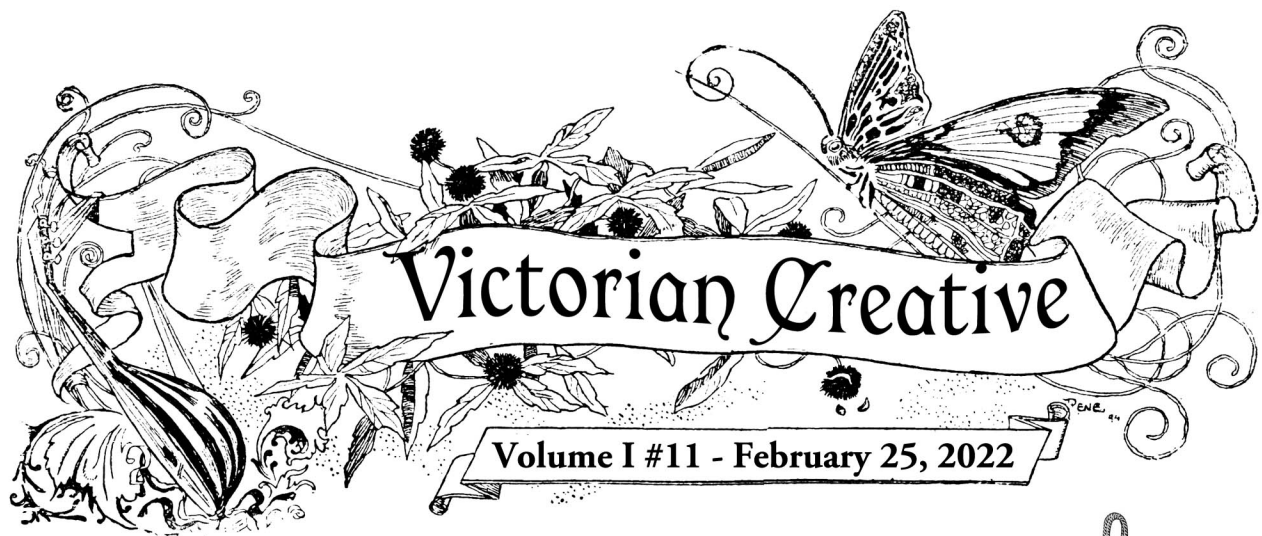


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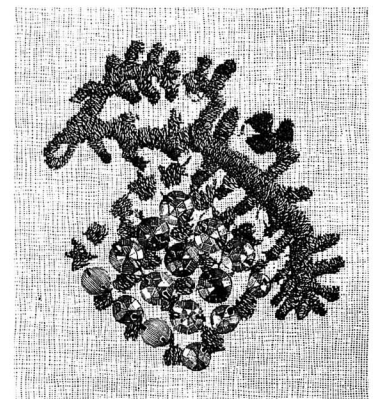
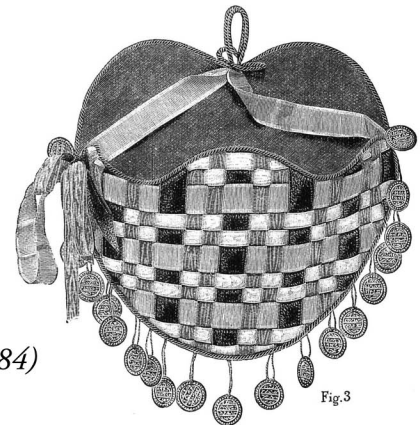
Tips & Tools for Victorian-Inspired
Arts, Crafts & Decor



Volume I #11 - February 25, 2022

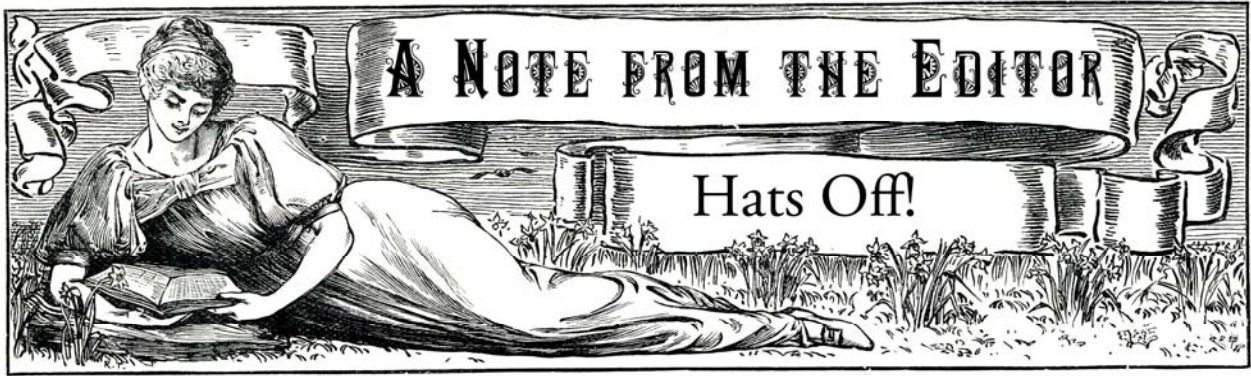


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ABOUT OUR COVER: It's cold outside, and the birds need a little extra attention! This lovely reminder is from a Raphael Tuck British Christmas card from the 1880's. This image can be found in our collection of **Seasons & Holidays Clip Art & Ephemera**, at www.victorianvoices.net/clipart/seasons/holidays.shtml



There's a general view—fostered by a host of modern novels and articles—that the Victorian woman was regarded as a creature without any particular brain power. This, we're told, explains why it was so difficult for Victorian women to obtain jobs (or gain any respect *on* the job), as well as why it was such a struggle to gain the right not only to a higher education but to the degrees such education conferred. (For quite some time, women could complete the courses of study at a university, but they were not permitted to obtain the degrees that such courses conferred on men.)

I have no doubt that there were plenty of Victorian men who believed that a female was by definition an airhead—and there were undoubtedly plenty of Victorian women who deserved the title. That's hardly a Victorian issue. There are still plenty of men today who think women are airheads (and, sadly, there are plenty of women who help perpetuate that notion). But as I put together articles for these issues, I see a very different picture emerging.

Take, for example, the series on papier-mache work (of which Part II appears in this issue). I'm no airhead myself, but I found my eyes starting to cross as I skimmed through these "simple" instructions. This series was certainly not written for someone whose sole abilities were limited to being a subservient wife and devoted mother. It was written for someone who could follow extremely complex, detailed instructions; someone who could deal with precise measurements; and someone who could handle a number of tools and supplies requiring a degree of skill and dexterity. I'd think twice (or more) before tackling such a project—but the unnamed author clearly didn't seem to think it was beyond the abilities of a "typical" Victorian woman.

Nor were Victorian women expected to confine their activities to such pursuits as embroidery, knitting or crochet. In a magazine like *The Girl's Own Paper* (which, admittedly, became surprisingly progressive over the years), our lady readers are offered instruction on such crafts as metalwork, embossing, etching on glass, wood-carving, leatherwork, and even blacksmithing. It's hard to equate such activities with the notion of a helpless, brainless female—and it's clear that the authors do not regard their audience as such. If they did, they certainly wouldn't be suggesting that such a delicate creature pick up a hammer and pound out a bit of iron in the forge!

While most articles on needlework are, admittedly, written by women for women, many of the articles on more challenging crafts are written by men. This tells us that a great many Victorian men assumed that their female audience was more than capable of following complex instructions and creating complex crafts. And this, in turn, suggests that not *all* Victorian males felt that the woman's place was tucked away in the home with an embroidery hoop or an egg-whisk.

Perhaps the proverbial proof in the pudding is the mere fact that, today, these articles still appeal to *us*. They don't feel condescending, or patronizing, or written for someone who less "smarts" than we have today. They appeal to today's skilled artists and crafters for the same reasons that they appealed to women more than 100 years ago.

In fact, I admit, I'm a tiny bit jealous as I read these magazines—because they *do* assume that the female reader has a mind, and is interested in complex concepts, lengthy historical accounts, detailed projects and more. Today, the average women's magazine seems to think that I can't process an article much more than two paragraphs long, and that my primary interests revolve around the make-up and fashion tips of celebrities.

So my hat is off to the Victorian woman—and my hope is that, perhaps, our own magazines will start treating us as if we had brains as well!

—Moirra Allen
editors@victorianvoices.net

PLAITED RIBBON WORK.

WORK with plaited ribbons enjoys such constant favour that readers to whom it is little known may well be glad to hear of it.

There is no doubt but that the growing popularity of the work is largely owing to

from one coloured ribbon and stretched in the frame side by side, fastened at each end with a pin as before mentioned.

To perform the actual weaving a special needle is to be bought, but where small

should be placed side by side, touching one another, just as were the others, and they should be fastened down to the frame at both ends in the usual way. This pattern is the easiest of all to execute, all that is necessary

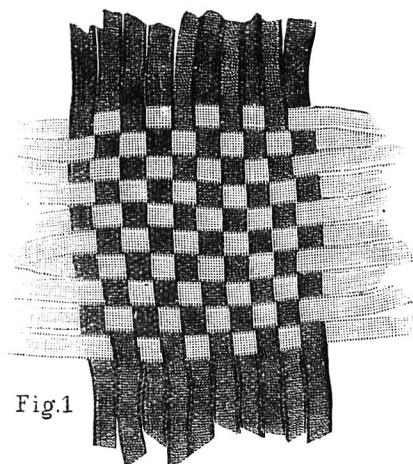


Fig. 1

the beautiful and tempting ribbons which are now to be found in so great a variety. No great expense is entailed by pursuing this fascinating little craft, as in patterns which need many yards of ribbon, a plain material is sufficient, brocaded and fanciful varieties being employed but scantily, since they are themselves so decorative that extra elaboration seems superfluous.

Some of the easiest plaiting patterns are also the most effective. A check or draught-board design can be made with two colours only of ribbon of the same width and make. The weaving can be done either in an embroidery frame, the rim of a slate whence the inside has been removed, or even on a board. Whatever support is chosen must be covered with braid lashed over and over, or, for a board with any soft thick fabric to which the strands can be pinned. Many pins must be provided, especially for a large piece of work, as each strand of ribbon used needs pinning down at both ends.

Having ready then the frame and two colours of ribbon, the next thing is to cut the latter into lengths suitable for the piece of weaving to be done. A little extra must be allowed than will be required for the finished work, as the ends have to be cut away, it being impossible to weave quite up to the limits of the ribbon.

For the chequer design as many strips as will be required for the width are to be cut

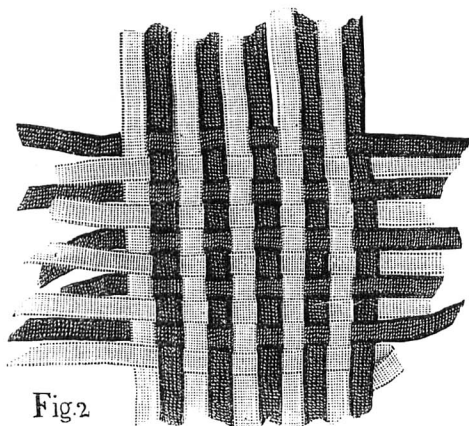


Fig. 2

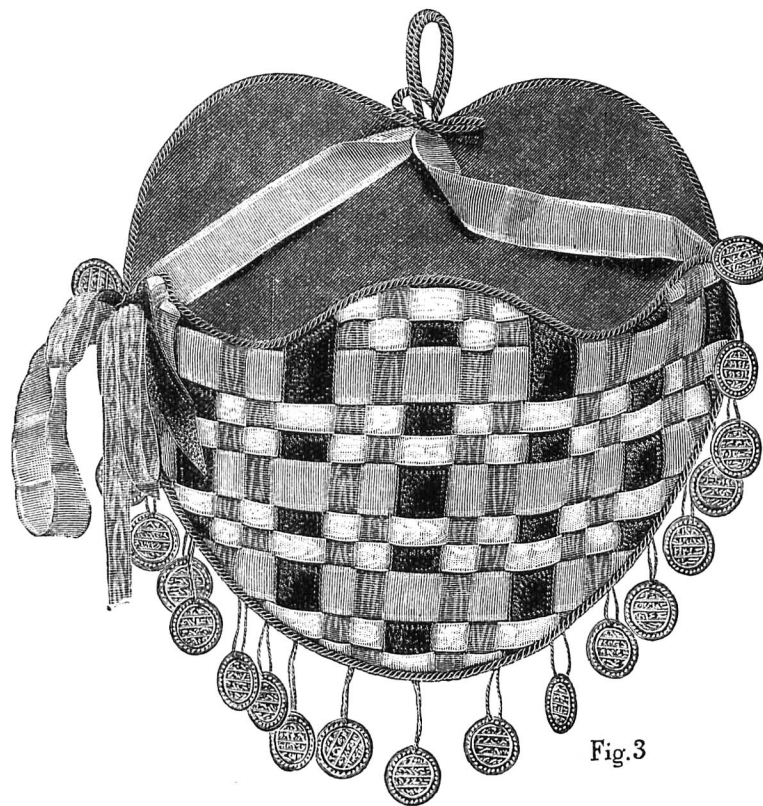


Fig. 3

quantities only of the work are likely to be done a large-eyed flat bodkin or no-crease ribbon threader answers well.

