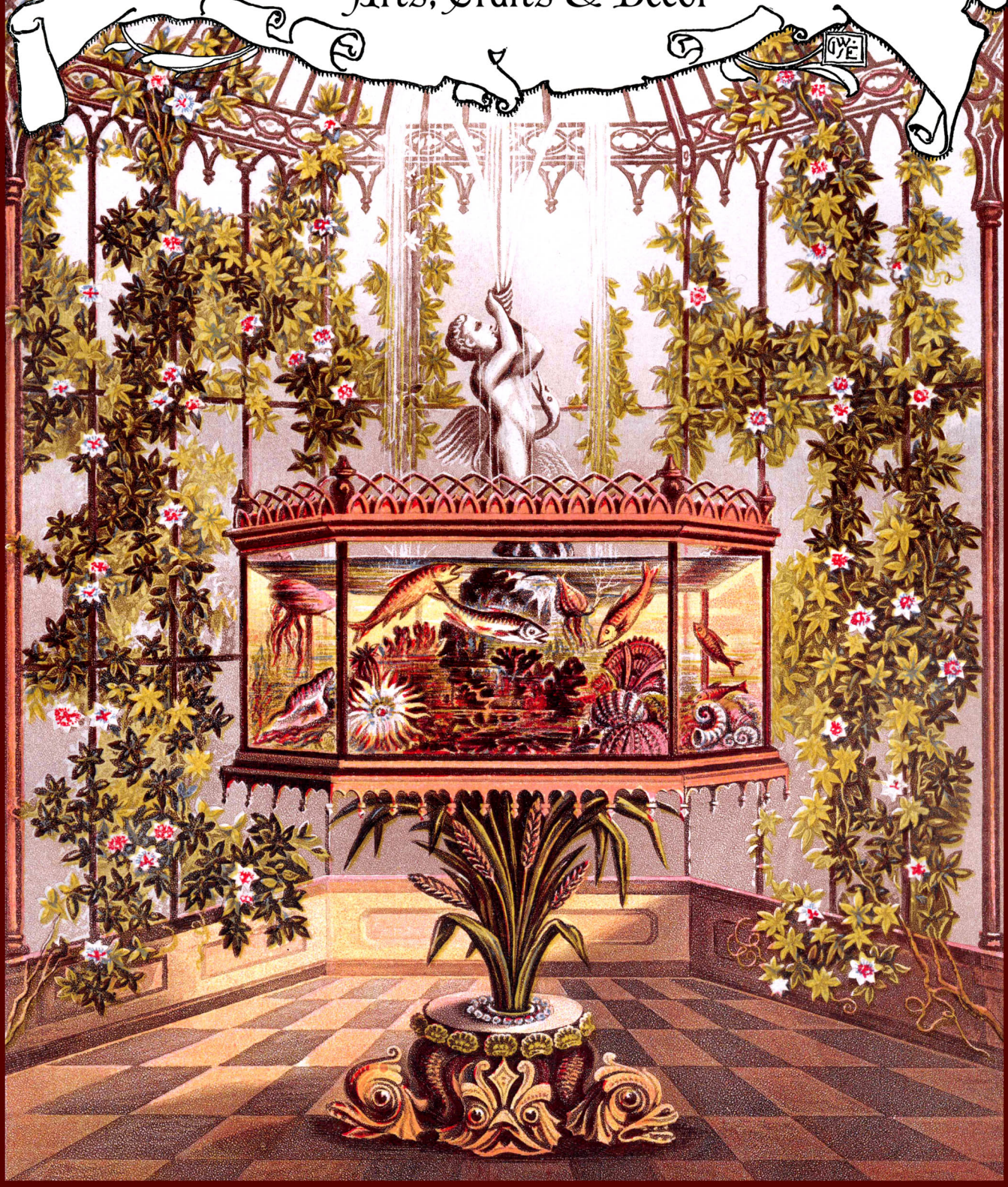
Victorian Creative

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



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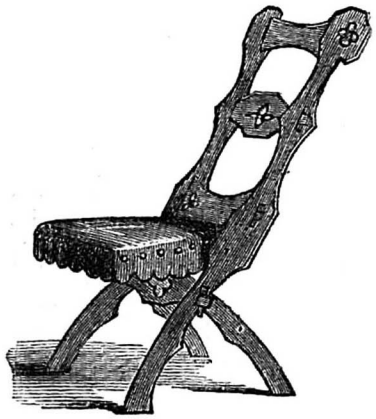
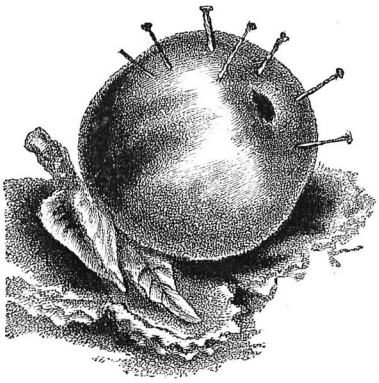


Fig. 9.



Victorian Creative

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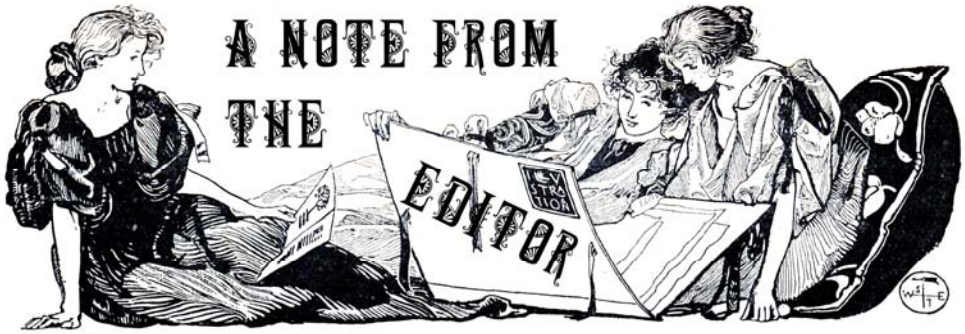
ABOUT OUR COVER: This charming print depicts an elegant Victorian conservatory with a (rather crowded) aquarium. It comes from the wonderful 4-volume compendium of "useful information," *Cassell's Household Guide,* published in 1884 - a collection that has provided many wonderful articles for this magazine!



MATERIAL GIRLS, PART III

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 to the Victorian era. Here's a look at some of the materials we can still find to make our Victorian projects as authentic as possible.

The first key in choosing "authentic" Victorian materials is to remember the Victorian passion for using items from nature. For example, many Victorian books on home crafts and needlework have extensive sections on the use of pine cones. The simplest types of cone crafts generally involve gluing cones to baskets—something that we often see today. However, Victorians didn't stop there. They used cones (as well as seeds and seed-pods) in a huge range of projects, including boxes, work-baskets, picture frames, free-standing forms such as crosses, and even small items of furniture, such as shelves and what-nots.

The nice thing about pine cones is that they tend to be free. Look for them on your walks through your neighborhood, or a neighborhood park. If you live in the right part of the country, look for "gum-balls," the pods from sweet-gum trees.

Autumn leaves were another Victorian favorite. These might be pressed, dried, or "skeletonized" and then incorporated into a variety of projects. Nuts and seeds were also widely used. When I take my walks in the fall, it's all I can do to keep from gathering up the bright red seeds that fall from the dogwood trees; I just long to make a necklace from them. Keep an eye out for naturally drying flowers ("everlastings") and dry or dryable grasses.

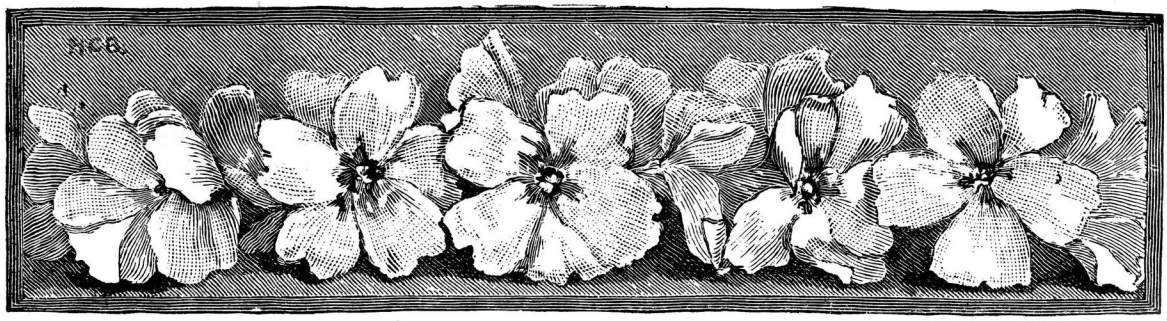
Shells were used in a variety of Victorian projects, such as the shell flowers featured in our March 25 issue. For most Victorians, this would mean purchasing shells from suppliers. Even if one took one's holiday at the sea-shore, one wasn't likely to be able to find the variety of shells needed to create flowers, or shell-covered boxes (just like the ones you can buy today as souvenirs). Feathers were another common material; these might be incorporated into dried flower or makart bouquets (see our October 8 issue), or added into a needlework project.

Finally, of course, there is the constant use of fabrics. Victorians tended to cover just about anything imaginable with fabric; this was the ideal way to repurpose an uninteresting discard and make it into something useful and beautiful. Small containers, covered with fabric, became baskets, waste-paper receptacles or umbrella stands; boxes became treasure chests or useful holders for gloves and handkerchiefs.

Keep in mind that the *underlying* element of some project that you might wish to cover with fabric, pine cones or shells can be nearly anything. Again, one of the key elements of Victorian household crafts was to take something ugly, unwanted or discarded, and convert it into something useful and elegant. An old tin can, covered with seeds or shells, becomes a lovely item to hold pens or pencils on one's desk. An unwanted box can become an elegantly decorated jewel case. Even a single large shell, with a hinge, can become a small coin purse. (I've even come across an article on how to convert a large marrow bone into a desk accessory, but honestly, this seemed a bit of a stretch.)

Creating "authentic" Victorian arts and crafts doesn't necessarily mean slavishly following Victorian designs and copying Victorian images. It can also mean adapting Victorian-style materials to projects that reflect the *spirit* of Victorian design. Creativity and originality are all part of the process!

—Moira Allen
editors@victorianvoices.net



PYROGRAPHY UPON GLASS: A NEW ART.

PYROGRAPHY—better known, perhaps, by the humbler name of "poker work"—is by this time well established in popular favour; but a new departure in the art has been made of late which proves that an immense variety of fresh effects is yet to be gained, and that there are many novel uses to which the work has yet to be applied. Until the last few months wood was the only material that had met with any success as a foundation for poker work, and even with this the scent caused by the burning and the unavoidable fumes have proved an objection to many sensitive workers; while those venturesome enthusiasts who have tried the art upon leather and kid have found cause to repent them of their zeal.

At last glass has been taken as a foundation for pyrography, and its very freedom from the disadvantages possessed by wood—to say nothing of leather—will do much to secure the popularity of the work. In the first place, there is no smoke and no smell, and in the second place, there is no trouble of tracing the design upon it; and this will be found no small recommendation in the eyes of an inexperienced worker. It is easily understood that a "point"—as the poker is called—that is intended to make an impression upon so hard a surface as that of glass, must be considerably hotter than one used to scorch a design upon wood. Hence a special point is sold for the purpose. This may be obtained from Messrs. Abbott Bros., of Southall, who are the originators of the work, or from any of their agents. A point that has been used upon wood will not make a clear outline upon glass, and it is therefore advisable to invest in one of these new pokers, and to keep it solely for glass work.

