USEFUL HINTS.

Keep a little note-book on your book-shelf, and enter the date and name of any person who borrows a book. Many books are lost and libraries spoiled by forgetfulness on the part of borrower and lender.

When travelling in a railway-carriage it is dangerous to sit facing the engine with the window open. Pieces of metal from the permanent way have become embedded in the eyes of passengers and caused great pain and distress.

It is not healthy to allow damp dead leaves from the trees to decay on the ground immediately under the windows of a house. They should be swept up and put on the flower-beds, where, if they are left, they will make excellent mould and protect young growing plants.

Glass bottles should never be thrown out of railway-carriage windows. In some cases where it was done serious injuries have resulted to men working on the line.

The legs of stockings cut off at the ankle, when the feet are worn out, make capital warm sleeve linings, tacked in at the top of the sleeve seam inside; or, new feet can be cut out and applied to worn-out stockings.

Ladies' kid boots and shoes should never have any blacking or polish put on them until it is absolutely necessary, as these all injure the kid more or less and wear them out sooner than they should. The mud only should be brushed off them after a walk, and, if wet, should be placed soles uppermost in a warm room or in the sun to dry, but not near a fire. When taken off, and while still warm, they should be filled with rags or soft paper to preserve the shape (of course, a boot-tree is best if you have one, and they are not expensive), and the top button fastened to keep the boot upright and the linings clean.

Cats with long fur should have it regularly brushed or else the long hairs get into their mouth and are swallowed when they are licking themselves, and this is very bad for them.

Clothes that have been used for cleaning oil-lamps should never be left about with any others, but kept in a metal-box (a biscuit-box would do) away from any risk of fire.

FLANNEL TAPESTRY.

DESIGN FOR CUSHION.
To many people the very word tapestry has a dismal sound, suggestive of close work done in cross-stitch, all very wonderful, but often undeniably ugly. It is of very ancient origin, and in the records of the past many histories of old tapestries can be found. In a contemporary we read of the great pieces that are preserved in the different country seats of many of our nobility and gentry. "Not a few of the touches that give so much enchantment to Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, for instance, are imparted by the solemn 'hangings,' the superb pieces of tapestry, that were there when the bewitching Dorothy Vernon lived in it, and its grey courts and green terraces were enlivened with the passing to and fro of much godly company and many retainers.

Hardwick Hall, too, in the same county, owes much of its Elizabethan air to the needlework of the Countess of Shrewsbury, and a great deal of its romance to that of Mary Queen of Scots, who languished there for a time as a prisoner. The lightness of this fabric, owing to the fact that there is 'more glass than wall' in it, its palatial extent, the trimmings, the general old-world aspect, impart impressions of their own; but without the needlework, the arras on the wall, the hangings and counterpanes on the state beds, and the cushions and other adornments of the chairs, we could not realize so completely the features of Elizabethan home-life. We know that a correspondent of Sir William Cecil reported to him that Mary Queen of Scots mentioned that 'all day she wrought with her needle, and that diversity of the colours made the work less tedious, and she continued so long at it till very payn made her to give over.' And we feel that even Holyrood Palace would not be quite so weird, so haunted-looking, and so full of fancies, without its faded tapestry and time-worn bed-hangings. The subtle and indescribable charm of Wolsey's great palace at Hampton Court also owes much to its tapestry. In fact, whenever we come into the presence of ancient needlework on a grand scale, those who have eyes to see are brought under an impressive influence that is hard to put into words."

In spite of all this, and much more that might be said in praise of the work of our ancestors, I think there are very few people nowadays who would contemplate for a moment imitation of this old tapestry. Everything is too quick nowadays, and people want to work as well as to travel as fast as they can. Now flannel tapestry comes in to meet this want very well.

It is most durable, for it is executed upon home-flannel, which is of a yellowy cream-colour, in tapestry wools. The designs are all bold and large, and they are very quickly worked. There is no monotony in it, for you can use any number of stitches that you please, and the work is very inexpensive. It also is very handsome, quite novel, and having said all this, what more remains than to advise my readers to try it for themselves?

The uses to which flannel tapestry can be put are very many. You can make charming bed-spreads, either in sections joined together or in one piece; curtain-borders mounted on plush are very handsome; fire-screens framed in wood, cushion-covers, portières, covers for hot-water cans—in shape like cosies and very convenient—table-covers, and many other things.

Many of my readers will remark that house or scrubbing flannel is very narrow, and they will wonder how it can be turned to use in large articles. The difficulty is met here. Mrs. Brackett, No. 150, The Parade, Leamington Spa, who makes a speciality of this work, has a flannel made expressly for her, forty-eight inches wide and somewhat softer in texture, though like in appearance to the common house-flannel so well known in all houses. If you write to her, she will, if you enclose a stamped envelope, send you a price-list of articles in flannel tapestry, either simply designed or begun, and with materials to finish it at very moderate charges. Her designs are excellent, and if you have not got a good eye for colour, and cannot depend upon your own taste, you had better leave the choice of colour to her.