To continue the chequer-pattern, thread each one of the other strands of ribbon through the bodkin in turn, and pass it alternately over and under the first set of ribbons to form the weft. The second ribbons

to remember being that the weft ribbon must in every line be passed under the warp ribbon which it passed over in the preceding row, and *vice versa*. Fig. 1 shows a small piece of the pattern worked.

The result of the weaving should be a firm interplaited (and therefore double) piece of work, which can be released from the frame

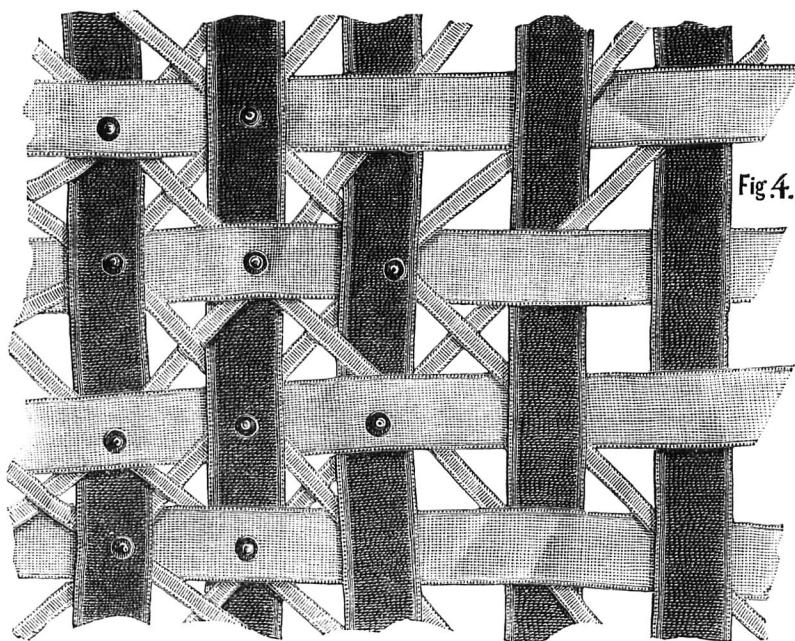


Fig. 4.

by removing the pins and made up much as is any ordinary piece of silk or satin.

A stripe (see Fig. 2) is as easy as a check to make. For this also two colours of ribbon are necessary. Cut these into lengths as usual and fasten them into the frame, but this time let the coloured bands which form the warp be used alternately, and not be all of one hue. The weft also consists of first a ribbon of one colour, then one of the next all down, these being always passed over the warp-ribbons which are of the same colour as themselves. If they are passed under these the result will be a chequer like the first one shown, though obtained in a slightly different way.

So far it has been taken for granted that squares have been woven, and for these a frame of suitable size has no doubt answered well. But for tiny or irregularly-shaped pieces the use of too large a surround means a considerable waste of ribbon. There is a special make of frame intended for such weaving, the size of which can be altered, but the same result can be obtained by a home-worker, either by nailing a flat piece of wood across, or even by very tightly stretching a length of stout braid over the frame. For fanciful shapes a board is convenient, though the weaving is less easy to remove from it if loosely done than from a frame. Open weaving (to be mentioned later) needs mounting on silk or some other fabric, and it is easy to tack the ribbons down to this before taking them from a surround, but difficult to insert it between them and their solid background.

Close weaving on a board can be most economically managed, when a fanciful shape is required, by cutting the outline from paper, pinning this to the board and laying the ribbons over it, extending them but a little way beyond it and there pinning them down. When the work is lifted the paper is easily moved. Study the wall-pocket shown at Fig. 3 as an example of close and fancy weaving. The front is mounted over stiff buckram and the back is a heart-shaped piece of card, covered and lined with brown silk.

For the weaving were used: seven strands of black-ribbon velvet three-quarters of an inch wide, twelve of green moiré nearly half-an-inch, the same amount of white moiré,

and three lengths of deep orange ribbon three-quarters of an inch wide. Begin with the centre warp (upright) strand of black velvet, and on each side of it pin down two green, a black, two green, a black, two green, and, lastly, a black strip.

For the weft threads orange and white are to be used; thread the top white over the centre black stripe, under the next and over the last green on each side of it. The second white ribbon passes over the threads passed under before, and under those which were

and sequins, threaded on gold tinsel, dangle round the bottom of it. Bows and ends of the ribbons are arranged at the back of the pocket.

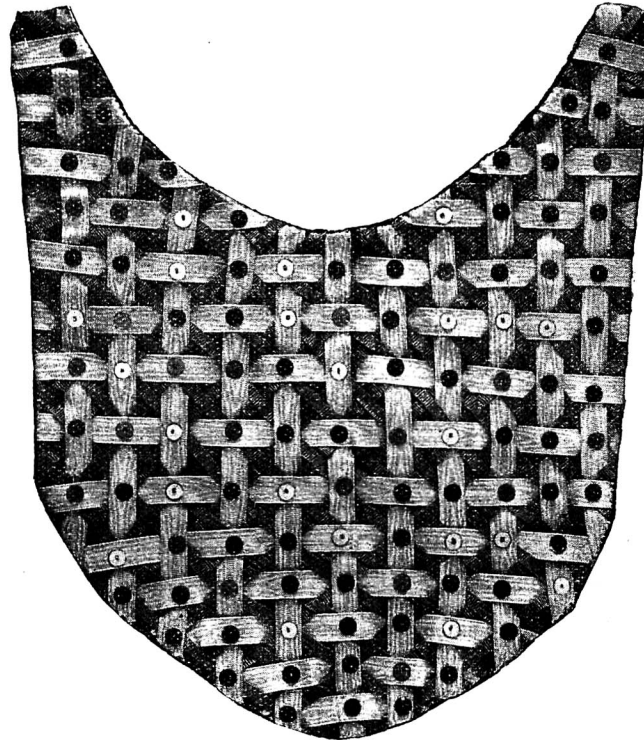
The second form of plaiting (open-weaving) deserves a few words. In this the ribbon strands are put more widely apart, permitting a background of silk to show between them. A specimen of this style of weaving is seen at Fig. 4, where wide and narrow ribbons are used transversely as well as down and across. The white warp threads should be secured each its own width distant from the next, and the weft ribbons are threaded over and under these. The first set of narrow ribbons passes right across the work diagonally, under the weft but over the warp lines.

The second narrow set crossing with these is arranged to come also under the weft and over the warp lines, and falls naturally over one of the former set of diagonal ribbons in every open space. A sequin keeps the strands together at each spot where they all meet. The last illustration shows the same pattern worked more closely as embellishment for the front of an open coat. The background is black satin, the wider ribbons and sequins are heliotrope, while the diagonal strands are pale green.

It has been shown that ribbon work is adapted for small articles of dress as well as to fancy trifles. The colourings can be greatly varied, and a bold or delicate effect be secured at will. The variety of patterns is quite bewildering, as a few trials and a study of fancy-straw weaving will soon show. Squares, diamonds and zigzags can be made of many kinds both in close and open weaving. In the latter the pattern of an ordinary cane-bottomed chair works out effectively.

As the finished work, lined if necessary, is equal in texture to a thick make of silk or brocade, it follows that it will serve in many cases for which these fabrics are also used: for mats, belts, covers for books, caskets, or fancy baskets; for *bonbonnières*, sachets, book-markers, pot-covers and a thousand other purposes it answers well.

It is pretty and modern, and readers are again advised to try it for themselves, and see how far better is the look of the real work than that of pictures into which colour cannot be introduced.



covered; this band is seen in the side curves also. The orange bands which come after every pair of white ones pass also over and under, alternating with the last ribbon threaded; in fact this simple rule suffices for the entire work, which results in little squares formed by the green and white ribbons and bolder details added by those of greater width. The completed weaving should be carefully laid on silk-lined buckram and stitched to the heart-shaped back.

A cord is carried all round the wall-pocket,

SHEATH FOR KNITTING NEEDLES.

BY MRS. JANE WEAVER.



Now that knitting silk socks, stockings, etc., is so fashionable, this little article will be found most useful, and it is easily made. Take two oakgalls, pierce a hole through each, making it large enough to hold the points of four pins; through these holes pass a white silk elastic measuring about six inches, fasten at each end under a bow of ribbon, and tie another bow of ribbon in the centre of the elastic. The sheath will then be complete.

HOUSEHOLD DECORATIVE ART.

PAPIER-MACHÉ WORK:—PEARL INLAYING—(continued).

AFTER the rubbing-down with the block of pumice-stone, as described in our last article, it will be found that a number of "cuts," or scratches, have been left upon the surface of the papier-mâché; and these will have to be removed by polishing the work with a rubber consisting of a piece of linen or wash-leather, dipped in what is technically known as "sand," but which is in reality finely-powdered pumice-stone. This will leave a surface generally smooth, but, owing to the grain of the sand, the varnish will have assumed a greyish colour, which will have to be removed, and the surface restored to its original blackness, by polishing with a rubber dipped in rotten-stone, thoroughly softened by soaking in water. This will leave a tolerably good polish, and a perfectly brilliant one is afterwards attained by rubbing with the palm of the hand and a little dry rotten-stone. All these processes are, as the reader will observe, purely mechanical, and the amateur in-layer will do well to



Fig. 1.

leave them to be carried out by the professed japanner. The article will now be ready for "touching-up." It will frequently be found that, in pumicing, some of the flakes and shapes have been worn through, or that a hole may, owing to the pearl not being perfectly flat, have been broken in it. Such holes must be filled up with "raising colour," which consists merely of whiting mixed up with gold-size into a kind of putty, and this is to be pressed into the holes with the point of a palette knife. It should be laid on thickly, as it will shrink a little in drying, which must be done in a stove. When perfectly dry, the surface of the raising colour must be neatly and carefully pumiced down to the level of the pearl.

The holes (if there are any) having been filled up in this manner, the next proceeding will be to restore any defective pearl with a greyish-purple colour composed of ultramarine, lake, or carmine, and a little black, mixed up with a large proportion of flake-white; the object in view being to get a colour approaching as nearly as possible to the general appearance of the pearl. This is the most expeditious, and is therefore the usual method of repairing; but where time is no object, we should prefer giving the defective place in the pearl also a thin coat of copal varnish, and then dusting in with a dry camel-hair pencil "white" or silver bronze-powder—which in brilliancy more nearly approaches the pearl than does any other material. If the piece of pearl has been hopelessly ruined in the pumicing, it may be replaced by letting in a new piece; the old one must be removed with a knife, and the new will simply require to be fixed in its place with a little paste. When dry, the crack round its edge should be filled up with raising colour, to preserve

the paste from being softened by the water employed in pumicing, and the new piece of pearl rubbed down with the pumice-stone to the level of the rest of the work.

If it be found that a pearl shape has slipped a little out of its proper place, the amateur need be under no apprehension that this will spoil the effect of his work, for it can be so repaired as only to be noticed by the practised eye, by painting-in to the original outline of the shape (as indicated by comparing the two sides of Fig. 2), on that side from which it has slipped, with grey colour, as at B, and obliterating the superfluous pearl upon the other side (A) with the black paint, of which we shall speak more fully hereafter.



Fig. 2.

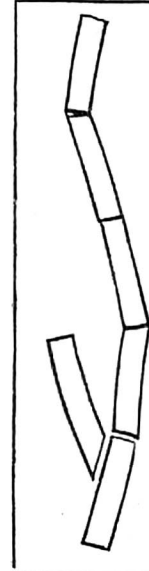


Fig. 3.

In purely geometrical designs, like those given, no further decorative touching-up will be required, beyond connecting the shapes by means of a neat dot of grey colour between each. The whole, or parts of the pearl, may indeed be coloured, or the background of black varnish may be heightened by gilded ornaments; but, even without these accessories, the simple pearl and black will be found to have a very good effect.

More Elaborate Pearl Inlaying.—

The above constitutes the most simple kind of pearl inlaying only, unless we consider as such the system of inlaying the whole surface of the article with squares or diamonds of pearl, closely fitting into each other, which has recently been very fashionable. This, though in-artistic, is pretty in effect, but we can scarcely recommend it to the amateur, since the fitting together of such quarries requires great nicety of workmanship, which can scarcely be attained without constant practice. We should rather recommend flowers and ornamental patterns for his execution.