Most "poker" artists are acquainted with Messrs. Abbott's Vulcan machine, which comprises a bottle of benzine with tubes, bellows, and point all complete; but there appears to be much difficulty in getting the benzine of sufficiently pure quality to do its work well. So widespread is this difficulty that, on the occasion of a visit recently paid to the factory, I was told that machines had been returned from all parts of the kingdom as faulty, but, when tested, it was proved to be the benzine and not the machine that was of inferior quality. To remedy this a clever little contrivance is now sold, to be attached to the neck of the bottle of spirit, and which connects it with the tubes in the usual way. By means of a tiny tap fixed to this connection, an additional supply of air can be had when

HERALDIC DESIGN FROM ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF LORD SHREWSBURY.

the strength of the benzine is too great, and the air can be shut off when the spirit is not sufficiently powerful to get the point to the degree of heat required. When needed for glass, the platinum point should be nearly at white heat, and should glow like an electric lamp in miniature.

The design chosen should be clearly drawn with a fine pen or pencil upon white paper, so that, when placed flat on a board, or on the table, it is seen clearly through the glass when this is laid upon it. It is very important that the side of the glass upon which the etching is to be executed should be quite dry, clean, and free from grease. It is a good plan to rub it thoroughly with a piece of rag dipped in turpentine

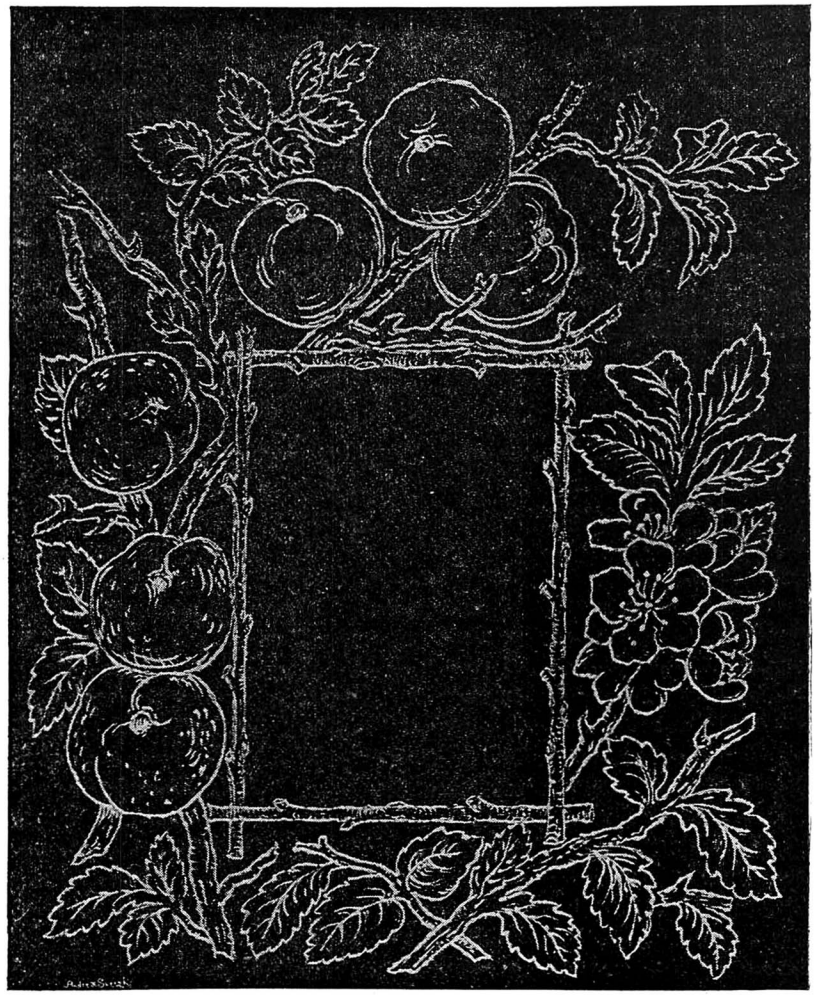
HERALDIC DESIGN FOR HOUSEHOLD GLASS.

before beginning operations, and it should, even after that, be polished with a leather. Also, it is advisable to keep a piece of stout paper or cardboard under the hand when at work upon the upper portion of the design. In choosing a sheet of glass, care should be taken not only that it is good in quality and free from flaws, but that it is at least an inch larger all round than the design to be reproduced upon it. If necessary, it can be cut to any special shape required after the drawing is finished. The reason for this is that the heat occasionally causes the glass to split at the edges.

Yet another advantage of glass as a material upon which to practise pyrography is that there is no trouble involved in shading or in varying the strokes beyond the ordinary outlining and stippling. A decided and regular pressure is needed to get a clear outline, the heat being kept uniform by the steady working of the bellows with the left hand. Tiny splinters of glass fall out in every direction over the surface as the point pursues its course, but they are soon blown away, and the artist need have no fear of her eyes unless she is working furiously and, I may add, carelessly. Although the work is especially easy of execution, there should be no excuse for slovenly performances, and a false stroke, once made, can never be remedied. The effect of the heat should be to trace the outlines in frosted glass, as it were, upon the clear material, and these outlines should stand out all the more sharply owing to the absence of any "grain" to turn them aside in the slightest degree. The frosted effect is not considered sufficiently clear for small and intricate designs; but, by taking the blade of a sharp knife, and by scraping the work with it rather vigorously, the particles of the surface of the glass which produce the frosted look fall out, and leave the device standing out in fine, even lines upon the material, the result being not unlike engraved glass.

For this reason the work is well suited for execution upon tumblers, wine-glasses, decanters, and, indeed, household glass of any kind. Heraldic designs—such as those on this and the preceding page—are particularly successful; the design illustrated forms part of the armorial bearings of Lord Shrewsbury, to whose order Messrs. Abbott recently constructed a screen decorated with this new pyrography. When etching upon wine-glasses, or anything of the kind, the advice above given against carrying the design too near the edges must not be forgotten.

A convenient article to practise upon is one of those inexpensive photograph holders which consist merely of a sheet of glass laid over a card, the two being held together with a brass clip, and supported at the back by a "rest" of the same metal.



DESIGN FOR PHOTOGRAPH FRAME.
(*By Mr. Haité.*)

The design shown on page 40 is by Mr. Haité, the well-known designer for "poker work," and as there is very little fine etching about it, the veriest tyro should find it well within her powers. This style of pyrography has been adapted to mirrors by working at the back and having the glass silvered; but I scarcely think that the progress we have lately made in artistic matters will allow us to decorate a surface which loses all its utility by being thus treated. A far greater success is likely to be achieved by utilising the frosted designs upon the lower panes of glass windows through which the outlook is an eyesore. Rather an elaborate device carried out in this simple manner will effectually cloud the glass without interfering much with the transmission of light.

The fashionable screens, of which each panel is divided into two portions, afford an excellent opportunity for the display of skill in this direction. The lower part of the panels is usually filled in with brocade or embroidery, but the upper division is generally much curved, and is provided, very often, with nothing more ornamental than a plain sheet of glass, which, owing to its inconspicuous appearance, is apt to become soon broken. This is not so likely to happen when the glass is covered with an appropriate design in "poker work." Amongst the hundreds of thousands of articles made of wood by Messrs. Abbott to meet the demands of the amateur artist, are many of these screens; and their elegant shape, when well decorated, renders them no mean addition to the furniture of any room. Many experiments have been made in painting, staining, and gilding the outlines produced on the glass, but at present no one trial has met with sufficient success to exclude all other decorations. The roughened outlines "take" enamel perfectly, and they may be gilded with equal facility. Should a mistake be made, or the effect be unsatisfactory, the paint can be removed by washing the glass over with turpentine, and the etched design will be left uninjured.

The following method of decorating the engraving is quoted from an article by Mrs. Maude, who is an authority on the subject:—"I first, with some of Winsor & Newton's Renaissance gold paint, one shilling the box, put a layer of gold entirely over part of the design, taking care to fill with it all the etched lines. A pad of soft rag, slightly damped with turpentine, removed most of the gold from the flat surfaces between the lines, and an ordinary paper stump, with a rag over it dipped in turpentine, cleared away the rest. It was now a fine gold tracery in the clear glass, and upon reversing the plate, it appeared to be in relief upon the surface, although really only showing through from the other side. Of course, any other lustra colour could be used instead of gold. A thick coat of ivory cloisonné enamel, laid on very carefully, so as not to drag the gold from the incised lines, gave a fresh effect of ivory and gold from the other side, and rendered the glass opaque."

Thus treated, the engraved glass could be mounted very effectively as panels for small doors, and it would also answer extremely well for finger-plates. For fireplace screens it is a good plan to make a movable back of stout cardboard covered with gilt or silver paper, plain or fancy, arranged so that it is held in position with small brass buttons (to be had from any dealer in fretwork requisites). By varying the colour at the back of the glass, the screen may present many different effects, according to the tone of the general decoration of the room.

To such workers as are possessed of a fair amount of ingenuity and originality, the fact that glass pyrography is as yet little known or developed will invest it with an additional charm, and their achievements will be all the more appreciated from the knowledge that at present, at any rate, they will not see replicas of their favourite productions in the drawing-rooms of their acquaintances, or at every bazaar they may chance to visit.

ELLEN T. MASTERS.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

Remains of omelettes can be cut up into thin strips and used for soups. A delicious addition.

Remains of stale bread can be mixed up with sour or fresh milk and made into a paste, adding a little sugar, allspice, and currants. Baked in a well-greased pan this makes a tasty dish, especially if served with a custard or a little jam.

Remains of cabbage can be chopped and served up as salad.

Remains of stale cake can be dipped in milk, covered with egg and breadcrumbs and fried.

Remains of ham mixed with butter sauce make an appetising addition to fish covers.

Remains of potatoes can be mashed, mixed with a little milk and an egg, rolled into *croûtons*, covered with breadcrumbs, and fried in swimming butter.

ROOT VEGETABLES.

Onions may be tied together in strings and hung up in a dark dry place, or put into a string bag (an old piece of garden netting answers this purpose very well), and hung up. If onions are allowed to lie on a stone floor, they are liable to get soft and bad, and also they often begin to grow, and are unfit for use.

Carrots and parsnips may be stored in a dry cellar. The earth should be shaken from their roots, and they should be quite dry before they are stored away.

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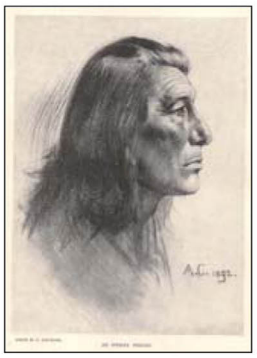
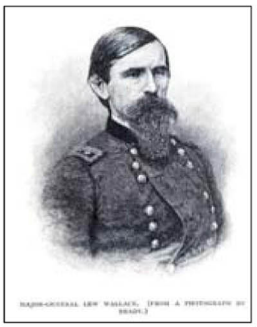
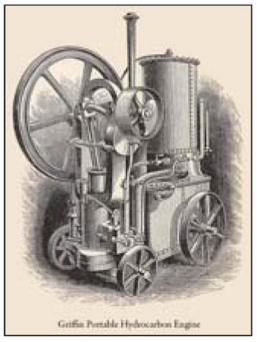


Native Americans

Eminient Victorians



The Civil War



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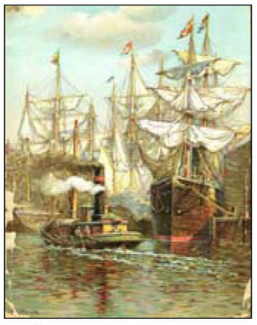
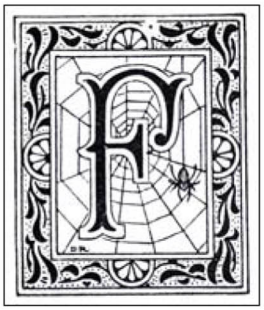


Ships, Boats, Seascapes & Sailors



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ODE
TO AN ODIOUS OLD DRESS.

