Victorian Creative

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

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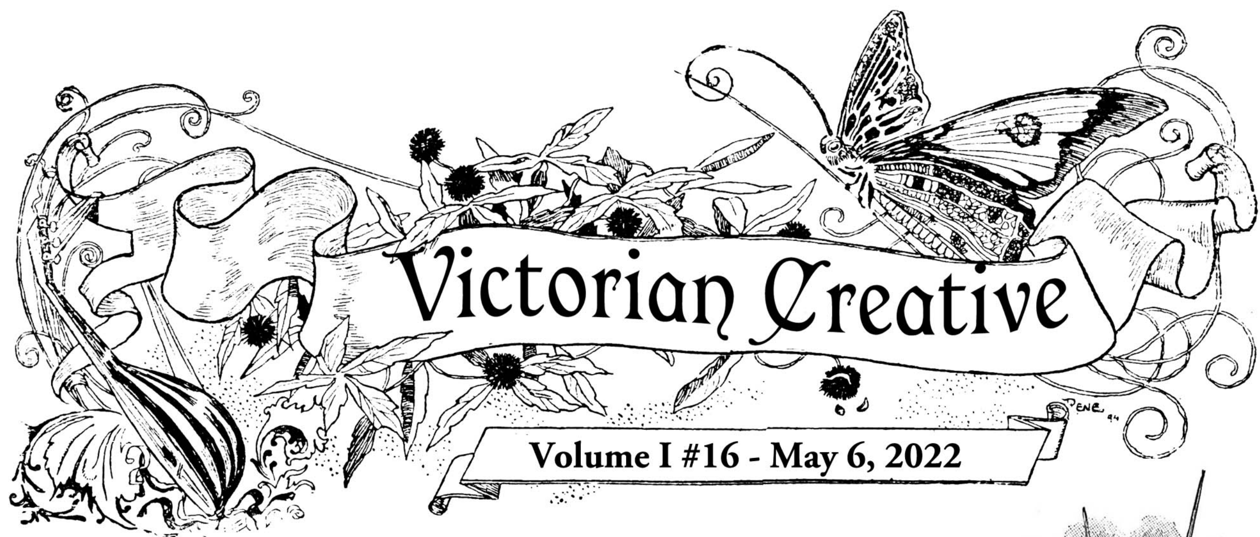

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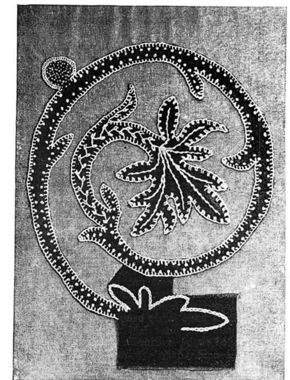

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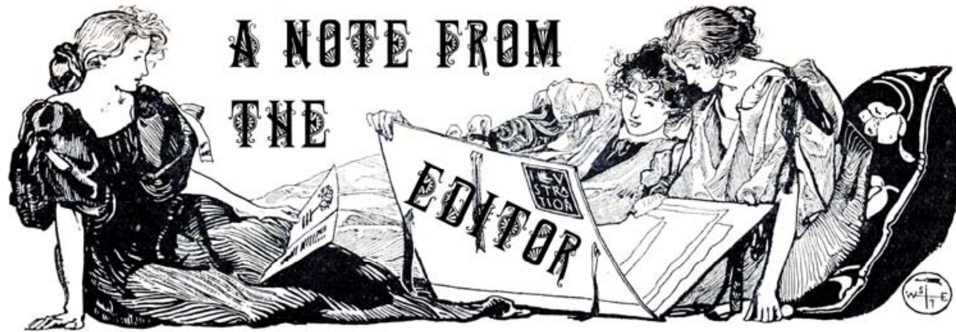
ABOUT OUR COVER: This May Day scene comes from a Child's Seed Catalog, probably from the 1890's. The John Lewis Childs Seed Company was founded in 1875. This image is available in our collection of **Seasons & Holidays Clip Art & Ephemera,** at https://www.victorianvoices.net/clipart/seasons/holidays.shtml



Material Girls, Part II

Last issue, I talked about some of the odder materials that Victorian artists and crafters used in their projects. Some of these, we might wish to duplicate or at least find viable substitutes for in our own projects; others, perhaps, we might prefer to leave in the Victorian era.

As I was pondering this weighty concept, however, an even weightier thought occurred to me that perhaps helps explain *why* Victorians used so many odd and interesting materials. It was perhaps due to the fact that there was one thing Victorians *didn't* have, that is so ubiquitous today: *plastic*.

Imagine, for a moment, a world without plastic. I realize many of us are trying to imagine this all the time. Victorians, for all their faults, could probably never imagine creating a small island of discarded plastic in the midst of the ocean. (In fact, Victorians were dedicated recyclers; very little household refuse actually went to waste.)

Today, plastic has certainly become a major part of crafts—and especially of household and holiday décor. When we extol the Victorian tendency to create all their Christmas décor from natural items, for instance, it probably doesn't occur to us that they didn't have any alternative. Today, I can hang a lovely plastic garland in my doorway and garnish it with any number of plastic or resin baubles; I can then put that garland away in the closet and hang it up again next year, and the year after, without changing it one bit. My tree is a bit more "natural," being mostly paper (I have to wear gloves to fluff it up each year or my hands end up covered with tiny paper cuts—and it still sheds nearly as many "needles" as the real thing.) Victorians had to start afresh every year.

In that sense, I have to think that plastic is, in many ways, the enemy of creativity. For starters, it's cheap. It costs far more, today, to purchase natural greenery to create a sweet-smelling garland for your mantel or doorway than it does to pick up a decent-looking plastic garland. An artificial tree may initially cost more than the real thing, but given the cost of "real" trees, that cost is quickly amortized over time.

Plastic décor, whether for the holidays or any other time of year, also offers an amazing amount of variety. No matter what your tastes, you can probably find something in plastic that suits them. It comes in every color, every size, every theme. You don't have to ask "how shall I make this?" but only "where shall I put it?"

Another "advantage" to plastic is the fact that it is lightweight and, generally, easy to store. It's durable enough to last year after year. But then there's a corresponding "advantage," which is that it seems so easy to discard. If you don't like it anymore, well, it's not as if you put a lot of effort or investment into it. It's just a cheap piece of plastic, right? So put it in the Goodwill bin or toss it away.

Now, I can't speak for the Victorian mindset here. I have no idea what Victorians would have thought of plastic if it had been as readily available then as it is now. Perhaps they would have embraced it every bit as enthusiastically as has our own generation. Though excellent recyclers, Victorians were *not* particularly noted for their grasp of the need to protect the environment; they generally sought to master nature, not preserve it.

I rather think, though, that most craft articles would have spoken against plastic as a cheap and lazy alternative to real artistry. And the bottom line is that when you don't have a cheap and easy alternative to beautifying your surroundings, your choice is either to do it yourself—or go without. Victorians chose the former option. I hope that we will as well. And on that note, I'll continue this conversation in our next issue!

—Moira Allen
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Flower Decorations

May

In this month the principal English wild flowers are cowslips, wild hyacinths, kingcups, buttercups, daisies, hawthorn (white and pink), moon-daisies, grasses, white broom, dead nettle, gorse, lychnis.

In gardens: Tulips, iris, American azaleas, peonies, lilies of the valley, rhododendrons, syringa, chestnut.

In the greenhouse: Roses, plumbago.

Most of the remarks I made last month on the primrose would equally apply to the cowslip; the latter are not so utterly ruined by being pressed into a compact bunch, because the soft green calyxes surround the tiny flowers so closely, and protect them from crushing. Still, now as always, the less crowding the better effect. A very usual and pretty arrangement of cowslips is to mix them lightly with wild hyacinths in a basket, and to these may well be added a few kingcups, letting them, with their handsome leaves, droop over the edge of the basket. For a small dinner-table I have made a very easy success by dividing about a penny bunch of cowslips between five little olive-green Clutha glasses (these shade into blue, or tawny yellow at the edges), and placing them on a table-centre made of pale sage-green linen. An equally simple decoration is made by filling about six small glass dishes, or old china saucers, with the common buttercups and daisies, a little fine flowering grass in each, and down the centre of the table three tall specimen or champagne glasses, containing kingcups and a larger variety of grass; or for a change, a small branch of white hawthorn in a blue-and-white vase; if a table-centre is used, it should be—for the kingcups, green; for the hawthorn, blue and white.

To girls living in the country I may offer the suggestion that the white dead nettle is a handsome flower too little used for decorative purposes; it can be joined happily either to the wild blue hyacinths in celadon, yellow, or white china vases, or to the pink or white lychnis, campion, or bachelor's button, as it is variously called, in glasses.

The wild white hyacinth is less common than the blue; but the two can be very prettily mixed, together with young fern fronds.

Lilies of the valley are plentiful this month; indeed, the Germans call them maybells: and very lovely they are. I have put them with forget-me-nots in white china vases, with pink tulips or American azalea in iridescent finger-glasses or silver decanter stands; or by themselves in specimen glasses, alternated with small dishes full of purple pansies, always taking care to add plenty of light green, either their own leaves, or fresh shoots of fern, and other low-growing plants.

All kinds of tulips look well in silver decanter stands or finger bowls; and as they are plentiful now, three or four blossoms should be used for each bowl. They are much improved by the addition of some ivy besides their own grey-green foliage, and some lighter flowers like narcissus, or small pieces of white lilac kept on a slightly higher level. Five large parrot tulips, placed in my little Clutha glasses on the green table-centre, opened wide in the heat of the lamps, and, with their own leaves, formed quite enough ornament for a small dinner. They were all placed in the middle of the table; but four more at the corners would make quite a brilliant display, and the whole ought not to cost more than ninepence.

Rhododendrons and American azaleas belong principally to this month, and are very effective ornaments for any occasion. For the centre of a table I have filled a punch-bowl with pale rhododendrons mixed with their own fresh green shoots, some sprays of the copper beech, and a few large fern leaves. The materials for this arrangement cost about one shilling and twopence; but they are ready to hand in most country and many London shrubberies. If the syringa is out before the rhododendrons are over, a few sprays of it may well take the place of the fern leaves.

Peonies, especially the pink and white varieties, are so handsome alone, that their own dark foliage is sufficient accompaniment; but a congenial addition is a little ribbon grass, or branches of syringa. Like most flowers of their size, they require substantial full-bodied bowls, jars, or jugs. I have seen them combined with iris, with what I consider atrocious taste, as, although often grown close together in gardens, the two flowers have absolutely no affinity, either in form, colour, or natural habits.

Fortunately, one can now buy large bunches of the sword-like iris leaves; and lightness can be given to groups of these flowers by the plentiful addition of flowering grasses and moon-daisies, or of sprays of spiræa, wild or cultivated.

Although June is their proper month, roses can now be found in some gardens, and can be bought, at some expense, at the florist's; but those ladies who have greenhouses ought now to be plucking rich harvests of the exquisite Maréchal Niel, which, with its glossy green leaves, forms so perfect an ornament in itself

WHITE TULIPS AND LILAC.

that little can be added with advantage. If possible, pick the flowers with a good length of stalk; if this is unadvisable, for the sake of future buds, cut off plenty of leaves from parts of the tree where their loss does not greatly matter, and put them into tall vases, old blue-and-white by preference.

I have an old-fashioned jug of clear turquoise and white china which forms an ideal holder for this flower; and I have also put a fine specimen of the Maréchal Niel with a piece of plumbago into a dull yellow Liberty vase. This mixture of colour is much pleasanter than the favourite arrangement of buttonhole makers, of this rose with forget-me-nots, where the blue is too crude to harmonise with such a very tender yellow and bright green.