Of inlaying a flower in pearl, the pansy given in Fig. 1 may form a sufficiently good example. We should recommend that the blossoms marked A and B, and the leaves C, should each be cut out of a single piece of snail pearl; before cutting, it will be well to turn the flake of pearl round that the light may fall upon it from various directions, and that the best effect of prismatic colour may thus be obtained. Where the leaf is deeply serrated as at E, it will be better that it should be cut from two or more pieces of pearl, which can afterwards be connected, in the process of touching-up, with grey colour, as before directed. To form the stem of this flower, it will be necessary to cut small strips of pearl (as shown in the enlargement of stem at Fig. 3), somewhat wider than the actual breadth of the stem, and in pieces of about half an inch long, or of rather more or less, according as the line of the stem is more gradually or abruptly curved; the joinings of these strips will afterwards have to be concealed by the application of grey colour, and the superfluous pearl at their sides will have to be painted out with black. With this latter paint the outlines of the petals, the fibres of the leaves, and, in short, all the necessary "penciling"



Fig. 4.

may be done. To this black we have before alluded : the pigment used in making it is known in the trade and sold as "best" black, which should be ground in turpentine, and afterwards mixed with copal varnish ; but of the preparation of colours we shall speak more fully in another place. In using this black paint, it is advised that it should as far as possible be kept strictly to the pearl-work which it is desired to conceal or correct, and not allowed to spread over the adjacent black ground ; for it is far from being of so deep

or rich a colour as the latter, and will consequently be perceived if it overlaps it, when the work is examined in a good light by a practised eye. In the arrangement of the pieces of pearl in a flower or other design, considerable additional beauty of effect may be gained by using various kinds of pearl for different parts of the work, according as the taste or fancy of the amateur may dictate. Fig. 1 may be used as the centre of a lady's card-case, to which the design given in Fig. 4 may form a suitable border. This border we give as an example of a method of getting an apparently exceedingly intricate pattern with little trouble in the following manner :— A broad strip of pearl should be cut, of about half an inch in width, which will have been inlaid in the manner already described. The pattern to be used must be drawn upon paper, and holes pricked through the outline, as before directed—whiting or vermilion must then be rubbed through, leaving the pattern on the pearl in white or red dots. Then the outline must be gone over with a blacklead pencil, and the dry colour brushed away : the spaces between the lines can afterwards be filled in with black paint, hiding the unnecessary portions of the pearl and leaving the other parts exposed.

The pieces of pearl used in these last examples may be cut out with the scissors or "saw-knife," but before doing so, to lessen the liability of the flakes to break in cutting, it will be well to soak them in water for a short time. We have now to speak of the management of these more intricate patterns, which will require the pieces used for inlaying them to be cut out with the bow-saw, in a similar manner to that described in an earlier number of the HOUSEHOLD GUIDE (see page 84, vol. ii.), in our article on "Fretwork and Carving in Wood."

The design given in Fig. 5 is a portion of a running border, which might serve for various purposes, as for the

pilaster of a chiffonier. As the ornamental fronds and other portions of this cannot be well cut with the scissors, and are not to be bought ready-stamped, saw-piercing will have to be resorted to, and as these forms frequently repeat in the course of the design, it will be found both more easy and more expeditious to cut several of them at once. Four or five flakes of the required size may be glued together, the pattern traced on the upper flake, and the whole sawn through at one operation ; after they are cut out, boiling for a few minutes will dissolve the glue

and separate the pieces. Animals, and indeed all intricate forms, should be cut out in this manner ; sometimes where a single form only is required, and it is desired that it should be very nicely cut, the pearl is laid on a sheet of thin copper, to give it additional strength, and the two sawn through as before.

Pearl inlaying is best adapted to flat, or nearly flat, surfaces. When applied to rounded objects, the pearl can only be used in very small pieces, and the pattern must be chosen accordingly.

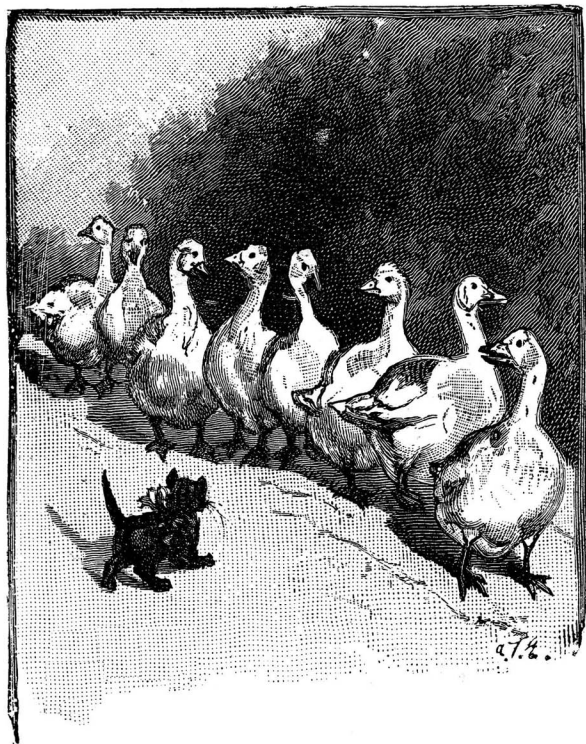
Ornamentation of Papier-mâché by Painting and Gilding.—For painting upon inlaid pearl transparent colours only are used, that the prismatic beauty of the flakes beneath may shine through and not lose its effect. The pigments most suitable for the purpose are— for reds, lake and carmine ; for yellow, Italian yellow ; for blues, ultramarine and Prussian blue ; for a cold green, verdigris ; and a range of warm greens may be made by adding more or less Italian yellow to verdigris ; for brown, burnt sienna, which may be darkened with a small quantity of "best" black, for the deeper

shades ; and for purple, a mixture of the above-mentioned blues and reds. These colours must be ground in a little turpentine, and mixed with about an equal quantity of copal varnish. This makes a far lighter and more delicate kind of paint than one mixed with oil ; it has also the advantage of drying more quickly. All colours used for painting papier-mâché may be prepared in the same manner. Colours may be lightened by adding to them more varnish and turpentine, and they may be deepened for shading with a little black, though in most instances it will be found best to gain depth by laying an additional coat of colour over those parts of the work which may require it ; in many cases a mixture of black and carmine will be found to form a good shade. Camel-hair pencils should be used for laying on the



Fig. 5.

colours, but as the varnish in them quickly dries, it will, if not washed out, harden and spoil their points; they must, therefore, after use, be always carefully cleaned with turpentine. Sable pencils are equally suitable, but are more expensive than camel-hair. The pansy, of which we gave a design and described the method of inlaying in our last article, may with these colours be finished in its natural tints, which the lustre of the pearl beneath will render exceedingly brilliant and beautiful. They may, indeed, be applied to almost any description of inlaid device. Statuary has a particularly fine effect in pearl shaded with purple; buildings and ruins tell exceedingly well, as do also many kinds of natural objects, and more especially birds and butterflies, but perhaps some of the most effective subjects that can be represented are stained glass windows in the interiors of cathedrals, which have a very fine effect when carefully painted upon pearl.



QUILL PENS.

QUILLS employed for writing purposes are commonly obtained from the wings of the goose; but it is only the five outside feathers in each wing which can be used for this purpose. Although the stem of the first feather is the roundest and hardest, it is also the shortest. The second and third feathers are those which are most employed for making into pens. With good management, as many as twenty quills may be obtained from one goose during the year. Quills for making into pens are also obtained from the turkey. The stems of these quills are stronger than those of the goose, and are employed for pens required for engraving, and writing old English, and other purposes where a strong pen is required. The feathers of the swan are also much prized when a quill pen of great size and strength is desired. Quills from the crow are also employed where a very fine-nibbed pen is wanted for delicate writing or drawing.

When quills are first plucked the stem is found to be soft, tough, and opaque, instead of being hard, elastic, and transparent, as we find it in a quill pen. The quill is also covered, both inside and out, with a vascular membrane, by means of which the feathers receive the supply of blood necessary for their growth and nourishment, and

which adheres tightly to it. Besides this, the fatty matter adhering to the quill would prevent the ink from flowing readily along it, if used in its natural state. The operation of rendering quills fit for use as pens is sometimes called "Dutching" them, owing to the method having been first employed by that nation. At one time Dutch quills were much valued from the care with which they were prepared, and all the fatty matters removed from them. The method originally employed by the Dutch was to press the quills into red-hot ashes. By this means all moisture and fat was got rid of, and the vascular membrane adhering to the quills detached. Great care has, however, to be exercised in conducting this operation, for if exposed too long to the heat the quills would be injured.

An improvement on this method is to introduce the quills for an instant into a sand-bath heated to a temperature of 140° Fahr., and then rubbing them while hot with flannel, by which means it ceases to be greasy, and becomes hard, white, and transparent. Sometimes the barrel of the quill is introduced into a fire for a few seconds, and the quill is then drawn under the edge of a blunt knife, furnished with a handle by which it may be forced down, and fastened down at the other end by a hook and staple. The quill, while hot and softened by the heat, is drawn under the blunt edge of the knife, which, being brought down, forces it perfectly flat against a piece of iron heated to 350° Fahr. The round form of the quill immediately returns when the pressure is removed, and the barrel is then polished with the rough skin of the dog-fish.

Occasionally another method of cleaning them is adopted. The ends of the quills are introduced into water, which moistens them by capillary attraction. They are then exposed to the heat of burning charcoal, and, while hot, drawn under the edge of a blunt knife, which squeezes them flat and cleans them. The round shape is afterwards readily restored to the quills, by exposing them to heat.

During the elevated temperature to which the quills are subjected, whatever method may be employed for cleaning them, the inner membrane that lines the inside of the barrel of the quill becomes detached, shrivels up, and drops out when the quill is cut, while the outer membrane cracks, and readily peels off. The feather is now removed from the inner edge of the quill, and the quills sorted into rights and lefts, and tied up neatly into bundles of twenty-fives or fifties.

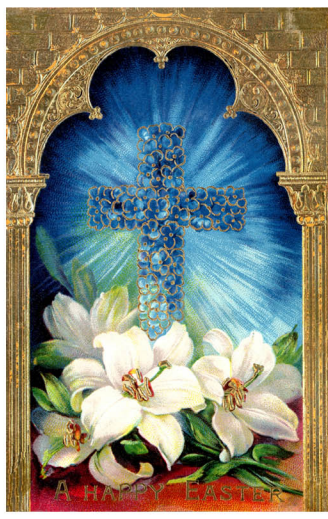
The quills are usually sold of three qualities, called primes, seconds, and pennions. The primes are the feathers that have the largest and strongest barrels; the seconds, those of inferior quality; while the pennions are the commonest kinds.

Quills may sometimes be had of a yellow colour: this is produced—to render them more attractive—by immersing them in nitric acid and water. Sometimes the method employed consists in placing the barrel of the quill in a decoction of turmeric previously to cleaning it.

Small pocket machines have occasionally been constructed for the purpose of cutting quill pens; but as they are expensive, apt to get out of order, and are not much used, we shall not stop to describe them.

The quill nibs commonly sold in the stationers' shops are thus made. The barrel of the quill is cut off and divided down the centre into two portions, and their edges smoothed off. The lengths are again divided into three or four portions, and the end of each piece is made into a pen.

FRECKLES.—To remove freckles, take one ounce of lemon-juice, a quarter of a drachm of powdered borax, and half a drachm of sugar; mix, and let them stand a few days in a glass bottle, then rub it on the face and hands occasionally.



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Ballade of Neglected Merit

I have scribbled in verse and in prose,
I have painted "arrangements in greens,"
And my name is familiar to those
Who take in the high class magazines;
I compose; I've invented machines;
I have written an "Essay on Rhyme";
For my county I played, in my teens,
But—I am not in "Men of the Time!"

I have lived, as a chief, with the Crows;
I have "interviewed" Princes and Queens;
I have climbed the Caucasian snows;
I abstain, like the ancients, from beans,
I've a guess what Pythagoras means,
When he says that to eat them's a crime!
Have lectured upon the Essenes,
But—I am not in "Men of the Time!"

I've a fancy as morbid as Poe's,
I can tell what is meant by "Shebeens,"
I have breasted the river that flows
Through the land of the wild Gadarenes;
I can gossip with Burton on skenes,
I can imitate Irving (the Mime),
And my sketches are quainter than Kean's,
But—I am not in "Men of the Time!"

ENVOY.

So the tower of mine eminence leans
Like the Pisan, and mud is its lime;
I'm acquainted with Dukes and with Deans,
But—I am not in "Men of the Time!"

