Victorian Creative

Tips & Tools for Victorian-Inspired Arts, Crafts & Decor

Volume I #10 - February 11, 2022

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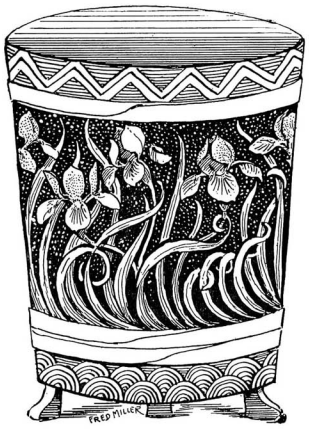
Fig. 4.

FIG. 2.



Victorian Creative

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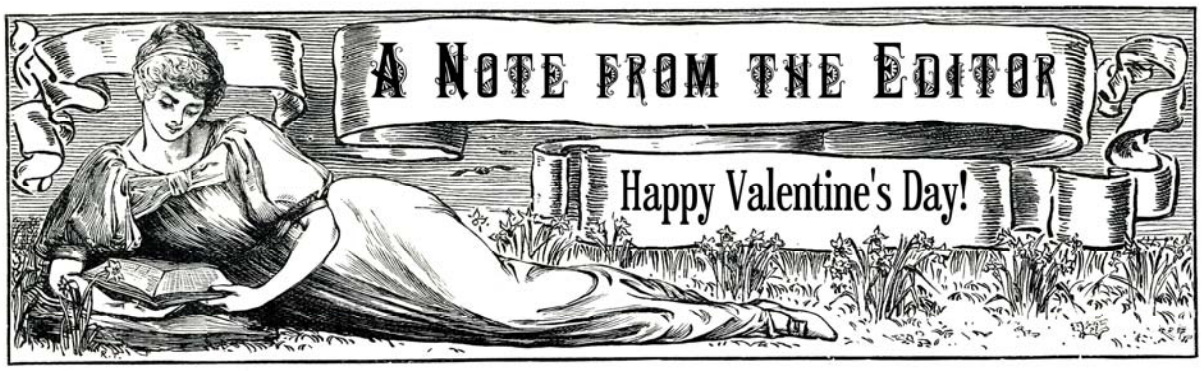
ABOUT OUR COVER: This charming bit of "fluffy" romance comes from a postcard by Arthur Thiele, from the early 1900's. It's part of our **"Romantic Couples"** clip art collection, which includes romantic Victorian people plus a delightful assortment of animal couples and more - www.victorianvoices.net/clipart/people/couples.shtml



Victorians had a mixed view of Valentine's Day cards. The prevailing view seemed to be that eventually such cards would completely go out of style and vanish forever. Since this view was expressed in an article dating from 1877, and another dating from 1895, I think we can confidently state that it was a rather inaccurate prediction—though I doubt anyone in the 19th century could have predicted the extent to which Valentines would be commercialized today!

Despite the fact that Valentine cards were clearly firmly entrenched in Victorian culture by as early as the 1850's, I rarely come across them in Victorian scrap albums or collections of loose ephemera. I suspect the reason is that, unlike Christmas cards, Valentines were never intended to be sent out *en masse*. While you might send a Christmas card to everyone in your circle of family, friends, business associates and distant acquaintances, Valentines were generally reserved for "someone special." By definition, they were intended for sweethearts and spouses. One didn't, typically, send a Valentine to one's third cousin or maiden aunt, and certainly not to one's employer or coworkers. For that same reason, a person who might gather greeting cards into a scrap album could surely expect to receive dozens of Christmas cards, but wouldn't be likely to receive dozens of Valentines. And, quite possibly, those that *were* received might have been kept more as a treasure than as something to paste into a scrapbook.

By the early 20th century, of course, matters were already evolving into the Valentine frenzy we see today. Valentine postcards from the early 1900's aren't *quite* a dime a dozen, but they're close—and you can easily obtain a scrap album that contains dozens of them. When I was in school (*not* in the early 1900's), it was the rule that every student had to give a Valentine to *every* classmate, so that no one would feel "left out." This rule no doubt filled the greeting card industry with delirious joy, though I doubt parents felt quite so gleeful about having to purchase those packages of 30 or more cards every year. As for the students themselves, since we all knew that these flimsy little cards proclaiming abiding friendship meant absolutely nothing, I suspect that's exactly what we felt about them.

Getting back to that article from 1877, though, the author was certainly prescient in other ways, even if he *did* fancy that Valentines would soon be a thing of the past. He writes, "…there is no telling how soon, through the abuse of a custom which is beginning to be an infliction on many people, society may discard valentines altogether. Already we have Christmas cards, and New Year's wishes are scarcely exhausted before St. Valentine steps in, and February's wooing days are scarcely over when Easter cards come on the counter. Whitsuntide, Michaelmas, and Martinmas may have, in time, their peculiar blessings, to be proclaimed by the makers of cards and sachets."

Being British, our writer failed to predict the addition of Halloween cards, Thanksgiving cards, and St. Patrick's Day cards—which I suspect have always been far more an American phenomenon than an Irish one. But it's clear that, like so many things that we take for granted in our daily lives today, the proliferation of holiday greeting cards has its roots firmly in the Victorian era!

As for Valentines, New Year's greetings, Thanksgiving cards and the like, I confess that I've become a bit of a Scrooge. I've decided that I don't need to enrich the greeting card industry by sending cards telling people what they already know—e.g., that I hope they have a happy whatever-day-it-is. Since a *nice* greeting card today often costs as much as a paperback novel, I'd rather have the novel—and my family would rather have a phone call.

Find out more about Victorian Valentines at www.victorianvoices.net/topics/holidays/Valentines.shtml!

—Moira Allen
editors@victorianvoices.net

FLOWER DECORATIONS

FEBRUARY

In February comes a little stirring of the sap, and a distinct promise of blossom, even when the fulfilment is cruelly deferred.

Out of doors snowdrops, aconites, and scillas start up out of the snow; crocuses follow quickly, camellia japonica and the yellow jasmine nudiflora adorn sunny walls, while in mild seasons the first primroses and violets give us a foretaste *of spring*.

Indoors there are now in bloom thousands of hyacinths, narcissi, tulips, and other bulbs easily reared by amateur gardeners, while the flowers from the south are more plentiful than ever.

Down in the heart of the Midlands there is an old orchard whose oddly-shaped appletrees, giving such a delightful shade in summer, now let all the sunshine through their boughs on to a perfect carpet of snowdrops and aconites, which grow and bloom in all but one corner, where a tree trunk has fallen years ago into a depression which is a shallow pond in damp weather, and where it still lies, its form clothed and almost hidden by forget-me-nots and ground ivy. The former have neither flowers nor leaves now, but the ivy is luxuriant, and not only creeps on the ground, even where the flowers do not allow it to show, but climbs the older trees, and hangs from the weirdly twisted branches in fantastic garlands. It is a shockingly neglected and wasted piece of ground from the economist's point of view, but to the artist, beautiful as Nature always is when left to herself; and when I have a good quantity of snowdrops to arrange, it is always this orchard which comes into my mind, with its many suggestions of harmonious grouping.

In all arrangements of snowdrops it is desirable that the graceful natural curve, where the flower-stalk emerges from its sheath, should be preserved, and the flower itself allowed to hang free; and to do this it must be assisted to stand up as straight as possible. They look best of all in troughs or baskets full of moss, but long-stalked extra large blossoms may be loosely placed in specimen glasses with a little fine ivy trailing downwards.

I have filled four semi-circular troughs with moss and water, stuck closely with snowdrops double and single, and at intervals yellow aconites; small ivy, drooping down on to the green table-centre, concealed the glass, as these troughs are generally rather common and clumsy. Two surrounded the base of each of the lamps with which the table was lighted, and an old champagne glass, containing some very fine double snowdrops and graceful sprays of ivy, stood in the centre and at each end of the arrangement.

I have also used similarly-filled troughs to surround a drawing-room lamp having a yellow shade.

Another pretty way is to put the snowdrops and ivy into a china basket filled with moss; or the contrivances of wire, moss, and waterproof paper, which I mentioned last month, would be very convenient for them.

A flower that mixes very agreeably with snowdrops is the blue scilla, and the two may be used with advantage in small vases either for dinner-table or drawing-room decoration.

Snowdrops and crocuses are an obvious association of ideas, but in practice the two flowers do not go well together. Still, I am often astonished that crocuses are so seldom used in room decoration, for few flowers make a more brilliant display, especially if the three colours, purple, white, and gold, are mixed. They require very little arrangement, and should be put into small glass vases, accompanied only by some of their own grass and ivy, or by what looks very pretty—a few budding twigs of some tree like lilac, when the fresh green shoots are just about to open out into definite leaves. I have filled six or eight little green and iridescent glasses (I wished they had been Venetian) with crocus blooms, three or four in each, and some budding lilac twigs, placing them on a dark green table-centre with excellent effect. These twigs are

a very favourite material with me for any arrangements of outdoor spring flowers, and no one who has not tried them can imagine the quaint suggestiveness of the glossy brown sticks and their vivid green excrescences (they are little more as yet) in conjunction with delicate-looking flowers like the crocus, snowdrop, and hellebore, which are yet so much more hardy than they. I mention lilac because these shrubs are plentiful and luxuriant in London gardens, but in the country many hedgerow plants are available and equally effective for the purpose.

A dull room can be made bright by dressing it with a few dozen crocuses, two or three together in a nice glass or china receptacle wherever they may be needed, either in all parts of the room, or closely encircling some large object, such as a palm or lamp. I have never seen the cut blossoms for sale, although no doubt they can be obtained if asked for; so this suggestion will be chiefly useful to those who grow a good quantity in their own gardens. But it is always possible, and I think worth while, to buy boxes of the bulbs, which can be kept quite easily in bloom for some time by transferring them to vases filled with water or very damp moss. For a dinner-table they would be charming in glass-lined decanter stands with plenty of ivy or sprouting twigs.

Primroses and violets, if they are to be had at all, make very pretty posies, together with a few snowdrops and their own leaves, especially in small pieces of china (not blue and white).

A little bunch of large purple violets may be distributed among a good quantity of snowdrops, and look as sweet as they smell; but equal numbers of each flower always suggest funeral wreaths. The same objection does not apply to a mixture of violets and lilies-of-the-valley, because the vivid green leaves of the latter count as a third colour; and such a posy will give grace and fragrance to a bright sitting-room; but both flowers are too expensive at this season to use in any quantity if economy is a consideration.

Roman hyacinths are good now, and a sixpenny bunch, placed lightly, will fill a good-sized china basket of moss. They are very sweet, but rather uninteresting alone, so I generally combine them with some bright larger flowers and dark foliage. Bunches of a very dark-leaved begonia with tiny pink blossoms are sold for about fourpence at many florists, and with white Roman hyacinths and pink anemones will make a very pretty group at a cost of about one and threepence.

Troughs filled with begonia stuck in moss might on a dinner-table surround a tall vase filled with white paper narcissus, or the begonia could be in specimen glasses shorter than others holding narcissus.

For "At Home" days following a wedding white hyacinths mixed with sprays of myrtle or box might appropriately dress a drawing-room, or a basket holding two pieces of white azalea or rhododendron, some hyacinths and myrtle sprays, the handle tied with light green ribbon, could occupy a conspicuous position in the room.

The winter yellow jasmine and scarlet japonica are very beautiful, and so Japanese-looking that they demand Oriental vases; but they are more suitable for shelves and brackets than for table decoration. I have often seen the little knots of the japonica flowers and buds plucked and laid in saucers of water, but cannot help thinking this a mistake, as a great part of their beauty lies in the way in which the brilliant blossoms open out on the dark leafless wood. Small sprays of them are most attractive when placed in narrow necked jars of dull cool colouring.