Before the lilacs and laburnums are over come the pink and white chestnuts and hawthorns, which all look best in large jars or jugs; but the May blossom grows naturally in such evident little bouquets, that one is justified in plucking them off the twigs and using them in small vases or troughs for table decoration. I did not admire, however, an arrangement I saw a spring or two back, of roses, pansies, and knots of may in ruby-glass globes.

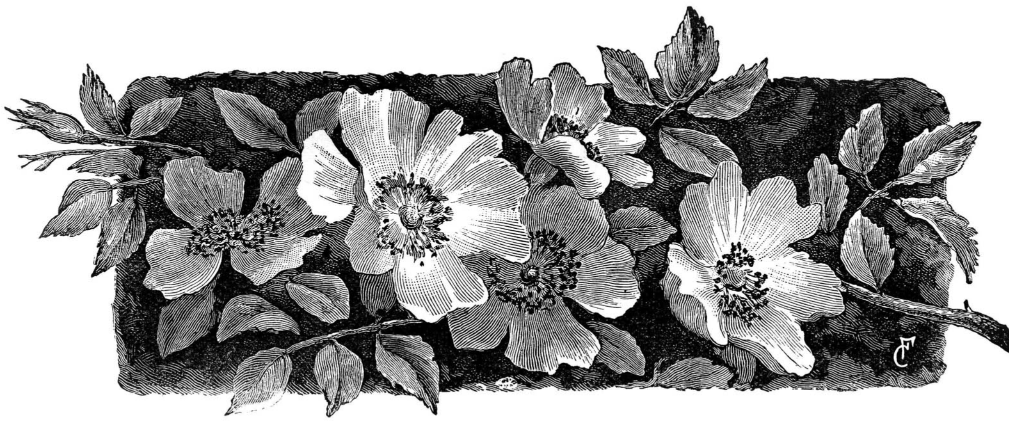
In this month we generally leave off fires in our sitting-rooms; and as our delightful climate never allows us to feel sure that we may not require to light them one day, even in summer, at a moment's notice, it is well for the stove ornament to be one which can be quickly removed. To this end I personally always use a large fan or paper screen to hide the ready-laid coals and wood, and stand on the hearth before it my much-valued large blue-and-white jar, or a brown earthenware jug filled with flowers or leaves according to the season; preferring this arrangement to pots of growing ferns and palms, which are invariably injured by the draught down the chimney; and having a wholesome hatred for a room in which the register is always closed. Large bunches of almond blossom, lilac, laburnum, chestnut, hawthorn, and wistaria may succeed each other for this purpose; but the purple lilac and wistaria must not go into blue-and-white china. Then a bunch of yellow or white iris mingled with moon-daisies and grass, backed with a piece of copper beech, is effective; and so is gorse or white broom, which is, in some places, to be obtained this month. This latter flower is very pretty mixed with peonies in a good-sized bowl; and, I might mention here, that heavy flowers keep in better position if the brim of the bowl turns inwards, and for this reason I have had the globular parts of some broken wine decanters cut round smoothly at a suitable height, and use them to line, so to speak, my punch bowls, which thus escape much risk of breakage, by not requiring to be often washed.

For a dinner party this month make a bank of ivy down the middle of the table, using thick bushy pieces to raise it in the centre, and trails of the smaller kind to fringe the edge, these coming nearly to the line of wine-glasses, and at the corners right to the edge of the table, winding round any small dishes of olives or sweets which may be needed. Down the centre put five or six white china vases, or specimen glasses, standing about six inches high, and so just showing above the ridge of ivy, containing each a well-grown head of lemon-colour or terra-cotta azalea, with some light sprays of very vivid green asparagus or young fern. If lamps or candles are used, they must also be placed in the same line. Then hide among the rest of the ivy as many small glass globes as you can afford flowers for, with a lily of the valley and two or three leaves in each, and at the corners a small spray, or two or three single flowers of the azalea in addition; stick in also at intervals a few small pieces of asparagus, to veil, if possible, all the vases. In all dinner-party arrangements the colour of the dessert service is a very great consideration, and sometimes absolutely prohibits the use of any flowers but white; but the above scheme would go with any china except the brilliant rose-pink which apparently was so popular about twenty years ago.

As both lilies and azaleas are at their cheapest in May, the whole design ought to be well carried out for a party of fourteen people, at a cost of about three shillings and sixpence, viz., azaleas eighteenpence, lilies a shilling, asparagus and ivy a shilling. For a luncheon earlier in the year I have mixed Neapolitan violets with the lilies; but I find that artificial light takes the colour out of all kinds of violets.

Another good arrangement of azaleas is to keep them on the lower level and let sprays of spiræa wave above them; using the ivy as before, and the foliage of the spiræa in place of asparagus or fern. But, indeed, ways of successfully treating these flowers are endless if the important points are remembered—that they require plenty of bright green surroundings, that any accompanying blossoms must be light in structure and neutral in tint, and the general background dark green or brown.

CONSTANCE JACOB.



PYROGRAPHY; OR, POKER-WORK.

By B. C. SAWARD.

UNDER the many names given to the old-fashioned poker or burnt wood engraving the art still flourishes, and, as time goes on, instead of declining in the public estimation it, by the improvements introduced, not only retains its hold on the working world but becomes, by new departures, more artistic and more useful.

The old original work done with red-hot irons flourished in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, England, Germany, and Italy during the centuries when heavy oaken chests, bureaus, and tables were in use, and some of this, in combination with fine wood carving, is still in existence. This decoration disappeared in Europe when furniture assumed less solid shapes, but in the rude half-civilised nations of South, West, and Central Africa it is still practised. With them drinking-bowls hatchets, spoons, pillows, idols, state wands, and other wooden articles are profusely decorated with incised lines deeply burnt in and sometimes embellished with colouring matter; but in them, as in European specimens, no attempt has been made to give the effects of shade or tone by working from light to dark, a hard decided line of various widths upon a clean surface or upon a black background being all that is aimed at.

Pyrography, we are glad to be able to write, owes its impetus to an English firm, who during the last few years have vastly improved upon the German revival of the art. The specimens sent from that country for imitation were only suitable for fine landscape etching, or for large panels round a frieze. The machine cost 25s., and the wood procurable was not of the kind used for the originals. By producing an apparatus that could be bought at a reasonable rate, inventing many different-shaped tools for working with, employing artists to design patterns that could be adapted to small articles, and making a variety of wooden articles with close-grained and seasoned wood, Messrs. Abbott has supplied a want felt by all who are interested in the art. Not content with developing the work upon wood, the same firm has applied it to leather, to plain glass, and to ground glass.

Although most of our readers know that the work is no longer done with hot irons or hot poker, few of them appreciate the delicacy of the machine that supplies their place. Surgeons will understand its working, as a somewhat similar instrument is used for cautery. The apparatus is a bottle half-filled with benzoline, through whose cork two tubes are passed. These tubes are fastened into india-rubber tubing, one ending in the holder of the platinum point that burns the wood, and the other in a small air-pump made of two hollow balls of rubber, connected together with a piece of tubing. The machine acts as follows:—The platinum point is hollow; it is heated in a spirit-lamp and held in the right hand. The lowest ball of the air-pump is held in the left hand, and pressed in and expanded by the finger and thumb of that hand. The air thus forced into the second ball runs along the tubing into the bottle, passes as a vapour over the benzoline, and takes up some of that spirit. It then runs through the tubing that is in connection with the platinum point and keeps that point in a perpetual glow; in fact, the point can be kept red-hot for hours without any relighting, as long as the left-hand thumb and finger gently press in and allow to expand the lowest ball. A beginner naturally thinks that this action of the left hand is a nuisance, but after a little practice it becomes quite mechanical; and though anyone can help by relieving the artist of this work, it should never be delegated to another at critical moments, as good work often requires the blowing to be either very slow or with a sudden burst of heat, and this variety can only be done by the worker. No violent action is at any time needed; a slight even pressure for general work, with a little quickening or stopping when certain effects are to be brought out.

Platinum, being the hardest of all metals, does not waste to any great degree when subject to heat and brought in contact with wood, leather, or glass, but it will amalgamate with lead or zinc, and must not be tried on these metals. The handle of the point is made of wood or cork, and so arranged that the point will unscrew and allow of another shaped point replacing it. Thus to the same handle can be attached a fine point for landscape etching, a very broad point for glass work and for deeply incised lines and other coarse work, or a curved point for burning down plain backgrounds, or a "pattern point."

It is not necessary to buy all these points, as they are the expensive part of the apparatus, and most workers can and do make one point answer every requirement by simply holding it in different ways—flat, when working at backgrounds, as a drawing-pencil when shading or making fine lines, and quite perpendicular when deeply burning down any particular parts, such as the centres of flowers, the eyes of animals, and conventional designs. With the aid of the pattern points—which are shaped as rounds, triangles, diamonds, hearts, ovals, trefoils, and crescents—the backgrounds of subjects are made into diaper patterns and large conventional designs, as shown in Fig. 1, relieved from any flat appearance. For borderings they are also useful, and they allow the worker to exercise individual taste, as by combining them together, or by simply using one of them at different angles, a great variety of work is obtained. They are made in platinum and in copper, the latter being the cheaper, and good enough when not much work is required.

There is one thing that must be remembered before undertaking this art, and that is, that no good work can be expected when common or very hard wood is used as a foundation. It is this rage for cheap wooden tables and other common deal articles that has spoilt not only decorative painting upon wood, but delicate work with a platinum point. The common fresh deal that oozes out turpentine and gives forth a most pungent smoke when worked on will never allow of any fine lines, half-tones, or artistic handling; it will burn a strong black and nothing more. Again with elm or oak; these woods, however good in quality, are much too hard for anything but strong deep lines. The best woods are holly, sycamore, lime, Kaurie pine, birch, chesnut, aspen, poplar, tulip, pear, and yew. Some of these woods do not grow large enough for panelling, but they can always be carefully joined; and no one who has once tried their surfaces and seen what delicate effects of light and shade are obtainable from them will ever grudge the small extra expense their use involves. The solid strong glove and handkerchief boxes, the blotters, photo frames, tea chests, and numerous other articles now procurable at good shops are made of the right sort of wood, while table-tops, door panels, and other particular articles can always be ordered. The wood used must be free from knots and half an inch in thickness, as very thin wood will warp from the intense heat of the instrument. Knots in the wood will spoil any fine effects, not only by reason of the unsightliness of the knot, but because the circles of wood round it are much harder in grain than the rest of the surface. Good artists are so impressed with the desirability of using well-seasoned wood that they keep it by them for a long period, but ordinary people are content to buy articles that are well and closely made.

In the list of the woods above given as fit for pyrography, we would point out that beech, cedar, and yew are red woods, and make very good backgrounds for classical figures, animals, and other large designs.

They also take firing well, and allow of a great deal of variety in the shading and lines drawn on them of great fineness and depth. Holly, willow, lime, and sycamore are close-grained white woods, and almost anything can be done with them, such as the finest lines—shading that looks like stippling, softly-smoked surfaces, and great depth of colour. What is known as Kaurie pine is another excellent wood. All these woods during the progress of the work emit a certain amount of smoke, but fortunately this wood smoke is not injurious to the eyesight, and, though pungent, is not disagreeable. Common deal is the worst to endure, but from the hard woods the smoke is sweet-scented and but little of it. The worker can always avoid coming in contact with it by placing the wood on an easel and standing or sitting a little away; it is the worker who uses bad fresh wood and stoops over the flat surface that finds the smoke inconvenient. Many artists find the smoke useful in throwing a slight tint over parts of the wood they leave untouched, and they contrive to arrange their panels while working at them so as to make the smoke fall upon such parts.

Another way of obtaining a scorched but soft surface (on which afterwards to etch in bold lines) is to hold the platinum point in such a manner that the small escape hole in it near the tip is close to the wood; through this a rush of warm air will fall upon the surface and tone it. Many workers keep the platinum points that have become perforated through hard wear by them, and when they want smoked or scorched surfaces they screw them on and allow the smoke, etc., to pour through the worn holes on to the wood.