— Andrew Lang (*Century Magazine*, 1884)

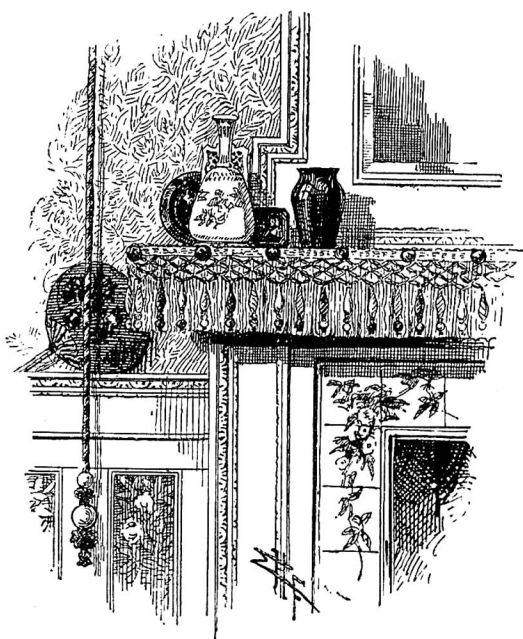
MORE HINTS ABOUT ARTISTIC FURNITURE.

HANGINGS.



AS I turned to examine the carpets, curtains, and furniture coverings in the set of rooms I was describing last month,* I was struck with the wonderful change the last few years have worked in such things; instead of the then fashionable magenta and pea-green rep curtains which, in turn with stiff netted cotton,

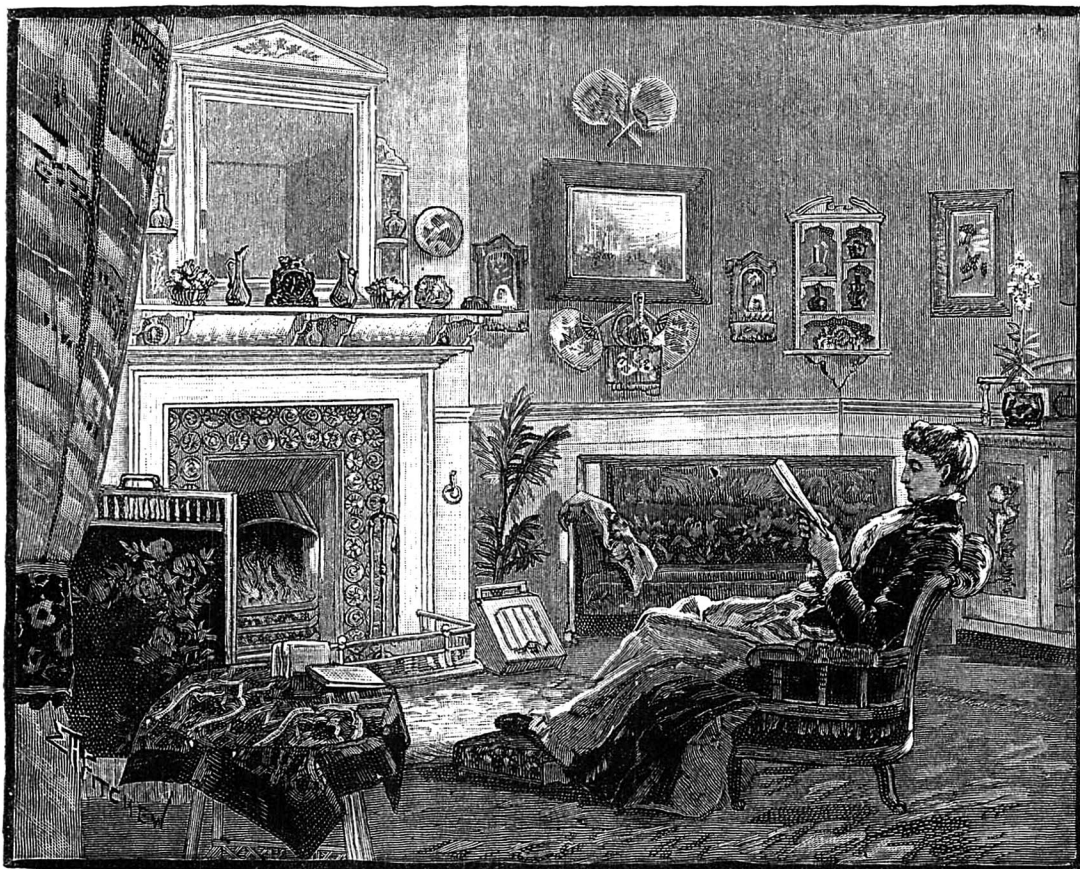
used to adorn our windows, we now see soft hanging serge, art plush, and the lightest Madras muslin. The largely-beflowered, many-coloured carpets are things of the past; even in first-class lodging-houses they only live in memory. In some rooms the white wool hearth-rug is still a cherished idol, upon which no chair may ever be placed, but its reign is nearly over: it is being fast hurried to the dye-pot, and will end its days a peacock-blue or sage-green harmony instead of a white atrocity.



MOORISH MANTEL-FRIEZE AND BELL-PULL.

To properly describe the hangings in this set of rooms, it will be best to take them one by one, as only minute details can give an idea of the appearance of the whole. The first room I entered was small and square, with two rather large windows side by side; it struck me as being very richly furnished. The same tone of colour was used for walls, carpet, curtains, and coverings, but in different degrees: the walls were papered with a plain unpatterned paper of light Venetian red; a wooden dado ran round the room and was painted white, the same colour as the door and the window-shutters. The mantelpiece was also of white painted wood, and it stood out well from the Venetian red background. The entire floor was covered with Indian matting: not the ordinary cheap substance of white and red, for this was dyed in colours of the old Egyptian mattings, and is therefore just the thing for putting under Persian carpets; it can be bought in London at from two to four shillings a yard, according to quality and width. Over this was a Persian carpet, covering the centre of the room: it was fourteen feet nine by eleven feet one, and had cost twenty-nine pounds ten shillings; it was a small pattern, an Eastern design in quiet colours; it had been down for some years when I saw it, but showed no sign of wear. The Persian carpets cost money

* "Some Hints about Hand-painted Furniture."



A WELL-ARRANGED ROOM.

to buy, but are exceedingly durable. The chairs and sofa were covered with a new and very beautiful material called Brockham plush: it costs twelve and sixpence the yard at present, and is a wide width; the colour of this was a Venetian red ground, with a quaint design in gold and pink; the substance of the stuff is so thick that it does equally well for curtains. It had not been used for curtains in this instance, for the money spent upon the plush had been saved in the windows, though the uninitiated would be none the wiser; the curtains in material looked like rough and very thick bath towels; they were of a Venetian red ground, with diagonal stripes of red, blue, sage-green, and white; they are called Moorish curtains, and only cost sixteen and sixpence a pair. They can of course be bought in many colours. Much care and artistic work had been bestowed upon the smaller details in this room: the footstools, for instance, had been covered with Venetian red serge, and worked in crewels in an Indian pattern—blue, olive-green, and white.

In the adjoining room the decorations were of a different style. The room was large and long, with four high windows, and here economy had been the order of the day, for, in spite of care, a room of this size cannot be furnished for nothing—and yet what a pretty room it was! Taste and knowledge do so much more than money where beauty is concerned.

The floor was stained and polished, and the dark

boards made a beautiful surface, upon which were thrown three or four large rugs made of dull Indian red felt, trimmed with a thick fringe of the same colour; these rugs are inexpensive, and look very well. I have seen them in bright orange-colour, when the effect upon the dark staining is exceedingly good. Two long sofas were covered with loose-fitting covers made out of Madagascar mats; these mats are woven in a pattern of well-blended stripes, and are most useful for furniture or for using on the floor. They are six feet six long, and cost about four and sixpence each. Some of the chairs were also covered with this material, while a dyed and patterned canvas, called kalamet, had been used for the others, as it went better than anything else with the mats; it can be bought from elevenpence the yard, and is very strong, and therefore most suitable for chairs. The mantel-border was made out of a mat, but instead of a fringe or lace edge, it had a novel and very pretty border of mosaic pottery balls of bright red, yellow, blue, green, and many other colours; it was just the edging to go well with the material, as it gave it the bright colour it seemed to want. A bell-rope made of cord and the same kind of coloured pottery hung at the side of the fire-place. These pottery trimmings are quite new, and are, I believe, only sold by one firm in London.

The window curtains were the chief triumph of art;

they looked like very coarse serge, but in reality they were made of ordinary house-flannel. Many yards had been bought at a small cost, and had been immersed for three or four days in a bath of coffee. They had come out a beautiful colour, and had since been embroidered in cross-stitch in Indian red. The embroidery went in the form of a wide band at the top and bottom of each curtain and across the middle. Cross-stitch was chosen for these particular curtains, because it is more suitable, in company with Madagascar coverings, than crewel patterns; but I have seen house-flannel worked with a bold crewel pattern, but not in crewel wools. The single Berlin wool is what is used, and it can be obtained in all the crewel art colours. A pattern of oranges, pomegranates, or cherries with the blossom, looks very well on this material, the fruit, when shown, being raised by French knots.

The dinner-table was being laid at one end of this room, and our attention was caught by a very pretty centre-piece for the table. A piece of white linen had been worked with a running conventional pattern, in china-blue washing cotton; this had been surrounded by a five-inch border of china-blue plush. Upon the centre of the work there stood four little wire horse-shoes, which were entirely covered with moss and flowers.

In the bed-room, the Madras muslin curtains were a pretty feature. They were cream ground, with a quaint pattern in darker colours of birds and flowers. These

curtains are two yards wide, and only cost one shilling a yard, so they are within the means of many, and are constantly used for drawing-room windows. A very pretty screen had been made from a clothes-horse; the frame was painted black, and a piece of pretty blue and white cretonne had been lightly nailed from the top to the bottom. Another of the same kind had been painted bright scarlet, while white dimity had taken the place of coloured cretonne.

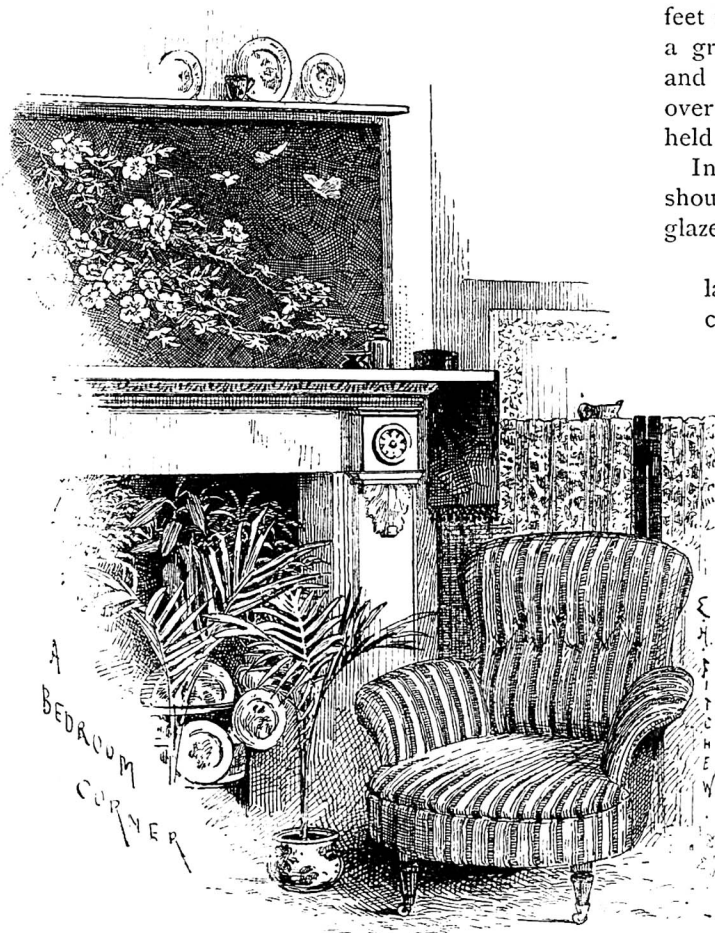
At the first sight this room looked like a sitting-room: there was no sign of a bed or a washing-stand; a comfortable sofa stood by the fire-place, and another delightful-looking wide couch was near the window. This, to our surprise, we found was the bed; it was one of those comfortable low beds made with no high foot-rail. In the day a loose-fitting cover of pretty chintz was placed over it; it kept the bed-clothes free from dust, and made the bed an ornamental adjunct to the room. The washing-stand was hidden by one of the pretty screens. The floor was covered with Indian matting of the ordinary kind, in a pattern of red and white. An Indian dhurrie had been used for the sofa and arm-chair. Dhurries measuring five feet in length can be everywhere bought for four shillings; for the coverings of chairs it is best to get them in dark colours—they will then wear for a long time.

The painting in this room had been confined to the back of the mantelpiece, where a piece of dark red American cloth had been fastened. It was the same length as the mantelpiece, and about three feet in width; it had been beautifully decorated with a group of white dog-roses and a flight of pale blue and yellow butterflies. A tiny shelf had been fastened over it, which ran the entire length of the cloth, and held some blue and white plates.