BY MISS E. CONOMY.

Poor thrice turned garment with
Thy threadbare air,
Can I thy faded form
Again repair ?
Turn yet once more thy well-
Worn narrow skirt,
Now fringed with specimens
Of city dirt?
Can I thy ruffles change
To pleatings wide,
And cover up the stains
On either side ;
Give thy close sleeve a
Graceful, easy flow,
And piece it so that
Nobody will know?
Thy shabby boddice can I
Then restore,
And shape the trimming
A la Pompadour?
Thy overskirt loop high
With careless grace,
Yet hide with cunning the
Oft-mended place?
Goddess of Fashion, at whose
Shrine we bow,
Lend me thine aid, sadly I
Need it now;
Inspire my hand with skill
To turn the stuff,
And make the scanty pattern
Seem enough.
And when I wear it,
Howsoe'er I feel,
Grant I may look
Exceedingly genteel.
May all beholders think it
A new gown,
And me the best dressed lady
In the town.

THE HOUSEHOLD MECHANIC.
CHEAP, SIMPLE, AND TASTEFUL HOME-MADE FURNITURE

As being also an article of extremely simple construction, we give the stool, Fig. 1. Take three pieces of three-quarter-inch board, one foot ten inches long and two and a half wide from the legs. They are arranged in an equilateral triangle, of which each side at the bottom measures fifteen inches, and at the top eight. The method by which they are screwed together, by means of cross pieces of half-inch board, is shown in the plan of the top, Fig. 2. This exhibits the construction before the top, a circular piece of inch plank, one foot in diameter, is screwed on. When this is fixed, canvas is tacked partially over, stuffed and fastened down; oil-cloth is then put on, and secured round the edge with ornamental brass nails. Eighteen-pence would buy everything required for making it.

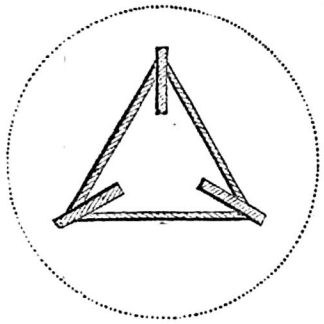


Fig. 2.

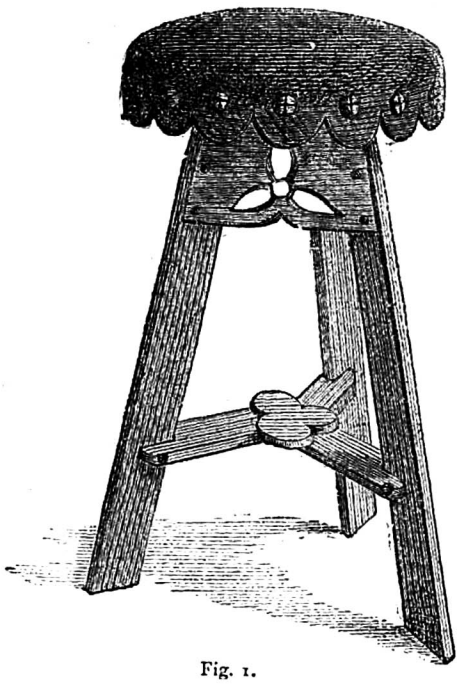


Fig. 1.

Almost similar in construction, as regards its lower part, to the table last described, is the writing table, Fig. 3, the only difference being that the top is carried on a frame-work which passes all round, and is dovetailed together at the corners, instead of being supported by cross-ledgers merely; the materials used are of the same kind, and the top is covered with oilcloth in a similar manner. After this last has been stretched over the top, the pieces forming the back and sides and the strip in front (which are dovetailed together at the corners) are screwed on. The upright pieces which form the divisions between the pigeon-holes, are next placed in position and screwed from the back; then the board, forming the shelf, is fastened down on them; and, lastly, the strips passing in front of them at bottom and top (the last indented to form arches) are screwed on. The whole of this superstructure is of half-inch board. The ornamental open work is sawn out with a frame-saw, and the edges bevelled into a concave moulding with a gouge. The dimensions of this table are, height, 2 ft. 4 in.; breadth, 3 ft. 3 in.; depth, 2 ft. 3 in. Cost of materials, 7s.

Greater outlay and labour are involved in the construction of the bookcase, Fig. 4. The total height of this article, including crest-board at top, is 7 ft. 9 in.; the breadth is 4 ft. The lower part forms a cupboard, and is made separately; the height of this is 3 ft. 2 in., and the depth 1 ft. 3 in. The ends are of ¾ in. board; ledgers (shown in section at A A, Fig. 5) are screwed across them, outside, at top and bottom. Strips, let into the ends, pass from end to end at the back, as at B B; also diagonal braces, C C. At the front is a strip similar to B, and let in at top; but at the bottom a wider strip, screwed on only. All this is extremely simple. Making the doors would appear to be a matter of greater difficulty to the amateur; but by adopting a simple expedient, the usual complex mode of putting together a door with mortice and tenon joints is avoided—*two thicknesses of board are used and clamped together.* This is shown in Fig. 6; lengths of ½ in. match-board are arranged vertically, to form the back of the door; over these a piece of French wall paper, with dark moreen ground and raised gold pattern, in imitation of embossed leather, is stretched, and on this the ½ inch wood, forming the front, indicated by dotted lines, is placed and screwed to the back. As the top and bottom pieces, A and B, are placed horizontally—that is, at right angles to the back pieces—perfect strength is secured. A door may be constructed in this manner with little trouble, and the embossed paper makes a handsome panel. The doors have to be fitted on with proper locks, bolts, and hinges, and when the top (of ¾ in. wood, projecting 2 inches beyond the doors and ends) is screwed down with flat-headed screws, this part of the structure is complete.

The bookcase proper is 5 ft. high without the crest-board, and 10½ in. deep. Pieces of ¾ in. board, dovetailed together at the corners, form the top, bottom, and sides;

the back is strengthened by diagonal braces, like those used in the cupboard, and the front by a single cross-strip at top. Ledgers are screwed to the ends to carry the shelves; and the crest-board at top, which is for decoration only, is screwed outside. The construction of the doors, which is in principle the same as that of those for the cupboard, is explained in Fig. 7; the dotted lines, as before, indicate the front pieces. These, as will be observed, project beyond the back ones at the edges, and have to afford a resting-place for the glass, which has to be fixed in with putty. In both the upper and lower parts the back piece will project ¾ in. beyond the front in the right-hand door, to form a ledge against which the left-hand door may shut. The backs of both cupboard and bookcase are covered with canvas, and lined within with paper to exclude dust. Such a bookcase will hold about 200 volumes of ordinary sizes. The cost of the materials will be about 25s.

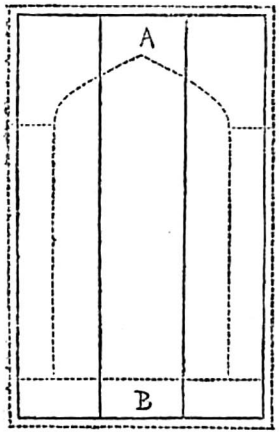


Fig. 6.

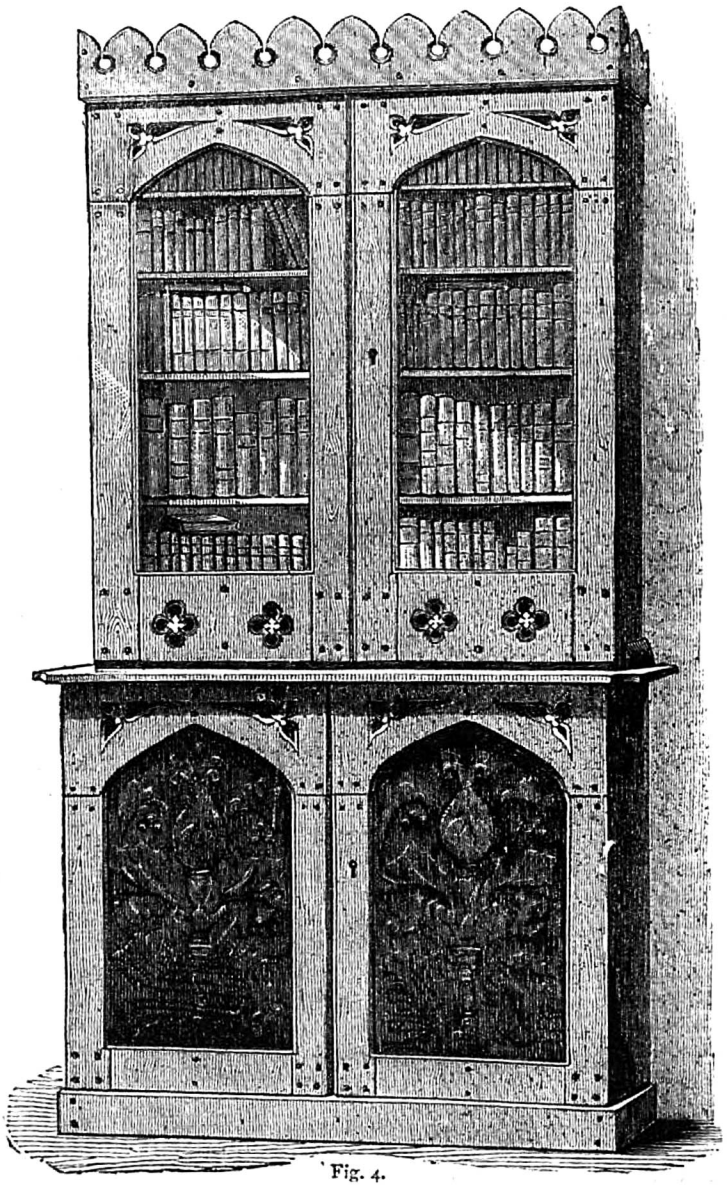


Fig. 4.

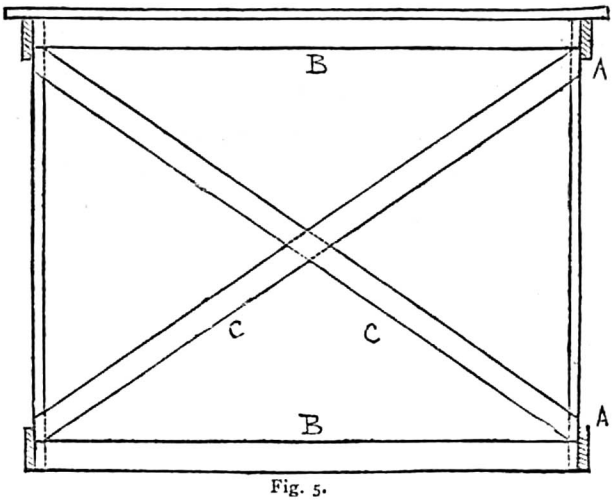


Fig. 5.

