




NEEDLE AND BRUSH.

CHAPTER I.

SORRENTO EMBROIDERY.



BOTH needle and brush are employed in the execution of the fascinating variety of decorative work known as Sorrento embroidery. Linen sateen is the material oftenest chosen for a background, and the purposes to which such work is best adapted are those which permit of developing bold effects. The sofa cushion chosen as an exposition of the work in the present instance is made of dark green plush and linen sateen of a slightly creamy shade. The plush forms the under side, and the linen, upon which the embroidery is developed, forms the other. Before the cushion is made up, the linen is prepared by being stamped with a design showing oak leaves and acorns in combination with an effective arrangement of conventional curves and angles. One-fourth of this design is comprised in Diagrams A and B, which are illustrated on succeeding pages, and are of the full size required. By placing the corresponding edges of these two diagrams together with the corresponding dotted lines marked A and B together, one-fourth of the entire design will result, and by quadrupling the portion thus achieved the entire pattern

will be reproduced. The remaining dotted lines show where the corresponding sections come together, and by comparing the diagrams with the cushion illustrated the process of enlargement will be fully comprehended. When the design has been traced, it is gone over with liquid dye in a dark green shade, the application being made with a brush that is not soft enough to take up much at a time. The liquid is applied with quick, even strokes, and extreme care is exercised lest it go beyond the outlines, as the beauty of the effect depends on the regularity with which the work is done and the strength of the contrast between the design and its background. When the design has been tinted in the requisite color and given plenty of time to dry, all its outlines are bordered with a button-hole stitching done with heavy rope-silk of the exact shade of the dye, and upon the background a network of outline stitching, broken here and there by a loop stitch, is made. The leaves are then veined with silk somewhat finer, but of the same shade, and the cover is ready for making up. The effect suggests rich appliqué work, and the process as thus described is illustrated at Figure No. 2 on another page. Sometimes it is the back-

ground which is tinted as pictured at Figure No. 3, while the design is left in the color of the linen; Figure No. 3 also illustrates the button-hole stitching very plainly, while Figure No. 2 clearly exemplifies the process of veining. When the design is geometric or architectural, or in any severely conventional

their experience yet to undergo, the maxim of "make haste slowly" may be repeated with emphasis. We have spoken of the linen sateen so much favored for this class of work. It is sometimes called "art linen" and is very firmly and smoothly woven; it is obtainable in cream and pure white shades, and, when



FIGURE NO. 1.—SOFA CUSHION DECORATED WITH SORRENTO EMBROIDERY.

style, the tinted background is effective; but foliage appears best when it is itself tinted.

Almost everybody who has experimented much with the brush will exercise personal preference regarding the liquid dyes which are used for this class of work, and to such only the hint to profit by experience need be given. To such, however, as have most of

enriched in the manner described, is counted suitable for association with the richest fabrics employed for cushions, portières and other decorative articles. Any other material woven so that the dyes will not spread too quickly may be used instead. Art linen or linen sateen resembles what is more familiarly or generally known as linen drilling.