In buying American cloth for painting, great care should be used to obtain the dull kind, as the highly glazed sort never looks well.

I have left the exterior of the fire-place as the last object to describe. The mantelpiece was covered with a plain piece of velvet, which ran along the top and fell down on each side, but did not hide the front of the mantelpiece. The colour of the velvet on the mantelpiece was dark red, but the two side pieces were blue. This is considered the latest fashion in mantel-borders, and it is not so ugly as it sounds.

The interior of the fire-place was large and old-fashioned, with wide bars. To each bar little wire hooks had been fastened, to which blue and white plates had been hung. A large dish was at the back of the grate, and in the grate itself and on the hobs stood blue and white pots filled with india-rubber plants and palms, both of which grow easily anywhere. The bottom of the grate was covered with a piece of Indian matting, like the rest of the room.



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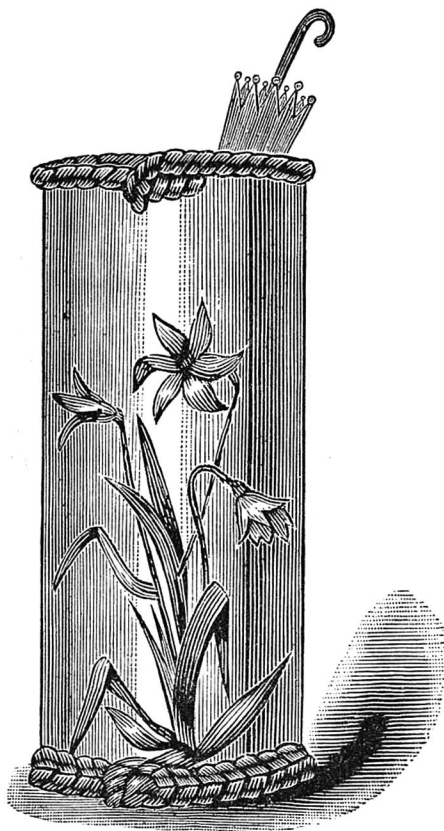
CONDUCTED BY LIDA AND M. J. CLARKSON.

SOME PRETTY UMBRELLA STANDS OR WASTE-PAPER HOLDERS.

IN response to our call for *original* designs in December number of Magazine, we have received a very happy suggestion from Mrs. Katie Reynolds Taylor of Decatur, Ala., which we are sure will please and interest our readers, more especially those with slender purses, who have to make the most of the little they have for household decora-

tion, and whose resources are limited to what they can do at a small outlay for material. We shall describe Mrs. Taylor's design for umbrella stand in her own words:

After my kitchen stove was put in place, there was an extra joint of stove pipe left, and I had some rope with which I had once secured an old trunk. The pipe was flattened a little to make it oval in shape, and then coated inside and out with dark red house paint, then a wooden piece made to fit the bottom, and the rope in which a knot had been tied, fastened around the top edge, with the knot in front to conceal the ends. The bottom was treated in the same way, and a second coil of rope added for a better finish and a more secure base.



DESIGN FOR UMBRELLA STAND.

“The piece of wood at bottom should be at least an inch thick, and should project a little from the pipe, so that the last coil of rope can be nailed to it. Then the rope should be completely covered with the red paint, and after the bunch of jonquils has been painted, the stand, the coils, and all the rope should be highly bronzed and the crevices made a dull tint of bronze, by using very little powder with the medium. I have found that a piece of chamois skin will polish the bronze nicely after the third coat has been allowed to dry.”

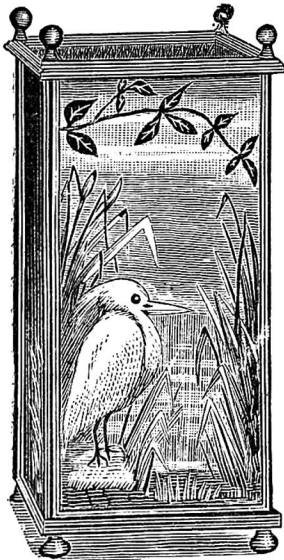
The illustration shows very plainly how the stand is made. Now that these stands are devoted not only to their original use as umbrella holders, but as receptacles for ornamental plants, ferns, grasses, etc.; they have become great favorites in the decoration of the home.

We give an original design for one, the construction of which will also come within the capabilities of clever hands, and entail a very slight expenditure.

Our second illustration will show exactly how this handsome holder is to be made, but that there may be no mistake, we will describe it carefully. Four smoothly planed boards are joined after the manner of an ordinary box, or a box of the right dimen-

“I read your proposition to amateurs in December Magazine, and I send you a *fac-simile* of an umbrella stand I have made.

sions will answer, although it is difficult to find one just the correct shape, high and narrow. Upon the four sides we first stretch



UMBRELLA STAND OR WASTE BASKET.

canvas, a light sketching canvas can be glued at the edges smoothly, or if preferred plain lincrusta walton can be used instead. It is now an easy matter to decorate the four panels in oils or bronzes, according to individual taste. Some such decoration as shown in illustration *à la Japanesque* is both quaint and attractive. The corners, top and bottom of holder, are now finished either with a gilt or bronze moulding, or with strips of lincrusta in imitation of moulding. This style of lincrusta can be bought by the yard and cut into strips, there being from ten to twelve strips in a yard. The feet are formed by large linen spools, cut in halves and nailed to the bottom of box, and the ornaments at the top corners, of smaller spools, upon which is glued a glass ball, or agate, such as boys prize most as marbles. The mouldings and spools are then neatly bronzed or gilded, and the whole given a coat of varnish, which preserves and finishes the article.

This stand when made thus will not exceed a few dollars in cost, while one of similar style, with tiles and antique trimmings, is sold for \$12.00.

Our third illustration, shows a handsome brass stand, from the works of a standard brass company, valued at \$18.00, but we will whisper a secret to our readers which will enable them to imitate it nicely at a cost of not over \$3.00. Buy three-quarters of a

yard of lincrusta walton, the style known as "hammered metal pattern." Glue this to a cylindrical pipe and decorate with ornamental bands of the lincrusta in Greek or key pattern. Bronze or gild with best metallic powder, and you have "a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

A correspondent in Kentucky has made several of these, and has been much pleased with the result.

These stands are also most useful as waste paper holders, the second illustration being particularly adapted to this purpose.



HAMMERED BRASS UMBRELLA HOLDER.

Speaking of this subject, reminds us of the very handsome waste-paper basket received from Mrs. A. T—, of Long Island, New York. It is what she terms an eel basket, but is entirely new to us. Doubtless sea-shore readers will recognize the name. It is a high, narrow basket, tapering up at the neck, with a round cover, and Mrs. T— has twisted coils of hemp rope around the basket, terminating with a graceful knot, and fringed-out ends.

The effect is graceful, and is admired by all who see it. The basket is simply varnished, but could be bronzed, painted, or gilded, although we prefer it in its primitive condition. Perhaps it may not have occurred to readers to turn these baskets to this use, or to procure them for decorative purposes. They are certainly superior to the birch baskets so much the fashion a while ago, being more durable and unique. Our renewed thanks to Mrs. T— for her odd gift, as well as the quaint and charming hint it has afforded.

A GREAT many of the plush photograph frames have curtains of soft silk fixed on a bar at the top and bottom. These can be drawn across at will, but are usually left open

at each side of the frame. The same style is applied to mirrors, and has a very pretty effect. A toilet mirror, a pier glass, or one over the mantlepiece, looks equally well.

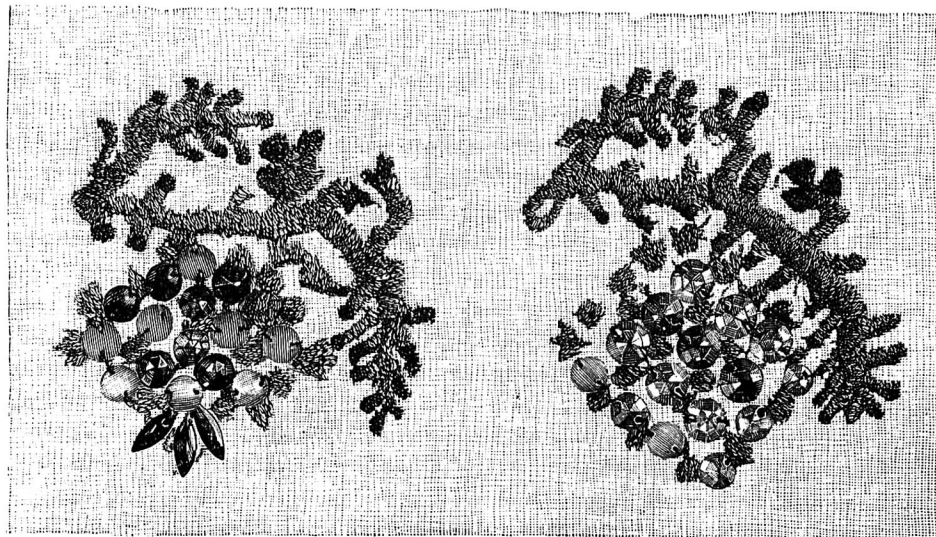


FIG. 1.

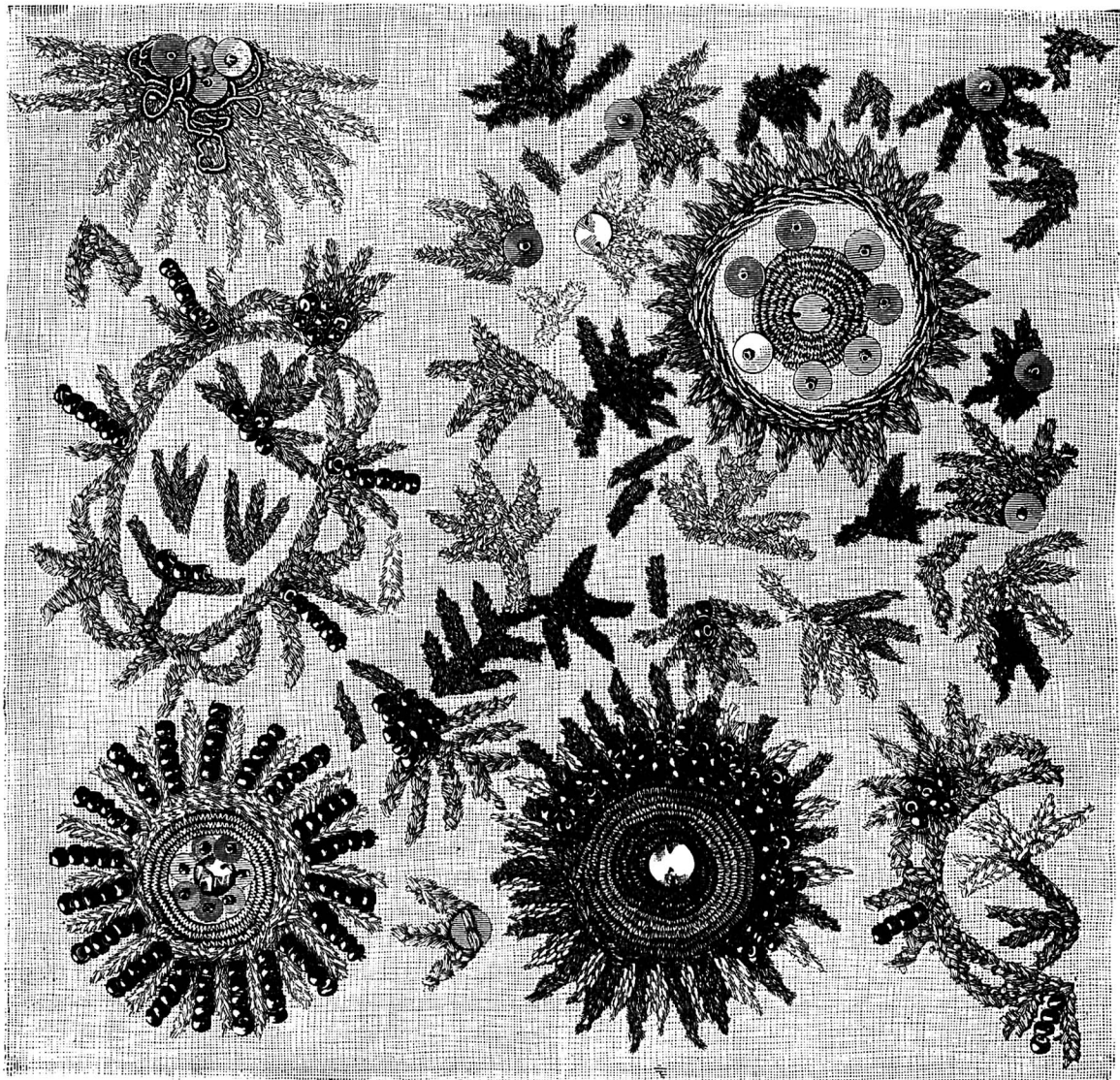


FIG. 2.