A few sorts of iris and gladioli are in bloom now, and are quite as quaint and beautiful as orchids, which they greatly resemble in everything but their costliness. For a dinner-party it would be difficult to make a prettier arrangement than a bank of moss fringed with maidenhair, studded in the raised centre with specimens of iris persica and reticulata, and filled up with spiræa or deutsia, some handsome flag leaves and maidenhair; or a centre row of tall glasses holding the iris and spiræa might be flanked by small pots of maidenhair. Gladioli could be treated in the same way, but are hardly so effective as iris. To make the latter last well, they should be cut in the opening bud the day before they are required.

I have not as yet mentioned orchids in any scheme of table decoration, fashionable as they have been of late years, because the cost even of the cheapest has seemed to me almost prohibitive; and for the price of two or three of their blooms a whole table can be decorated with iris, gladioli, or even forced ixias and narcissi. If, however, orchids are used, they should always be placed in banks of moss amidst a mass of fern leaves or other ornamental foliage lightly placed.

A similar bank may be studded only with freesia, white and yellow, at a cost of about half a crown for a dinner of eight people; and blue and white scilla and chiondoxa would give an original effect at even less expense if the flowers were bought direct from the nurseryman. In this arrangement the foliage should include silver and yellow leaves; asparagus would be better than ferns, and the lamp or candle shades should be yellow.

I have used six small but bushy ferns planted in decanter stands as the only accompaniment to three heads of salmon-coloured imatophyllum and a few of their leaves in tall white glasses, the table being lighted by two silver-branched candlesticks with very pale salmon-coloured shades. The whole cost me five shillings, but it will be understood that the occasion was a special one, and I do not think so really splendid an effect could have been obtained for less; while the ferns, carefully repotted next day, lived and grew, serving me in like manner on many future occasions. These suggestions are offered to those who have greenhouse plants in bloom now, from which they do not mind cutting sparingly; and experience will show that even though familiar blossoms like snowdrops and crocuses need treating in good quantities, rarer flowers may be more isolated, and will often make quite as rich an effect if the foliage surroundings be sufficient and appropriate. For the latter I go to a large nursery instead of to a shop, and find usually that the proprietors are willing to cut from their less perfect plants enough leaves for a good sized table for a shilling or so.

Begonia, caladium, canna, rheum, and saxifrage leaves are specially suitable for such arrangements.

Hyacinths, grown in rooms by most people, make beautiful ornaments for sitting-rooms, if not for the dinner-table.

Other bulbs, such as narcissi, freesias, tulips, crocuses, snowdrops, and scillas, are best grown on in boxes until the bud is well formed, then a number in the same stage of development can be planted in a nice bowl. If several are grown together in the same pot from the first, the buds will seldom open out at the same time.

When the bloom is over, all bulbs, whether grown in water or earth, should be planted out into good mould, and only taken up when their leaves are quite withered; then they will be worth growing again next year, although probably the flowers will not be quite so fine.

CONSTANCE JACOB.

Valentine to a Man of Worth

Fair Sir! to you my maiden intuitions
Shy but sincere—ingenuously incline,
And if I find you answer the conditions,
I'll take your bid and be your Valentine.

I know your worth—that is, your general merit;
But, when your mourned and wealthy father died,
Pray tell a simple girl, did you inherit
His virtues only—or—a bit beside?

Yes, I admire your lofty reputation,
Dear to my artless spirit as my own;
But tell me this—to still my trepidation—
Are you an owner in Bell Telephone?

Your learning, too, has bound my heart in fetters—
For you are wise, if street report be true;
I, too, a childish fancy have for letters-
I hope you're solid on "C., B., & Q."

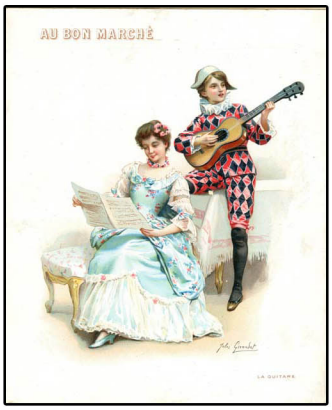
Your noble presence—"dignified and stately"
With inexperienced ardor I adore;
But those Villard stocks! Have you tried 'em lately?
And were you long or short on that Lake Shore?

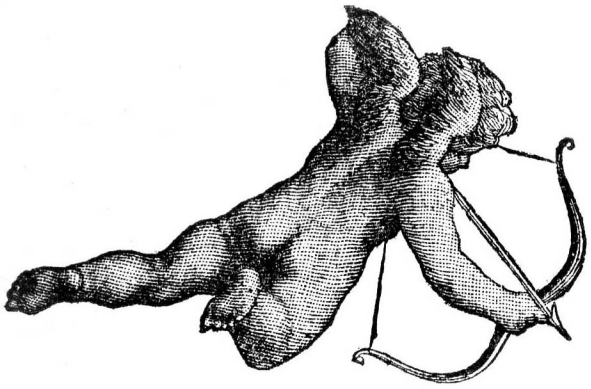
So, gentle Sir, if you aright but read me,
And will with all your Bonds and Stocks be mine,
Then into Mutual Union you shall lead me,
And I will be—
Your booming VALENTINE.

— Edward Church *(Century Magazine, 1884)*

Create the Perfect Valentine with Our Image Collection of Romantic Victorian Couples!

victorianvoices.net/clipart/people/couples.shtml





HOW TO MAKE VALENTINES.

THE fashion of sending valentines has so much increased of late years, that a few directions how to make them may not be unwelcome, for the result which entails the outlay of shillings or sovereigns can be achieved for a few pence if the manufacture takes place at home.

There are not a great many patterns sold in valentine lace paper; and nearly all valentines are made from combinations of these with the German embossed flowers (such as are seen mounted on cardboard), small leaves, very small flowers, &c.; from the milliners, or linendrapers, coloured aerophanes, gauze, net, gelatine, and similar appliances. We do not admire those valentines which are made up of much millinery, but prefer the use of paper.

The sheets of valentine paper we refer to are sold for twopence each. They can also be had in enamelled paper, picked out with gold and silver, which of course are more expensive. Two sheets are always required to make a valentine in a box; but pretty ones may be made from a single sheet.

One of the prettiest valentine papers is composed of a small plain oval, surrounded by smoke issuing from a vase; all the rest of the paper is covered with palm-trees, cut out like fret-work. At the base of these palms is a statue; below the statue sits a classic maiden holding a lyre, and giving ear to a story Cupid has just brought her. To use this paper: First way—Cut out the oval and the smoke from the centre. Line it entirely with white tulle, or pale pink aerophane. On the inside of the note sheet place or draw a bouquet of flowers, with a motto beneath them, in such a manner that the flowers may show through the aerophane in the centre, but not the motto. Second way—In a box place a piece of coloured paper, inside the note sheet of embossed paper, after cutting out the oval in the centre as before, and on this gum a group of flowers, a photograph, or anything you fancy. Pink, bright green, and crimson are the most effective colours for the purpose. Silk or satin, or even aerophane, is richer than paper in effect. Fold up four narrow strips of paper, backwards and forwards like an accordion or a dressmaker's pleating. These form four springs. Gum one end of each to one of the four corners of the paper in the box. Take another sheet of the paper, cut out the oval and the smoke; gum it to the other ends of the four paper springs. Then raise the springs by drawing them out, and the paper at the top will come as high as the top of the box. Third way—Cut out the oval centre and smoke, and mount the paper on crimson satin. In the centre take one or two small figures cut from another sheet, coloured nicely, and glazed over with gum. A Diana and Endymion followed by a dog is suitable in size, and can be found on one of the sheets of lace paper published. Place them in the centre of the satin, or use a few flowers bought at the linendraper's. It may be a sprig of tiny pompon roses and little leaves, which should be placed on white satin, or forget-me-nots on white. Small white flowers, such as elderberry or London pride, can be used; snowdrops look very well, so do lilies of the valley. These must be nicely grouped and sewn to the satin; but when artificial flowers, as they are called, are used, a box is necessary. The valentine should then be gummed to the box, and a second sheet raised above it as before described. The paper picked out with gold and silver is very rich over dark-coloured satin, such as plum-colour or violet. A group of flowers in water-colours in the centre is suitable, with or without a box.

A pretty way to ornament paper valentines, is to make a transparent gum of a little isinglass dissolved in warm water. Brush it over the whole sheet of paper lightly, and sprinkle it well with thin blown glass, which can be purchased at some of the tinsel and spangle shops, and where theatrical figures and fireworks are kept. It must be powdered in a mortar. The diamond dust kept by hairdressers is the same kind of thing; the gold and silver dust may also be used.

Another pattern of lace paper represents a mosque surrounded by palms. Cut out the mosque entirely, and mount the palms over a picture or over satin or silk with an ornament in the centre. At the bottom of the paper, if the valentine is in a box, arrange a bouquet of leaves and flowers just under the bridge. This paper makes up well over bright emerald-green aerophane, with a bunch of red rosebuds and leaves tied by a gold cord in the centre. If in a box, raise it with a second sheet of the same.

A very handsome valentine may be made by mounting a square or oval picture on satin, and framing it with a row of pearls, or coral or gold beads. It is easiest to do this by lining the box first with the satin, then tacking on the picture, and lastly the beads. Edge the satin all round the box with white blonde lace, very narrow, and a narrow gold braid, or purse twist of gold. Then mount over this a sheet of either of the patterns No. 1 or No. 2, crystallised, gilt, or silvered. Blue satin and beads, green and gold, violet and silver, crimson and pearl or gold, golden yellow and pearl, all look well. So does pink and pearls, or blue and silver. White can be used with gold or coral. If under the satin a little wadding and scent is used to make a sachet of it, raising it slightly like a pincushion, the valentine is improved. The picture and beads must then be attached first to the satin. An edge of small flowers and leaves instead of the blonde is also pretty, especially any colour with white, crimson with green, and white with violet or crimson. If the picture is drawn in water-colours by the sender, its value is much greater. Next to this, a photograph of the sender, vignetted in an oval, is pretty. Hair prettily twisted and arranged, or flowers beautifully dried by the "Nature-printing" process, may be applied with advantage to making valentines.

Another pattern forms one of a distinct kind, in which rather large figures occupy a great portion of the paper. All these figures look well cut out and used alone. Make a sachet of satin, double, and removable from the box. Let it be of some beautiful full shade of colour, such as violet, cerise, crimson, or azure-blue. Edge it with a white blonde lace, and a gold twist tacked round, or run in the blonde. Of course the wadding that fills the sachet is scented. At each corner put a pompon rose and two or three little leaves. Cut out the figures from one of the sheets of paper; gum them, but not letting them be wet, and fasten to the centre of the right side of the sachet. To send it, tack it inside a box.

Second way—Line a box at the bottom with silk or satin, or coloured gelatine. Cut out the figure and gum it on. Raise the border from which the figure is cut on four springs, and place it over the figure in the way before described. All these figure valentines look well if made up thus.

Third way.—Simply take the sheet of paper, line it with a sheet of coloured silk, satin, aerophane, gelatine, or even of coloured tissue paper. A bow of narrow white satin ribbon tacked below the figure, with a motto written in colours on it, or a scroll or little wreath of flowers bearing a motto, may just be added or not at the bottom of the paper, or a few words or a simple motto can be carefully written in fancy letters on the reverse.

One pattern is a figure of a young girl, led forward by two Cupids. It is nearly the full size of the paper. In cutting out the figure, reject the leaves and roses around her. If the rest of the paper is used as a border to a box, raised over the figure, cut away the oval bordering of daisies. The floral scroll border is best alone.