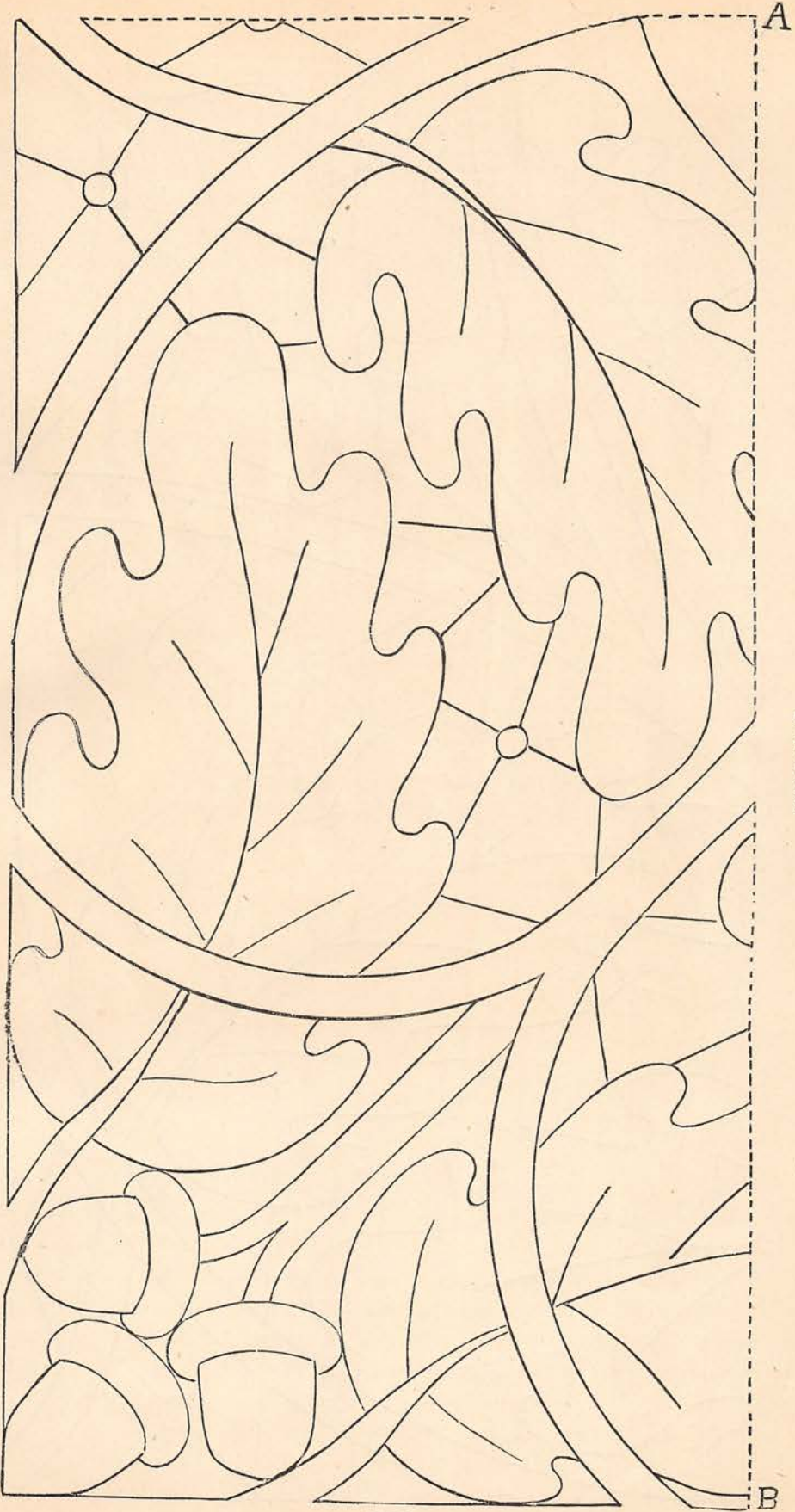


DIAGRAM A.