In landscape work, figure, portrait, and animal etching the artist should look upon the platinum point as if it were an etching needle, and make with it fine shadings, deep-incised lines, clear delineations of light and shade, and artistic effects. The whole world of drawing in black and white is opened to all with the aid of this little needle point, if it is only taken seriously and time spent in learning how to use it. Many people think that after they have bought a machine nothing more is expected of them; its use comes by nature, and time is thrown away in learning how to shade or draw with it. To these people we recommend the flower and easy conventional designs that require no knowledge of any art but that of keeping the point red hot; but all who desire to rank as artists must put their wills and minds into the work.

With regard to the designs used there are many good outline patterns published by art papers that can be adapted to fill up spaces. The *Art Amateur* and *Home Art Work* and Messrs. Abbott publish full-sized tracings or large designs suitable for carving or brass or poker work, and for more finished designs, the etchings of old masters, the beautiful modern etchings of old buildings and foreign streets produced in shades of brown, and giving exactly the colouring and depth necessary, are perfect copies. In Fig. 1 a modern conventional design for the door of a corner cupboard is shown, worked up and shaded with the aid of a broad platinum point and three pattern points—the diamond, oval, and trefoil. This is a fair specimen of what can be done by an ordinary worker, and is managed as follows:—Trace the chief outlines of copy upon transparent paper, lay this on the wood with red carbonised paper underneath. With a finely-pointed pencil mark through the transparent paper on to the wood, being careful to keep to the pattern lines. A little stale bread can be used to rub out wrong markings, but it is better not to use it and not to trace through black or blue carbonised paper, as the lines they leave upon the wood are difficult to get out.

FIG. I.

Having traced the lines, heat the machine and work in the broad lines with the platinum point, but not the dragons. Hold the point as a pencil and work, or rather stipple, in the background to the dragons, leaving their outlines white. This background requires very minute shading, deepened at parts by being gone over several times not by the blackness of those places being obtained at once. Touch in the wings with the broad point and the markings of the heads, and make the body scales by fastening on the oval "pattern point," heating it red hot and working with it. Unscrew it after it has cooled, and finish the bodies of the dragons with fine shading. Work with the broad point for the deep border round the design, burn this border very deep and black, also the centres to the shields. Mark in the background to the scrolls, etc., by holding the broad point as a pencil and shading with fine and light-crossed lines. Use the diamond pattern and the trefoil as finishes, placing the trefoils as an ornamental border round the dragons and making various designs with the diamonds. When using these pattern points, the spirit lamp that heats the platinum point should be kept alight, and the pattern point kept hot by being thrust into it. This help does not supersede the blowing with the air pump, but is additional, it being necessary to keep up a strong even heat. When the panel is quite finished, rub it over with a white opaque varnish obtained from the Artists' Guild. A very thin coating of this is used, and it is rubbed on with the finger; a thick coating spoils the surface. Having rubbed in the varnish, take some silver paper, make a ball of it, and rub it over the whole surface of the wood. Work pretty hard for a quarter of an hour, changing the paper as it becomes limp, and a soft shine will appear—not like

any shine given to wood by French or beeswax polish, but the shine to be seen upon ivory. This protects the wood and keeps the sharp tones of the burning from becoming dulled; it also softens down the parts left unburnt, and gives them the tone of old ivory. This varnish cannot be used for pictures or figures worked out as etchings, but it is recommended for conventional designs, for table-tops, door panels, photo frames, etc.

When working figure and landscape pictures upon wood, use the fine point and not the broad platinum point, and work upon beech, Kaurie pine, or any wood that has a soft-coloured tone; leave plenty of white surface, and imitate the perpendicular lines and cross-hatching of an etching, taking care to give roundness of outline, as in drawing, by placing the greatest dark near the greatest light, and by following out all the rules of drawing and perspective.

In working upon leather, outline and a little shading is all that can be managed. The skins are sold by leather shops, and can be cut to cover blotting-books, *Bradshaw* guides, glove and handkerchief cases, or any other small articles. This branch of the art is not so artistic as the others, but can be made very effective. The fine-pointed platinum instrument is used.

Pyrography upon glass is quite a new invention, and at first sight the idea that an instrument so red-hot as the point must be, can work upon glass without cracking the background seems impossible, but it is not so; and in Fig. 2 is illustrated a coat of arms done upon a sheet of plain glass, and in this the very finest straight lines and curved lines of great delicacy are made. When working upon glass the pattern (on ordinary paper) is laid under the sheet of glass, and no tracing is required. A broad point is generally used, and greater heat and greater pressure than is necessary when working upon wood or leather. To obtain a greater heat use the best benzoline to be had, and place a piece of cotton wool shaped like a pyramid in the bottle. Let part of this wool appear above the benzoline in the bottle. A much larger surface for evaporation is thus obtained, and greater vapour given off. Work the platinum point not as a drawing pencil, but nearly upright, and press heavily down on the glass from the wrist. As the point works, a thin film of glass will peel away from the surface wherever it has been touched by the hot point. Sometimes this film will not peel off, but will remain on the lines in a loose state; a penknife is then used to pick off these detached pieces. Armorial bearings to insert into window panes, photo frames ornamented with engraved glass flowers, glass paper weights, tumblers, finger glasses, and wine glasses are all subjects suitable for this decoration. When working on them in cold weather, warm the glass before applying the instrument.

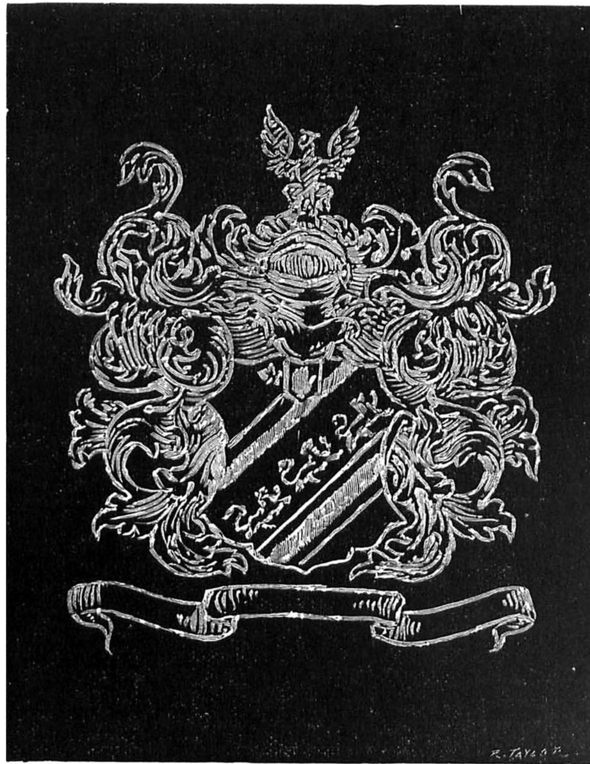


FIG. 2.

Fig. 3 is a design to be used for ground glass for hall windows, or in any window where light is to be let in and objects excluded. The pane of glass to be decorated must be laid flat, the design placed underneath it; the broadest point and firm pressure are required. The lines as burnt in and the film of glass removed come out as clear glass. The few lines of shading shown greatly improve the pattern, and are easily executed by a steady hand. No stippling or cross-shading is necessary, and the work is highly effective.

FIG. 3.

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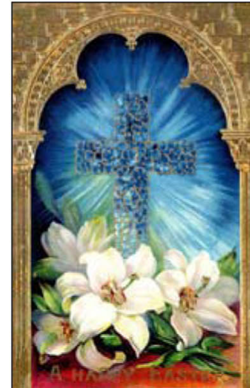
Seasons & Holidays

Needlework Patterns

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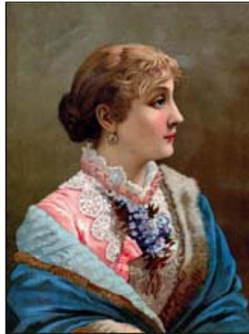
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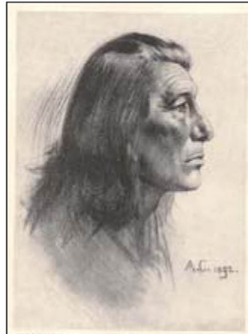
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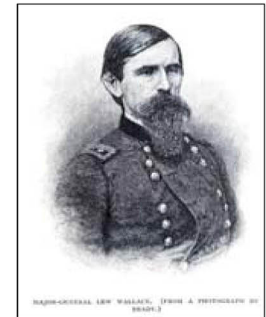
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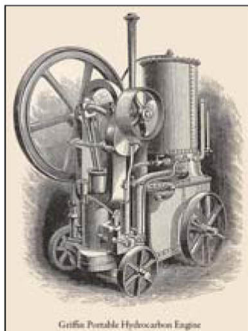

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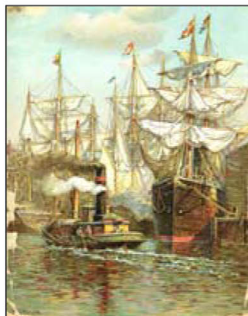
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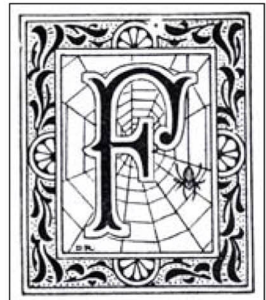
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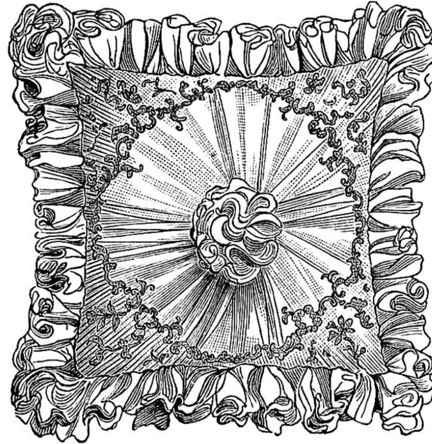
SOFA-CUSHION OF GAUZE AND LACE APPLIQUÉ.

THE foundation of the cushion may be made in any size preferred, of soft white material stuffed with down or pulled cotton wool. You cover this with bright-coloured silk, attaching to the corners, as in the illustration, flat pieces of velvet to match, so shaped as to leave a circular centre of the silk. Now take a gauze scarf, which must be wide enough to entirely cover this centre and must be about twenty or forty inches longer; gather both edges of it and attach one edge to the velvet all round; the other edge is entirely drawn up and securely fastened in the centre, so that folds radiate from thence to the sides. Then the outer edge of the gauze next the velvet is embellished either with embroidery or lace appliquéd lightly on, and single sprays are also appliquéd on the velvet corners. A huge puff or rosette of gauze (used double) is fastened in the centre. You must reckon five or six times the width of the cushion for the gauze, as it spoils the look of it altogether if the latter be not full enough. The back is covered with plain silk or velvet. Any colours or combination of colours may be used, though delicate shades are preferable, but our girls may safely be left to their own taste in the matter, though the following suggestions may be of use. Orange looks especially rich, the gauze being



always white, the velvet being either a contrast or some shades darker in tone, and the surrounding frill of the gauze may also be lined with orange silk, which looks charming under the white gauze, in which case it need not be quite so thickly gathered. Chiffon would also be suitable instead of gauze. Pink silk, crimson velvet and white chiffon, would be delightful; also pale turquoise-blue silk, a darker shade of velvet and white chiffon. The remains of old evening dresses, if tolerably fresh, might be utilised in this way, but made of entirely new material the cushion would be an elegant gift. It would be most elegant though extremely perishable if made entirely in white or cream-coloured silk with velvet to match, and the lace pattern accentuated with jewels such as turquoises or gold spangles. If any of our girls contemplate making a wedding-present, I recommend the above suggestion, as it would be decidedly unique, besides being very delicate. It has also the advantage of not being expensive to make at starting, though of course to ensure its attractiveness it would have to be renewed directly the chiffon or other materials became in the least degree soiled.