Our next example is a sideboard, Fig. 8. Its height, exclusive of the ornamental back, is 3 ft. 2 in.; its breadth, 6 ft. 5 in.; its depth, 2 ft. The sides of the two cupboard-like portions which form the ends are of ¾ in. board, placed vertically, and screwed together by means of ledgers at top and bottom; the hinder portions of these upright pieces, 2 in. wide, are carried through the top, as shown at A, and serve to support the ornamental back-board. Three-quarter inch strips pass diagonally between these end cupboards (as shown in the engraving), and are let into the backs of the inner upright pieces; and in front strips run at top and bottom from end to end. The panels in the doors are of the same material (imitation embossed leather) as

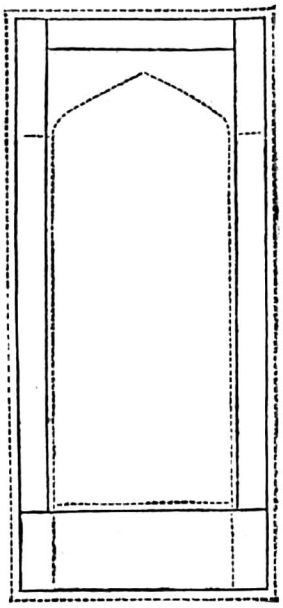


Fig. 7.


Fig. 10.

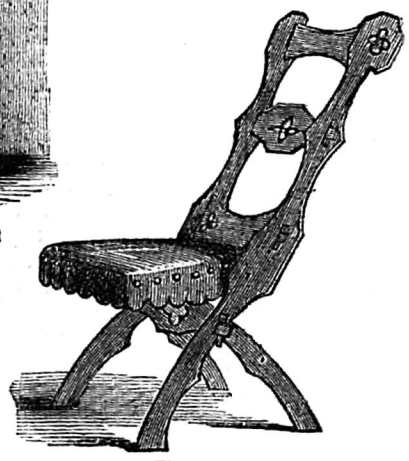


Fig. 9.

those shown in the lower part of the bookcase on the previous page. The spaces within the ends may either be fitted with shelves as cupboards, or with drawers; if the latter is determined on, considerably more labour, as well as more material, will be required; but the amateur is scarcely advised to attempt drawers unless he has acquired considerable proficiency in carpentering, since he will find them far more difficult of construction than any part of the articles given in this series of designs. It is by no means easy to make drawers fit accurately, and if ill made they will constantly stick and get out of order; if made, however, the corners should be dovetailed together, and the bottoms let in with a rebate, or, failing the proper tools to do this, they may be simply screwed on. The whole sideboard must be strongly held together by ½ in. match-board, screwed with flat-headed screws from behind, and running horizontally from end to end at the back. That portion of this match-boarding which appears above the top should be decorated with fretwork openings, cut out with the bow-saw and finished with the gouge as in the bookcase. The top should consist of ¾ or 1 in. board, and should overlap the ends and front by 2 inches.

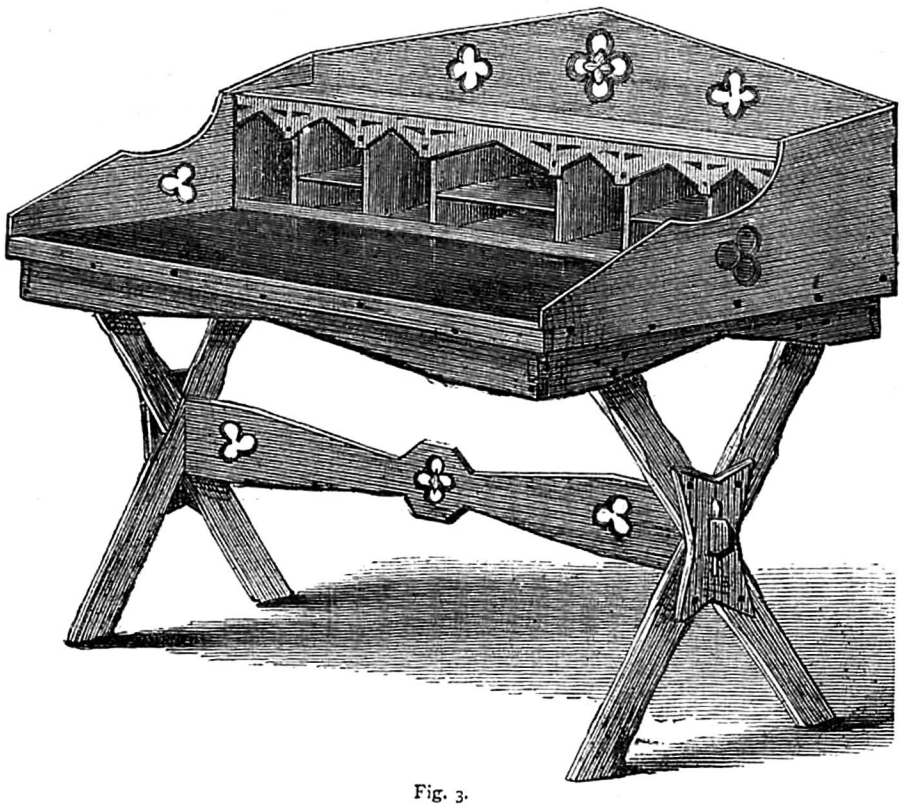


Fig. 3.

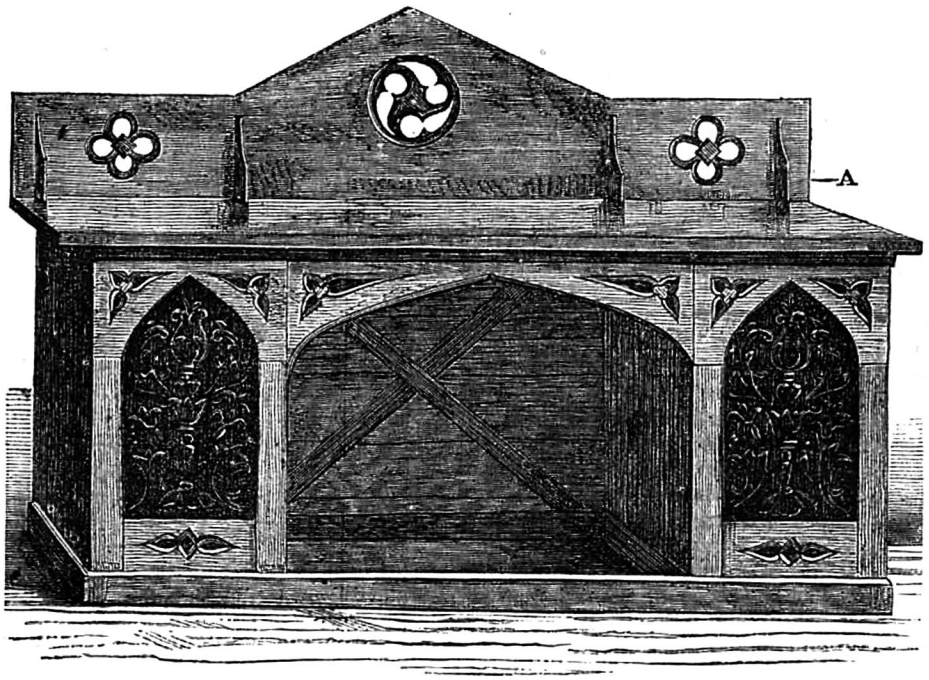


Fig. 8.

Fig. 9 is a chair of primitive simplicity as to form, but which will be found both strong and comfortable. Its total height is 2 ft. 9 in.; the height of the seat is 1 ft. 4 in; its breadth, 1 ft. 2 in. The six pieces of wood which form the sides of the seat, the back, and legs, are cut from ¾ in. board; the pieces across the back and seat are of ½ in. The seat is stuffed and covered with oilcloth, fastened on with ornamental brass nails, like that of the stool; as are also the seat and back of Fig. 10, an armchair on the Glastonbury model, in which similar materials are used; but in this, for the sake of greater comfort, the seat should be 1½ in. lower than in the last, and also of larger dimensions, about 20 inches broad by 18 deep. The construction of both these articles is well explained by the woodcuts.

The materials for the sideboard would cost about 15s.; for the armchair, 3s. 6d.; and for the ordinary chair, 1s. 9d.

All these articles will require a final polishing to render them complete. If the natural colour of the deal, a little heightened, is not objected to (and to this we are ourselves partial), a good coat of varnish laid on equally with a brush will suffice; or, to give a somewhat deeper tinge, French polish may be used in the same way. Some persons may prefer to use red pine boards instead of deal; they are slightly more expensive, but are more easily worked, and these when merely varnished or French polished assume a good rich colour. If, however, an oak, a walnut, or mahogany colour is desired, prepared stains for imparting them may be bought at any ordinary oil and colourman's. The selection of a particular kind must depend on individual taste. These should be applied according to the directions given with them; the varnish being brushed over afterwards. But if a jet black like

ebony should be wished for, the reader is advised to follow the instructions given in our article on Wood-carving, page 184, vol. ii., and he should remember that pinewood takes this ebony stain far better than deal. We should also recommend to his consideration our other remarks on wood-staining given in that place.

The appearance of a suite of this furniture is by no means to be despised, and, as the reader will see from the figures we have given, the outlay involved is inconsiderable. It is true that the prices mentioned are for materials only, but it must be remembered that the labour spent is to be considered in the light of relaxation. There is a large class of men whose work is sedentary and, to some extent, mental, of whom clerks may be taken as a type, who require some evening occupation which would afford bodily exercise, be interesting, and at the same time form a complete relief to their daily toil. To such persons we commend this work; they will find it combine all these requisites, and, in addition, save them many pounds at the furniture broker's.

In conclusion, we may cite the case of a young man, an acquaintance of our own, employed as draughtsman in a manufactory, who had little inclination for music halls, and the like, the ordinary insipid amusements of his class, and who, therefore, spent his evenings in reading. He was country bred, and so sedentary a life told unfavourably upon his health. His medical adviser pointed out the cause of his complaint, and suggested, "Why not spend your evenings in carpentry?" The patient took the hint, and, being of an inventive turn of mind, made some designs for furniture, bought tools, and began to carry them out. The exercise soon restored his health, and he became interested in his work. He removed to unfurnished lodgings, and gradually surrounded himself with every necessary and ornamental article of his own making; while the beauty of his designs still renders his furniture matter of wonder and delight to all who see it. In this instance the amateur possessed unusual ingenuity, and his profession specially qualified him for a designer, but there are many who do not possess these advantages who may yet derive some benefit from his example.

ODDS AND ENDS.

To destroy Crickets or Beetles.—Put some strong snuff in the cracks and holes from whence they come. The parings of cucumbers will, if strewn about near their holes, drive them away.

To destroy Flies.—Strong green tea, sweetened well, and set in saucers about the places where they are most numerous, will attract and destroy them. This plan is much to be preferred to the use of those horrible fly-papers, which catch the poor insects alive, cruelly torturing them while starving them to death.

When to buy Candles.—Always purchase those made in winter, as they are the best; and buy a good stock of them at once, as they improve when kept for some time in a cool place.

Discoloured Wax Candles.—If wax candles discolour by keeping, rub them over with a piece of flannel dipped in spirits of wine.

Lighting Candles.—When candles are difficult to light, if the wicks are dipped in spirits of wine they will ignite readily.