JEWEL, CORAL, BULLION, AND ARABIAN EMBROIDERIES.



NEEDLEWORK as an art is no new invention of the modern decorator, as there is hardly an ancient nation whose records have come down to us that has not been distinguished for some description of embroidery. This art is found among the Egyptians before the time of Moses, and the minute description in the Bible of the work on the hangings that veiled

the Ark in the wilderness shows how much hand embroidery was appreciated by the Jews.

Even before this period the Chinese, Indian, and Persian nations were distinguished for their richly-embroidered robes, golden textures, and brilliant colours; and their kings were noted for the splendour of their dresses, embroidered with artistic and fanciful designs in which gems, pearls, and other ornaments were interwoven with gold and silver threads.

With the Oriental, in the days when he was undisturbed by Western ideas and Western dyes, colour was an absolute science, and all the work of ancient days that has been spared bears evidences of the national taste for harmonious colouring, as however bright the shades and contrasts of shade they exhibit, the colours themselves are so arranged that they never offend good taste, never bewilder or dazzle the eye, and are never more admired for the richness and costliness of the materials used than for the beauty of their design or workmanship.

This true test of art is one that should always be present to the modern embroiderer, and should be her shield against what Ruskin aptly calls "the interposition of ornament," as we constantly find people led away by the costliness of an article, or by the expense incurred for decorating it, from the fact that the thing is ugly and unartistic; and if anyone suggests a disapproval on these grounds, they are silenced by the tone of satisfaction that its price or its ornaments are referred to.

The love of good patterns and good workmanship has certainly revived in our nation, as no one can dispute who has the *entrée* to any of the well-arranged homes that belong to the artists of the present day, where beautiful modern or ancient needlework is to be found as part of the chief adornments, and where it is treasured not for the materials used, but for its beauty of design, colour, and workmanship. Although we do not insinuate that all homes are to be decorated in the costly manner of these typical houses, we think that if our girl readers will educate themselves a little in the art of distinguishing between what is good and bad in design, and will copy good examples, they will be able by their needlework to make their homes beautiful with but little actual expense, but with the expenditure of their time and good workmanship.

In submitting to them the designs of jewel and other embroideries which we illustrate, we are showing how the ancient types of Oriental needlework can be adapted to modern requirements, and worked out with materials that are obtainable at any art shop. In these designs the colours are mostly positive, but they are broken up into small spaces, and the same richness of tone given to each, so that instead of their producing a painful and glaring design, they blend imperceptibly together, and the complicated and intricate pattern is rendered clear.

Fig. 1 is an example of jewel embroidery in combination with silk work. The design is an Oriental one, and should be traced upon a coloured background of fine cloth or rich silk—it is shown upon a light ground in order that the pattern can be more clearly seen. Each design takes, when worked full size, a square of three inches, and can be used as a bordering to a chair back, etc., by being worked in lines with a space of two inches between each. As a table-cloth design, the material used should be of dark blue or ruby silk (the soft foulard is the best), and the pattern placed as a powdering all over it—not in straight lines, but thrown upon the grounding with the stem sometimes horizontal, at others perpendicular and diagonal; in fact, the design should be thrown down upon the ground as if it were a quantity of single flowers scattered carelessly upon a table, but a certain uniformity of distance between each repetition should be observed, as without this method (which is always observed in all powderings) the unity of the whole will be sacrificed.

The colouring is as follows: Use two shades of green Oriental silk, and one shade of a dull ruby-red; and for the jewels, a pale clear green, opaque and clear amber, opaque and clear reds, clouded and clear blues, and clear terra-cottas.

Work the stems thick with raised satin-stitch for the broad parts, and plain satin-stitch for the little thin branches. Raise the thick stems by padding them with strands of silk until they stand out from the grounding, and then cover with a close and even satin-stitch. Work the stems with green silk until close to their points, and then introduce the ruby-coloured silk, thus giving to the ends the appearance of a just-bursting-forth bud. Use one shade of green for the whole of one pattern, and work alternately with the light and dark shade. In the flower part of the design use both jewels and silk, with the latter working the outer parts and between the jewels in satin-stitch.

The arrangement of the jewels should be different in every pattern—in one the dull opaque shades used, in the next all clear colours, thus amber, pale green, and terra-cotta will work in together, or two shades of amber only; in a second, deep ruby reds and dull turquoise blues; in a third two shades of blue, two of red, and a few pale yellows.

There is no limit to the variety of the colouring that can be used in this design, and as the tones of the jewels bought are very varied, the best manner of arriving at a satisfactory result is to lay the jewels out and arrange them according to fancy, and try different combinations before sewing them on. The jewels are easily sewn on, as they have holes drilled through them for that purpose.

Jewel embroidery is used for various purposes, as mantel-borders and bracket-hangings:—when worked upon coloured velvets or upon dull shades of Oriental silks it is most effective. It is also used for the ends of chair-backs, for glove and handkerchief sachets, for book-covers, and for ornamental covers to jewel and other boxes. Any one with a little neatness of execution can work this embroidery upon pieces of velvet or silk, and make herself a handsome box with its help out of any of the many wooden boxes with lids that are bought with sweets, etc.

The embroidered material is not put on to the wood without a foundation underneath, as it would then wear badly and look common; but folds of ordinary house-flannel are placed between the satin cover and the wood. Round the sides and back these are drawn quite tight, and carefully stitched down; but on

the top of the box successive layers, forming a cushion well raised in the centre and thin at the edges, are made by cutting the flannel in smaller and smaller pieces. The ornamental top is laid on this padding, its edges turned in under it, and quite made up before it is attached to the box. The ornamental top is cut with an extra piece to cover the back of the box, and with enough margin round the three sides to turn in under the lid.

A thick gold cord is sewn round every edge and corner of the box to hide the necessary stitching, and where it is necessary to use an adhesive, the following preparation is recommended as being colourless: it will *not* stain the material should it come through. Put a heaped-up tablespoonful of Glenfield starch in a teacup, and add sufficient cold water to make it into a thick cream free from lumps, then fill up the cup by slowly pouring in boiling water and stir well until the liquid is clear. Let it cool, and it is ready for use. Le Page's fish-glue is also a good adhesive, and is used for fixing velvet and plush to wood, and the Glenfield starch for silks and satins.

The coral and bullion embroidery which is shown in our second illustration is an old Cretan design, and is intended for working over a tablecloth (the bordering and centre being both given), or for a mantel-piece border, or the front of a work-bag. Its foundation should be of foulard silk, or rich Oriental silk, pale green, sky blue, or lemon-yellow in tone. The materials used are small coral beads, the wire bullion in gold, red, silver, pink, and bronze colours; spangles, gold beads, a few jewels, and rich Oriental working silks, bright and dark green, royal blue, and a rich red. The only two embroidery stitches worked are the Oriental and satin, and as the former goes very quickly, the embroidery, though seeming to be complicated and tedious, is far from being so.

To colour the design:—Work the thick stars in the border with light and dark green Oriental silk and in Oriental stitch, the oval-shaped part of the border with royal blue and in Oriental stitch, and the sprays chiefly with green and blue silk and an occasional red spray and in Oriental stitch. The outline of the round in the centre part of the table-cloth work in satin stitch with blue silk. Oriental stitch, as most of our girls may know, is nothing but herringbone stitch worked very closely, with its stitches overlapping so much that they form a plait.

Great variety can be given to this design by altering the ornamental centres of the stars in the border and the rounds in the centre part. In the design given, the round is worked as follows:—An opaque white jewel surrounded by 5 rounds of pink bullion in the centre, then 7 spangles secured with a gold bead in their centre, and a double row of gold-coloured bullion as a finish to the blue silk outer round. In the half-completed star—Centre—a blue jewel surrounded by spangles, which are interlaced with fine gold cord; star made with pale green silk. Corner star—Centre, a green jewel surrounded with 7 very small spangles and 3 rows of gold bullion; star made of pale green silk with extra rays of coral beads. Side star—Centre, pale pink jewel surrounded with 3 rows of deep red bullion, 3 of silver bullion, and 2 of bronze bullion; star made of 2 shades of green with coral beads sewn on in a half-circle. The ovals on the border are outlined with Royal blue silk, and their centres filled with green silk. Where the coral beads and the spangles are arranged upon the rest of the design can be seen from the illustration.

Any conventional pattern can be used for

this description of embroidery, and it can be altered by using gold thread as well as bullion, and the jagged pieces of coral (sold in strings) as well as the round coral bead. The design, outlined with two lines of gold thread and filled up with satin-stitch instead of Oriental, is another variety.

Arabian embroidery has only lately been introduced into England from Algiers, and is not much known. It is worked with Oriental untwisted silks upon strong white linen backgrounds, and is used for the ornamental covering to long wide sofa-cushions. It is worked in an embroidery frame, and is entirely executed with couching-stitch—the same stitch that church work is done with. Only Oriental colours are used; these are ruby-red, black, bright green, and royal blue. Any handsome

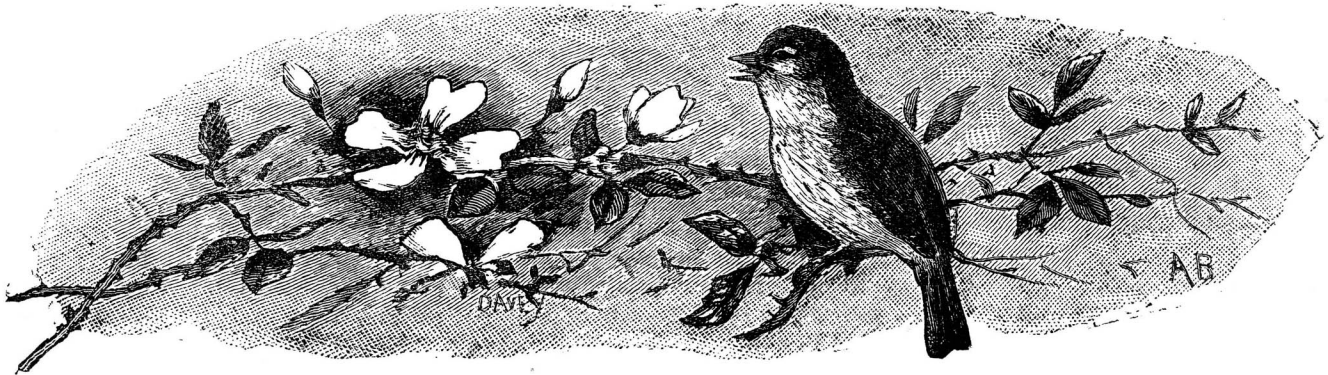
Oriental pattern is used, the peculiarity of the work being that, instead of filling up every part of the pattern, every alternate space is left unworked. Thus, if a conventional flower forms the design, and has four distinct sections from its centre to its outline, the outline section would be filled with laid stitches, the next left unworked, the third filled up, and the centre left plain. The whole design is done with this peculiarity, and it will be found upon examining Oriental patterns that it can be easily carried out. Stems and tiny leaves are filled in. One colour is used for each section of the design, and never more than three colours (not counting black) employed upon one piece of work. For the couching-stitch, the silk is laid in horizontal lines, and secured with Oriental silk laid in upright lines over it, and stitched down

with fine purse silk. The whole design must have the laid lines and the couched lines going the same way, but it is at the option of the worker to select the direction before commencing. Lines of close stitching made with the black silk are worked round the outline of every little bit of the pattern; sometimes two lines of black are worked round the larger pieces, but always one.

These cushions are made up with open sides, which show the under-cushion.

They are finished off with gold braid loops and gold buttons, the loops meeting in the centre of the open space, and there buttoning together. The manner of making up these cushions was illustrated in a recent article upon "Pillows, and How to Make Them."

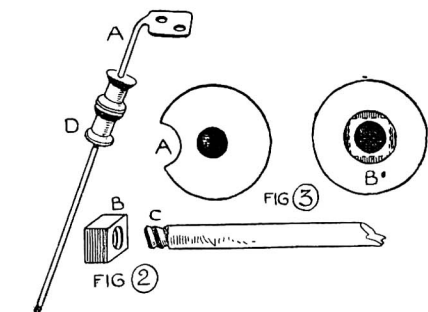
B. C. SAWARD.



A TABLE WITH COTTON-REEL LEGS.

GIRLS with fathers and brothers who, from one reason or another, have a few idle hours on their hands, here is an idea for you. I don't mean to say that you cannot work it out yourselves, but it is such a comfort to have something that our menkind can do, and most probably they improve upon it in the doing. My father set to work and made this table for one of our bazaars; he was most interested, it was perfect in every detail, and we sold it for 10s. 6d.