BEAUTIFIED HOUSE-LINEN.

OUR shops are full to overflowing with all kinds of useful and fresh-looking articles made of linen, either white or coloured. Nearly all these things are hem-stitched, and the designs upon many are sufficiently good for use in ordinary households, the members of which, while liking to surround themselves with pretty things, have neither taste nor leisure to enable them to prepare designs for embroidery themselves. The ready-traced articles consist principally of such as are useful in a house; and most housewives find it scarcely possible to have too many of such trifles. Among them may be mentioned sets for toilet-tables, pillow-shams—some having a night-dress envelope attached—d'oyleys and tray-cloths of all sizes, tea-cloths, sideboard-cloths, night-dress cases, splash-backs, tea-cosies, and many other things. There is no necessity to give a full list; suffice it to add that they are for the most part extremely cheap—a large toilet-cover, for instance, costing one-and-sixpence and some odd farthings. Unless silk be used, it is not likely that any very great expense will be incurred for the embroidery alone, and many workers consider that flax is the most appropriate thread for use upon linen. The best flax threads cost little over eightpence a dozen skeins, but they need care in washing. Silks are about double the price of either flax or cotton, but there is a brightness about them that is more specially suitable for very small articles, such as d'oyleys, tray-cloths, and the like.

Some few workers prefer wool to any other thread for embroidery upon linen, but it is rarely that the ready-traced goods are of a sufficiently good make of linen to render wool suitable for them. When crewels are used, the idea generally is to copy some of the old English crewel embroideries; but these were worked upon hand-made linen such as nowadays scarcely exists, except under the auspices of Mr. Ruskin in the Lake District. A portion of a sideboard-cloth embroidered on this sort of fabric is given in Fig. 1. The design, which is handsome, though somewhat formal, is executed with Appleton's crewels, the conventional flowers being worked with several shades of apricot, the stems and leaves with green, and the centre of the flowers with dull yellow deepening to brown. The stitches used are crewel stitch, long and short, or feather stitch, and French knots. Owing to the roughness of the surface, it can readily be understood that wool is not in the least suitable for use upon anything smaller than a tea-cloth.

The coloured linens are enjoying a great deal of favour just now, and certainly they are a boon to dwellers in towns, with whom the white work so soon becomes soiled by fogs and smuts. Many of the white linen goods to be had in the shops are made up with corners and hems of the coloured material; but if the article needed is to be made entirely of the coloured fabric, it is very

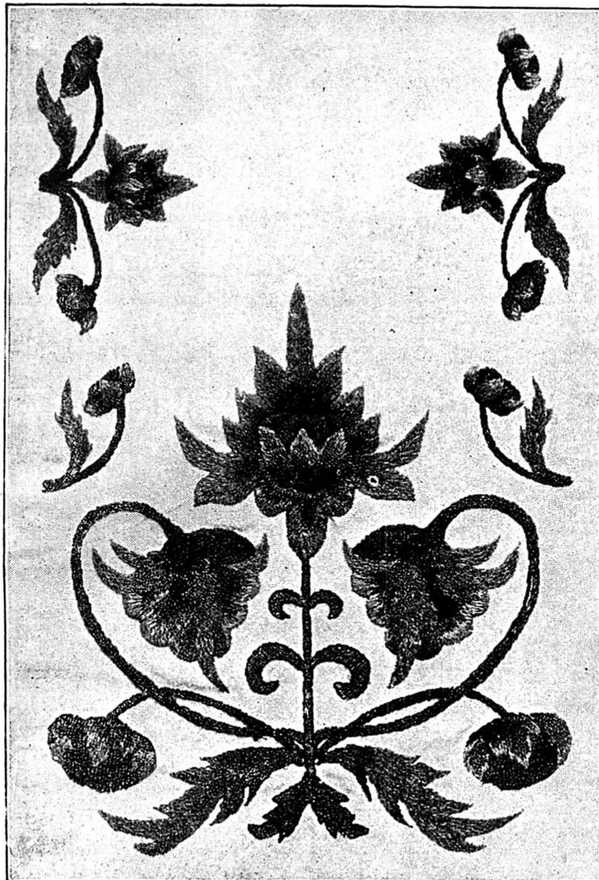


FIG. 1.—LINEN SIDEBOARD-CLOTH, WORKED WITH CREWELS.

economical to buy this by the yard, and to make it up after embroidering it. The night-dress sachet in Fig. 2 is arranged in this way: it is made of pale blue linen, upon which has been worked, with white crochet cotton, a particularly effective powdering in cross-stitch. The crochet cotton, being closely twisted and somewhat glossy, is not so apt to catch the dust as are the rougher flax threads and some embroidery cottons. The task of embroidering upon such a foundation as this will be a particularly interesting task to many workers who perhaps still retain their old fancy for Berlin wool-work. Over the whole of the linen is tacked a piece of the ordinary Penelope canvas, care being taken that the threads of this lie exactly even with those of the linen—a matter which may generally be best decided by holding the two materials up to the light, or by placing the two selvedges precisely together. The work is then proceeded with in the usual way, the stitches being kept quite regular, but pulled up rather more tightly than would be the case when no canvas is used. Also, it must be remembered that on no account must the needle be taken through the threads of the canvas. The reason for this will be seen when the embroidery is finished, for then the canvas has to be drawn away thread by thread from under the cross-stitch, leaving nothing between this and the linen. The making-up of such a night-dress case is no difficult task if a ready-made one is studied. In the original of the illustration the flap covered the pocket entirely, and was bound with blue and white binding, having a tiny blue and white pompon at intervals. Lace may be used, if preferred, and will naturally make the sachet more dressy in appearance.

Appliqué should not be overlooked now that coloured linens have been brought to such perfection, and indeed, charming heraldic designs have lately been brought out, made of pale blue linen laid upon white, and intended to be outlined and partially filled in with embroidery stitches. The worker of average intelligence should, however, find no difficulty in managing a simple form of *appliqué* for herself. If she irons off a bold transfer pattern upon the coloured linen, all she has to do is to lay this upon a white

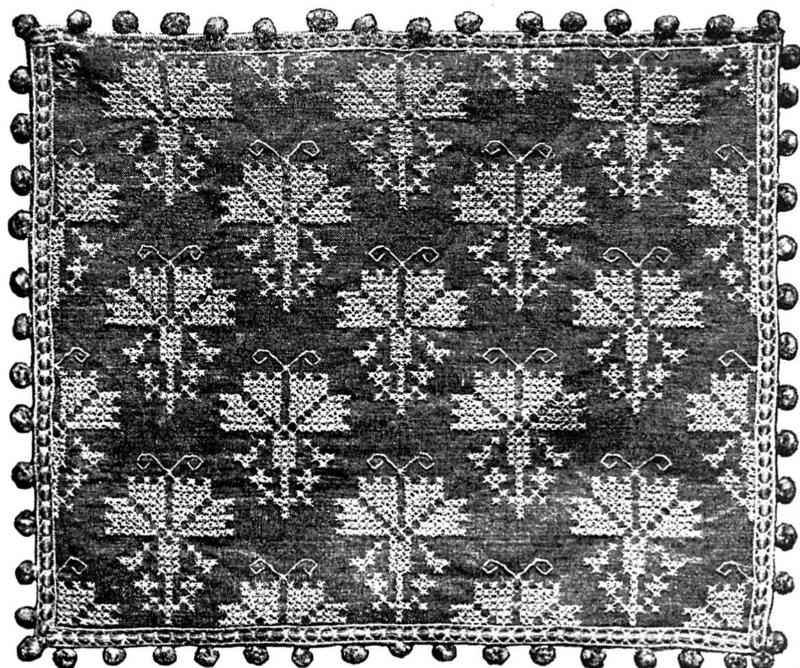


FIG. 2.—NIGHT-DRESS SACHET OF BLUE LINEN, WORKED IN CROSS-STITCH.

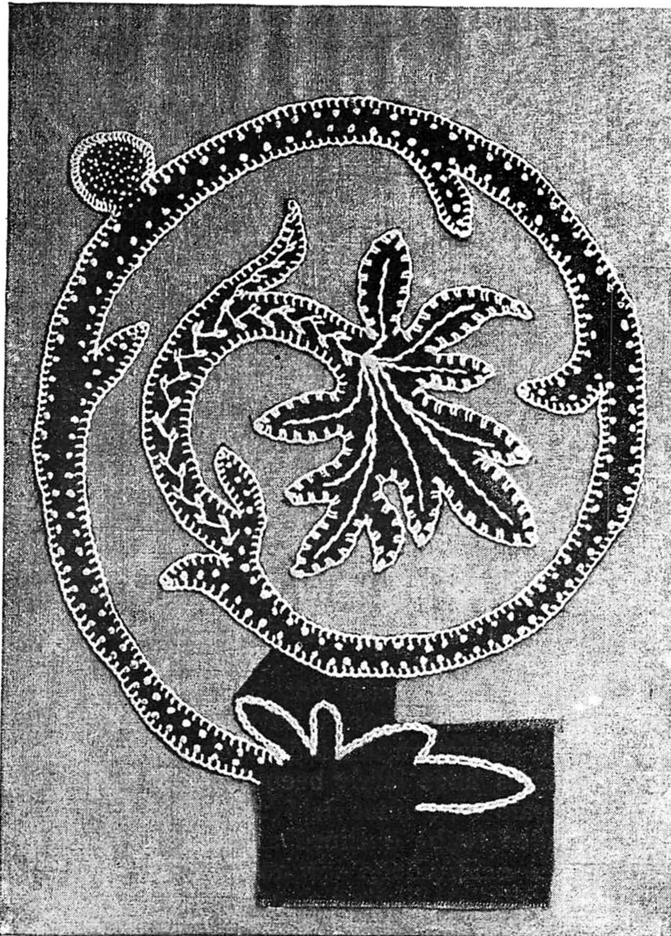


FIG. 3.—APPLIQUÉ OF TURKEY TWILL ON UNBLEACHED LINEN.

the same foundation, dividing and sub-dividing the designs into several colours, according to the odds and ends of linen at their disposal. When this is done, the pattern is cut out in all its intricacies before it is tacked down to the background chosen for it, and some considerable amount of accuracy in doing this and in piecing the small fragments together is essential.

A tray-cloth is a moderate-sized piece of work, of which only the laziest could find time to grow weary, and the decoration of such an article can never be considered superfluous all the while an invalid can relish food the more the better it is served, and the more perfect the appointments of the meal. A tray-cloth in most families has constantly to be in the wash-tub, and it is therefore essential that it should be of a kind that will bear even the laundress's bleaching-powders with impunity. Now, by experience, I have learnt that there is only one colour that will do this, and that is scarlet. I have seen scarlet and white d'oyleys washed and re-washed till they have almost dropped to pieces, and at the end, though I can scarcely say it is like new, the Turkey red cotton has changed to a pinkish shade that is fully as pretty and even more artistic a tint than its original brightness.

material, and to tack it well into place. The outlines on the tinted fabric should then be worked closely with button-hole stitch, the straight edge of which should set towards the outside of the design without exception. The stitches should all be taken through both materials. A few open fillings, dots, and lace stitches are a great improvement, and tend to greatly enrich the work ; though, at the same time, these must not be made so closely together as to entirely cover the coloured material. When sufficient embroidery has been executed, the coloured linen should be cut away beyond the outlines of the design ; and now will be seen the utility of the button-hole stitch in preventing the cut margins from ravelling. The general effect of this simple kind of *appliqué* may be judged from the portion of a border given in Fig. 3, where there is a scroll of bright red Turkey twill *appliqué* to a background of *écru*-coloured linen. The embroidery here is executed in white. There are many more elaborate forms of this class of work, but few that are more effective. Some workers are patient enough to use several shades of linen upon

As a rule, the paucity of stitches used in embroidery upon linen is to be deplored. In Germany the utmost variety is displayed, and it would often seem as though the object of the worker were to make a decorative sampler, showing the many changes that can be rung upon simple stitches. In Fig. 4 are given a few fillings that might with advantage be employed upon the traced linen goods now prepared for amateur workers. In this little sampler the stitches are entirely such as are used for filling broad spaces between the outlines of conventional leaves and scrolls. Workers will easily recognise varieties of cross stitch : one, for instance, similar to leviathan stitch, but made up of eight short stitches instead of four long ones, all of which pass through a hole in the middle of the star. Below this is a powdering of half cross stitches, which can be used for such spaces as require little attention attracted to them and any minor portions of the pattern. Above the leviathan stitch is the arrowhead stitch, a combination of two short diagonal stitches and one longer upright one between them.