A Scratched or Defaced Table.—If a table is defaced or scratched, it may be sent to a cabinet-maker's, and planed and re-polished, which will make it look like a new one.

To clean an Oil-can.—Drain the can thoroughly of all dregs; then take a small mop with a long stick—such as is used for cleaning lamp glasses—or a piece of rag tied to a stick will answer the same purpose; with this wipe out the can all round from any sediment. Have ready a strong, warm, brown soap lather, with which cleanse the can; then rinse it in cold water, and drain it well afterwards.

Mahogany Furniture, if made in winter, and brought immediately into a warm room, is very likely to crack. The dining-table should be placed across the fireplace, as if placed lengthways, it renders it more liable to crack and warp.

To make Rosewood Furniture look well, it should be only rubbed with a soft cloth a little every day, for if polish, or bees'-wax and turpentine be used, they spoil the appearance.

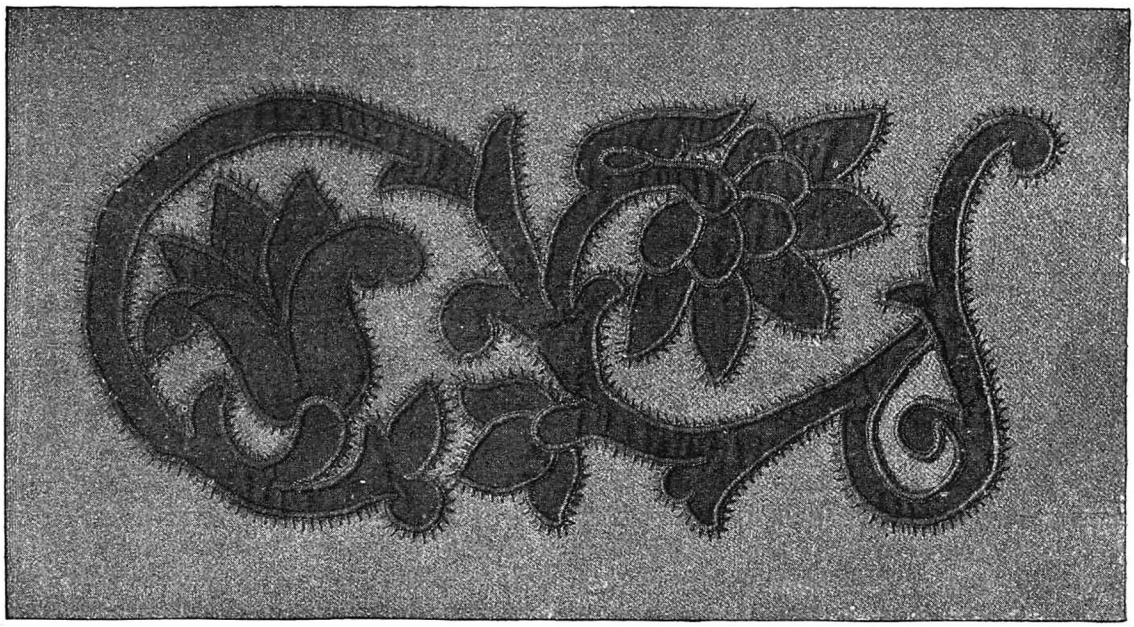
India-rubber Blacking.—Ivory black, 15 lbs.; 11¼ lbs. of treacle. Mix, with a ¼ lb. of dissolved gum, 5 gallons of vinegar, 6 lbs. of oil of vitriol, and 2¼ lbs. of india-rubber oil.

Scrap Jars.—These are useful in either parlour, drawing-room, or library, and consist of an ornamental jar to put waste paper or clippings in. If for a drawing-room, a china one is most suitable; for the library, we have seen the common large unglazed jars used, painted in oil to imitate china and afterwards varnished; for a sitting-room, flowers and patterns cut from chintzes, pasted on, then varnished. If done tastefully, they look exceedingly well. The jars should be selected with small mouths, to hide the contents as much as possible.

TO MAKE SWEET JAR.

By the following formula a sweet jar may be made which will retain its fragrance for twenty years and upwards. When roses are in perfection, gather them upon a fine dry day; pick the petals from the stalks and green parts; and when you have half a peck of rose-leaves, take a china bowl and strew some common salt over the bottom; then put in two or three handfuls of rose-leaves and strew salt over them; and so on, with alternate layers of rose-leaves and salt, till you have put in the whole quantity. Cover the top with salt, and press the leaves down gently with a plate. Let it remain four or five days, stirring, turning, and separating the leaves once a day; and when you perceive the leaves to have become very moist, and water to be drawn from them, stir, and mix among them three ounces of allspice; this forms the stock. After three or four days, put it into the jar in which you intend to keep it, and add more allspice. The following ingredients may also be added without previous preparation:—One ounce broken cloves, one ounce bruised cinnamon, one ounce nutmeg, some whole allspice, some anise-root sliced thin, six grains of musk, and any sweet essential oil you may prefer; lavender water is excellent, and a little may be added at any time when you find the jar getting too dry. The following flowers, &c., are proper to be added at such times as they come in bloom:—A handful or two of fresh-gathered violets, picked from the stalks; some myrtle-leaves; a few clove pinks, picked from the stalks; some orange blossoms; an English orange or two; and, above all, some lavender freshly stripped from the spikes. These may be added yearly. The jar should be frequently shaken, particularly at first, and should be kept closely shut down. It may be refreshed occasionally with new rose-leaves, but they must always be prepared, as at first, with salt and allspice.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF TURKEY TWILL.



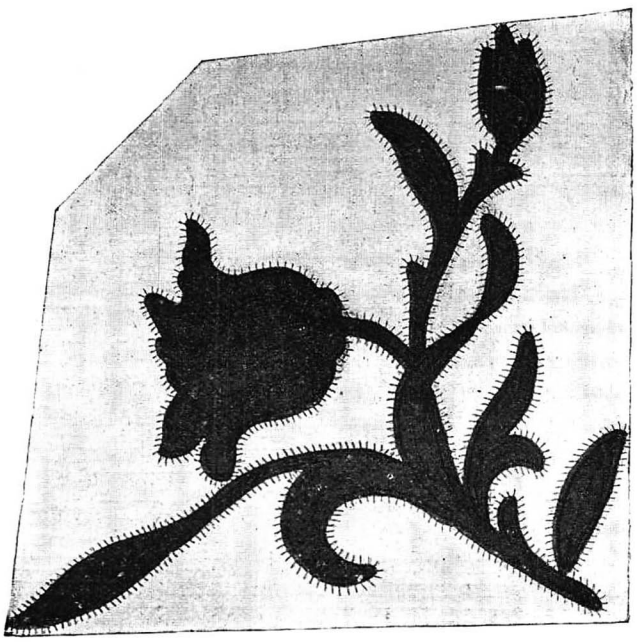
APPLIQUÉ BORDER.

MANY a worker who is not good at ordinary fancy work and feels she can never grasp the many stitches new and old of which she is always hearing, may take heart of grace and learn to her comfort that there is a kind of work called *appliqué*, which she can do and do well, even if she is competent only to work buttonhole stitches and back stitches. *Appliqué* is, of course, a very ancient form of embroidery. A well-known authority says :

"In the sixteenth and seventeenth century cut-work was much employed in Italy for large-flowered arabesque designs, commonly in velvet or silk, making columnar wall hangings, which are often very effective—giving the rooms an architectural decoration, without interfering with the arrangement of works of art, pictures, statues, and cabinets placed in front of them. Besides, it was supposed that the utmost effect of richness was thus accomplished with the least labour, and very large spaces and very high walls covered without losing anything of beauty by distance, as must be the case when the work's highest merit is the delicacy of the stitches and the details of form." From this to *appliqué* on Turkey twill seems a far cry, and yet most charming and certainly very inexpensive articles can be made for the decoration of homes, big and little, with it. When well done, it is effective, handsome, and as worthy of a place in the well-appointed houses of the rich as in the smaller homes of those whose means are limited.

The corner of a bedspread, which you see given in our illustration, is a capital example of this work. The bold design is done in red Turkey twill upon what is called poorhouse sheeting, a material which is easy to work upon, and is of a soft creamy white. Curtains, bedspreads, and many articles can be made with it, and it is satisfactory to know that both the sheeting and the twill wash remarkably well. This latter advantage is to be considered by those who live in towns.

Each corner of the bedspread is decorated



CORNER OF BEDSPREAD.

in the same way, and a large design to correspond is placed in the middle.

Turkey twill *appliqué* is very effective for sideboard cloths, and many articles of the kind.

Bolton sheeting and art serge, which can be had in a great variety of colours, are capital as foundations for this *appliqué*.

The border before you is a very handsome design suited for a bedspread, the pattern running all the way round, or else as an edge for curtains.

The serge upon which it is done is of a dull art green, and the design is well thrown up by it.

Now come directions for working this.

Choose conventional, bold designs. Many of the transfer patterns so easily procured answer admirably for this work.

Having your Turkey twill—which, by the way, should be of the best quality—laid very flat on a table before you, you should iron off your design, being careful to place it perfectly straight. When you have done this you next place it upon your sheeting, serge, or whatever material it is to go upon ; and here again I cannot too strongly urge you to be careful in putting it on very straight, for, once applied to the foundation, if discovered to be crooked, there is no remedy but to cut it all out and join on a new piece as best you can.

Tack your twill then down very carefully, and see that there are no wrinkles, and that the one material lies flatly and closely upon the other.

Ingrain embroidery cotton (not a very fine number) is the best for using, and a coarse needle, with eye large enough to carry the cotton easily, is also requisite.

Buttonhole your design down in a buttonhole stitch not quite a quarter of an inch deep. This must be perfectly regular, the upper part of it having no even stitches marring the line, and the edge being firm and even. Each stitch must be close to the preceding one, and, of course, as you see in Fig. 1, you work from left to right. The amount of buttonhole that you put in must be regulated by the character of the design. Examine the border and spray, and that will guide you, for a good deal more than the mere outline is treated in that way.

When you have completed this, take a pair of sharply-pointed scissors and cut the Turkey twill away from the foundation close to the buttonhole border.

This being done, put stitches, which are nothing but back stitches, all along the edge, as you see in the examples before you.

Work as you see in Fig. 2, from the buttonhole to the foundation, not *vice-versâ*, keeping your thread over your needle.

In Fig. 3 you see another way of proceeding in which the buttonhole stitches are nearly a quarter of an inch apart. This is the first stage in the stitch you see completed in Fig. 4.

Push your needle up through the material about a quarter of an inch from the border.

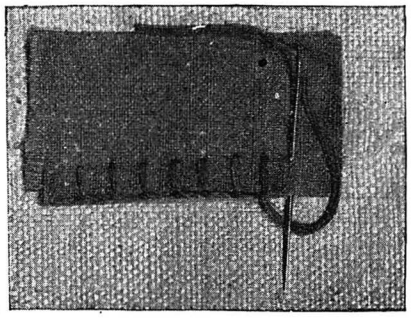


FIG. 1

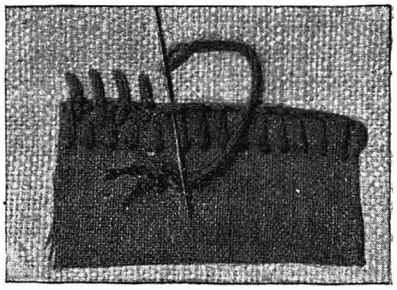


FIG. 2.