The remarkable thing about this ornamental piece of furniture is that the legs are made of cotton-reels. They soon accumulate; get the children to collect; ask your dressmakers and



pushing them up to the top. Cut a small piece out of the side of the first one (A, Fig. 3) to allow of your putting in a screw in the holes made in the turned-over portion of the rod when fixing to the table-top. It requires a certain amount of care to get your reels to fit exactly; the last one must have a hole grooved out at the bottom (B, Fig. 3) to allow of the little nut being screwed up into it quite tightly; the great beauty of the legs consists in their being firmly fixed into one block without the possibility of a reel shaking. Then came the painting, black enamel and two coats of it

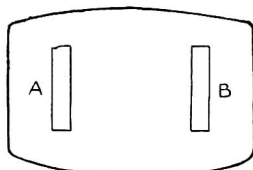


FIG 1

spreading slightly and so rendering the table steady (A, Fig. 2), and also flattened out, and two small screw holes made in it. The other end of each rod was made into a screw for $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch C, and a small nut attached B. Then we threaded the reels on the rods D, and here you must be very careful to get them in regular order, seeing that the knob on one reel fits on to the flat side of the next, and never two knobs together; put a little glue between each reel, of course you must remove the nut, and commence at that end with the smallest reels,

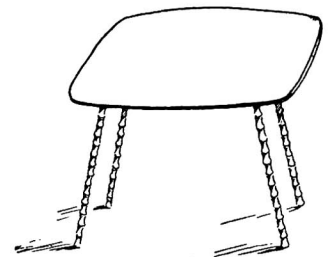


FIG 6

workwomen. You require 64 in all, 16 for each leg, Coats' machine reels are the best, various sizes from 24 to 80, an equal number, divisible by 4, of each size.

For the top of our table we used a Japanese tray 25 inches by 15 inches, that had years ago parted with its rim, and been put away in case it "came in useful;" but a plain piece of deal would answer the purpose. To the back of it we screwed and glued two pieces of wood 12 inches by 2 inches (A and B, Fig 1); we then made friends with the blacksmith, and got from him four iron rods 21 inches long, and thick enough to pass easily through the reels; $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch was turned over at an angle sufficient to allow of the legs

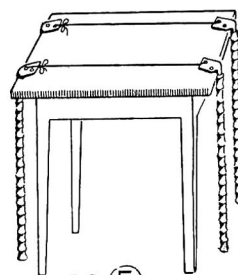


FIG 5

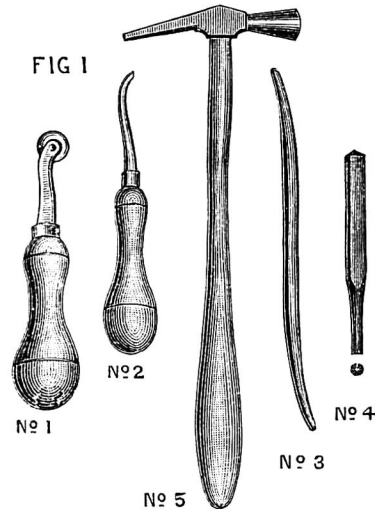
made our reels look like ebony; we threaded string through, the screw holes at the top of each pair of legs, and suspended them across a small table to dry (Fig. 5). In three days they were "as dry as a bone," and then we screwed them firm and fast into A and B (Fig. 1); we then gave A and B a coat of enamel for neatness, and the edges of the tray-top also required a similar attention, or in the case of plain deal it would require two coats, and then behold our table complete (Fig. 6). A most handy and comfortable arrangement for afternoon tea, or for one's work or books.

"COUSIN LIL."

CUT LEATHER WORK.

Cut leather work is one of the most fascinating of minor arts, and has the great advantage of being open to amateurs as well as to skilled designers.

In this, as in every other pursuit, talent and originality produce an adequate result, but a



good copyist who can transfer or adapt the patterns of more gifted artists, can turn out very creditable work.

The cutting of leather is not an expensive pursuit. Two or three shillings will provide an ample supply of material upon which to begin, while the same remark applies to the tools, which once bought wear for a long time.

As regards the tools there is a very large choice before the worker, but it is better to start only with those which are absolutely necessary, and to gradually add others to the collection as increasing proficiency seems to warrant the expenditure.

Five tools are here shown, and they are all sufficient for early attempts.

Cut leather-work being, as its name implies, a process by which certain outlines are incised upon the material, it follows that the first requisite is a tool which will mark curves and angles evenly. The wheel (Fig. 1, No. 1) accomplishes this satisfactorily if used as shall afterwards be described. The bent awl (No. 2) should be employed to more deeply mark certain points in the design and to trace corners and small curves which the coarser tool cannot reach.

No. 3 is a modelling tool, intended to help rub and soften down the edges of the cuts made by the tracing wheel and awl.

No. 4 shows a punch, at one end of which is a mould of a star or other design which is

of great help in making little patterns over a leather background, to which it is held with the left hand, while with the right grasping the light hammer (No. 5) a sharp tap is given so that the pattern is transferred to the leather whereon it is used most commonly as a powdering.

There are many of these punches to be had, each, of course, made to stamp a different device.

A few specimens of punching are shown at Fig. 2, where sixteen punches have left as many impressions of crosses, stars, circles, trefoils, roses, triangles and other patterns.

Punching is easy and interesting, but the worker must not employ it too liberally, nor be tempted by the prettiness of the little patterns to invest too largely in these tools.

The next consideration is the leather. Of this there are two kinds which are more frequently used than others. There is cowhide and calfskin; the former thicker, stouter, suited for larger articles, and requiring greater firmness in handling than the latter.

They should be worked upon a flat board to which they can be fastened with drawing-pins, the cowhide being lightly but evenly sponged over the back before work is begun, and then, when dry and pinned down upon the board, should be again moistened with clean water over the face of it. Calfskin requires, if soft, no such preparation; but if firm, damping on the under surface only.

Whichever kind of leather is used will probably need a little rearrangement on the board before any pattern is marked upon it, as after being damped it is sure to stretch a little. The leather should be larger than is desired for the finished article, as the marks made by driving the pins through it can then be cut away.

It is to be supposed that the worker has from the first made up her mind what article she is going to make, and what design she means to emboss upon it. The pattern should be drawn upon paper and perfected, then this paper should be stretched over the leather, being fastened

down with drawing-pins, and all the outlines gone over with a sharp bone-knitting-needle, or even with a penknife, held so that only the point touches the paper.

The pressure exerted should be sufficient to mark the pattern clearly, but rather faintly upon the leather. When the paper is taken away any mistakes can, in this part of the work, be corrected

by rubbing out the erring line with any smooth and polished surface, as that of a knife-handle or agate burnisher. So far the surface of the leather has not been cut through, so judicious smoothing and, if necessary, damping, can thus be employed.

When the outlines are satisfactory, the wheel is the next tool required. Wheels are to be had in various sizes, but one only, of medium dimensions, is sufficient for a beginner.

The wheel is to be held in the right hand, firmly and upright, to be guided and assisted by the left hand.

The wheel passes over all the lines of the

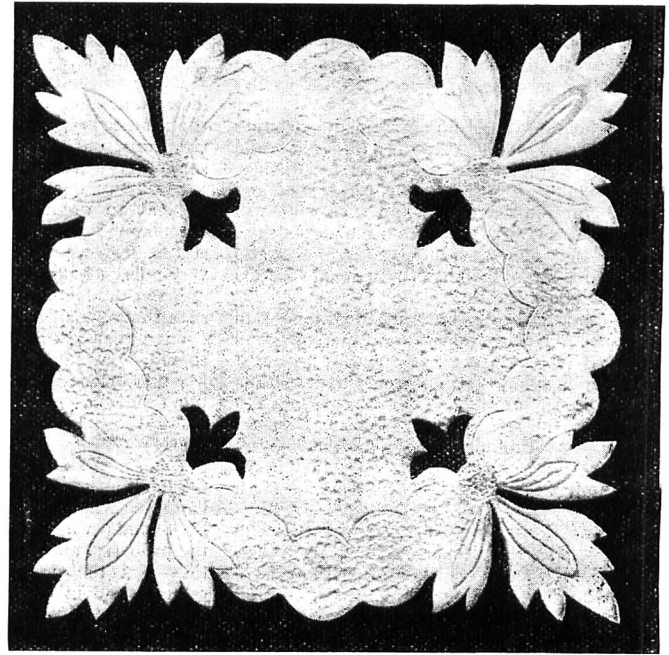


FIG 3

design and should dent through the leather for about half its thickness.

The wheeling done the bent awl is taken up, and the use of this is to cut, as did the wheel, but especially all those portions of the pattern which could not be reached by the larger tool. This may seem a small purpose to serve, but such is not the case, as a study of the bends and curves of even a simple pattern will show.

When the lines seem ready for its use the modelling tool is applied to them to rub or bend down the edges of the cuts so that they have a rounder and more gradual slope than when, as at first, gashed straightly down into the leather.

There are few patterns in which one or more punches are not used as a speedy and effective way of ornamenting either the background of the work, or of certain details of it which it is desirable should have some such distinction.

As hinted above, punching is done by holding the punch pattern downwards on the leather and striking the head of it a sharp tap with the hammer. Each stroke should be of similar force that the marks may be of equal depth and sharpness.

When the work is finished as far as the tooling is concerned, it can be released from the board and made up.

For a beginner a penwiper is a good thing to make, as this consists only of a circular or other shaped piece of leather glued on the top of a pile of sections of cloth. The pattern may

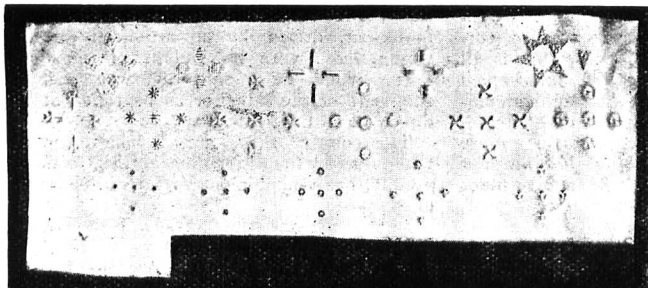


FIG 2.

be either simple or elaborate, but beyond it all should be marked the extreme limit of the finished work, outside of which boundary were the drawing pins. The leather is to be cut with scissors along this line when, for a pen-wiper, the making up alone remains to be done.

The mat shown in Fig. 3 is a sample of a handsome and rather uncommon way of using cut leather. In this all the skin beyond the outlines has been cut away to form a vandyked edge, and certain portions of the design have also been removed. This was, of course, done after the wheeling and beveling, in fact after the removal of the work from the board. In a small picture the details of the tooling cannot be fully seen. Suffice it that the corner sprays and inside of the edge are wheeled, while for the background of both centre and edge three differently patterned punches were employed. The leather when fully tooled was glued firmly down to a square base covered with brown velvet.

The fourth figure is of another variety of the work and is easier, more fit for a novice. The strip of leather is intended to be fastened into a circle for use as a serviette ring. The pattern is particularly easy, being all wheeled except the tiny rounds in it, which, if liked, can be punched. The special feature, which



FIG 4.

alone distinguishes it from previous examples, is its colouring.

Bright hues are not employed for this ring, black, brown and yellow alone being used. It is lined with a strip of leather and fastens with a stud and slit.

The last design is a heraldic one of special beauty and a typical specimen of one variety of the work. It is partly completed, the head and shield being both tooled and varnished. The tooling is somewhat elaborate in character, the outlines being not merely cut with a wheel or knife, but also undercut and modelled. Undercutting needs a little practice to accomplish satisfactorily, but is simple enough in theory, merely consisting, as its name implies, of raising the upper surface of the leather with a knife inside the outlines of the design so as to cast them into higher relief.

The modelling is done after the leather is taken from the board by laying it face downwards on some soft surface, and pushing and pressing out from the back with the modelling tool all the parts which are to be in relief. The leather may need damping to render it pliable.

Work intended to be in high relief is maintained in position by filling in the hollows at the back with modelling wax. Silver paper is laid over this to make a clean and level surface. The effect is naturally much richer than that of the plain cut leather work.

A coat of varnish is an improvement to some articles of leather-work and gives them a more professional and finished appearance.

Sometimes staining is applied, or staining and varnish are seen on the same piece of work, thus introducing two shades of colour. The varnish must be first laid on where it is to go, but not over the parts to be dyed. The varnish dry, the stain can be applied to the rest of the work; this will leave no mark on the portions already varnished. Varnish, staining and wax, are obtainable ready prepared.

Messrs. S. Hildesheimer & Co. are doing



FIG 5.

much to revive the art of leather work, and their tools, designs and commenced articles are to be had from any artists' colourman.

There is an endless choice of subjects for ornamenting: chair seats, cushion covers, panels, portfolios and desk-strips are for the skillful; caskets, book-covers, card-cases and blotters offer rather smaller fields.