All three are passed through the same hole at the bottom. A bold and effective stitch is that above the arrowhead, which describes a series of triangles so arranged that there is a space between each equal to that occupied by one of the triangles. The stitch above this is well suited for working with two colours, for it consists of a long line of thread laid upon the surface of the material, and caught down at regular intervals with shorter stitches of the second colour. There should be no necessity for me to describe the whole of the stitches, for they are for the most part extremely simple. One or two, however, cannot be so readily dismissed. There is a close lattice work rather to the left of the arrowhead stitch, which may at first sight be somewhat puzzling. It consists of sets of three stitches placed side by side, with only one thread of the material between them. Three threads are missed between each set of stitches. They are crossed by similar stitches worked in the opposite direction, so as to lie over them at right angles, and finally, a cross stitch is worked over each square where the two sets of lines meet. This, again, is effective when carried out in two colours. Next but one to this stitch, and still going towards the left, will be seen another lattice that is very effective, but very much more troublesome to work. Carry a square network of threads over the material, as in the stitch previously described, but instead of using three threads, lay one only for each line. This done, begin at the left-hand corner of the lattice; pass the thread over the first upright thread, under the first horizontal thread, across the open square, over the bottom thread of this square, under the next upright thread, then across the next square, and over and under the threads in the same way till the opposite corner is reached; turn and work back as before, but take the thread over the lines it passed under before, and *vice versâ*. This is the most elaborate of all the stitches given here.

For outlining, where only a slender line is desired, crewel, back, and chain-stitch, also the Mount Mellick coral stitch, are invaluable. Speaking of Mount Mellick stitches reminds me that many of those stitches that are deemed characteristic of that embroidery only came originally from Germany, where they were largely used on the ordinary white linen.

Another useful outlining is button-hole stitch, which may be arranged in several different ways. If a plain edge is needed, the straight side of the stitch must rest against the line of the design; if a serrated edge is required, what more easy than to turn the button-hole in the reverse direction? Then, too, the spikes of the stitch

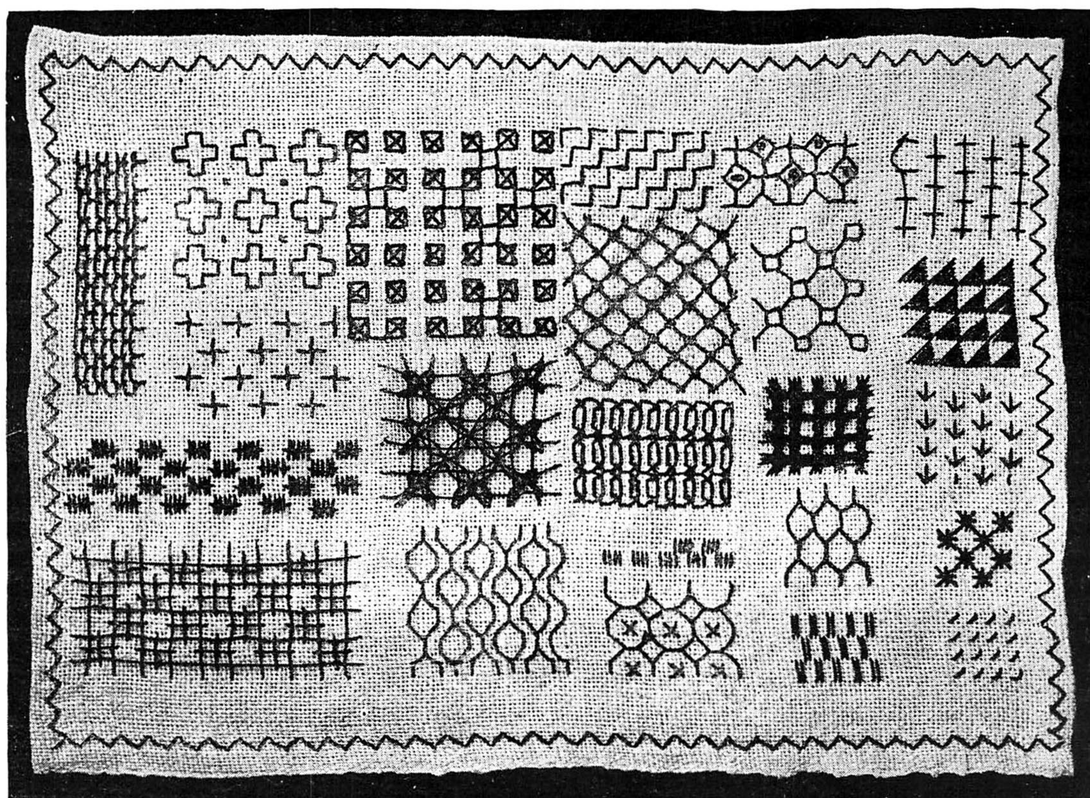


FIG. 4.—USEFUL FILLINGS FOR LINEN EMBROIDERY.

may be placed close together or at regular distances apart; or they may be made of varying lengths, so as to describe vandykes, irregular toothing, scallops, and several other forms. When very bold work is in progress the outlines are not infrequently followed with a fine braid sewn on or button-holed down with thread of a second colour.

Even prettier than this is the effect given by fine cord, which is a feature of the beautiful border in Fig. 5. Another characteristic of this pattern is the use of open fillings between the closer stitches. In this particular design flat satin stitch has a large part to play, but the appearance of this is greatly lightened by the eyelet-holes which are sprinkled over the broader portions of the design. Great crispness is given, too, by the clusters of closely-set French knots. The whole of the design is outlined with the cord above-mentioned, which serves to throw it up admirably. This scrap of work is, like so much good linen embroidery, of German origin, and would form an admirable decoration for a sideboard-cloth, tea-cloth, or even the upper sheet on the spare-room bed. We English people are quite exceptional in our fancy for extremely plain bed-linen; and this is to be regretted, as handsome embroidery of this kind gives a very decorative effect to the bed when the sheet is turned over to the outside, and in no wise interferes with its comfort or utility. There is nothing about it to prevent it from being washed as often as an ordinary plain sheet. Perhaps we shall patronise embroidered sheets and pillow-cases more in time, for the day has long gone by when we are content to keep the smaller articles of our household napery in their pristine simplicity and attendant ugliness. We no longer use our towels, table-cloths, and the like, in the severe plainness of ordinary white linen, but we are decorating them with embroidery and drawn thread-work of more or less artistic design. We do not find that our male relatives, who are apt to sneer at feminine handiwork, eat their dinner with any smaller appetite because the carving-cloth is decorated with a running pattern of embroidery and has a handsome monogram in the corner; nor do they relish their cup of afternoon tea the less for having it served on a daintily-embroidered cloth matching those on which the cake and light refreshments are arranged. It is true that a love for good embroidery may be carried to a ridiculous extent. May it be long ere we consent to lay our handiwork on the ground, to be trodden upon by irreverent feet, or ere we drape our walls with it, as was recently suggested, by way of frieze and dado, greatly to the convenience, no doubt, of the spiders and their webs.

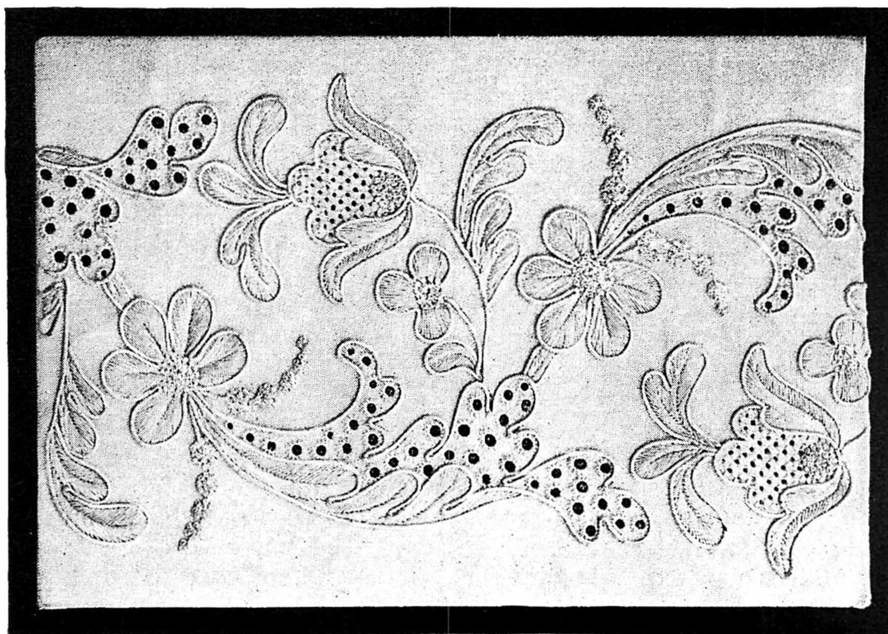


FIG. 5.—BORDER WORKED ON WHITE LINEN.

ELLEN T. MASTERS.

PETERSON'S MAGAZINE—February, 1881.

VENETIAN LONG STITCH: EMBROIDERY ON NET.

Before and After.

Picnic morning
Bright and fair,
Golden sunshine,
Balmy air.
What a pleasure
Thus to go
Where the woodland
Breezes blow.
Happy hours,
Free from care,
Joy and beauty
Everywhere.
Through the leafy
Woods we'll stray.
Gracious, gladsome
Picnic day.

Picnic evening,
What a plight!
Rained from 10
O'clock till night.
Flossy garments,
Once so nice,
Filled with mud
And beggars' lice.
Dinner ruined,
Pies and cakes
Food for ants
And garter snakes.
Full of doleful
Dank dismay,
Dirty, drizzly
Picnic day.

ARRASENE, OR WOOL FLOWERS.

AGAIN, to-day, I am going to teach you a work, suitable alike to boys and girls. It is simply the pretty flowers of your gardens which we are going to try to imitate in wool. Each blossom requires but very little material; and who cannot get a few skeins of wool? The most advanced among you will do well, after a little practice, to try their skill on the arrasene, which gives such a rich, glossy effect; however, as the mode of handling is the same for both fabrics, I shall confine my remarks to wool flowers. These are made, 1, in crochet; 2, on moulds of cardboard or box-wood; 3, on meshes. The last kind only I shall teach you just now. First, what are the tools required?

1. Flat box-wood meshes, about 9 in. long, and of different widths, to correspond with the different lengths of the petals. Thus, the buttercup and hedge rose will require a mesh $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; the pansy two meshes, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; the camelia three, $\frac{1}{2}$ in., $\frac{3}{4}$ in., and 1 in.; whereas the dahlia, by reason of its particular shape, calls for a single mesh, though a special one, tapering in breadth. These tools, of slightly gradated thickness, have curved ends, as in fig. 3, where obviously only a portion is represented, the longest and thickest being grooved, and the shortest one presenting a thin cutting edge.