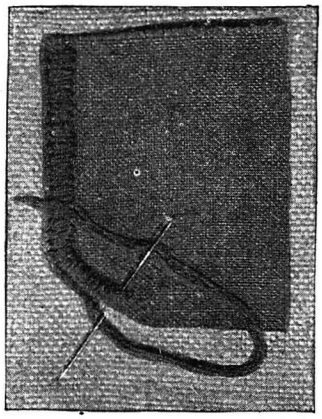


FIG. 3.

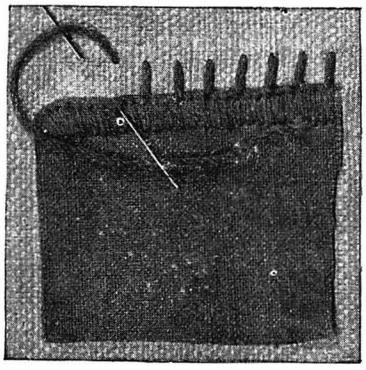


FIG. 4.

HOW THE STITCHES ARE MADE.

Then put it in just behind the thread at the edge between the two buttonhole stitches, keeping your working thread to the left.

Draw through, and then secure by a short stitch the bar just formed.

Turkey twill used thus in *appliqué* is capable of being very decorative, and many very handsome articles can be adorned with it.

CHEAP AND PRETTY.

It is not that which costs the most that is the most productive of pleasure. The truth of this remark one sees every day, and in nothing more clearly than in the matter of flowers.

We all love flowers in our rooms, or at all events, something green, whether we be rich or poor, idle or hard-working. I have often seen men and women trying to spare a penny on Saturday nights from their hard-earned and scanty wages to buy a few flowers or a bunch of green leaves at a street stall to brighten up their living room, and it always interests me. It is for this reason that I mention what I have very frequently seen in the rooms of sick ladies and on the dinner-tables of well-to-do people, but never in the cottage of the artisan or in the lodging of the poor, and I think it must be that they do not know of it, otherwise at no cost whatever they could always have something green and graceful about them.

The crowns of carrots, beet, turnips, and other like roots if cut about half an inch in thickness and placed in a saucer of water and exposed to the light, will in a few days send out young leaves, green or coloured, which will grow into pretty sprays six or eight inches in height, and in the case of turnips flower buds are produced.

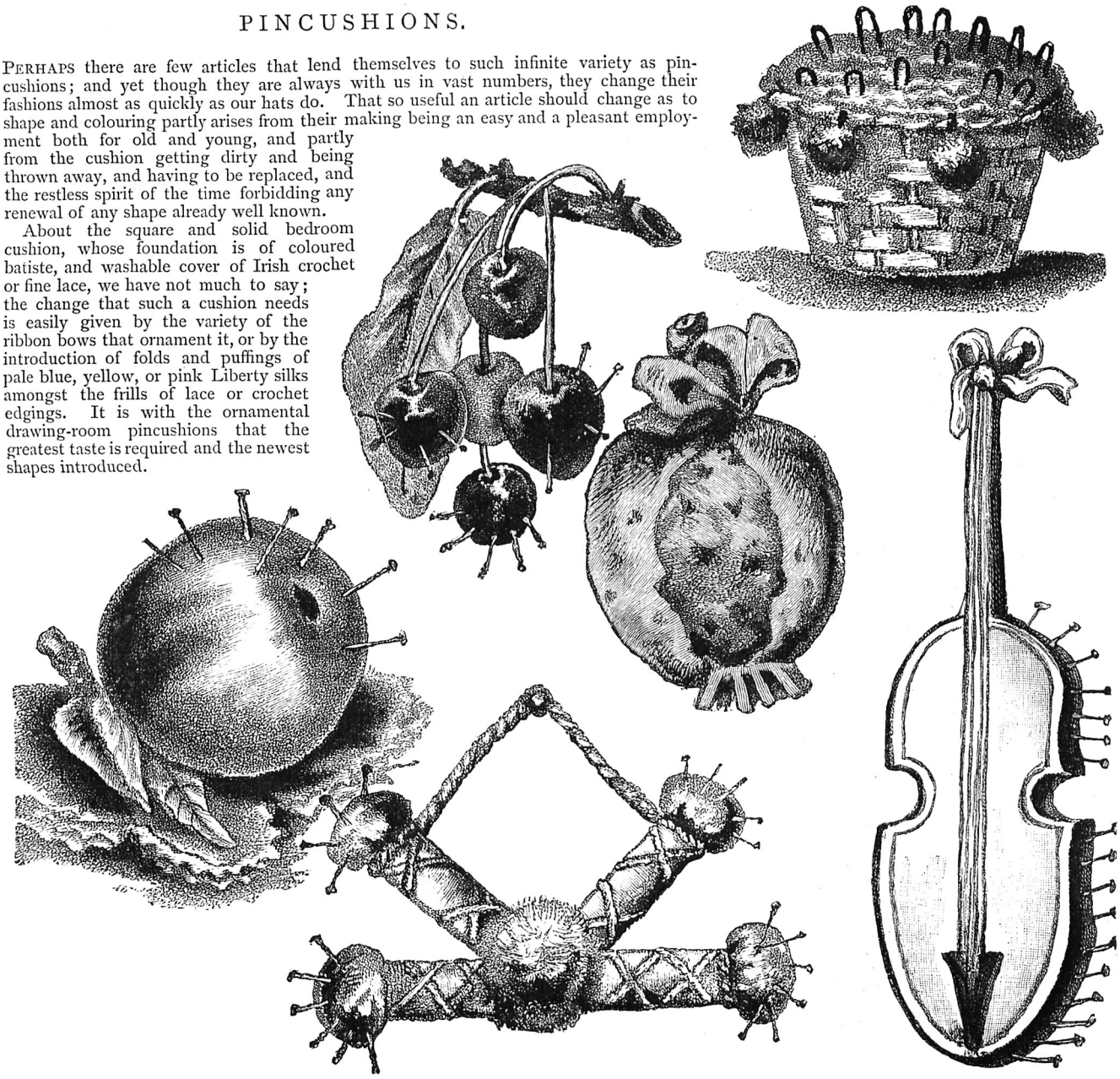
Dr. Cogswell, speaking of the beauty and grace of these productions at the Botanic Gardens the other day, said he thought the tops of these roots were nothing like so much used as they deserved to be, and people were unaware of the pretty and ornamental combinations which could be produced from them.

In the time of *Charles II. the young leaves* of the carrot so produced were used as personal ornaments by ladies, and I could add that many girls of my acquaintance use them still for personal adornment.

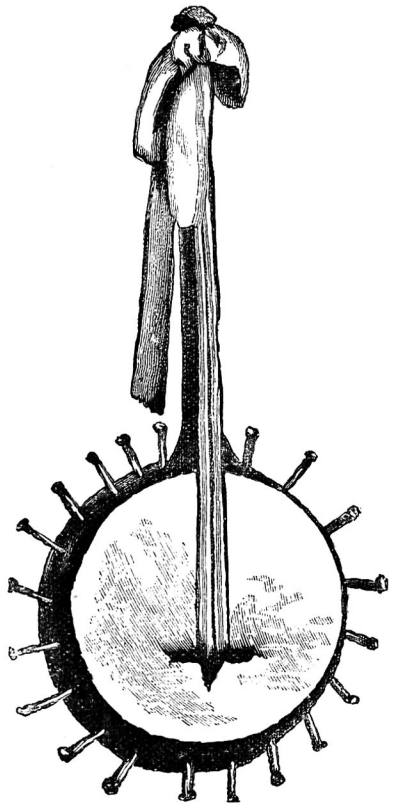
PINCUSHIONS.

Perhaps there are few articles that lend themselves to such infinite variety as pincushions; and yet though they are always with us in vast numbers, they change their fashions almost as quickly as our hats do. That so useful an article should change as to shape and colouring partly arises from their making being an easy and a pleasant employment both for old and young, and partly from the cushion getting dirty and being thrown away, and having to be replaced, and the restless spirit of the time forbidding any renewal of any shape already well known.

About the square and solid bedroom cushion, whose foundation is of coloured batiste, and washable cover of Irish crochet or fine lace, we have not much to say; the change that such a cushion needs is easily given by the variety of the ribbon bows that ornament it, or by the introduction of folds and puffings of pale blue, yellow, or pink Liberty silks amongst the frills of lace or crochet edgings. It is with the ornamental drawing-room pincushions that the greatest taste is required and the newest shapes introduced.



These shapes are taken from a great variety of forms, and worked out in every imaginable way. There is the pipe, the boot, the arm-chair, the spoon, the horseshoe, the basket,



the starfish, and a hundred other devices, of which we illustrate some of the most effective and least describable by letterpress.

The spoon is made from an ordinary wooden salad spoon, painted with Aspinall's enamel either a pale blue or terra-cotta colour. The pincushion fits into the bowl; it is made of dark blue or olive-green satin, stuffed with bran, and glued into the bowl. A fine silk cord or a gold lace edging is sewn round the outer edge of the cushion, and softens it off. Narrow quarter-inch ribbon of several shades of one colour, or several contrasting colours, are wound round the handle until the top is reached, and then finished off with loops and long streamers, one of these loops being used to hang the spoon to the wall by.

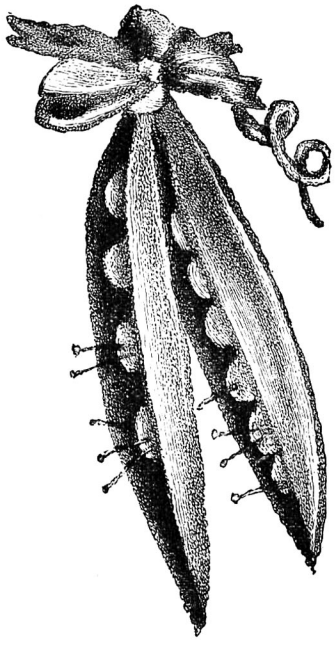
The arm-chair cushion has as its foundation one of those dolls' arm-chairs of pith that are so often sold in the streets. The cushion on this chair is made square, covered on both sides with satin, with a cord and ball tassels round its edge. It is only fastened to the chair through its centre, and should be made large enough to hang over the edge of the seat. The arms and rails of the foundation are decorated with narrow ribbons wound round them, and finished with bows and loops.

The pipe is made with a foundation of cardboard covered with coloured velvet; in shape it must resemble a German student's pipe, and be large and curly. The cushion is fitted into the bowl, and ribbons are wound round the stem. An ordinary wooden pipe can be used as the foundation, but then it must be gilt with gold leaf both on stem and bowl.

The lucky shoe cushion has for its foundation a doll's leather shoe; into this is fitted an upright but long and narrow cushion, covered with pale pink Indian silk. The pins are stuck into the pink silk, and the article is hung on the wall by coloured ribbons, which are secured round the instep of the shoe and taken up the length of the cushion by being crossed over each other and finished with loops.