Another pattern is that of a lady touching a guitar, and a gentleman in mediæval dress bending over her. To use these figures alone, cut out the entire oval, trees and all, and apply it.

A fifth pattern bears figures of a classic bride and bridegroom carrying a child, Hymen, the deity of marriage, on their shoulders. They stand under an arch of lace drapery. To use these figures, cut them out entirely. The arch of lace and roses must then be cut out from the rest of the border, and rejected for present use. The vases of flowers, the Cupids in the corners, and the lace hangings above, look best alone.

A sixth pattern represents a lady and gentleman in the Watteau costumes, seated beneath lace curtains, and beyond there is a handsome border. To use these figures separately, cut them out with the ottoman and the ground beneath their feet. To use the border, cut away the lace curtains up to the lilies held by Cupids.

A seventh pattern is a youth at the feet of a lady, in a bower of grapes and roses, animated by Cupids. Behind is a terrace. To use these figures alone, cut the outline of the youth's figure to the tip of the toe on the left side; leave the ground beneath them to a level with the extent of the lady's robe on the right, but cut it away from the vine beneath; also cut away the flowers between the figures. These two figures do not look so well as the others together, but the lady alone makes a pretty centre for a valentine, if coloured.

Another way of using the figures cut out separately is to colour them naturally, and then varnish them several times with strong gum-water, letting each coat dry before the next is added. When finished they look like china.

There are other devices of lace-paper to be purchased, both of the same size and smaller than those described. The numbers affixed here are not trade numbers, but merely our own suggestion, for distinction.

Sheets of lace or embossed paper, with the centres removed, always make pretty frames for drawings, photographs, coloured prints, or rice-paper drawings. The spaces may be filled with gelatine, or net, over a picture fitted exactly to the aperture, and coloured tissue slipped in behind. If lined with silk, pretty groups of muslin flowers, or of real seaweeds, can be placed on them.

Valentines made in boxes, with white or coloured silk or satin tacked to the bottom of the box, and edged round with a *passementerie*, may not only be made of groups of dried flowers, but of seaweeds, skeleton leaves, or autumn leaves, carefully prepared and tastefully contrasted in colour. Water-colour drawings on vellum, also, are quickly done and very effective.

By constructing the missive of the 14th of February of beautiful natural productions, or other more artistic evidences of the sender's talent and taste, the token of friendship or love can be rendered valuable and uncommon. Coloured flowers embroidered on satin are not unfit for valentine centres.

To put up boxes with taste, if they can be sent by hand, fold them very nicely in coloured tissue-paper, and tie with narrow satin ribbon, gold twist, or purse-silk. Place each in a sheet of white letter-paper, and bind with ordinary fine twine.

Our present remarks are intended merely as suggestions, which an ingenious person can easily follow and enlarge, by looking at the best valentines exposed in the shop-windows. The portions of paper rejected from one missive can be used in another.

Water-colour flowers in silk or satin should be thus managed:—Procure a bottle of thick Chinese white. Dilute a small portion of this to half its thickness. Draw the bouquet of flowers over this. When dry, proceed to use the colours, mixing the white with all. Take the lightest tint, and cover each flower and leaf entirely. When dry, shade and detail, without using any white.

Agricultural Courtship

A potato went out on a mash,
And sought an onion-bed;
"That's pie for me," observed the squash,
And all the beets turned red;
"Go away," the onion, weeping, cried,
"Your love I cannot be;
The pumpkin be your lawful bride;
You cantelope with me!"

But onward still the tuber came,
And laid down at her feet;
"You cauliflower by any name
And it will smell as wheat;
And I, too, am an early rose;
And you I've come to see,
So don't up your lovely nose
But spinache at with me."

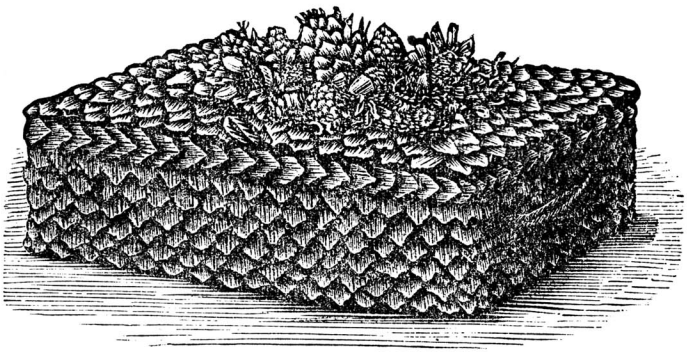
"I do not carrot all to wed,
So go, sir, if you please!"
The modest onion meekly said,
"And lettuce, pray, have peas!
Go, think that you have never seen
Myself, or smelled my sigh;
Too long a maiden I have been
For favors in your rye!"

"And, spare a cuss!" the tuber prayed;
"My cherryshed bride you'll be;
You are the only weeping maid
That's currant now with me!"
And as the wily tuber spoke
He caught her by surprise,
And giving her an artichoke,
Devoured her with his eyes.

— *(from a Victorian Scrap Album)*

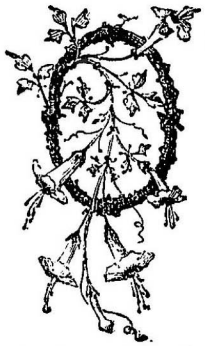
HANDKERCHIEF-BOX OF PINE CONES.

BY MRS. JANE WEAVER.



A box of the required size is procured, and covered on the outside with brown cambric; on the inside a silk and wadded lining is arranged. First select fine cones, and then take off the petals, and sew each one in place upon the foundationbox, the sides first. It is easier to sew these in place upon extra pieces of card-board for the sides. The top is done in the same manner, only being ornamented in the centre by tiny cones, acorns, and a few bright-red berries. Then the whole is to be varnished. After drying, add a second coat of varnish. Then adjust the lining of the box, and add a loop of brown silk cord to lift the lid. Very pretty pin-cushion stands are made in the same way. This would be very appropriate for a Christmas gift.

OUTLINE EMBROIDERY.



OUTLINE embroidery is such an important branch of the decorative art that it requires a chapter to itself. Although it is included under the general head of "crewel work," yet the two differ so widely that it is necessary to describe each separately. In crewel work our ideas of beauty are expressed by the harmonious blending of colour; in outline work, confining ourselves to strict simplicity of tone, our object is attained by graceful forms and delicate tracery. Neat and careful work is absolutely essential, and the somewhat free-and-easy style of design allowed in crewel work is inadmissible for this, as everything depends upon accuracy of detail and neatness of finish.

There are many stitches which may be used equally well in both styles of embroidery, but several are suitable only for outlining, and some of these I will explain before going on to the designs. The first and simplest is the split stitch, chiefly used where absolute straightness of line is necessary. This is made in exactly the same way as stem stitch, except that when the needle is brought up from the back of the work it must be brought *through* the thread, instead of at the left-hand side of it, splitting the thread, as the name implies.

For thick lines, such as the folds of drapery, particularly on coarse materials, either twisted chain or cordonnet stitch is employed. The former resembles the ordinary chain, with which, no doubt, all my readers are familiar, only that the stitch must start from the left-hand side of the previous one instead of from the middle of it.

The cordonnet answers the same purposes as the twisted chain; it is used occasionally for variety, and has also the advantage of being the same on both sides if desired. It is formed thus:—Make a row of running stitches along the line to be covered; the stitches must be of equal length with each other and the

OUTLINE EMBROIDERY.—FIG. 8.

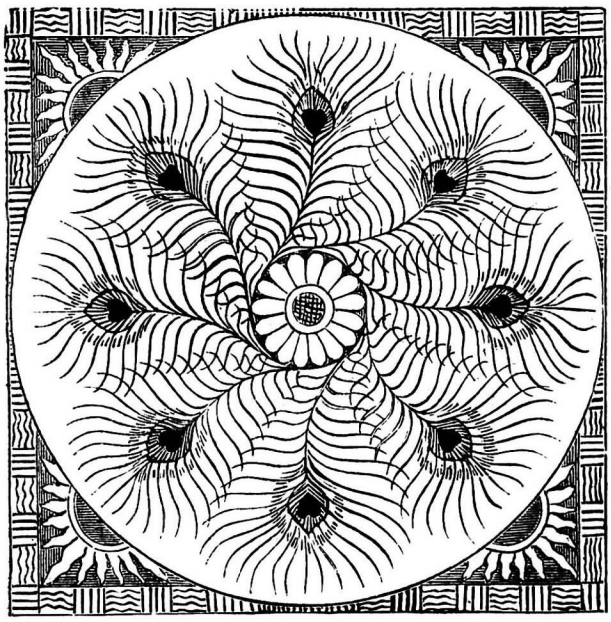


FIG. 4.

spaces between them; come back along the line again in the same manner, filling up the spaces; then pass your needle and wool through each stitch on the surface of the work, thus giving the appearance of a twisted cord. This last process is shown in Fig. 1; the running stitches will, of course, look the same on both sides, but the twisting stitch will have to be done separately on the back and front. The ordinary chain stitch, closely worked, is occasionally introduced for drapery, and in old work button-hole stitch is sometimes seen for the edges of leaves and petals, though it is not usual now; for very fine work, such as occurs in the face and hands of figures, back-stitching is employed. These few stitches, selected out of many, with those already described in "Crewel Work," will be found sufficient for all ordinary outline embroidery, and the worker will soon learn to modify and alter her stitches according to the exigencies of her design. In case of employing the stem stitch for outlining leaves I must give one caution which would not be so necessary if the leaf were to be filled up; having worked up one side to the top, be careful, in coming down the other side, to draw the needle out at the *right* instead of the *left* side of the thread, the latter being the ordinary rule. The reason for this will be obvious on examining the serrated edge of a real leaf; were the needle brought out in the usual way the edge would have the unnatural appearance shown in Fig. 2. Fig. 3 shows the leaf as it should be. The materials used for outline embroidery should, generally speaking, have a smooth and rather fine surface. Of course, for a large design, with no minute details, this is not necessary; indeed, a favourite groundwork for screens and wall hangings is sail-cloth, which is certainly neither smooth nor fine, but for small articles closed-grained holland, linen, satin, or silk sheeting will be found to answer better.

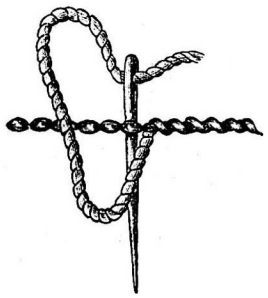


FIG. 1.

Cricketing flannel, too, is often used as affording a good ground for fine work, whilst it has the advantage of being warm enough for children's dresses, cot-covers, &c. There are some varieties of crewel wool specially prepared for coarse work, and the use of them saves a great deal of time and improves the general effect; tapestry wool, for example, is twice as thick as crewel, but it is at present rather more difficult to procure than the better-known materials. Another new thread is arrasene, which is thick and handsome, having the appearance of chenille; it is very useful for thick lines and broad effects. There are many different kinds of silk, but perhaps the most generally useful is the embroidery or bobbin silk, which is made in two thicknesses, "fine" and "rope," the former being in one strand and the latter having about twelve strands, which can be readily separated, and the thickness regulated by the style of embroidery in hand. Raw or spun silk is recommended for white flowers, as it is quite as good as the embroidery silk, and is much cheaper. Filoselle and purse silks are also used occasionally, but for ordinary purposes the two mentioned will be sufficient. A new idea for dessert d'oyleys is to embroider on each some portion of a willow-pattern tea service; on one a plate, on another a tea-pot, a cup and saucer, and so on. These should be worked in different shades of china blue silk or crewel, in stem stitch, with the small figures in split stitch. Punch-bowls and vases of all sorts can be treated in the same way, and form a pleasant variety from the floral designs so long in favour. Fig. 4 is a simple design, based upon peacock's feathers, with ornamental border. It would be effective worked in shades of blue, and can be done entirely in outline embroidery.

FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.

Another style which gives scope for considerable ingenuity to the worker, and affords a great amount of amusement at the dinner-table, is to embroider on each d'oyley a representation of some popular song. For one mat, "Twickenham Ferry" would be a very good subject—the river side, boat with its pretty passenger, and the stalwart young boatman just pushing off; for another, "Darby and Joan," an old couple by the fireside, hand in hand; the "Three Sailor Boys," and many others, will afford suitable and characteristic little pictures for the purpose. If the names are put underneath, the letters should be back-stitched; but, provided that the subjects are well carried out, their meaning will be obvious to everyone without the name, and it is generally preferred to leave each guest to find out what his d'oyley represents. In the case of larger articles, and where there seems so much open space between the lines of the the design, it is very common to partially fill up some small part of the pattern. I have seen a banner-screen of dead-gold satin, on which was outlined a branch of an oak tree, with leaves, acorns, gall-nuts, &c., but the cups of the acorns were all filled up with French knots. It is an improvement to cover a portion of the large leaves by a few lines in the middle, like veins; and this may be done in all cases where the design looks at all bare. Where a scroll is introduced with the foliage the scroll is often entirely filled up.

Fig. 5 is part of a design of a procession of young storks, and would be suitable for a frieze or any piece of embroidery, as the idea might be carried out to any length. Birds, when drawn quaintly, form very effective decorations for certain rooms, and can be executed in one colour, such as brown or indigo blue. Fig. 6 shows the treatment of fish, which is both novel and effective, and gives great relief when interspersed with other embroidery. The design would look very effective worked in golden browns on a dark blue or green cloth. The water lines at back should be light blue, to give relief to the fish.

In the last paper on crewel work some mention was made of table-cloths for five o'clock tea, and I promised to give a further de-

FIG 5.

FIG. 6.

scription of them. If the table be round, a tight-fitting cloth is best—a round piece for the top and a straight strip round the side. A pretty idea for a cover of this sort is to make a design introducing the characters of some of the well-known nursery rhymes, such as "Hush-a-bye Baby on the Tree Top," "See-saw, Margery Daw," &c. Another way is to have a series of pictures all illustrating the same rhyme. Take, for instance, the story of Mother Hubbard and her dog. The events of their chequered career are too numerous to be all chronicled, but the most striking portions of this well-known history should be chosen for the cloth, and one side of the cosy Mother Hubbard should be pourtrayed sitting at tea, and on the reverse her faithful hound. The spaces between the groups of figures may be occupied by the words of the story if desired.

Another pretty design would be a ring of little damsels, joining hands, dancing round the mulberry tree, a representation of which should occupy the cosy. The same class of designs applies to borders for side-board cloths, which are an immense improvement to the dining-room. They look best made to fit on to the side-board. The border is a straight piece, stitched on to the top part after being worked, but sometimes they are made like an ordinary loose cloth.

The old fashion of having drawn silk in the front of cottage pianos is disappearing, the modern ones usually having that part filled up with painted panels of plain wood. But those who have old pianos, with, perhaps, faded silk displayed in the front, may easily make them look new-fashioned by removing the silk, and inserting in its place a strip of crewel or outline embroidery. A conventional floral pattern looks well, and a design of one will be given in a succeeding number as a specimen.

Fig. 7 is a design, representing music, for figure screen. It shows the treatment of figures, as the whole effect must be produced by outline embroidery. The other arts, such as painting, poetry, and sculpture, would form suitable companions.

Fig. 8, on the following page, is a design for floral panel, and, as will be seen, is a conventionalised representation of the sunflower. The leaves might be outlined in green and the flowers in yellow, while the double line running round the outside, and which serves to frame in the design, might be light turquoise or peacock blue.

Outline embroidery is very applicable to the ornamentation of large pieces of furniture—such as screens—more so than the ordinary crewel work, as it is lighter and more graceful in effect. Besides this, time is an object to most people in these busy days, and they might hesitate to commence a large mass of filled work, so that for this reason outlining is preferable, as being more quickly done. A three or four-fold screen, with embroidered panels, would look very nice. The frames of the screens being always quite plain, they are not expensive. The material worked upon, if cotton, should be very coarse and heavy, such as sail-cloth; and for the thick lines, either tapestry, wool, or arrasene is more effective than crewel. The designs best suited for screens and other large articles are those taken from allegorical or mythological subjects.

For instance, for a screen with four wings, representations of the four seasons would be effective, and easily designed. Sail cloth is strongly recommended for the foundation; and dark brown, or olive green wools, keeping to one uniform shade for the whole. The ears of corn, the grapes, and apples, and the sickle, may be filled up. It is not necessary to work the back of the screen; it should be covered with stamped velvet, or any other rich material, in the same colour as the wool used for the embroidery.

In doing a large piece of work like a screen, stop occasionally, and look at it from a distance, to make sure that you are working in the best way for the general effect, and not making unimportant details too prominent, which is a fault into which beginners are apt to fall. The worker must use her own judgment as to which stitches are applicable to the different subjects in her design. Of course a variety can be introduced on the same figure; and it is no waste of time for a beginner to spend a little while before beginning her work in learning the stitches described above. If you have taken the design from a picture it is a great help to have the original at hand to refer to while working, as however carefully you may trace your pattern some of the lines almost always become indistinct, and very often the slightest deviation from the real lines is disastrous, as for instance, in working a face. In "the good old times" people must have had a great deal more spare time at their disposal than we have in the present day, or they never could have attempted the marvellous specimens of work which have been handed down to us from our ancestors. I have seen a full-sized quilt completely covered with outlined flowers, scrolls, and foliage, every stitch of which is hand-worked in the finest back-stitching. The time it must have taken to do is something appalling, and its extreme neatness and exactness makes me feel rather ashamed of the slipshod manner of sewing and stitching allowed now-a-days. This quilt was worked by some Huguenot ladies in their spare time, after their escape to England from the persecutions in France, and their descendants are justly proud of possessing such an extraordinary piece of work. Things are very different now, and there is no need to spend our time in making what can be manufactured and sold at convenient prices; but in the case of crewel work no girl ought to think of buying what she can make for herself at almost no expense, the only necessaries being neatness, patience, and good taste.

FIG. 7.

FANCY-BOX MAKING.

SOME years ago I had the pleasure of visiting the principal manufactories at Birmingham, Sheffield, Barnsley, Manchester, and other places. At a factory in Birmingham, which the kindness of the proprietors enabled me to view, I was much struck with the simple way in which the boxes used in the business were made. I have since then often taught children to make these pretty and useful little boxes, and the work has given them so much pleasure that I venture to think some readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER will find it an amusing occupation for younger sisters and brothers.

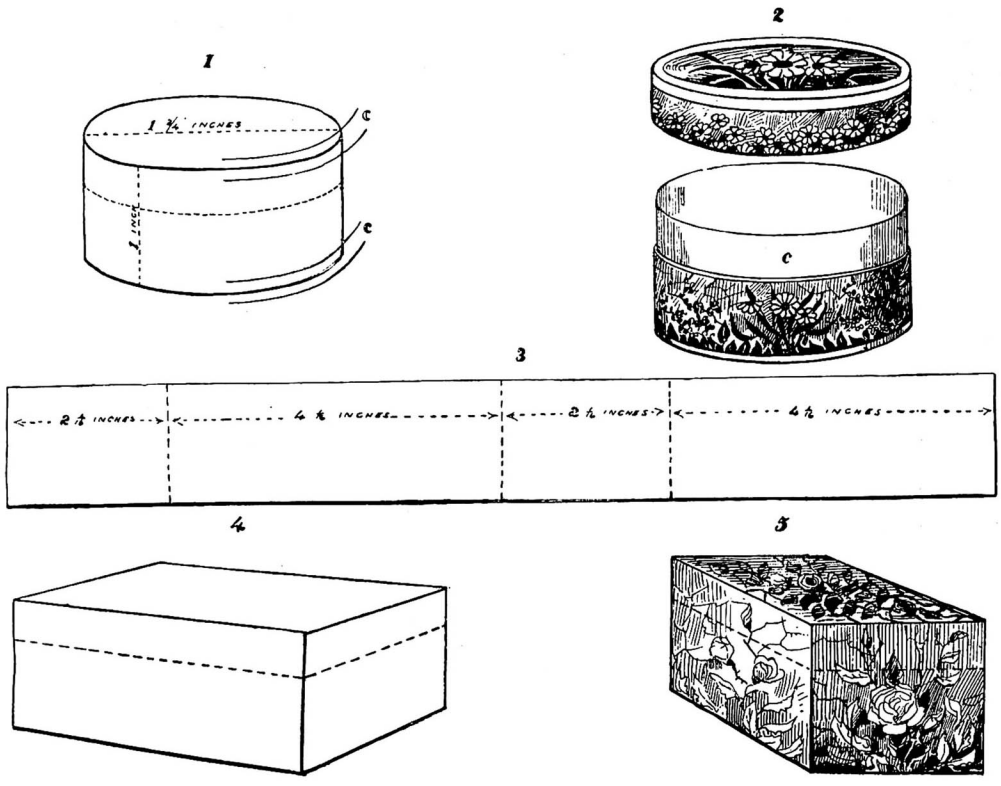
The materials required are a sheet of cardboard, a sharp penknife, a foot rule or a T square, a sheet of fancy paper, a sheet of gold or silver paper or of plain coloured paper (such as is used to line work-boxes with), some very smooth paste, and a small brush for it. Something is also required on which to model the boxes; this last is the only thing that cannot be procured quite easily; the simplest way is to get a carpenter to cut a block the size and shape required, oval, round, or square, as you fancy, but of course the block will only do for one-sized boxes. I have generally managed to find some wooden or metal thing that answered the purpose very well. A wooden pill-box makes a good model for a small round box (Fig. 1); some wood bricks out of an ordinary box of bricks gummed together and allowed to dry, can be used for many different shapes, and when finished with, can easily be washed, and return to their proper use. Small tins also make good moulds.

Round and oval boxes are much easier to make than square or angular ones, so we will begin by making a round one, and will suppose that in the absence of anything better, you are going to use a wooden pill-box to work on. The most important thing is to be very exact in your measurements, it is impossible without, to make a neat box.

Suppose the diameter of box to be an inch and three-quarters, cut two rounds of cardboard, to the size for top and bottom of box; to do this, stand the box on the cardboard and draw a line close round it, then cut with penknife close to, but outside line; after making one box you will easily understand that this little margin is to make the edges of the top and bottom level with the side, to allow in fact for the thickness of the cardboard. Next cut two rounds of fancy paper, the line smaller than the pieces of cardboard. Suppose the mould to be one inch deep, cut a strip of cardboard exactly one inch wide (allow no margin); for length you must measure round the outside of your box, but it will probably require to be a little more than five inches and a half long; the strip must meet exactly round box, not wrap over; cut a second strip of cardboard seven-eighths of an inch wide, but nearly a quarter of an inch shorter than first piece. Cut a strip of fancy paper seven-eighths of an inch wide, but half-an-inch longer than first piece of cardboard, be very careful that the edges of the paper are very even, no jags. Next cut some long strips of gold or coloured paper three-eighths or half-an-inch wide.