2. Short strong scissors.

3. Reel wire, uncovered for stalks and ties, and covered, in various sizes and colours, for the chain edge of petals.

4. A comb to regulate and fluff up the hearts.

5. Wool needles.

Several other odds and ends not necessary for the explanation of our cuts.

The easiest flower to practise upon is the pretty red poppy (fig. 1).

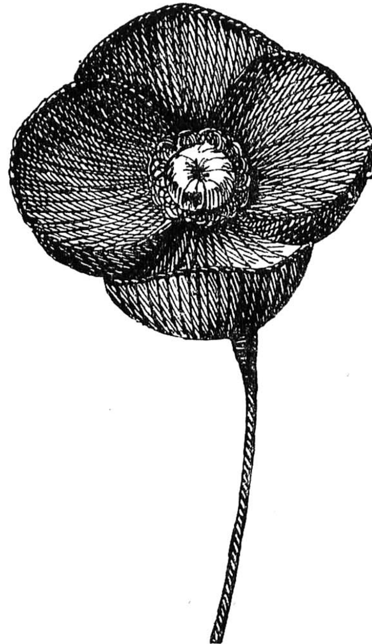


FIG. 1.—POPPY.

We will commence with the heart, which can be made in many ways. Evidently the quickest expedient is to use an artificial one, like those employed for paper flowers, but the heart illustrated in fig. 2 represents a kind of streaked wool-work apple surrounded by a looped fringe.

To shape this, wind pale green wool loosely round the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, pass a rather long piece of steel wire through the centre at the top of this ring, double and twist it, in order to keep the strands together and form a durable stalk. Then carry a bit of the wire or wool a little way up, and twist it firmly round, just joining the strands of the oval and closing the opening; this tying of course produces towards the stalk a littıle knob, as in fig. 6. At the opposite end split the strands, and you will have a tassel. Now divide equally the ends of the tassel, and bring down each half over the knob, which they will cover after being secured by wool or wire, coiled several times at the exact point where the stalk was passed through the woollen circle. By this means is obtained a doubled knob or seed-vessel, as distinctly seen in the engraving, fig. 2. To make the ends neat, work a few loop or buttonhole stitches tightly round them with a needle threaded with similar wool, and so form a compact calyx. The peculiarity of this heart, *i.e.*, of having its woollen tuft turned downwards instead of remaining upright, like in fig. 6, has earned for it the name of *reversed*.

FIG. 2.—REVERSED HEART FOR POPPY.

In a second method the heart is imitated by attaching a tiny tuft of wadding to a wire stalk, then covering it with green flower-paper and marking the veinings of the heart by crossed lines of black glazed thread, fixed meanwhile round the stem.

Again, another mode is to contrive a combed heart like the daisy one, fig. 5, but smaller and black, with a few loops of green wool in the centre. To indicate the encircling stamens, you may either cut several equal lengths of black glazed thread and set them with wire in a row round the heart, or make a small looped fringe of the same thread in the manner to be explained presently, as it is identical with the one for the petals. To follow fashion, the new metallic threads and wools might with advantage be utilised for hearts, together with pistils, stamens, &c.; they impart a pleasant sparkle to the whole arrangement.

In the poppy, four petals are required of two different sizes. The two small ones, being placed first, are, therefore, made first. To execute them, take an inch mesh and hold it between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, groove downwards; cut off two pieces of red wire nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ yard long; cross them over the top of the mesh, leaving, at the starting point, good ends, say about 2 inches, which by-and-by will be needed to be curved down for shaping and stiffening the left side of the petal; for this reason the same length must be left at the other extremity when the chain is finished. Just where the wires have crossed, insert between them red Berlin or merino wool (fig. 3), leaving here, also, an end

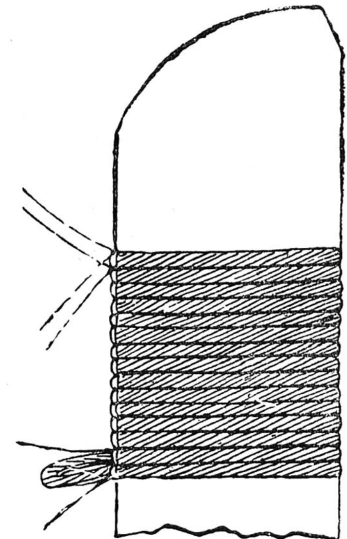


FIG 3.—POPPY PETAL ON MESH.

of 3 or 4 inches; cross the wires again so that the wool is firmly held as in a vice, proceed to pass it round the mesh *from back to front* (see fig. 3), and, as each loop is thus made, fix it by twirling the right-hand wire to the left and the left-hand wire to the right, which intersection obtains a visible wire chain, appearing on either side as a twist stitch. For the small petals from 30 to 34 loops are usually wound, and for the two others from 40 to 44. When finished, there remain at each end the two bits of wire and a piece of wool, as shown at the left side of the mesh (fig. 3). Do not take any notice of the other end, which illustrates the wire used double. Now turn the mesh upside down, thus having the groove upwards. Slip in the groove, and underneath the loops, a piece of uncovered wire about 4 inches long, leave equal ends, and gently withdraw the mesh; bend down the fresh wire, join it by a twist, giving a sort of fan shape to the petal (fig. 4).

At last coil the loose wool hanging from the top on each side closely round their

respective double wires, turn them gently until they meet the stem made by the lower wire, next twist all the wires together to form a single stem. With its four sides thus sustained the petal will be very flexible, and will take any bend or curve applied to it by the fingers, instead of remaining straight and

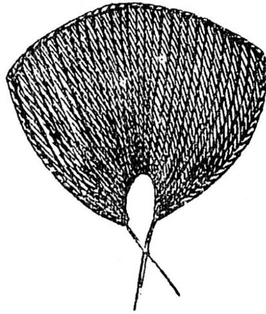


Fig. 4.—Shaped Poppy Petal.

formal. Afterwards connect the two small petals to the heart, but very carefully, not to crush the stamens. As soon as the larger petals are completed fix them in place, letting them spread underneath and enclose the remainder. Conceal the stalk, which is by this time a solid twist of the many wires, by twining over it pale green wool.

For the daisy (fig. 5) we must again begin by the heart, which is a combed one.

Proceed as for the one of the poppy, *i.e.*, wind twelve rounds of wool over the thumb and forefinger, and through them pass the

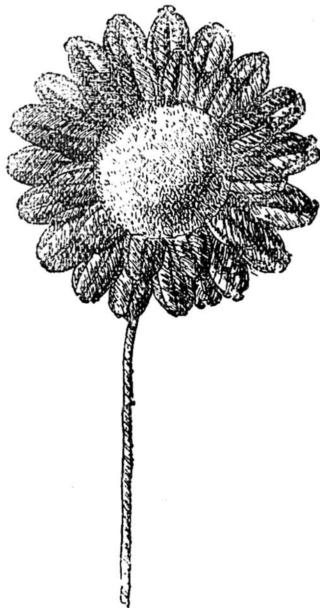


Fig. 5.—Double Daisy.

wire stalk; tie the whole together at the height of about 1¼ inch (fig. 6). After this, however, begins the difference between the combed and the reversed heart.

Split and shave the loops of the tassel, then, with a brass or any clean comb, make them quite velvety in order that they have the effect of a tufted button (fig. 6). Take care not to leave the loops too high, for, as you all know, the daisy has a wide and rather flat centre. If you prefer it, make the heart green, wash it over with gum, and dab on yellow semolina to imitate pollen, or the yellow dust of the flower. The petals are likewise commenced in a similar way to those of the poppy, with white, pink, or any coloured wool chosen. Make sixty loops, but instead of passing the wire through all at once, divide them two by two, in knotting each couple with wool or silk to match (fig. 7).

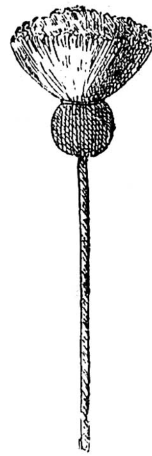


Fig. 6.—Combed Heart for Daisy.

Draw out the mesh and encircle the heart by twelve of these knotted petals, putting the chain-stitched edge inside and the notches outside. Attach them at the back by sewing stitches, and use the remaining eighteen petals for the second row. When two shades are selected, they are mingled by winding both the wools at once over the mesh, so that each turn makes two loops. The showy dahlia is executed in this way on the graduated mesh, starting with the smallest edge for the petals nearest the heart. Shaded blossoms are effected by sets of loops in different tints—twenty-four light for the central row, twenty-seven darker for the next, and so on. The loops are generally marked off in twos for the middle, and in threes for the outside, though I have seen some pretty ones of five rounds grouped in fours throughout. For the heart the correct kind is the *reversed*, ¾ in. in diameter and ½ in. high.

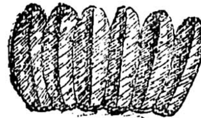


Fig. 7.—Petals of Daisy.

For the single daisy another mode is resorted to, which I find much more troublesome. It is the one also in use for forget-me-nots, cornflowers, and all flowers with slender petals.

Prepare bits of white wool, three or four inches long, double them and fasten them, either in twos or threes, by knotting them through the centre with white wire, as already explained for the reversed poppy heart. Carry both wire and wool downwards, according to the length you wish to give to the petal, and twist them firmly together at the bottom; the result is a spiky petal. Having made as many of these as you want, sew each separately, with its knotted end outwards, round the heart; pinch them here and there till they lie as naturally as possible, then give a finishing comb to the heart, making it spread well. Each of the petals is supported by its own wire acting as an invisible midrib.

Precise dimensions are impossible to give, as the size of blossoms so much depends on the intended use to be made of them. With regard to the colour, Nature herself is the best teacher.

Before passing to the moss fringe, I may as well remind you of the real signification of petals, stamens, and pistils. The *petal* is a single leaf of the corolla, or coloured blossom, the *stamens* the thread-like filaments which encircle the heart and contain the yellow dust, while the *pistil* is the taller and tipped stem rising from the centre of the seed vessel.

Moss Fringe.—Numberless are the ways of preparing this crimped fringe. I generally make mine from twenty-five to forty stitches wide, according as it is intended for a lamp mat or a rug, and knit a length of about 1½ yard, then dip the work into boiling water, in which has been dissolved a small lump of alum to keep the colour fast. Afterwards I leave it in a saucepan on the fire for about one or two minutes, then take it out and dry it in front of the fire. Before unravelling I iron the knitting, and further divide the strip along the centre, even to a stitch, and having also snipped off the ends of both bands, I unravel them till within two or three stitches of the lengthway edge. These will stand as a selvage or foundation by which to sew the fringe in straight or circular lines upon the mat, &c. This mode produces a very wiry and lasting crimp.

Another plan that I occasionally follow is to put the ready-damped work into a moderate oven, and there let it remain for some time until perfectly dry. But somehow I have never felt very satisfied with this process. It does not seem to make a curl sufficiently tight and durable for my taste, and, besides, the watching of the oven is rather a trouble. It must neither be too hot, or it will scorch, nor too cool, or it will make scarcely any impression on the knitting. And again, the work wants looking at every now and then, to test when it is sufficiently dry. The hot water method is quicker and safer, for the boiling fluid has the same effect on the fringe that boiling fat has on fish or potatoes, if I may be allowed such a simile.

I know some people, however, who merely hold their band over steam till thoroughly damp, then dry it before the fire, whilst others wet their knitting with hot water stiffened by a little sugar or gum, then roll the strip round a stone bottle filled with boiling water. This bottle they cover with a clean cloth and leave all night in a cool oven. A few knitters, on the contrary, adopt quite an opposite method, and dip the band into perfectly cold water, wring it out, let it dry, and lay it aside for a day before unravelling. Again, some workers, unsparing of their trouble, wet the strip, and, when dry, unravel in the ordinary way without cutting, meanwhile rolling the wool into a ball; afterwards they re-knit the fringe, and unpick it like those already mentioned.