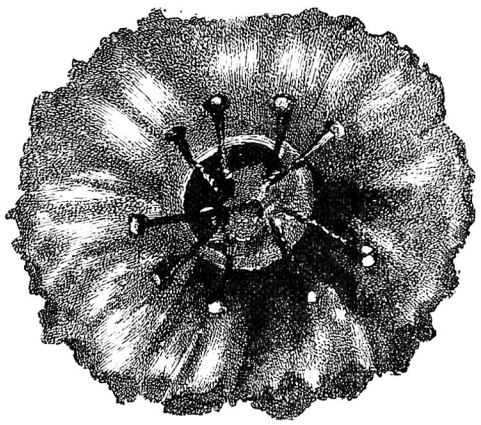
Another shape of wall cushion is shown on our front page. The foundation in this is of cardboard; the lower arm measures seven inches in length and three in diameter, and the upper arms three and a half inches in length. This measurement does not include the cushions at the end of the arms. Cover the cardboard foundations with velvet, and the cushions make as balls of bran covered over with silk; sew these balls firmly into the rounds of cardboard, and hide the stitches with a cord; wind tinsel down the arms over the velvet, and hide the place where the arms join with a plush ball. Finish with a silk cord—of the same colour as the cord already used—to hang the article up by. This cushion can be made in an endless variety of shades. A bright yellow velvet with olive-green silk is a good combination; also a deep green velvet with pale blue or deep red silk. Terra-cotta velvet with terra-cotta silk looks well; red velvet with navy blue silk, pale blue velvet and pale pink silk, pale green velvet and orange silk, etc.

The fiddle and baize cushions are suitable as presents to musicians. The shape of the violin is cut out in chamois leather, and the cushion is glued on to its back. To make this cushion, cut out the shape in cardboard, lay folds of flannel thickly on the cardboard, and cover the whole with dark velvet or silk, turning the edges of the material to the front of the cushion. Glue firmly to the leather, which previously ornament with a line of stitching and with violin strings made of fine whipcord. Hang up the violin with ribbon bows. For the banjo make the back and the cushion as for the violin, but cut the front out of a piece of thin parchment. On this parchment paint a landscape or a group of flowers in water-colours, and make the strings of the banjo of whipcord. Overcast the edge of the parchment to the edge of the cushion with mare's tail silk, and if possible make the edges so neat that the stitches need not be hidden; if they must be hidden, sew a very narrow cream-coloured cord round them. A bunch of ribbons with long loops is hung from the top of the banjo, and a bow of ribbons can be stuck on the cushion where the arm joins the round, if more ornament is desired. Another musical instrument pincushion is made the shape of a harp. This is rather difficult to form correctly, but looks quaint when accomplished. The pins are stuck into the thick part of the harp at its base, which is purposely made broad. The strings of the harp are made with fine gold cord or coloured purse-silk, and the frame is covered with pale blue or pale yellow velvet, and a loop of ribbons hung to the top of the frame.



The horseshoe pincushion has for its foundation a real horseshoe that is gilt or silvered over. To the centre of this shoe a small wicker basket is fastened by being tied to the horseshoe by ribbons passed through the nail holes. These ribbons are also wound up the shoe and used to hang up the article. The cushion, made of a dark silk, is fastened into the basket. This is a very simple way of making some use of the horseshoes most people bring home for luck when they come across them during their country walks.

Another figure has as its foundation one of the large dried poppy-heads to be purchased at any chemist's. Select a large and well-shaped



head, and with a very sharp knife cut an irregular-shaped segment out of it. Get rid of the poppy seeds and fill in the opening with a satin cushion. Make this of a rich coloured red satin, and catch it down in places as if it was to be buttoned down, but do not put on any buttons. Glue this cushion into the opening, and tie a bunch of ribbons round the stem of the poppy-head. Any coloured satin can be used to stuff the poppy, but deep rich reds and blues tone in best with the mellow brown hue of the natural seed.

The apple is a combined pincushion and pen-wiper. It is made by laying thin muslin over a real apple and shaping the muslin, but cutting away any fullness, and overcasting the raw edges together. The shape formed (but not sewn together at the bottom) is then stuffed with wool, the upper part being raised round the eye of the apple, as in nature, and the deep depression for the eye being made by sewing that part closely down on to the wool. The rest of the apple is then filled in and the lining sewn up, all superfluous fullness being cut away, not folded in. This foundation is covered over with pale yellow-coloured Liberty silk, which is pasted down and arranged with as few creases as possible. As the base of the apple is not shown, the silk can there be folded under. The streaks and rosy colouring of the fruit are imitated by painting the silk with water-colours, using some of Miss Turck's aquarelle as a medium. The leaves are simply artificial leaves sewn to the cut-out folds of cloth that form the penwiper and the foundation of the apple.

Pea-pods and Cherries.—These little cushions are intended more as ornaments to the mantelshelf than for practical purposes. They are pinned on to the drapery of the front of the mantel-board. The bunch of cherries is made of rose-coloured satin, some of the cherries being of a light shade and others of a darker shade. The stems are made of green wire, the leaf of an artificial leaf, the stalk of chenille wound round wire; the cherries are painted with water-colours, so that they are not entirely of one colour. The best stuffing for the satin is the little plush balls sold for sewing on to cushions and other furniture. The pea-pods are made with cartridge-paper covered with green silk, the little peas, of balls of green chenille of a lighter shade than that used for the pods. Tendrils are made of twisted cap wire covered with chenille or purse-silk. A very fine wire is sewn along the ridge of the half open pods to keep them in shape, and to allow of the ornament being twisted and arranged gracefully. Three or four pods look better than only two on a bunch, but this cushion is never made large. It is tied into position with a bunch of green and blue ribbons.

A bunch of plums is easier to imitate than a bunch of cherries, as the fruit is larger; but it is not so effective. It is formed as the apple, and a wire stalk fixed into the lining before it is covered. Purple velvet and maroon velvet form their best covering; and this, when glued on, is brushed over with some Chinese white mixed with a little weak gum-water. A hard brush is used, and the white paint only put on where the fruit catches the highest light.

The foundation for our next is one of the red silk double poppies sold for millinery purposes. The poppy can be bought of any size, but the petals should be of silk, not of coloured muslin. To turn the poppy into a pincushion, cut out all the pistils and stamen and make a fair sized flattish ball of linen, which stuff with bran. Cover this ball with dark red plush several shades darker in colour than the silk petals; sew this ball firmly into the centre of the poppy, and take the stitches through to the back of the flower. Strengthen the back of the flower by sewing a few rounds of any dark-coloured silk on to it, and at the same time give each petal a securing stitch. Sew a loop or ribbon on to the back of the cushion to suspend it by.

The basket shown on the front page is made of ornamental wicker, and the basket itself is filled up with odd pieces of Berlin wool. The cover is of knitting single Berlin wool, scarlet in colour. Use pins No. 12, and work backwards and forwards in plain knitting. Make a square of knitting in length rather longer than the width of the basket, and when it is finished stuff it out in the centre with the wool shreds, and then draw its ends together underneath, so as to keep the cushion firm. Force this ball into the basket and sew it in round the edge and finish off, first with a thick silk or tinsel cord, and lastly with pompons of plush hung over the cord. This cushion is intended for hairpins, and will be found very useful, the coarse knitting and the woollen shreds allowing the hairpins to pass through them with ease, and also preventing them from getting rusty.

A simple and effective flat pincushion is made like a long square, but buttoned down church-cushion fashion. The length of such a cushion is from five to six inches, the width three or four and a half inches, and the depth one inch. The sides are velvet, the top and bottom of a dark rich satin. The lining is first made, it is then stuffed with wool, and if of the largest size, twelve places sewn strongly down in it and the parts surrounding them well puffed up. Satin is laid over the top part and the indented places again sewn through, each being finished off with a little tuft of white chenille, the satin sewn neatly round the edges. A piece of plain satin is arranged to cover the bottom of the ornaments, and its edges sewn down along the sides. Narrow ribbon velvet is finely sewn round the cushion's sides. All shades of satin or velvet can be used in making these articles, and two contrasting shades used together form a variety. These flat cushions are suitable for presents to gentlemen, as, being devoid of lace and finery, they do not require care.

The starfish cushion is not very elegant, but is a variety. It is made first of linen, and should have an unequal number of arms, and be well puffed out in the centre where the arms meet. The arms are joined together there by shaping the linen foundation like a vandyke. Having filled the foundation linen with bran, cover the starfish with yellow or orange velvet, and arrange a bow and loop of ribbons of the same colour to suspend it by.

An easily made drawing-room cushion is of the shape of a large plush pompon. The ball is made of velvet or plush, well stuffed with bran, and should be three inches in diameter. Upon the top of the ball tinsel is sewn; this tinsel is brought down the sides and forms five points. The whole of the top of the ball is filled in with tinsel, and short upright loops are made to stand up at the extreme top, and by the longest the cushion is hung up.

A nigger pincushion, instead of having for its foundation an ordinary black doll, is made of five skeins of single Berlin wool. Fold this black wool all up until it is eight inches in length, then tie it tightly together an inch and a half from the top. This forms the head. To make the arms, detach about thirty strands of wool on each side from the main body, and cut them so that they measure two inches in length. Tie them tightly at the end, leaving the little tufts of ends to imitate hands. Two inches below the neck tie the main part of the wool again together (this forms the body); then separate the wool left into three portions, two for the legs and one for the tail. Tie each leg up two inches down, and leave long tufts to imitate the feet, and plait the tail into a three-plait and tie that up. Wind a little scarlet wool round every part that has been tied, and with the scarlet wool give features to the head, making eyes, nose, tongue, and ears. This little pincushion is an easy one to sell at bazaars—the cost is very trifling, and it looks quaint.

B. C. SAWARD.

HOW TO MAKE A PAIR OF PAPER BELLOWS.

HAVING shown you in a previous volume how to make a paper box, we shall make a pair of paper bellows. Will they blow the fire? That they will if you make them large enough. They will raise a strong breeze, and perhaps might answer in an emergency: supposing, for example, that Tom has knocked a hole in the kitchen bellows.

We shall begin with a small size, big enough for the fireplace of a doll's house.

Take a square piece of paper, and be careful that the paper is of a sort that does not crack readily.

Double it by making two of the corners meet, then open it out; double it again by making the other two corners meet, but instead of opening it out, catch the paper at the fold between the finger and thumb of each hand and press it into the form shown in fig. 1. In this figure the paper is shown a little open, but the artist has done that so that you may understand it better: the paper really should be pressed on the table as flat as can be. Now fold the point *a* to *e*, and also the point *b* to *c*.

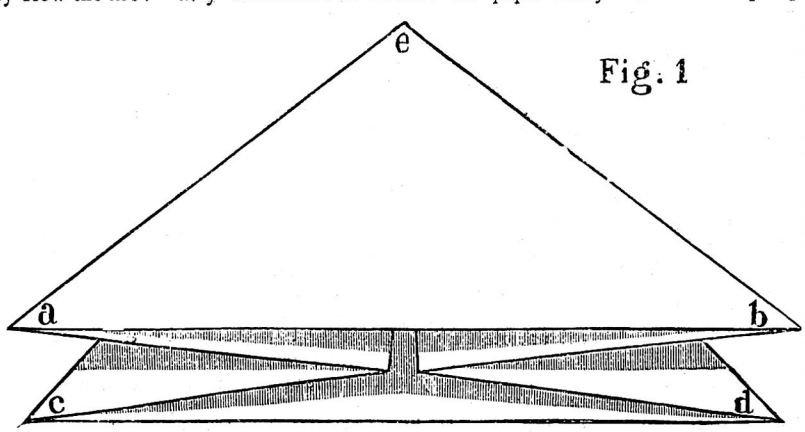


Fig. 1

Turn the paper over and fold the point *c* to *e* and then *d* to *e*. You have now a diamond-shaped piece of paper like fig. 2.

Fold *a* to *b*—fig 2, of course—and open out; fold *a* to *c* and open out; fold *d* to *e* and open out; fold *d* to *f* and open out. All this folding will leave marks shown in the figure by dotted lines.