Now take your mould in your hand and bend the longest strip of cardboard round it; where it meets paste a little piece of thin paper to keep it in place (stamp paper answers very well for this), put the top of the box on, paste one of the narrow slips of gold paper and put round the top of box as a binding (C, in Fig. 1), press it down carefully, put the bottom of the box on in the same way. Be careful that the strips are sufficiently damp with the paste for you to be able to press the creases very flat on the top and bottom of the box. Let it dry a little, then paste and put the strip of fancy paper round the box, taking care that the join which will lap over a little comes on a different side to the join in the cardboard, put the rounds of fancy paper on top and bottom of box; if your papers are accurately cut, you will have a fancy box with gilt or coloured edges. You must now put it aside to get thoroughly dry (do not dry by a fire), when dry cut round the box one third from the top (see dotted line, Fig. 1). The easiest way to do this is to use a sharp knife. After marking with pencil, remove the two parts from the mould, then take your shorter strip of cardboard, paste all along but only half the width of it, then place inside the bottom of the box (to form C, Fig. 2), letting the join come the opposite side of the join in the outside cardboard, and the paste towards bottom of box; the strip should not lap over. Box and lid are now finished as Fig. 2. An oval box is made in the same way.

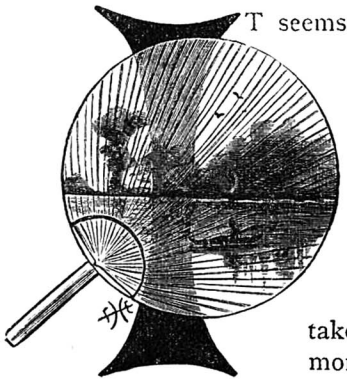
A square cornered box.—We will suppose you mean to make a box two inches wide, four inches long, and three inches high; you will cut the top and bottom, allowing the thickness of a line larger than your block, then cut a strip of cardboard three inches wide, twelve inches and a quarter long, bend this round the block and make sure that the quarter inch (as this depends on the thickness of the cardboard) is enough to allow for the difference in the size of the box and the block; it must fit it tightly, the seam coming at a corner, then lay on a board and cut the corners with your knife nearly half through (dotted lines, Fig. 3). Cut the strip of cardboard for lining box two inches and a half wide and twelve inches long, partially cut through corners in the same way, the measurements for the inside like the outside depends a little on the thickness of cardboard used, when the inside is put in do not forget that the join must come the opposite end to the seam in the outside, cut the fancy paper by the same rule as for round box, that is to say just a trifle smaller to allow the gilt or coloured edge to show, except the strip to go round the box, which must always be long enough to lap over. In placing the cardboard round the model take care that the cardboard is bent to a sharp angle, otherwise when your box is done you may find the lid will only go on one way, the corners not being true. Rub the sides flat with the back of your knife, fasten the corner with stamp paper, put on top and bottom, bind and finish as you did the round box, cutting off lid when thoroughly dry. Hexagon or octagon boxes are made in the same way, but the more angles there are the more measurements and the greater accuracy is required. Pretty boxes may be made by covering after putting on the gilt edges with white or light coloured paper, and painting or sketching on them, or light coloured velveteen may be used and painted on. But though paste is best to use with paper, if you intend to cover with velvet, the surface on which it is to be placed, must first be covered with thin glue. Stamp boxes with gilt edges, and a halfpenny stamp on top sell at bazaars (Fig. 5).



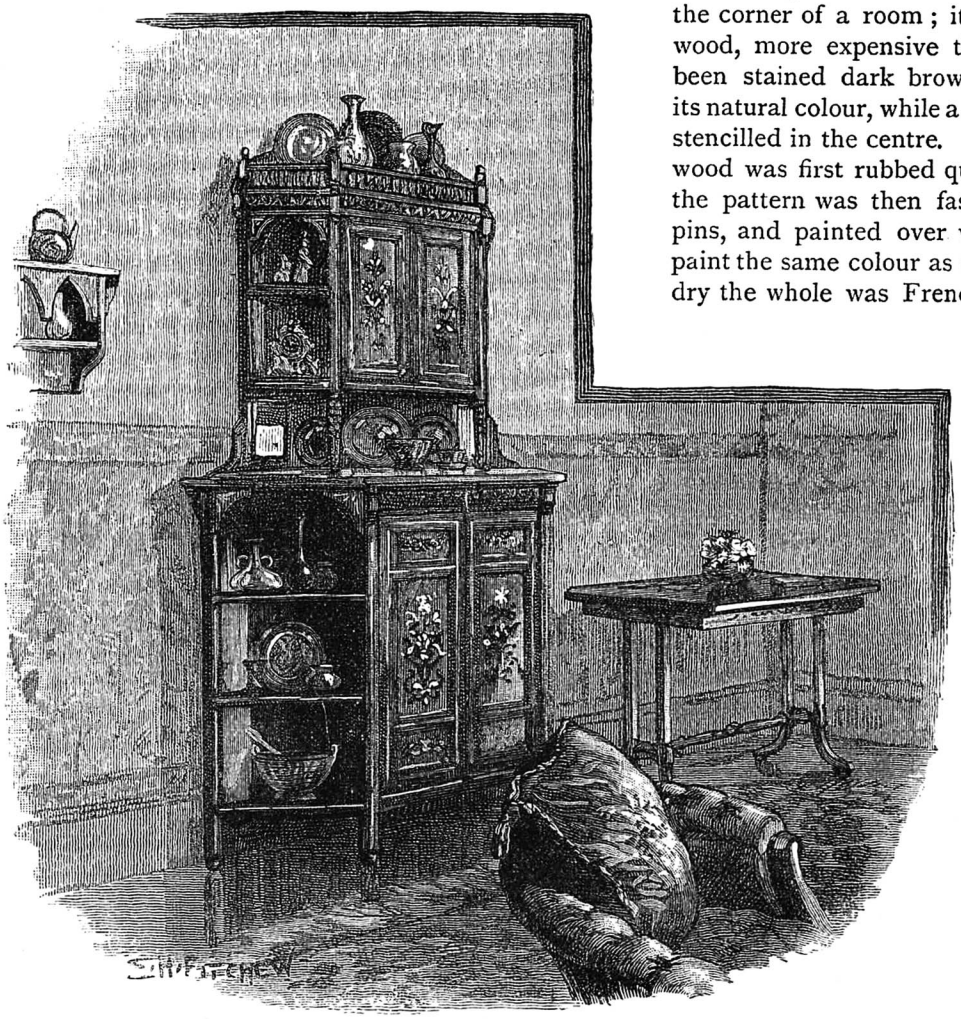
This work has the advantages of kinder-garten work in teaching children to use their fingers, and to measure with exactitude, I have found it much enjoyed and much appreciated as a pastime.

MARY POCOCK.

SOME HINTS ABOUT HAND-PAINTED FURNITURE.



IT seems strange that, although so much time and money is spent in acquiring the art of drawing, we see so little practical result in our own homes. The artistic mind does not apply itself to furniture, or, perhaps more truly, artistic fingers do not often take it in hand. Yet, what is more important? Our furniture is always with us either to charm or disgust. As only the rich can afford frequent changes, the man of moderate means should begin by buying articles of good form and design, which will delight and not weary the eyes as the long years pass on. But such things, in every way perfect, cost money, perhaps more than can be rightly afforded. Then what can be done? Perhaps the would-be purchaser possesses a gift worth very much—the art of using the pencil and brush. Let him, under such circumstances, turn his steps from the fashionable furniture shop, and seek a good carpenter, who is also a cabinet-maker. With him he can begin at the commencement; he can visit the wood-shed and choose his own particular wood, see it cut and gradually turn into the chair or table he may have ordered. The carpenter will generally enjoy carrying out original designs, and will throw much individual skill and interest into the work. But good carpentering is not all that is required. Able hands must be busy in the studio, where persevering work and art-knowledge are necessary adjuncts. Let us examine this large room of furniture, all of which is "home-decorated." The three corner cupboards first attract attention. The first of these is made of deal; it is high and narrow, with an arched top; it is painted white; the centre panel of the door is filled with lattice-panes of glass, around which is painted a plain band of red; below the arched top a motto has been traced in old English letters (this, too, is in red, and looks very quaint); below the door is a shelf upon which stands a tall Indian pot. The second cupboard is smaller, and is made to hang in the corner of a room; it is made of white American wood, more expensive than deal; the outer rim has been stained dark brown, but the door has been left its natural colour, while a conventional pattern has been stencilled in the centre. To do this, the surface of the wood was first rubbed quite smooth with sand-paper; the pattern was then fastened upon it with drawing-pins, and painted over with a large brush filled with paint the same colour as the staining. When perfectly dry the whole was French-polished. The third cupboard looks like old carved oak; it is difficult to believe that it is only deal. It has two doors, and stands high; some wide and narrow Lincustra-Walton had been used; it was of the pomegranate pattern, which is one of the best. The wide piece had been cut into two pieces exactly the size of each door; these had been securely fastened on to the wood, while the narrow pattern had made a border for the sides and top, and ran round a little shelf just below the top. When all the Lincustra was ready, the whole cupboard,

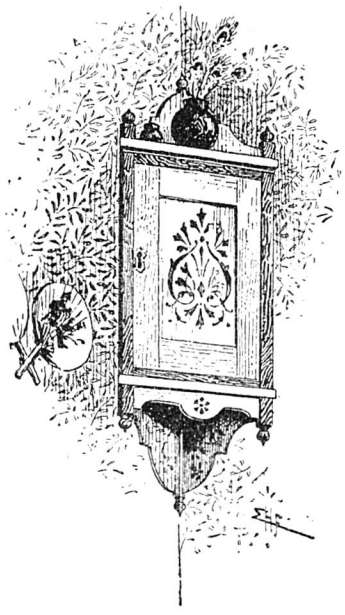


CABINET, CHINA-SHELF, AND TABLE.

woodwork and Lincustra, had had several coats of black staining, and had then been well varnished. This had taken much time and trouble, but its appearance well repaid it. The brass handles and locks and keys on each door give a brightness to the black, and the whole effect is of a beautiful example of carving.

At the other side of the room there stands a handsome piece of furniture. It is a large cabinet with upper and lower cupboards and shelves for china, and with a railed top for large jars and vases. It is made of American walnut, and the doors have been decorated with a beautifully painted conventional pattern in gold and bright sea-green. A little gold rim also runs round the shelves and up the sides. Several coats of French polish, well hardened, have given it a delightfully transparent surface. On each side of this cabinet there hang two china cases, copied from the Chinese. They are both made of English oak, but have been differently treated. One has been painted that bright vivid scarlet which is so common in China, but so difficult to meet with in England. It has then had a pattern of storks and flowers painted on it in gold, then it has been French-polished. The other has been ebonised, and when a very good black had been arrived at, a pattern had been drawn and painted with Chinese white, put on very thick. When the white was thick enough to make the pattern stand out from the wood, and when it was perfectly dry, all the white had been covered with gold. This kind of decoration cannot be polished or varnished without injuring the pattern, so some good varnish should be mixed with the ebony, if any is required.

There are several tables worth attention. One has been beautifully carved by a lady who has been giving her mind to the study of wood-carving. She has found it needs patience and skill, and long practice; and her first finished work bears traces of toil and pains. Two simple tables are stencilled in darker shades than the background, which is of natural wood. This art of stencilling is very easy and one that any one can learn, as it comes within the most moderate means. The patterns can be drawn and cut out at home, so there are hardly any expenses connected with it. It can be applied as a decoration to all kinds of things, from the walls of a house to delicate china plates. People who know nothing of the art think it fine to despise stencilling as inartistic. They forget that as much knowledge of drawing must be brought to bear upon making the patterns and cutting them out as there would be if they were simply drawn, only that with the help of a stencilling pattern much time and trouble is saved. A pretty set of dining-room chairs had been made at a small cost. They were deal, rush-seated chairs, such as those often used in churches. They had been painted white, and upon the top cross-bar of each a crest was painted in colours; the rush seats were hidden by dark blue velvet cushions. These chairs look well stained black or walnut, with the crest in gold. At the large furniture shops they can generally be bought unpainted for 3s. 6d. Of course, made to order, they would be more expensive.