Though these recipes vary considerably, they all agree in one point, viz., that of drying before the fire and not in the open air, in order to prevent the running of the colours.

But I perceive that I have "put the cart before the horse" by explaining to you the completion of the work without any allusion to the commencement. This, however, is a very easy matter, in which you can be helped by your little sisters, nay, even by your younger brothers. The needles should be a medium size (steel pins, No. 12, will do nicely), and the wool rather rough than otherwise, not the Berlin, but a kind of yarn which many fancy shops sell in balls under the name of "moss wool." One ball, however, would not be sufficient; you want five, or at least three, different shades to be able to gradate the colour at about every quarter of a yard. Keep the same needles and size of wool throughout, or the fringe will look irregular and untidy. The stitch required is the garter stitch, made by knitting backwards and forwards. Each strip should be worked entirely by the same hand to ensure an even waving. The number of stitches differs, as I have already remarked, to suit the purpose and method employed. Twelve or fourteen sti ches are cast on when the band is intended to remain single. In this case three of the edges are cut with sharp scissors, one, lengthwise, being left for heading. When from 25 or 40 stitches are cast on, the strip is generally divided—by far the more rapid way.

For a more variegated fringe you can use a two-stranded worsted, prepared in two shades of green, in green and dull brown, and in green and heather red. There is, in the trade, a shaded Berlin wool often offered as moss wool, but most inappropriate for the preceding

recipes; still, this kind comes in very well for daisy mats, raised woolwork, and a tufted fringe sometimes called "Daisy," from its resemblance to the half-closed field-flower. (See fig. 8.) The real name, however, is the French one, *muguet*, or lily of the valley, because each little ball dangles

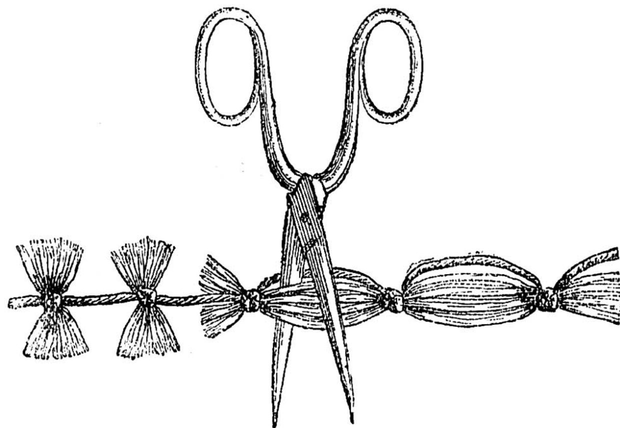


Fig. 8.—Daisy or Lily Fringe.

loosely from its stalk, just like the pretty spring-flower, while another "daisy" fringe is composed of round, compact knobs, recalling the ox-eyed daisy. This one is a little more difficult, and requires a frame; some day I will explain to you how it is made.

Suppose you wish to do the lily of the valley; proceed just as for the old-fashioned "queen's garters." Take several 4 yards to 7 yards strands of doubled wool, from 5 to 20 in number, according to the size you require for the balls. Fix them to some pin or knob, and hold them lightly in your left hand, while you tie them at intervals either with wool or silk, single or double. To do this, confine the strands by two very tight buttonhole stitches, carry the wool or silk along underneath a little way, and work two buttonhole stitches again, and so on, till the length is completed. The distance between each knot depends upon the purpose to which it will be put—*i.e.*, for the fringe of a shawl, the border of a jacket, in imitation of fur, or to be intermingled with wool flowers and moss fringe. Now, for the second process, which, by the way, is so clearly shown by the cut that I scarcely need describe it at all. With a sharp pair of scissors snip through the centre of each division of strands, taking care,

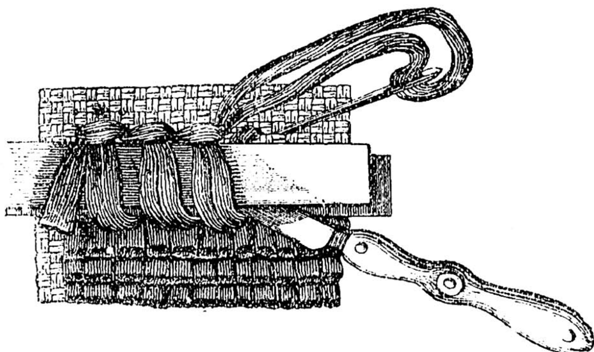


Fig. 9.—Cut Fringe.

of course, not to cut the fastening thread. The split wools stick out on either side of the knots in little brushes, which, when combed together by a brass or ordinary comb, join, and fluff up into little balls, which are at last regulated with sharp scissors.

It has lately become quite fashionable to make moss mats bordered wholly with rows of the above fringe. I have been given one, nicknamed "Mulberry bed." It is made in this wise:—The circular foundation is worked in DC, with black Berlin or fleecy over scarlet blind cord. Any cord might be used for the purpose, but this one is really preferable because it is so smooth, so even, and so firm. Ten rounds of this coil is the average number of a lamp mat, but of course they may be lessened or added at will. The border of my mat consists of three rows of lily fringe in shaded mulberry wool, fastened with double filoselle of the darkest shade. The tassels of fifteen strands are one inch apart, and are festooned in loops of four round the three last rows of the mat, secured either by sewing, or, still firmer, by catching in the double connecting thread whilst crocheting these edge rounds. Each inch-wide scallop is attached three times, and allows a fall of 1½ inches; the three rounds mingle so well as to present a rich cluster of *ombré*, or shaded balls, which in my mat remind me temptingly of mulberries. Others in red are knotted with old gold, in wallflower brown, tied with pale blue; the contrasting colour, far from being obtrusive, peeps up cheerfully from the rather dark mass. The green mats are the only ones that really should be called "Moss" mats, and even then the semblance does not equal that of the knitted moss.

Artificial moss, sold in bundles at florists, and even at some greengrocers, comes very handy too in the making-up of wool bouquets kept under glass shades. Thus children partly fill up a wire sponge basket with the moss, into which they imbed their much prized flowers, set off well by the straggling little bits of green poking upwards from the soft bed. The outside has previously been covered by a latticework of treble crochet in green wool, commenced at the lower part and worked backwards and forwards for the first six or seven rows, then crocheted round and round, gradually increasing till it has reached the top. To conceal the wire still more perfectly a layer or padding of moss is inserted between the basket and its wool-cover. This radiant receptacle is then mounted on a stand over which tufts of moss lie carelessly as though just fallen; occasionally trails of artificial flowers are intermingled to wind daintily over the sides.

In another style an oblong cardboard box, say eight inches long by four inches wide and three inches high, answers for a foundation; it could evidently be improvised with strips of cardboard. The box is hidden by green baize overlaid by a band of four rows of treble crochet; a double wire pierces the centre of the cardboard from end to end, and above it curves a handle of twisted green wire, rising eight inches high. The whole is firmly glued to a wooden stand, and the handle quite concealed by twisting over it small flowers, such as convolvuluses, fuchsias, etc., intermixed with moss. Towards this handle mount on either side blossoms of gradated hues and sizes; their wire stalks range longer and longer as they approach the top. I need scarcely say that the grouping of the flowers with their bunches of moss calls for some little taste and care; but the young worker will be well repaid for her trouble by a bright bouquet which lasts fresh for years, only requiring now and then a little additional moss and a pulling up of the blossoms, as they are apt in time to sink down.

With a combination of knitted or lily fringe and flowers can be fashioned tea-cosies, flower-pot covers, large nursery frames, fire-boards, even mantel boards, leaving the necessary spaces for vases, &c., besides all kinds of mats. The latter, being smaller, are evidently more popular. For these prepare two circles of cardboard; over one strain green sateen or velveteen, and round the edge sew thickly and tastefully the tasselled fringe, then dot in the flowers. Line the second circle with baize, serge, alpaca, &c., and, placing the wrong sides face to face, sew both edges closely together, always leaving a little of the fringe to project. Some ladies add a central piece of glass for fictitious water.

There is now rather an objection to this wool work. It is not sufficiently artistic for the present mania. True, it does not boast of great refinement, but certainly, with proper guidance, it helps to train both the taste and skill of the young ones, teaches them to employ their time, and offers opportunities of getting up inexpensive presents. Indeed, it is a great mistake to hoist such barriers before willing workers, for how many of us can swell the ranks of real artists? Is it not a pity to see so many children left idling their time away under the pretext that they can do nothing worth looking at?

The cut fringe of fig. 9 forms also a nice border for a flower-mat. When all the loops are cut and trimmed, a plush-like appearance is imparted by a thorough combing.

IMITATION STAINED GLASS.

INSTEAD of buying the transparent printed paper, which people stick on to their window-panes to give the appearance of stained glass, I am going to show you how you can paint on window glass with ordinary oil colour and produce a much better effect than can be obtained with this applied paper.

The lead lines themselves can be imitated with lamp black mixed with a little copal varnish. If the colour is found to be too thick to come from the brush, use a drop or two of turpentine, but don't thin it more than you can help, as we want the colour to be solid.

Some little difficulty will be experienced in running the lines straight and of even thickness. A piece of tracing paper cut the size of the window panes and divided up into squares and put at the back of the glass will guide you in this. I am assuming that you are going to paint glass *in situ;* but if you were painting pieces of glass which were either going to be put in front of the existing glass, so that they could be removed at any time, and were going to be puttied in the sashes afterwards, it would be easier work to paint them as you could lay them down on a table having the designs to be carried out underneath.

If you are painting glass in a window, then you must stick your design upon the back of the glass to be painted and follow it in front with your rigger and outline colour, which might be made of burnt sienna and a little black, for you don't want it to look quite so opaque as the lead lines. A flat piece of wood about two inches wide to rest upon the sashes of the window, and upon which your hand may rest, will be of help in steadying your hand.

Your design must not be on paper too opaque to allow of light coming through, or you will not be able to see to work. It might be as well to trace them on tracing paper first of all. Of course you will allow the lead lines to dry quite hard before painting in the patterns or figures, and you will also thoroughly clean the glass with whitening to take away any grease there may be.

A very good treatment of "quarries," as these small squares are called, is to trace on them quaint renderings of birds, animals, fish, etc., as I have shown in the design. But these may with advantage be alternated with some simple design of an ornamental character or with small floral designs conventionally treated. This alternating design could be used throughout and would save you racking your brains to make each quarry different.

The whole effect of these quarries should be got with the outline, though it need not be of the same solidity everywhere. The tint which is seen in the illustrations represents the transparent yellow stain used by stained-glass painters, and could be imitated by aureolin thinned down with copal varnish, and put on after the outlines are quite hard. This yellow should be darker here and there, and the addition of a little Indian yellow would give this effect better than putting a light yellow on thickly. The lines representing water with the frog and two fish quarries should be in yellow and not in the tracing colour. So too should the moon and stars in the owl design.

Designs of this character can be obtained from those books of Japanese sketches which can be bought cheaply at some bookseller's, or a good illustrated natural history would afford much material; but in using such illustrations they should be quaintly rather than accurately reproduced, for a too naturalesque treatment is less effective than a conventional one.