The cushion in our illustration is one of her designs, and you will see that, bold and conventional as it is, it has a character of its own, and that ordinary patterns, which are nice for crewel work, etc., would not so well answer here.

This cushion is worked in two shades of peacock-blue, three shades of yellow, several greens, and a great many different stitches are used. There is no rule about what stitches can be employed, the worker must please herself; only be careful in working to have good, bold
outlines, and not to mix your stitches or your colours too much as a general rule. The ground, as you will see, is left quite clear, and upon the rough flannel the shades of the wool come out very well indeed. Of course, the selection of the colours is a matter of taste, and one cushion I saw of Mrs. Brackett's was done in a great many colours. This was really done out of odds and ends, and it varied from the cushion you see before you, as the entire ground was worked in what is called point de ris, and in that a great many colours were used. This background obtains very much in flannel tapestry, but whether it is to be used or not is simply a matter of taste and individual fancy. I shall describe point de ris further on, as well as many other stitches which have been used in the cushions, besides a few not used, but which my readers may like to know how to do.

In the spray of Fig. 1 you see this tapestry done in quite another way from the cushion. This is executed simply in what is called long and short stitch and stem-stitch. When finished the background is covered with point de ris in light yellow, the actual flower being entirely done in three shades of art red, almost resembling terra-cotta.

Fig. 2 is a peacock's feather, and a design only of peacock's feathers is very handsome indeed. Those who live in or near London can see the work in many varieties at the Studio Tea Rooms, worked by ladies at 85, New Bond Street, near Oxford Street, Mrs. Brockett's London address.

In working this peacock's feather I used a little silk to brighten it, but this is merely a matter of taste. I only did this in the centre so as to make the eye of the feather brighter. I used a little peacock blue and brown. Now for the stitches.

Fig. 3 shows you small balls which are useful for filling up spaces. No outline is needed, the ball being sewn over about four times, for as the wool is very thick you can get a good effect in surprisingly little time.

Fig. 4 is the eye and short stitch. In working always begin near the top of the petal and make your stitches of uneven length, so that when you use another shade there may not be a bar across, but the shades dovetailing one into another. Let very little of the wool lie under the material, but as much as possible on the top.

Fig. 5 is stem-stitch. Make your stitch always like the one before, and exactly opposite to it.

Fig. 6 is picot-stitch. Make a loop as if for chain-stitch, and then fasten down the loop with one stitch much shorter than the loop. When used for filling up spaces always place the picots between the last row of them, not one exactly under the last. Be careful to have your loops all the same length.

Fig. 7 is feather-stitch done closely together to form a thick stitch. Always have a middle vein on the leaf you are going to work in this way. Bring up your needle and wool on the right side of the flannel, going into the middle vein near the tip of the leaf. Next put the needle in the tip of the leaf, and bring it out where you already have the wool. Then draw it through and hold your cotton under your left-hand thumb, inserting your needle in the outline on the right side of the leaf close by the last stitch. Bring it out in the middle vein over the wool which you are holding by your thumb and draw it through. Hold your wool again under your thumb and put your needle in the outline on the left side of the leaf. Bring it out in the middle vein over the wool held by the thumb, and after drawing it through proceed doing the same, always alternating one stitch to left and another to the right.

Fig. 8 is point table. Take up only about a thread or two of the flannel as if you were going to make a back-stitch. Place each stitch at regular intervals and observe that the stitches in the alternating rows lie in between those before and never exactly under them.

Fig. 9 is herring-bone. This is very easy and is often used as a filling for a leaf. Always do it from left to right, and make your stitches evenly and neatly.

Fig. 10 is what is called Indian filling. Keep your wool under the needle as in illustration, but when you have withdrawn that stitch take up the same amount of stuff, keeping your wool to the right, then throw it to the left as in the illustration. It is a very pretty stitch, and useful for forming entire leaves or petals.

Fig. 11 is trellis-stitch. Work as if for coral-stitch, only placing your needle into the former stitch, keeping your wool always under the needle.

In Fig. 12 you see the trellis fastened down with two rows of back-stitches in another colour. One entire flower in the cushion is worked in this way, each leaf being outlined in rope-stitch.
Fig. 13 is done in post-stitch. Bring your needle up from the back and twist the wool round it as many times as the length of the stitch needs. Hold your left thumb firmly on the twists round the needle which are thus formed, and pass your needle and wool through it. Then insert it at the end where it first came out, and drawing it out at the right place go on to the next stitch.

