a dozen large ones. Cut one end of the ticking to form a point, and leave the other square or straight across. For a distance of about eight inches on each end, cover each white stripe with a row of herring-bone stitch, alternating the red, blue, and yellow till you have crossed the strip. Then through each blue stripe put a straight row of tinsel, using the colors to suit yourself. Now line it with the red satin, and turn up the end you have left square, to form a pocket. Slip the other end through the large ring and let it lap over for a flap to the pocket. Sew the crescents, that is, the small ones, six on each side of the point, and a large one just at the point, and put the other five large ones across the bottom of the pocket. The effect when finished, is beautiful and very oriental in appearance.

A table scarf I have recently made is so handsome, that I shall try to describe it. Here again bed-ticking was my foundation, but in this case was striped with inch stripes of dark blue and dark red; the blue stripes had hair stripes of white through it, but the red was plain. I bought black velvet ribbon one-half inch wide, an assortment of embroidery silks, and some yellow sateen. I counted my blue stripes (there were eight) before buying the velvet, and then purchased just enough to cut into eight strips, each three inches shorter than the length of my table scarf. I doubled the scarf in the middle and basted a line of white thread through the fold, then found the middle of each velvet strip, tacked them to my scarf, allowing the middle fold of each to correspond with the line of basting in each blue strip. I basted them the entire length, and fastened the edges of the velvet with fancy silk stitches. Through the red stripes I put stitching of different colored silks. Through one a row of yellow stars, another a row of herring



bone, and so on till all were embroidered; then I fringed three inches on each end of the scarf. The inch and a half of velvet which hung over the fringe, I left loose, and turned in the ends to form points, tipped each one with a pompon, alternating red and yellow. I lined it with yellow sateen, which I also fringed. Everybody who saw it admired it very much, and all were surprised to learn that common bed-ticking formed the foundation.

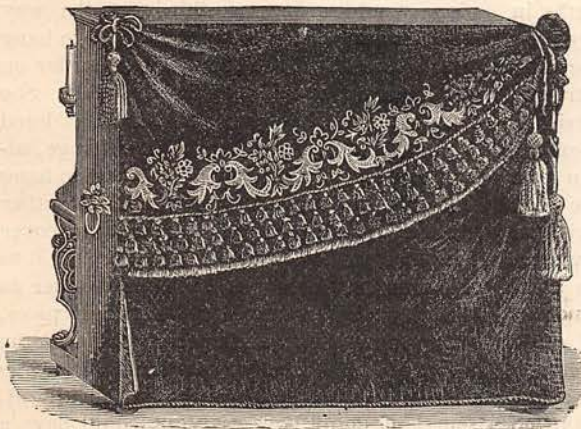
Mrs. J. B

#### Decoration for Upright Piano.

ONE of our readers desires a suggestion for decoration of upright piano so placed that the back faces the room.

The illustration here given shows a very handsome arrangement of drapery for this purpose. The back of instrument is draped with a dark shade of felt, the under part being edged with a heavy worsted cord. The upper drapery is caught up at the corners with cord and tassels, and finished with a tassel fringe.

The embroidery is appliqué couched down with silks and wools in the manner described in our *Embroidery Department* this month. Of course other styles of decoration may be substituted, and those who handle the brush can paint a pretty border design either in



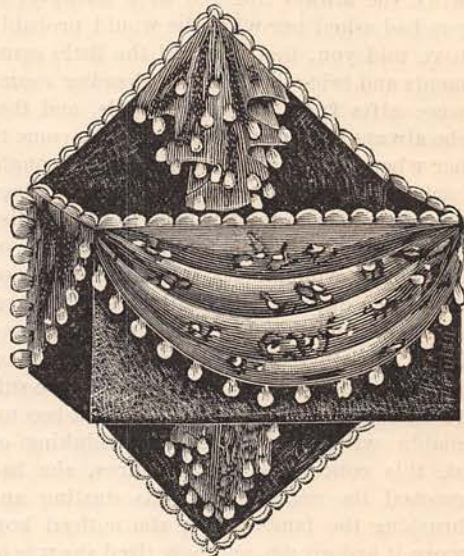
SUGGESTION FOR PIANO DECORATION.

plain or Kensington painting if preferred. If this drape is too expensive, the back of piano may be entirely covered with lincrusta walton in a design of fret work or carving

and stained in imitation of rosewood. This with a narrow slip scarf upon the top makes also a very handsome decoration.

#### A Novel Wall Pocket.

THE accompanying illustration shows a very simple, yet pretty wall pocket, easily made and quite inexpensive.



WALL POCKET.

Take an ordinary cigar box and glue it firmly to a board shaped as here shown, or else glue two pointed pieces top and bottom, so that the joining will be even. Cover all neatly with velveteen or velutena and drape as suggested in illustration, with figured India silk bordered with silk tassels. Finish the box and back pieces with a stiff gimp or gold cord caught along the edge in scallops, or a macramé or crochet border stiffened and gilded, makes a pretty finish.

#### Pillow Shams.

PILLOW shams of colored satin, edged with lace, have small square centers of lace and insertion fastened upon them with ribbon bows at the corners, which should point toward the sides of the under square.