The treatment of Heads on Glass.—The design by Mr. Henry Ryland was drawn for a portion of a stained-glass window; but it can be reproduced in the way I have just described, the lead lines with the black and the outline of the head in the brown. The background of rings should be more transparent, as should the heads and the ornament

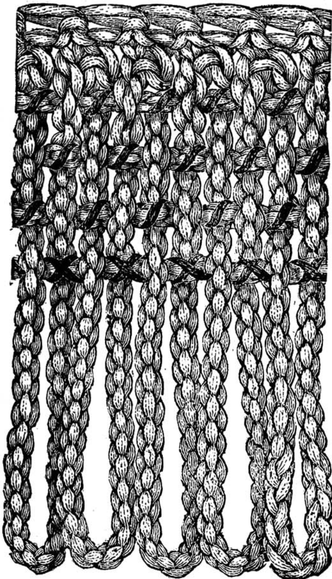
on the dress, which is obtained by using the colour thinner. The hair might have a wash of the yellow over it, and the name might also be put in Indian yellow instead of the tracing colour. The face itself I should leave plain, as it would be very hazardous to attempt to put a flesh tint over it. My feeling in all decoration is that it should be kept very simple and too little rather than too much attempted.

Pretty heads painted on pieces of glass to hang up in windows would be a very nice decoration, and as there is plenty of material to work from in the pages of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, I commend this suggestion to my readers. The glass used for stained-glass windows would be nicer to paint upon and would be more artistic than ordinary window glass. This could be obtained, cut into circles or squares, at any firm making leaded windows. A piece of lead round the edge with copper rings soldered on at the corners to hang it up by would be a pleasant addition and could be put on where you purchase the glass for a few pence.

This drawing of Mr. Ryland's is worth studying as it shows how to treat a head decoratively. Everything you see is simplified, the hair being represented by simple curves, and no attempt made to give the effect such as a painter would attempt. Remember you are not painting a picture on glass, but are decorating a piece of glass. The small head would be suitable if enlarged. Heads of poets, artists and musicians would also be very suitable.

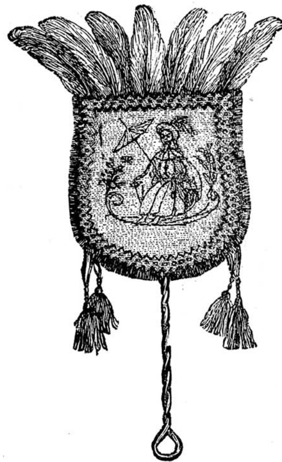
The thickness of glass between you and the design you are following will just at first bother you; but a little practice will soon enable you to follow the design on the glass. A great help will be afforded by a hand-rest made of a flat strip of wood one and a half to two inches wide with pieces at each end one inch or so high. This affords a rest for the hand and enables you to work directly over the glass.

Fancy Work.



Crochet Fringe.

THIS fringe is suitable for shawls and tidies; it is also a pretty addition to lambrequins for brackets. Along a chain of wool crochet as follows: First row (in the back of the chain-stitch), 1 double, miss 31. Second row, going back along the stitches, double back along the stitches. Double crochet, then work three rows of cross-stitch with filoselle, taking in the loops.



Fan or Hand-Screen.

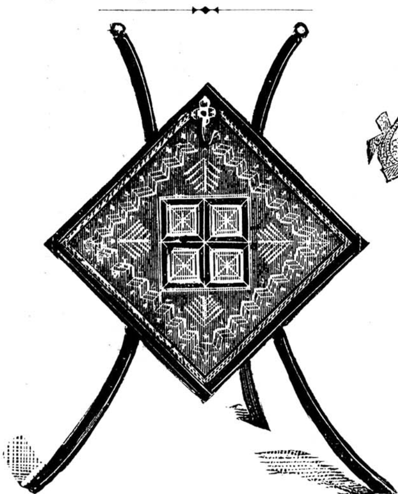
COVER two pieces of very thin cardboard on one side with silk. Paint or embroider a floral design in the center of each. For the handle use the end of an old parasol handle, or purchase a handsome carved tooth-brush and cut the bristles off, and glue it firmly between the two cardboards. Finish the edge with chenille and gold braid, and at the top glue in any kind of fancy feathers, cord, and tassels, to correspond with the silk and painting.

Herring-bone Purse.

Only two needles are required for this knitting. Cast on eighty-eight stitches, begin with the silk forward, slip a stitch, knit a stitch, pass the first over the second, knit a stitch, bring the silk forward and rib the next; when this is done, the silk will be forward; begin again. If the purse is required to be longer, cast on as many stitches as are necessary, only it must be a number which can be divided by *four*.

Porcupine Knitting for a Purse.

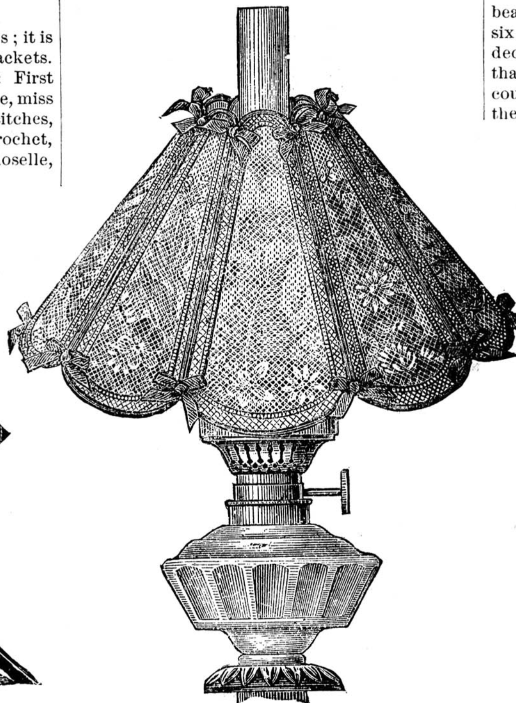
Four fine needles, nearly three skeins of silk and one string of gold beads are required. Thread some of the beads on the silk before you begin. Cast 36 stitches on each of three needles, knit a plain round. Knit 4 stitches, bring the silk forward, knit a stitch—this is the center stitch of the pattern—bring the silk forward, knit 4 stitches, slip a stitch, taking it under, knit 2 taken together, pull the slipped stitch over it, then begin knitting the 4 stitches again, etc. It is better at the end of each needle to knit a stitch off the next one, as it prepares for the next round. Continue thus for six rounds, increasing before and after every center stitch, and knitting till within one of where you decreased, which stitch slip, knit the next two together, and pull the slipped stitch over it, Knit a plain round. Knit another round plain, excepting over the center stitches, where you are to knit a bead, bringing it through the stitch. Knit a plain round, keeping the beads on the outside of the purse. (This purse is knitted wrong side outward.) Knit to within one stitch of the bead stitch, which slip; knit two together; these six rounds increase each side of the stitch you decreased with in the last pattern, which makes that the center stitch for the bead. It is easy to count the number of rounds you have done, at the place where you decreased.



Watch-Stand.

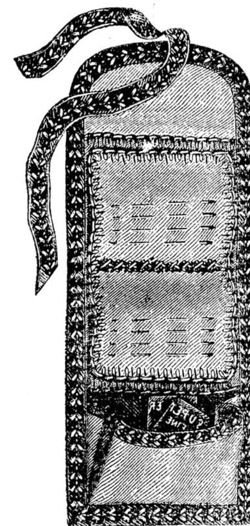
THE stand is of black wicker or wire. The square in the center is made of cardboard covered with satin on both sides, and on the side which is to be the front put several thicknesses of cotton. Cover it entire with a square of Valenciennes lace. Finish the edge with a full ruching of ribbon.

Wind a large hook with silk, and fasten at the top to hang the watch on. Tie the square to the stand case with ribbon.



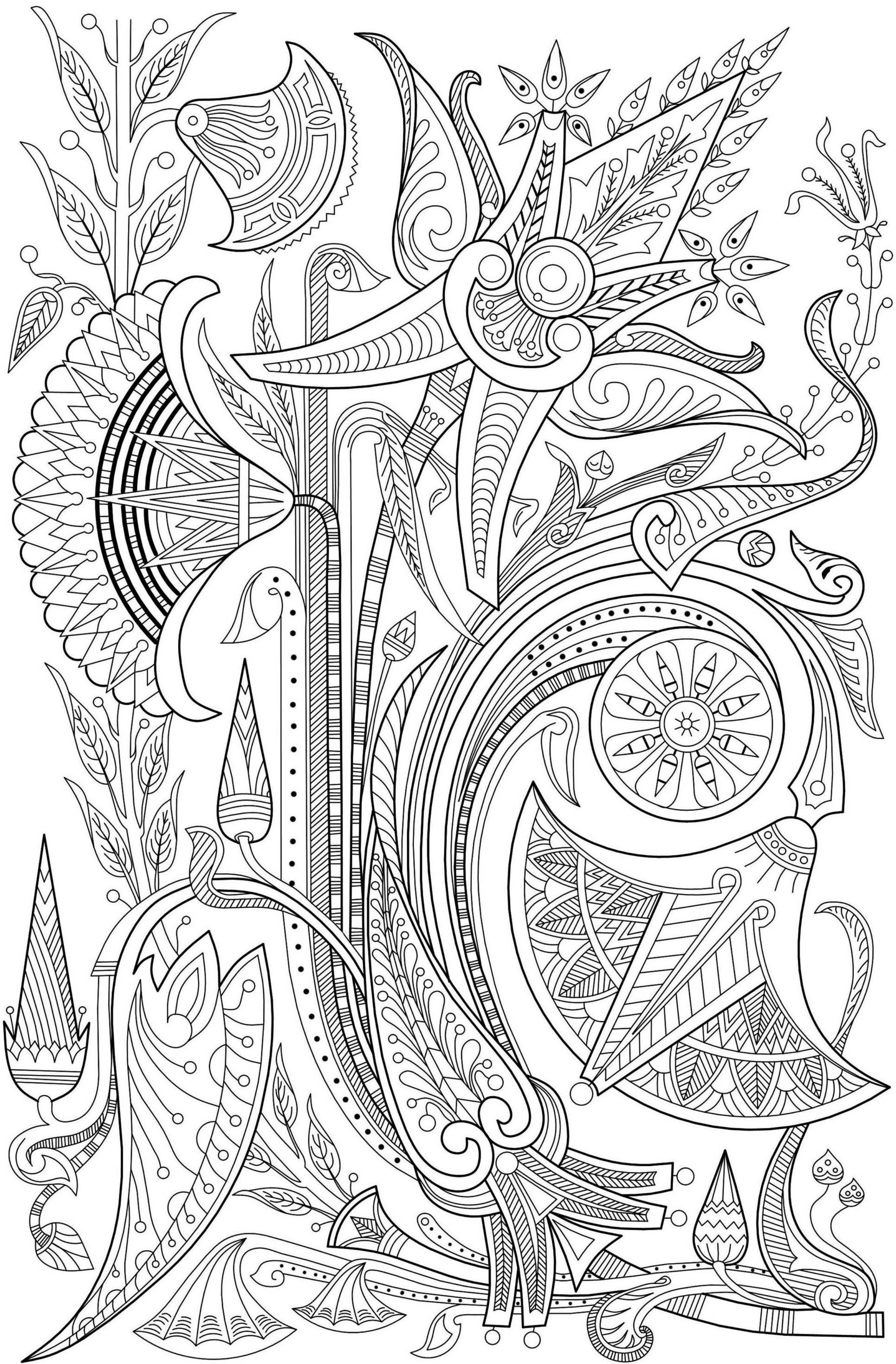
Lamp-Shades.

OCTAGONAL lamp-shade of glazed paper, scalloped according to illustration. On each section is pasted a spray of cretonne or dried flowers; and a narrow line of stamped gold paper is arranged round the edge, and each section is covered with fine white Mechlin net. The eight parts are then bound with ribbon, stitched together, and finished off with bows and ends according to the illustration.



Needle-Book.

THE design of needle book is shown open. It may be made of any material. It is bound with a fancy ribbon one-half inch wide. The cover of the book is six and one-half inches long, and two and one-quarter inches wide. Line it with a light-colored silk At one end make a pocket for holding papers of needles; and pieces of flannel worked with button-hole stitch on the edges, and fastened to the silk by herring-bone stitch, are put in for needles.



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