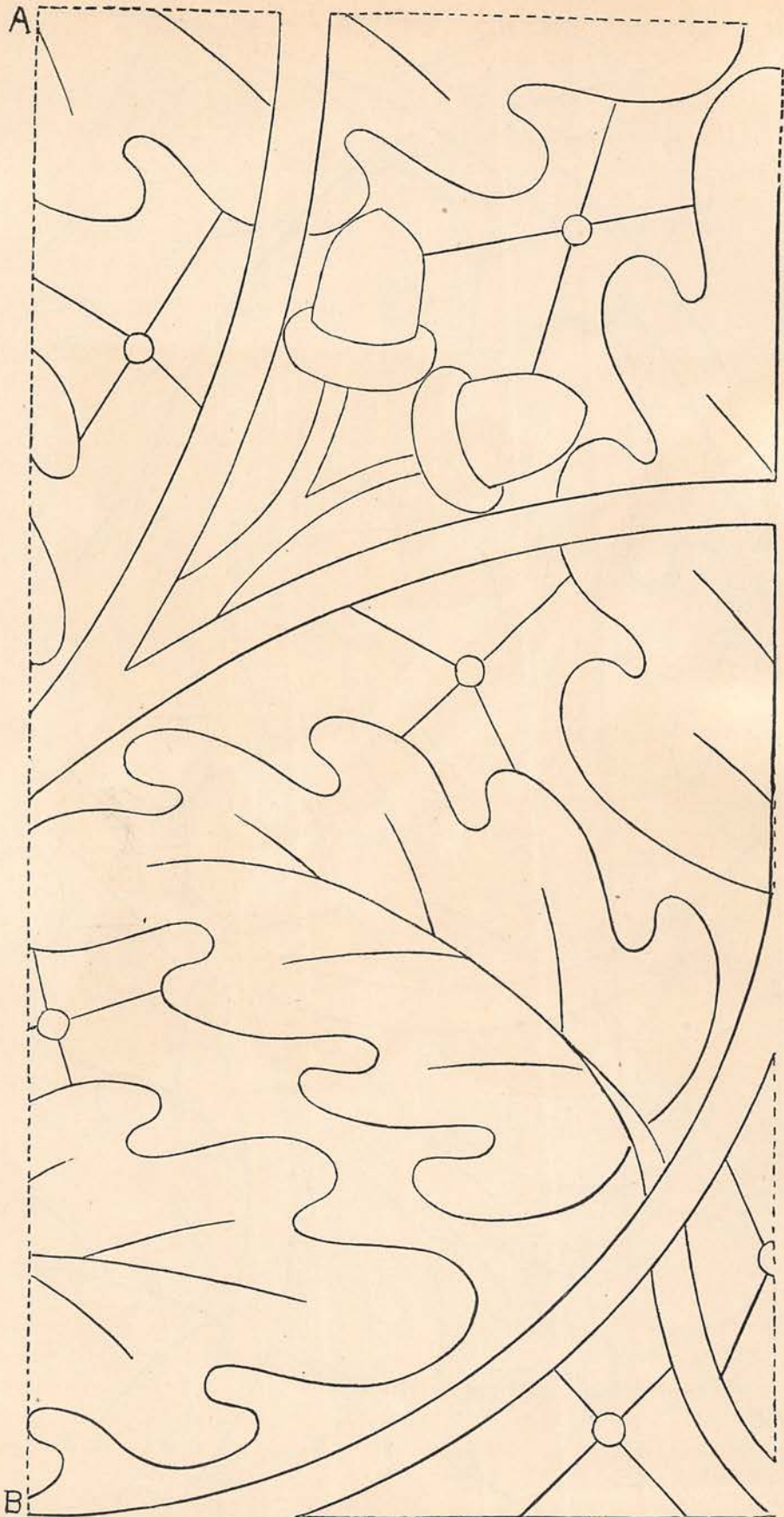


DIAGRAM B

Those who attempt Sorrento embroidery without previous experimental knowledge, usually find Gréniés' dyes the easiest to work with, because with them they may procure a medium

certain effects, which to combine, and how much they may be diluted. If, however, the worker desires but one tint and is certain of obtaining that in perfection at the shops where

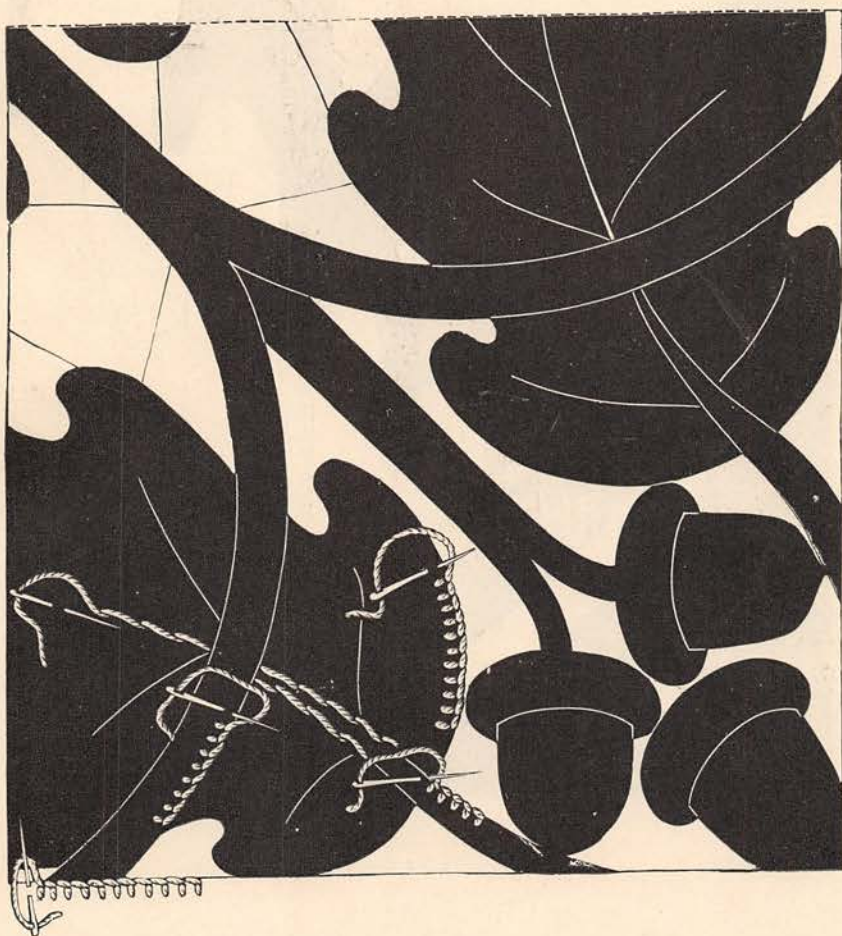


FIGURE NO. 2.—SHOWING THE EFFECT OF A TINTED DESIGN.

for mixing with them, which imparts body enough to hold them within even the most circumscribed space, and because they are so few in number that a few trials will convince her which are the proper ones to use to produce

such articles are kept, she may proceed even more fearlessly, but in no instance should she apply it to the article to be embroidered without first testing it upon a scrap of the same texture. The fabric should be laid over a sheet

of blotting paper in order to arrest the superfluous moisture, and the first strokes should be made toward the edges of the design, in order to guard against overrunning. In gen-

eral, it may be said that any dyes and any materials adapted to tapestry painting may be used for Sorrento work. But it must be urged, even with the danger of repeating our

previous warning, that practice alone can teach the process thoroughly. Beginners will do well to limit their first efforts to producing uniformly tinted designs, but when they have



FIGURE NO. 3.—SHOWING THE EFFECT OF A TINTED BACKGROUND.

progressed a little in this direction they will understand the possibility of developing shaded tints and of uniting different hues in the same design.

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