Fig. 14 is plait-stitch. This is done much like feather-stitch, only that the wool is held above and not below the needle, and you do not go into the middle of the centre vein but a little to one side of it. This makes the wool cross in the centre, and gives the stitch the appearance of a plait. This is a capital stitch, and will be a favourite with those who like what goes fast, but you must be careful to have the outline quite clear.

Fig. 15 is rope-stitch, and this is used for the thick outline you see so much in the cushion. Form a loop as if for a chain, and then, instead of placing your needle in the loop just formed, put it behind it. Examine the illustration and that will show you how to do it than many explanations.

Fig. 16 is coral-stitch worked by holding your wool under the needle and going from one side to the other.

Fig. 17 is the point de rin. The stitches are taken at all angles and are about the size of a grain of rice.

Fig. 18 is raised stem-stitch. Take a thread or two of the tapestry-wool and lay it as a foundation along the line you wish to work, then sew over it in wide stem-stitches, which, as a matter-of-fact, are more like satin-stitch taken slantwise.

Fig. 19 is simple chain-stitch.

Fig. 20 is wheat-ear-stitch, and I shall here copy the very best directions I have ever seen for working it. "To work, draw three perpendicular lines a quarter of an inch apart from each other, the centre line as a guide for the chain-stitch and the outer lines to regulate the size of the spikes. Bring up the needle on the centre line, hold the wool under the left-hand thumb, insert the needle nearly in the same place as the wool emerges from, only a quarter of a thread or two to the right, and bring it up on the same line a quarter of an inch lower down and over the wool held by the thumb; draw through. This forms a chain-stitch; insert the needle on the left-hand guiding line at the same level as you commenced the chain-stitch and bring it out in the lower part of the chain-stitch; next work another chain-stitch, followed up by a spike stitch on each side and continue." From the same work I must quote the way to work Fig. 21, which is called cable-stitch.

"This is a peculiar stitch rather difficult to explain, but simple enough when understood... Bring up the needle and wool on the right side of the material, hold the wool straight down under the thumb of the left hand, pass the needle from right to left under the wool so held down, and draw it up till the cotton held under the thumb is brought to a small loop, then keeping the thumb in the same position insert the point of the needle in the material below the wool and just underneath where you brought it out; bring the point of the needle up in a straight line a quarter of an inch below, but not to pass through the loop of wool that is still held under the thumb, and draw the loop of wool closely round the top of the needle and pass the wool from left to right under the point of the needle, and draw the needle at once through the little circular loop at top of the needle or through this present loop which resembles a chain-stitch loop, and the stitch is accomplished; all the stitches are worked in the same manner, and the effect is as of a small knot of wool linking one chain-stitch to another. Be careful always to pull the wool closely round the top of the needle and to loop it under the point of the needle, as represented in the engraving, before drawing the needle out, as if this is forgotten the stitch cannot be rightly formed, and it being a tiresome stitch to undo, great pains must be taken to work it correctly."

Fig. 22 is simply over-casting, and is useful where only a border of a petal and not the entire petal is wished to be worked.

Fig. 23 are French knots. Twist the wool two or more times round the needle before withdrawing it, and place where you withdrew it. In Fig. 24 button-holing is taken slanting.

In Fig. 25 feather-stitch is done but not closely together.

Snail-trail is the name of Fig. 26. Form one stitch as for rope-stitch, and then do the next a short distance from it.

Figs. 27, 28, and 29, explain themselves if they are carefully studied, as in Fig. 29 it is seen how the one before it is fastened where the wool crosses.

I have said enough to show you how much variety you can get in flannel tapestry, and I am sure if you once do any you will find it very fascinating.

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A DRAWING LESSON.

There were three young people learning to draw,
And they drew such things as you never saw.
They drew the master's attention first,
And drew him out, as much as they durst.
They drew lots for the prize, and drew a blank;
And drew a deposit out of the bank.
They drew the blinds up and drew them down;
And drew the people out of the town.
And then they drew rein, and drew breath as well,
And drew more corks than I can tell.
They drew beer from a barrel, a charge from a gun,
And then they tried drawing one by one.
They knew they must draw a line somewhere,
So they crossed the equator, and drew it there.
They drew their boots off and drew their gloves on.
(By-the-by they had queer things to draw upon:
They drew on their funds, their imagination,
And drew on account without hesitation.)
They drew an audience, drew applause,
And drew their swords in a worthy cause.
They drew an inference, drew a bill,
And drew the long-bow, which they're drawing still.
They drew a badger, and, to their surprise,
Drew blood from their hands and tears from their eyes.
They tried to draw back, but he held them fast;
And they drew a veil over their feelings at last.

CLARA J. BROOKE.