A CORNER CUPBOARD.

LARGER CORNER CUPBOARD.

The last article to be noticed here is a set of bookshelves made of deal covered with Lincustra-Walton, the whole having been coloured with metallic paint, which is much used for Lincustra. The shade is copper; but for a book-case the effect is more startling than pleasing, and a little light oak book-case, quite plain and unvarnished, standing only four shelves from the ground, with a railed top for ornaments, was a much more successful piece of furniture. Another time I hope to speak of the art upholstery work which decorates this room.

HOUSEHOLD DECORATIVE ART.

PÂPIER-MACHÉ WORK: PEARL INLAYING.

FEW of the decorative arts furnish more beautiful articles for domestic use than does that of papier-mâché or Japan work. The glossy surface in which it exhibits its beauty of colour, and the profusion of its gold enrichments in combination with the iridescent lustre of the delicate pearl with which it is inlaid, always render articles in papier-mâché the most striking to the eye upon entering a room. The art was originally derived from the East, and objects brought from the country from which it derives its name, and from the remotest regions of the Asiatic continent, still remain models for our imitation. The material of which these are composed is wood covered with a beautiful dark varnish, with the exact composition of which Europeans are still unacquainted; but for this a substitute, almost as effective, has been found in combinations of paper coated with varnishes,

Fig. 1.

which give a surface scarcely less glossy and beautiful than that attained by means of their Eastern prototype.

The best descriptions of papier-mâché are composed of sheets of thick porous grey paper, pasted together until the requisite thickness has been attained. A flat article is made by pasting together three sheets of this paper; these are thoroughly saturated with a strong paste which contains glue, laid over a flat slab, and pressed and smoothed together by means of a level piece of wood. These sheets are then placed in a stove and dried, the process being repeated time after time till the panel of paper has acquired the requisite thickness. For the formation of curved objects, a wooden mould or core is used; this is well greased, and three or four thicknesses of paper are pasted over it; it is then dried in the stove. After a second coating of paper, and subsequent stoving, the paper object (say a vase) is sawn in two and the core removed; the two halves are then smoothed and glued together, and more coatings of paper are pasted over them, which operation totally conceals any appearance of their having been joined. After the final stoving, the vase is soaked in linseed oil to thoroughly harden the paper; it is then dressed and smoothed in a lathe with files and sand-paper in precisely the same manner as if made of wood, and a bottom cut from a piece of flat panel is then glued on, and carefully smoothed to the requisite circular shape. That panel can be sawn, glued, and joined together into articles in almost precisely the same manner as wooden boards.

In papier-mâché manufactories these operations, with the exception of the turning and joiner's work, are performed by women, and there is no reason why the whole of these processes should not be carried out, with the assistance of an oven, by any amateur in his or her own house, as we have ourselves done with considerable success.

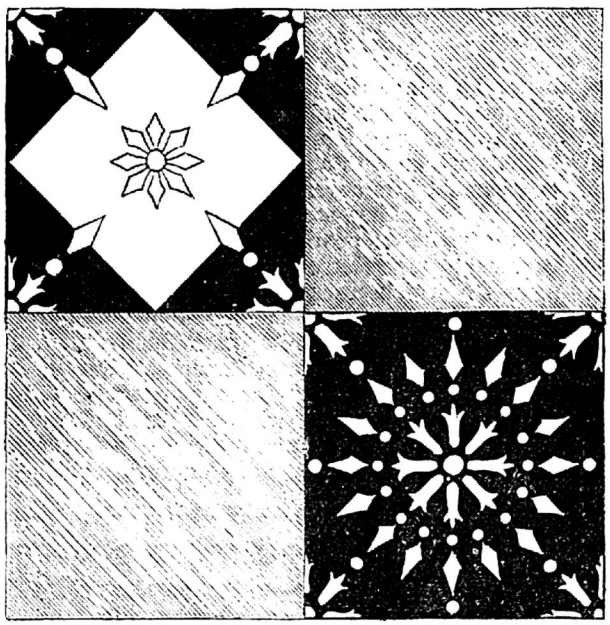


Fig. 3.

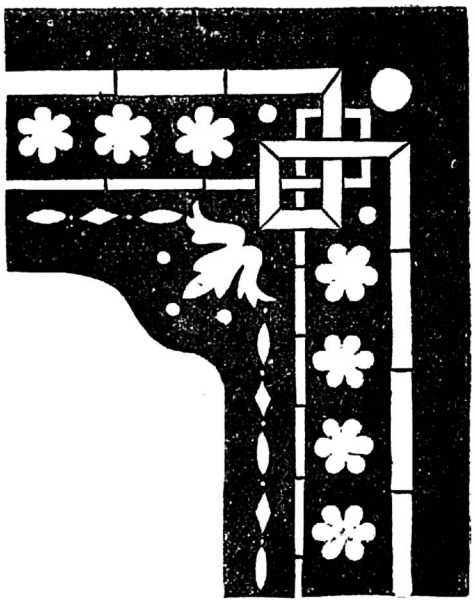


Fig. 5.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 4.

Half a century ago, this was the only method; but at the present day, from its greater cheapness, papier-mâché is usually formed of a thick mass of the same material as paper, mixed with paste and pressed in moulds to the form required, and in this objects and panels are to be purchased far more cheaply than they can be made of sheets of paper. From a papier-mâché manufactory any article may be obtained in this latter material, ready prepared for inlaying with pearl, at an exceedingly low price; and of this the amateur artist in papier-mâché will generally do well to avail himself, to avoid the trouble of attempting the earlier and merely mechanical processes; all that

is really interesting in the art will be found to lie in the later operations of inlaying and painting.

The pearls used for inlaying papier-mâché work are of four kinds: ordinary mother-of-pearl, aurora pearl—which is excessively iridescent and beautiful, but only to be obtained in small pieces rarely of one inch square—snail, or Scotch pearl—which has more gradual changes of colour, but can be obtained in much larger pieces than the aurora pearl—and the green pearl, which has exceedingly beautiful changes from blue to green, but is very liable to crack. These small sheets or flakes of pearl (the form in which the material is used for this work), of about the thickness of ordinary drawing-paper, can be bought, of the three latter kinds at about two-and-sixpence an ounce, and of the former at somewhat less. From the pearl-workers, also, can be bought a variety of ornaments ready stamped out, consisting of such simple devices as flowers, bells, stars, dots, &c.; a collection of these is shown in Fig. 1. The flakes may be cut into other simple forms with a pair of small strong scissors, but for so doing they should previously be soaked in water to render them less brittle; rectilinear figures may be better cut with a saw made by roughening the edge of a knife by drawing it across a file; while intricate patterns must be cut out with a fine bow-saw in the manner described in our articles on "Fret-work" (vol. ii., p. 84), a number of pieces of pearl being glued together and sawn through at the same time.

The "blank," as the article is called before it is decorated, will, when purchased, have received a preparation for the "pearling" by being coated with "black varnish," which, after it has passed about twelve hours in a stove, will have been scraped smoothly off, so that when it reaches the hands of the amateur it will be ready for the operation of inlaying.

A pattern having been prepared by drawing all the principal lines of the design to the actual size upon paper, and these lines having been pricked through with a needle into a succession of small holes, it is usual to blacken the blank by rubbing it over with a damp rag dipped in lampblack; the pattern is then laid upon it, and whitening is rubbed through the holes with a piece of wash-leather; when the paper is removed the design will be seen indicated by a number of small white dots. With a camel-hair pencil dipped in flake, or Chinese white, the outline of the design should then be drawn through the dots, as otherwise the after operation of sizing might obliterate them. This is only necessary where the design is somewhat intricate; for simple designs a black-lead line will show sufficiently.

Those parts on which the pearl has to be laid must now be coated with a size known as japanners' gold-size, and upon this the flakes of pearl must be laid in their places; small pieces are best taken up and placed upon the blank with a point of boxwood, rendered adhesive by just touching it with size. The work must then be put in a stove to set the pearl; for this purpose an ordinary oven, very moderately heated, will suffice. When the pearl is set (which will be in about twelve hours or somewhat more, according to the heat of the stove), if it be found that some pieces are springy—that is, do not lie flat—a little paste must be worked under them with the finger, and weights placed on to keep them down till they are firmly fixed. When the whole of the pearl has been placed in position upon the article, it will, however, be better to send it at once to the professional japanner, who will attend to all the remaining operations (with the exception of the ultimate touching-up), which are merely mechanical.

Let us now suppose that the amateur would wish to make his first attempt on an article which will be at the same time simple and effective; nothing will be better for him to begin upon than a chess-board. For the white squares, mother-of-pearl or snail pearl will have to be used, as in these there will be least difficulty in finding pieces of the required size; and of the two, snail pearl will be the most pleasing in effect. These squares may be purchased ready for use, or the amateur may cut them in the following manner:—Let him first make a pattern of the required size and shape in cardboard, and lay it over the flake of pearl, marking round the sides with a black-lead pencil. Let him then lay the pearl on a piece of board fixed to the table, and, holding the flake firmly, saw through the markings with the edge of the roughened knife.

For the black squares, pretty combinations may be formed of the ready-stamped pearl shapes given in Fig. 1. Examples of squares thus formed are shown in Figs. 2, 3, and 4; and a board may be completed with black squares, all of the same design, or of two alternating designs, or of all the squares differing in pattern, though the two latter, in our opinion, are less effective. A border may also be formed to surround the board, wholly composed of such stamped devices, though a combination of these and rectilinear strips of pearl, as shown in Fig. 5, is much to be preferred. All these pieces of pearl being fixed on, the chess-board will be ready for the operation of "stoving."

The gold-size being dried in the stove, and the pearl thus set, the next operation will be a merely mechanical and not particularly agreeable one, and therefore had better be left to the japan manufacturer. It consists in coating the whole work with a thick black varnish. The article again goes into the stove, is dried, and the surface is then rubbed with a piece of pumice-stone till the pearl is cleared of its covering of the varnish. These operations of "blacking, stoving, and pumicing" are repeated till the pieces of pearl and the intermediate spaces have become one perfectly level plane, chiefly through those parts on which no pearl is laid being filled up with varnish, but also to a slight extent through the pearl being worn down by the operation of pumicing. As will be seen from the above remarks, what is known as "inlaying with pearl" in papier-mâché work is not actually such, for the pearl is not let into the background—as would be done in real inlaying—but the background itself is raised to the level of the pearl.

(continued in our next issue)

RAG-DOLL-MAKING.

FIG. 1.

SINCE the introduction into England of the French mechanical doll, the art of doll-making has greatly developed, and the present wax-headed and correctly-limbed article has become an artistic object.

How recently *this transformation* has been brought about was forcibly shown to us in the interesting account published last year of the Queen's favourite dolls, which have been preserved at Windsor, and are now kindly lent by her Majesty for charitable purposes. These dolls, dressed entirely by her Majesty, are all of the wooden Dutch doll make. They are small in size, have painted faces, with but little attempt at a nose and no expression to speak of; yet these were the cherished and loved possessions of the little girl whose destiny was even then foreshadowed. They were clothed in the richest of materials procurable; they represented many well-known historical characters; and it is presumable that if a doll of a better make could have been procurable it would have found a place among the collection. In 1845, if we may credit Charles Dickens's account of such matters in his *Cricket on the Hearth*, dolls were no longer all of one kind. Caleb Plummer, doll-maker, far improved upon Nature, and superadded striking personal differences that marked the place in society the doll was destined for. Thus, "the lady of distinction had wax limbs of perfect symmetry, while the next in grade were made of leather, the next of coarse linen stuff, and as to the common people they had matches out of the tinder-box for arms and legs, and thus were established in their position without any chance of improving it." These match-made dolls are no longer to be met with, and it is evident that doll manufactures have moved with the times, and have assigned to the working doll and the housemaid and footman of society a more important physique.