Even scraps can be used up for mats, purses and other trifles.

A caution on the important subject of designing. In every case the patterns must be chosen with regard to the articles they are to decorate; bars of music (the notes punched) can be included in the design for a music-case and heraldic "beasties" on a panel, but not impossible flowers on a church hassock or a dog's head on a chair-seat for instance.

For a powdering on a large surface, such as a *fleur-de-lys* on a church curtain for example, a stencil plate is an assistance, as the pattern can be repeatedly traced round with wheel and knife and then tooled in the usual way.

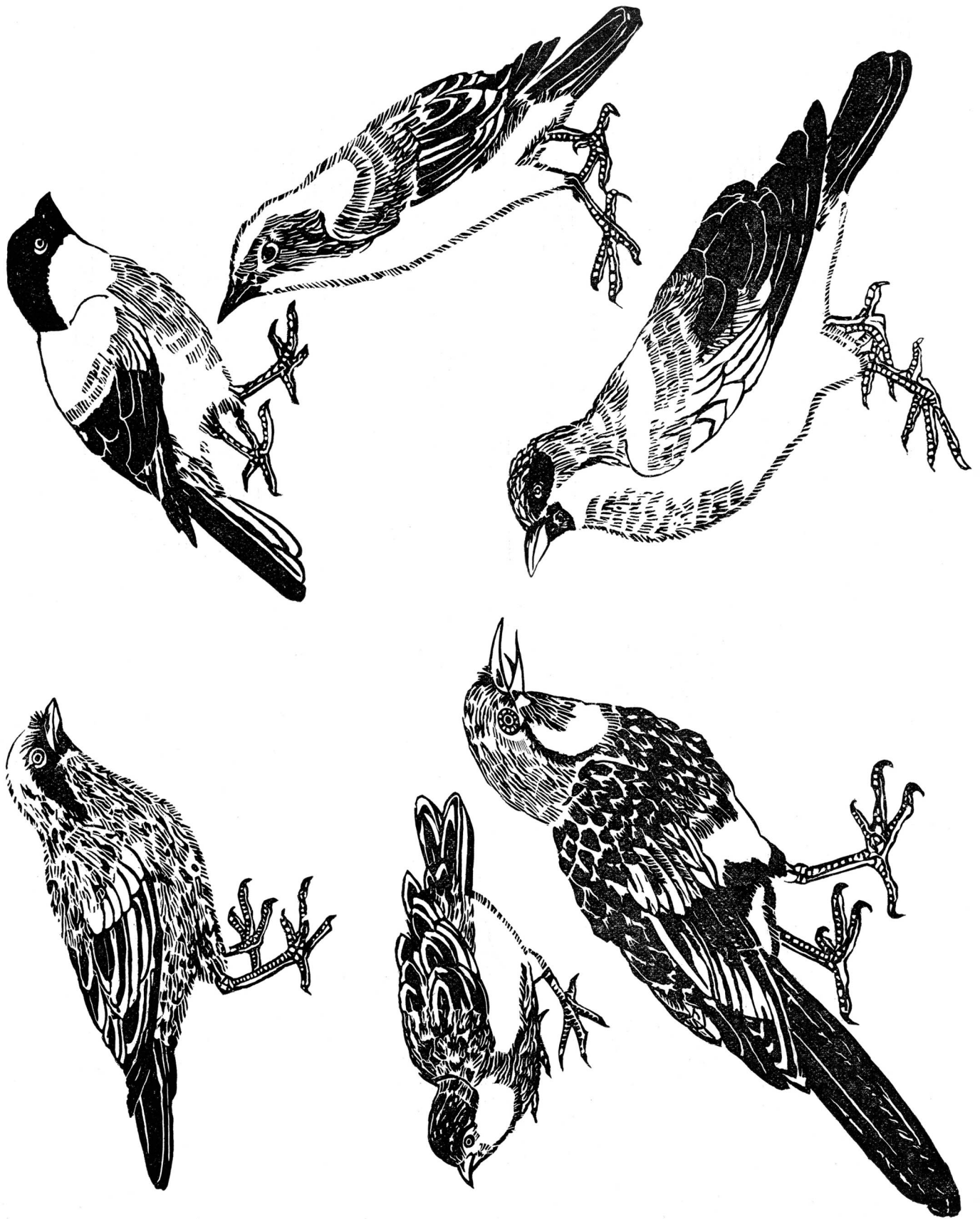
LEIRION CLIFFORD.

SPOOLS IN DECORATION.

EVEN such an apparently useless thing as an empty "spool," or, as our English cousins name it, a "reel" of cotton, may be made of use in household decoration. Brackets, tables and shelves can be made with them, and the trouble of collecting them is amply repaid by the good effect they produce when properly used. Pretty little book shelves to hang against the wall may be easily made. Get the carpenter to cut two boards from a half-inch pine plank. They must be twenty-two inches long by nine inches wide. Holes should be bored in the four corners about an inch from the edge. Take four pieces of old-fashioned red or blue picture cord, each about twenty-five inches long; make a good knot on the end of each one of these pieces, slip the other end through the holes in one of the boards; string

on the cords about six spools of uniform size, then put on the other shelf; make a tight knot as close to the shelf as possible. The spools may be painted and the shelves painted to match, or the spools left their natural color, brushed with some linseed oil to darken them; the pine shelves treated in the same way, or the shelves may be covered with some handsome material with fringe to finish the edges. If the shelves are to be used for books, an edging of leather, which can be bought already stamped and pinked, may be put on them with brass-headed nails. Two picture screw-eyes must be screwed into the top shelf four inches from each end to hang the shelf by. Three shelves will only require twenty-four spools and are very easily made.

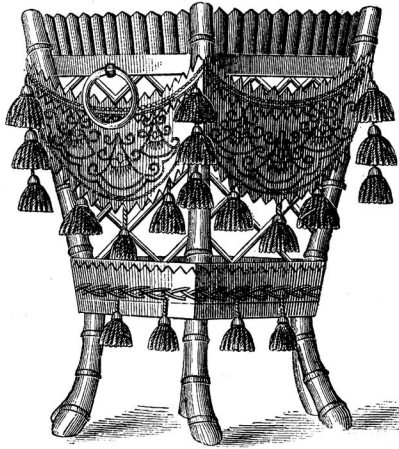
— *Exchange.*



BIRDS FROM JAPANESE DESIGNS: IN PAINTING OR EMBROIDERY.

Peterson's Magazine, 1883

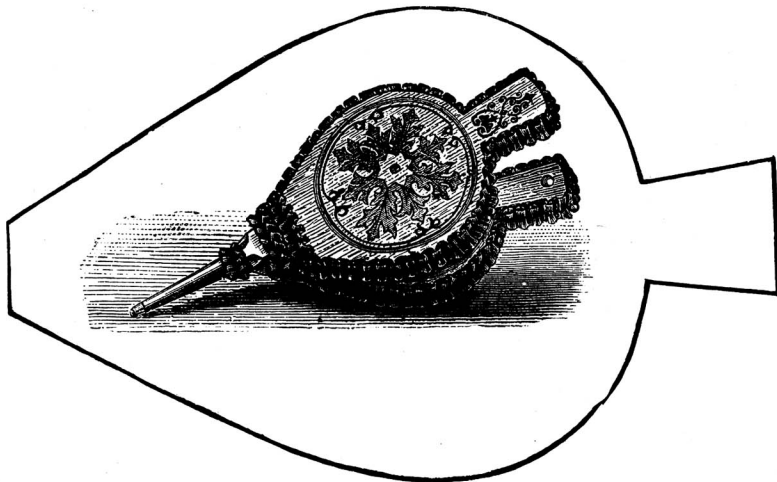
FANCY WORK.



Scrap Basket.

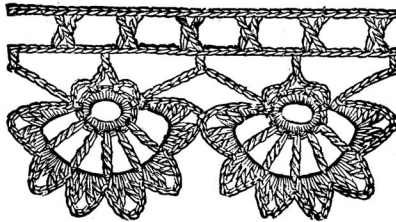
THE drapery is suitable either for a round or square basket. Cut four pieces of black cloth (or as many as are required) the shape of pattern, braid them with scarlet and gilt braid, and the band to go round the bottom of the basket-work in the same manner, or the stamped pattern can be feather-stitched. Make numerous tassels of all colored wools, and hang on as shown in the design.

If the basket be very low, or without feet, leave off the band, and substitute a full plaiting of the cloth, also add the plaiting round the top of basket inside.



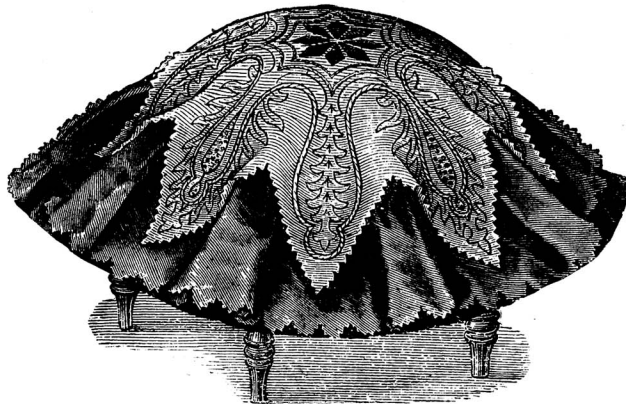
Pincushion Bellows.

Cut of cardboard two pieces the shape of pattern, cover one side of each with black satin, and paint a design in water colors. The handles are covered on both sides. Measure the size round the cardboard, and cut a piece of velvet one inch wide, narrowing at the ends, turn in the edges and overhand it to the side pieces. To form the nozzle, slip a pencil in and cut it the desired length; and then sharpen it, which will be found very useful, as a pencil is an article that disappears very mysteriously from a work-basket. Fill the cushion with emery powder. Around the edges finish with quilled ribbon or cord.



Crochet Edging.

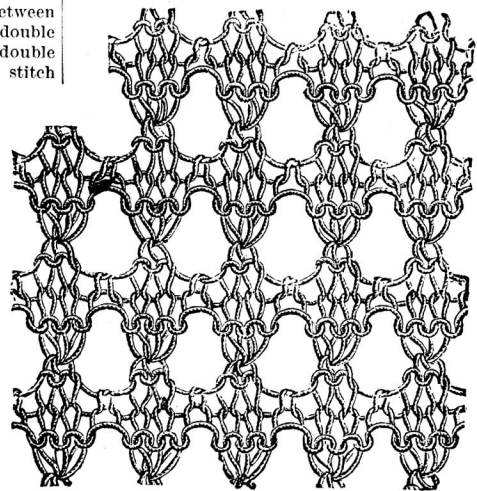
1st round : * 22 chain, close the last 8 into a circle, 12 double in circle, 1 slip stitch in 1st of 12 double, 7 chain, 5 long treble with 3 chain between each in the next double stitches, 7 chain, 1 double in next stitch, twice alternately 5 chain, 1 double in every second stitch, then 5 chain, 1 slip stitch



Foot Rest.

TAKE any wooden stool, make a cushion to fit the top of it, and stuff tightly with curled hair : then cut a wide ruffle of red cloth, have it pinked on one edge and plait it in large plaits, making sure to have a plait between each point of the center piece. Cut the center piece of cloth, the shade of old gold, the size of pattern. Have a braiding pattern stamped on it, and work with gilt braid ; fasten it to the cushion between each point, then sew stout strings at four equal distances apart, and tie round the legs of the stool.

in last slip stitch, 2 double, 1 treble, 2 long treble in next 7 chain, 3 chain, two long treble, 1 treble, 1 double in same chain, 4 times alternately 1 double, 1 treble, 2 long treble with 2 chain between, 1 treble in 1 double, in 3 chain, then 1 double, 1 treble, 1 long treble in 7 chain, 3 chain, 2 long treble, 1 treble, 2 double in same 7 chain ; repeat from *, joining as shown by illustration. 2d round : * 1 treble in center of five chain scallops, 9 chain, 1 treble in center of 13 chain, 9 chain ; repeat from *. 3d round : * 1 long treble, 1 chain, miss 1, 1 long treble, joining the centre stitch to center of last long treble, 3 chain, miss 3 ; repeat from *.



Knitting Design.

THE design shown is suitable for clouds, shawls, etc. Knit with No. 4 or 6 needles, using split zephyr wool. Cast on an even number of stitches, and knit a plain row.—1st row. Plain knitting.—2d row. Slip 1, knit 1, * wool forward, take 3 together and knit as 1 ; repeat from * to the end of the row ; knit 1.—3d. Knit 2, * in the over stitch knit 1, purl 1, then knit 1 ; repeat from *.—4th row. Knit.—5th row.—6th row. Repeat from the 2d.



“God blesses
those people
who make peace.

They will
be called
His children.”

- Matthew 5:9 CEV

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