The little ladies and gentlemen that now figure in our shop-windows as heroes and heroines of romance, that give balls, that appear in Court costume, in fishing, riding, and highland costumes, that are wedded or christened with all due solemnity, are beyond the scope of this article, and indeed are beyond the needs of real doll-life—they are too fine for us. They need to live on rose-leaves, and to be served by footmen, and to live in perpetual glass-cases; and their destiny is generally to be much admired and coveted when first possessed, to be taken out with the best frock for the drive in the park, or for display to other little girls, and then to be neglected and despised.

It is the work-a-day doll we want! The Cinderella, whose dear, smutty face conveys no reproach to our own, whose clothes are not too good for the nursery wash, and whose limbs do not dislocate or their face break when, in the ardour of affection, we smother them in bed, or in the paroxysm of rage send them flying into a corner of the room. It is the dear old rag-doll of everyday need that is really the doll we love, and not the painted and perfumed beauty.

The true rag-doll is rarely sold now. There is a doll that can be bought which is made of rags, but it has a hard face and an attempt at a nose, and the old rag-doll had no such blot on her escutcheon; her head was, we will not say soft, but shapely, and had nothing solid or spoilable about it.

In the illustration, Fig. 1, we give a real rag-doll made by a lady, and one that any of our readers can easily copy. The body of this doll is made of pink sateen; the length of the doll is fifteen inches, divided into three for the head, six for the body, and six for the legs. Length of arm four and a half inches, two and a half in circumference. Waist measure is six inches, neck three inches, breadth at shoulders three inches, but round the shoulders six inches. The face is two inches in length, with an inch beyond for hair; it is two inches broad where shown, but is five inches in circumference. The head is the most difficult part of the doll to make. It is first formed of a piece of linen stuffed with good cotton wool, and made in the shape of an egg. The stuffing of the shaped piece of linen must be firm and full without being hard. Then a piece of flesh-coloured *suéde* leather is required (this can always be taken from the clean part of a *gaut de suéde* glove), and this is fitted to the head, and hair and features traced out upon it. The nose is made slightly prominent by the leather being pinched together at that place so as to shape it, and these pinches are secured with a few stitches at the nostrils and where the nose and eyes are on a line together. To paint the face, use water-colours mixed with aquarella medium. Make the hair of burnt sienna and vandyke brown, and mark the eyebrows out with vandyke brown. Use cobalt and black for the eyes, with a little ultramarine blue. The cheeks are made bright with a touch of vermilion, but previously to that the face is washed over several times with a wash made of Chinese white and crimson lake. The lips are touched in with crimson lake. A good deal of careful stitching is required to fit the glove leather to the doll's head; but as the doll's cap conceals all of this, it is better to shape the head by so doing correctly, than to leave it to chance. Some people sew a little real hair on to dollie's forehead instead of painting it in. This hair can be bought as a doll's fringe at any dollmakers.

The baby's dress consists of one long under-garment, a baby's robe and cap. These are all made of fine Indian muslin, and take off and on. The under-garment has a plain body drawn in at the neck and three inches long, the skirt to it is twelve inches long and sixteen inches wide, the baby's robe is seventeen inches long and thirty-six wide, the body being full and gathered in at the neck, the sleeves plain and trimmed with lace. The cap is shaped like an ordinary baby's cap. It fits the head with a round back piece, half an inch in width, from which a full cap comes that is two inches in length, and is gathered up at the edge with a draw-string, and trimmed with a frill and rows of fine lace. A little white satin baby-ribbon is made up into bows and strings as an additional adornment. Should any of our readers find it difficult to

FIG. 2.

make this doll, a lady who works for charitable purposes will furnish designs or make up the doll.

We have now to mention a very different kind of rag-doll, for which we are indebted to the ingenuity of our American cousins. This is a doll whose shape is printed upon a sheet of calico, and that requires sewing together and stuffing. We give an example of this doll in Fig. 2. The back and the front of the doll are provided, and a line is traced round the outer edges of the printed creature to indicate the exact parts that are to be cut out, and where they join when sewn together. The face of the doll, its hands, feet, boots and under-garments are all indicated and printed in colours, and the worker has nothing to do but cut out the two pieces that make up the doll, face them so that the right side of the colouring is inside, and sew the two together leaving an opening at the waist. The linen shape is then turned so that its right side is outwards, and the stuffing commenced. The head is the first part stuffed, either with cotton wool or with finely-shredded crewel and Berlin wools, in fact with anything that is at hand and that is soft and pliable. When stuffing the head some regard to the shape of a head is necessary, as also are a few stitches through the head to keep the nose, eyes, and mouth together and shapable. The junction of neck and head is a little wide in the printed design, and cannot be altered, as the head is stuffed through it; it therefore requires to be slightly drawn together with a thread; this thread narrows the neck and gives support to the head.

Having stuffed the neck and head, fill the arms and legs with wadding and keep them as little cumbersome as possible, and yet stuff them full, as unless well-stuffed they become limp and out of shape. When the body is well filled up and no wrinkles are visible at the joins of any of the limbs, the space through which the stuffing is introduced is sewn up, and the doll is ready for dressing.

The under-garments, boots, and stockings being already indicated on the printed linen, a dress is all that is necessary, and a pretty pink or blue silk frock trimmed with white lace makes a good garment to complete one of the cheapest rag-dolls in existence, as the sheet of coloured linen that forms the foundation is sold for sixpence.

This rag-doll is only taken as an illustration of the numerous coloured sheets of linen procurable that make up into various shapes; one very good sheet represents a black baby. This baby is made of three pieces, the front of the child, the back, and an oval-shaped piece, sewn in after the stuffing is finished, and forming a stand which makes the baby seem standing on its feet. The black doll is dressed in a long pink garment, and holds a blue hat in one black hand. The queer one with its white eyeballs showing out of the dusky face, its solemn look and the novelty of the article renders this black baby highly appreciated by the youngsters. Being already clothed, it needs no more trouble expended on it than being cut out and sewn together, well-stuffed, and the third piece lined with cardboard and sewn round the bottom of the skirt to form a stand.

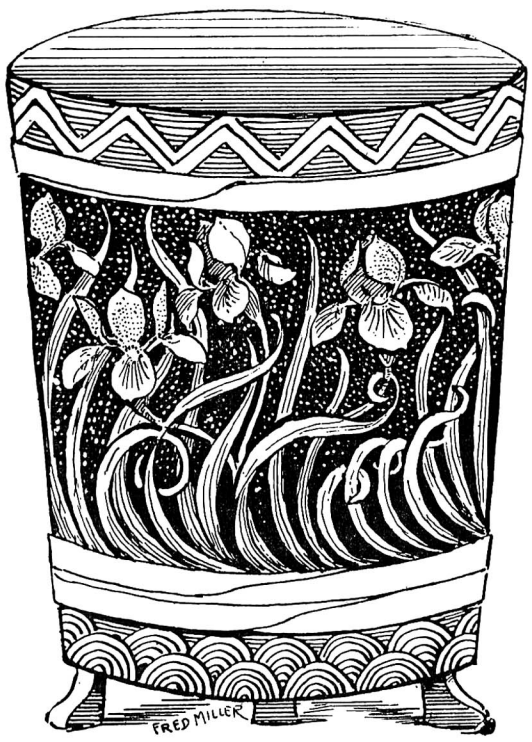
Animals are not forgotten, sheets of coloured linen being procurable that represent elephants, lions, retriever and spaniel dogs, severe-looking seated cats, frisky kittens, etc. These animals are not standing on their four legs (with the exception of the elephant), and they are mostly intended to serve two purposes, *i.e.*, that of a plaything for baby, and for gigantic pincushions. This is managed by dividing their printed parts into three pieces, one for back of animal, a second for the front, and a third, as in the black baby, as a base. These parts are sewn together as described in the black baby, and allow of the animal supporting itself in an upright position.

Another printed sheet is one of the terrestrial globe, coloured, and showing the chief continents, seas, and towns of the world. This sheet is divided into eight parts, and requires careful cutting, sewing together and stuffing. It makes a very good ball, beside providing instruction for the young.

BLANCHE C. SAWARD.

WHAT TO DO WITH A BUTTER TUB.

THE cost of the article itself is not more than sixpence, as provision merchants are glad to get rid of them. They are made very neatly of white wood, with wooden hoops, by our kinsfolk in Canada to pack the butter they send us in. A tub when dry shrinks, and the hoops would fall off; so, to prevent that, get some half-inch French nails and drive through the hoops into the staves, and then clench them inside, which will effectually keep the tub from dropping to pieces when it gets quite dry, for, when you purchase it, the tub is naturally wet.



The first thing to do is to thoroughly wash the tub inside and out with hot water, soda, and soap to remove all grease, and put it aside to dry. Let this be done thoroughly, as paint will not dry if there is any grease on the wood, and we propose painting it and putting a little decoration on it; but before this three feet should be screwed on to the bottom. Large empty reels of cotton would do; but, if you want them shaped like those in the sketch, then you had better get a carpenter to make them for you. The feet, though not of course absolutely necessary, give such a finish to the appearance of the tub that I don't think any reader would wish not to have them.

As to the colour of the tub, I have indicated a dark rich one in the sketch; but, of course, this is a matter of taste, though I think if it were painted a deep peacock-blue it would be very effective in a room, and would take decoration well. If you decide upon this colour, then get two pounds of white lead ground in oil, which you can purchase at a good oil-shop, half a pint of linseed oil, one pennyworth of driers and tubes of Prussian blue, emerald green, and French ultramarine, also a little turpentine. Pour some oil upon the lead, which you could put in an empty tobacco-tin, until it is well covered, with just a couple of dessertspoonfuls of turpentine and the driers. Let this wait for a while, though you can take a palette knife and stick it into the lead a few times to allow of the oil and turps amalgamating with it, and you can repeat this a few times. The next day the lead will be soft, and when stirred up should be the consistency of cream (not clotted). If still too thick, then add more oil and turps, and strain it through some fine muslin, rubbing it through with a brush. Then squeeze out some of the three tubes, and add a little of the white, and mix up on a palette, and then put into the pot of paint and stir up. This will tint it a bluish-green colour, and you can now put on your first coat of paint. A flat hog brush about two inches wide will do well, or, if that is not procurable, use an ordinary round brush; but a good brush will give you a better result, as the colour should be put on evenly. When this coat is dry, put a little more of the tube colours into your paint to darken it still more, and then give the tub its second coat. The last coat will have to contain very little white if your ground is to be dark, and you ought to add a little more driers, as the tube colours take some time to dry, unless you put something in the nature of driers into it.

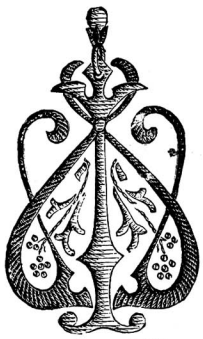
When this last coat is quite hard, you can decorate or stencil your tub. If you put on some hand decoration, choose plants that lend themselves to the shape of the tub. I have indicated the iris as the *motif;* but the ox-eye daisy, meadow-sweet, and many other plants can be used with equal advantage.

These tubs do most excellently for large ferns, palms, or other indoor plants. If you are content with plain painting, and do not care to decorate the tub, then you could finish with a coat of enamel, and paint the hoops a lighter colour. By the way, some of the tubs have three hoops, and this centre one will interfere with such a design as the one I have sketched. If you cannot get one with two hoops, remove this centre one if you wish to paint such a plant as the iris; but, if you use stencils, then a couple of rows of stencilling between the hoops will nicely ornament it. I should advise the painting of the inside of the tub with a couple of coats.

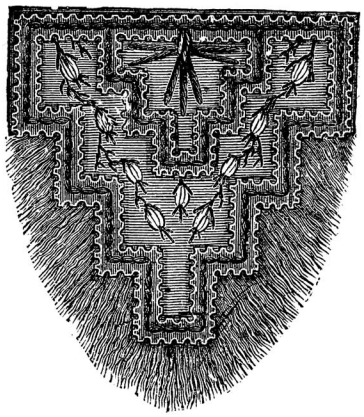
Don't forget to have a saucer or tiny tray at bottom of tub if you have a growing plant in it so that the water does not rot the wood.

Sun Flower Design in Crewel Work, or Silk Embroidery.

FANCY WORK.



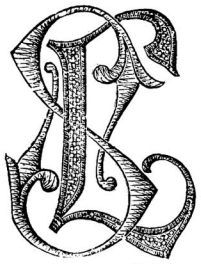
MONOGRAM.—I. W.



LAMBREQUIN.

Lambrequin.

THE lambrequin is of blue velvet. The appliqué design is cut out of brown perforated cardboard, and sewn on with brown and gold-colored silk. There is also a feather stitching of green and chain stitching of blue floss. The embroidery vine is of pink and light green. Lay the pattern of lambrequin on the perforated cardboard, to get the edge the same size of velvet, then cut the border any width desired. By doubling your velvet you can have the lambrequin any length required.



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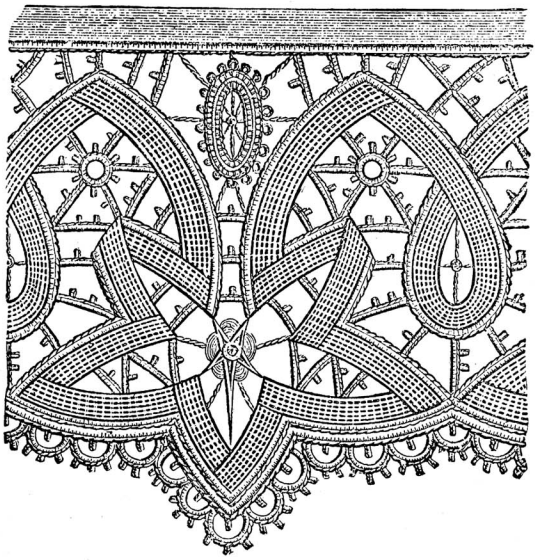
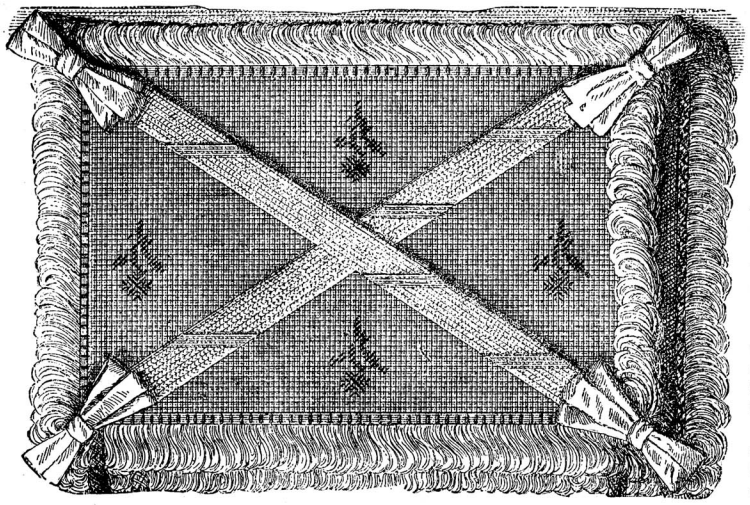


Lace Pattern.

FIRST copy the design on thin paper, or tracing cloth, then use what is called point lace braid. After tacking down the braid the connecting-bars are buttonholed, and ornamented with small picots. The scallops at the edge are buttonholed over soft embroidery cotton.



HANDKERCHIEF SACHET.

Handkerchief Sachet.

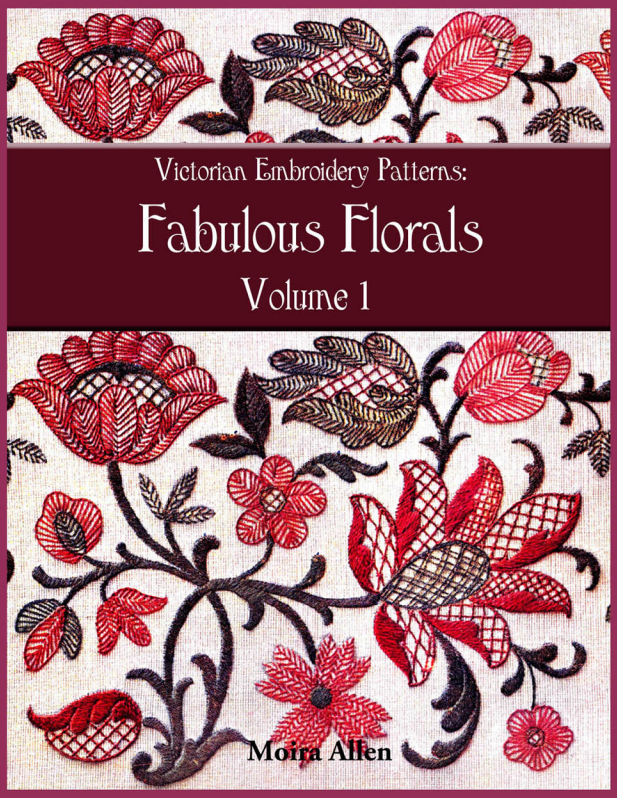
TAKE a piece of silver perforated paper, one-half yard long by one-quarter yard wide, double it in half, and on the part to form the top, work a pattern in floss. Quilt a piece of light blue satin the size of the paper, and fasten it to the inside of case. Around the edges, put a narrow trimming of ostrich feather band, and finish with tiny loops of satin ribbon.

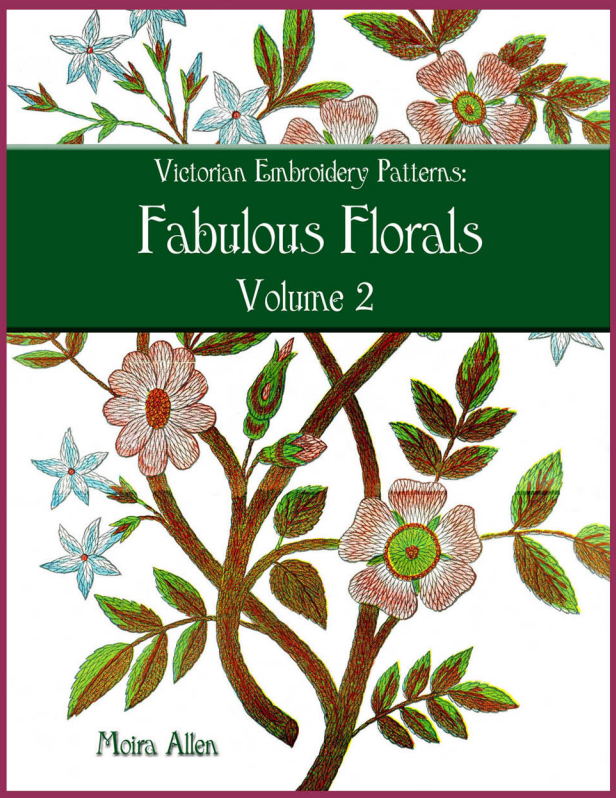
Across the top lay No. 12 satin ribbon, and finish the ends with bows. A perfume sachet placed underneath the quilted lining is a great addition.

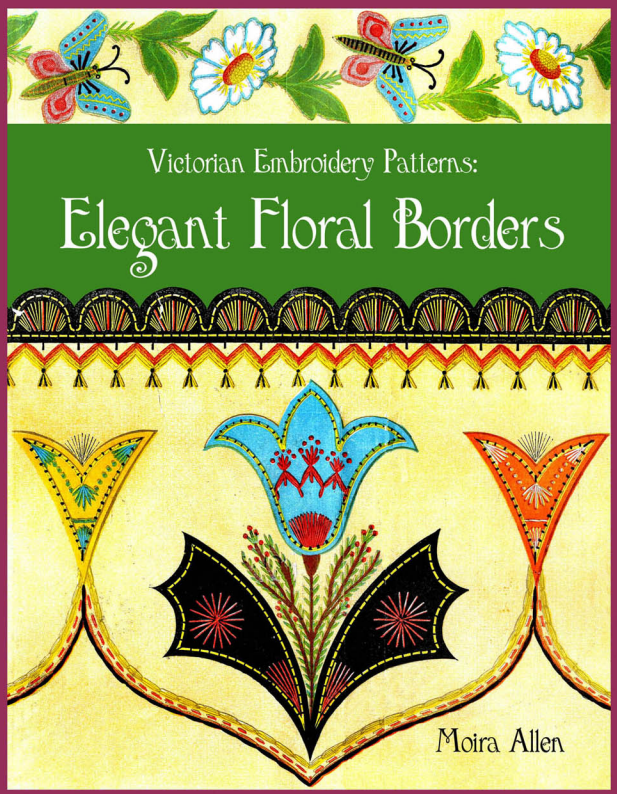
PATTERN FOR LAMBREQUIN.

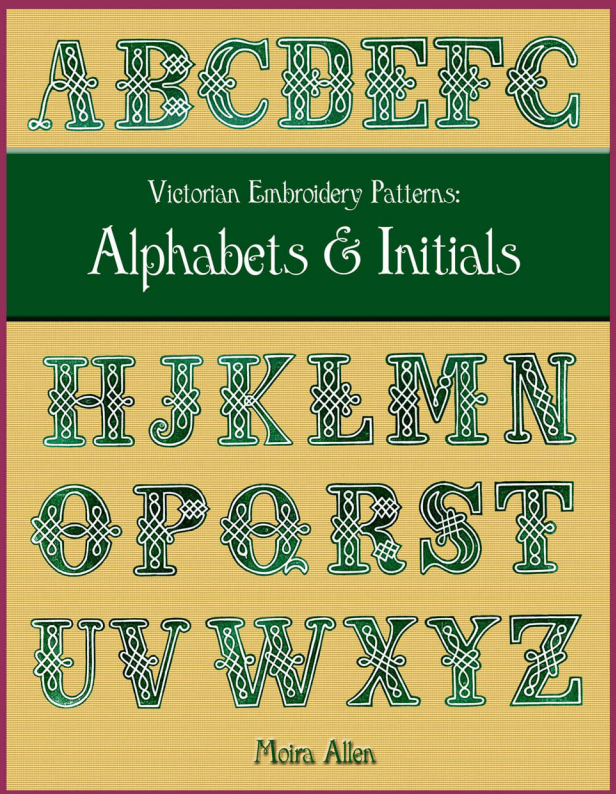
William Morris "Sunflowers" Wallpaper pattern, from *A Victorian Floral Fantasy,* by Moira Allen

Collect the Entire Victorian Embroidery Pattern Series!









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