Turn the paper over and fold the other side, which you will find looks just the same as this one, in precisely the same way.

Now turn to the side you operated upon first. Take the parts shown by the letters *a x z* and *d x z* one after the other between the finger and thumb and pinch them hard. They will fall naturally into the form given by the folds, and will form what we may call the handle of the bellows on one side.

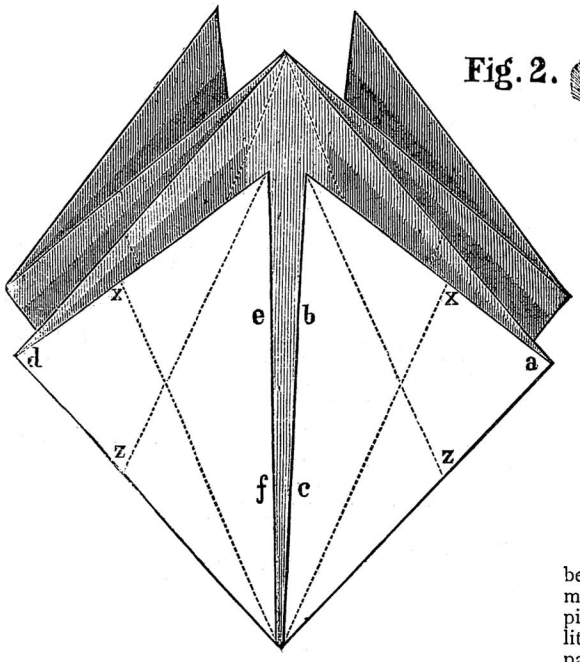


Fig. 2.

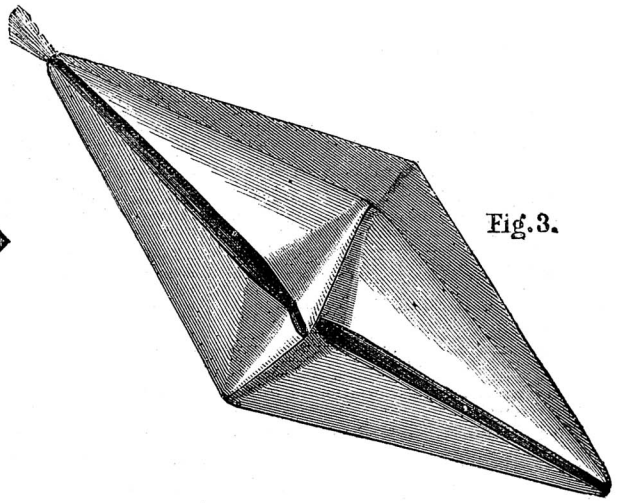


Fig. 3.

Turn over to the other side and pinch the corresponding pieces of the paper in the same way. This will make the two sides of the bellows the same. You may fasten the two pieces of the handle with little bits of gummed paper, but that is not necessary. The complete bellows is shown in fig. 3. Lay hold of the handles and pull the bellows open. It will fill with wind; shut it, and the wind will be driven out by the little opening from which the blast is issuing in the engraving. If the witches ever stop selling winds in bags, as they say they do, this little article might come into extensive use. Anyhow, you will say it is a clever contrivance, and we'll all give three cheers to the memory of the person who invented it.

BASKET-MAKING.

THERE is a proverb which says, "The best way to learn is to teach;" and we have all heard the story of the Oxford don who, when asked his opinion on some subject, replied, "I know nothing about it. I have not even examined in it."

Well, there is an exception to every rule; and the best way to learn basket-making is to take lessons of a basket-maker, if you can get hold of one who will teach his trade. But there is the crux. Basket-makers do not care about teaching anyone but their own apprentices the secrets of their art. The writer of this paper took lessons of a Sussex basket-maker, and at the end of six lessons had finished two baskets, one a French "hotte," which was new to the teacher, and the other a garden basket. The round basket is a very good one to learn to make, because it includes the principal difficulties of basket-making; and we may say here that the crucial parts of basket-making are the Alpha and the Omega, "the tying the slart," the beginning, and the border, which is the final process. Most of the rest is plain sailing and easy enough, with the exception of one part, called the "upset," which is decidedly upsetting to the beginner's equanimity.

Though not really difficult to do when shown, some of the processes are puzzling to describe on paper; so if the beginner fails to master "tying the slart," "following the stroke," "the upset," and "the wail" from this paper, the best way to learn would be to induce a local basket-maker to explain the difficulty, assuring him you have no wish to spoil his trade.

An amateur basket-maker requires very few tools—a good knife to point and cut the osiers with, and a "bodkin," a kind of bradawl, to fix the handles with, are all that are really necessary. Basket-makers have two other little tools to cut the rods into "skeins;" but the amateur would do better to buy the skeins ready cut, as the cutting is a troublesome and very uninteresting process.

The osiers of which baskets are made are called rods, and can be bought by the bundle at most basket warehouses. The trade name for these rods is white or brown Belgium tacks, price 3s. 9d. a bundle, and a bundle will make a good many baskets.

A "skein" is a rod divided into three flat strips. The skeins are used for weaving the sides of the baskets, and are much easier to work with than the rods, which are used for the bottoms and uprights and borders. The skeins can be bought at any basket-makers.

It takes a boy apprenticed to the trade a year—if he is very quick at it—to learn it thoroughly, and two years is the usual time. This sounds discouraging to an amateur; but let her not despair. An educated girl with a head on her shoulders, and fingers which are not all thumbs, will learn to make a basket fairly well in a fortnight if she gives her mind and a few hours a day to it.

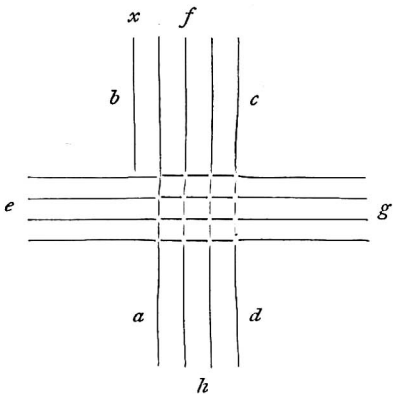
It hurts the fingers at first until the basket-maker learns how to hold the rods; but you can work almost as well in gloves; and as the osiers are slightly poisonous, it is better to wear them.

The rods and skeins must be well soaked for an hour before use, or they will crack and break, or "kink," as the basket-maker calls the ugly angular stroke a dry rod or skein makes. It is sometimes necessary to plunge your basket into water while working if you find the osiers too dry. This can scarcely be insisted on too much, for dry rods will spoil an expert basket-maker's work; so it is necessary to have a pail of water or a bath near while you are at work, to keep your material damp, for the osiers are quite unmanageable when dry.

The first process in making a basket is rather troublesome—it is called "tying the slart"; but as it is used for all baskets with round wicker bottoms, it must be mastered. It is also used for the tops of tables, the number of rods used varying from six and a half to twenty and a half, according to the size of the round required. There is always a half rod to make an odd number of spikes.

We will make our first basket with eight and a half rods. The length of the pieces is the diameter of the bottom. Ten inches is a good size to begin with; it is easier to work upon than a smaller size.

Cut eight pieces of osier ten inches long; then in the centre of each scrape to half the thickness about two inches of the rod; place four side by side close together in front of you, lay the other four pieces across them, making a cross thus—



then take a whole rod, place the thick end, which is called the butt, under the four horizontal rods at *a*, pulling it out till it is level with *x*; this makes the odd spike. Now at *a* bend it back over the horizontals, at *b* bend it under the parallels, at *c* over the horizontals, at *d* under the parallels. Repeat this process, and you will have your rods loosely fastened together. Now take a second rod, place the butt under the horizontals at *a*, pull the rod up at *b* and bend it over the parallels, bend it under at *c*, over at *d*. Repeat this and you will find your rods are now firmly fastened, and

both your tying rods are together at *a*. You have now "tied the slart."

The next process is easy enough, but looks puzzling on paper. You now keep one rod above and one below, alternately, until the bottom is finished. Pull the first rod up at *a* over the second, divide the four horizontals at *e*, pulling them well apart, pull the second rod up at *e*, cross the first rod over it and pull first rod well down, bring it up again at *b*, cross the second rod over it, and pull that well down at *b*; divide the five uprights at *f*, bring the second rod up at *f*, cross the first over it, and pull that well down at *f*, bringing it up again at *c*, cross the second rod over it, pull that well down at *c*; divide the horizontals at *g*, and bring the second rod up at *g*, cross the first rod over it, pull that down firmly at *g*, and bring it up again at *d*, cross the second rod over it, and pull that down at *d*; divide the rods at *h*, and bring the second rod up at *h*, cross the first over it, and pull that down at *h*, bring it up again at *a*, and cross the second rod over it. You have now been round the bottom once with both rods. You must go round again in the same way, but this time divide all the spikes, and go between each one instead of between each pair, always crossing the upper rod over the under one before you pull it down. Work on in this way round and round until you have reached the top of the spikes. When you have used up a rod take a fresh one and piece it on, that is, push it in and work it for a turn or two with the old end, as you would in knitting. Always put tip to tip and butt to butt to make the work even. You generally begin with the butts, and of course those rods end with the tips, so you begin the next rods with the tips, and cut off the very thin piece before using. When you begin with the butt, slice it off into a point first; this is called a "slipe," and you must cut a slipe to every butt before using it. When the spikes are all filled in the bottom of the basket is finished. You don't cut off the ends of the pieced rods till you have finished the whole basket.

Now comes the "upset" and the beginner is warned it is a very trying process; for probably as fast as you stick the rods in the wretched things will break off or topple out. Have the bottom and the rods for the "upset" thoroughly soaked before you attempt this part of the business, or your temper will be sorely tried. Have a bundle of rods all ready sliped, and poke one in to the bottom on each side of every spike, push every rod well down between the woven osiers for about two inches. Go all round the bottom till it looks like an enormous starfish with an abnormal number of rays. Then place the bottom flat on the floor and take your knife in your right hand and a spike in your left; put the point of the knife on the spike close to the bottom, give it a sharp turn, and at the same moment pull the spike with your left hand into an upright position—you must not cut it nor break it, you must only bend it. As a matter of fact, you will probably break a good many. But you must not despair; slipe them off and poke them in again. Continue this charming process till every rod is set up. You will probably be upset at the end of the first half hour, and we will hope the basket will be also, but that is less certain. Be patient; you may indulge in a "wail," to relieve your feelings as soon as you have finished the "upset," for you have only done half of that at present.

To keep the rods you have set up—now to be called stakes, or uprights—in place, twist two osiers into a ring rather larger than the bottom of your basket and slip over them; it will constantly fall off, but put it on again, for it is a help. Then take four new rods, slipe off the butts, place the basket on your knee, and take hold of the bottom of it close to the stakes with the thumb and two first fingers of your left hand; keep the fingers inside the stakes, the thumb outside. Place a rod between two of the stakes, putting the butt inside the basket about two inches; place another between the next two stakes, a third between the next, and the fourth between the next, working to your right. Keep these rods in a horizontal position as much as possible, the tips to your right. Now take the first rod (the one to the left which you put in first is meant), pull it over the two next rods and three stakes, and push it in between the third and fourth stakes, and bring it up again on the other side of the fourth. Do the same with the second rod, that is, pull that over two rods and three stakes, and push it inside the basket between the fourth and fifth stakes, bringing it up on the other side of the fifth.

This is the "stroke" of the "upset," and you go round the basket once in this way—in technical terms, "following the stroke," always going over two rods and three stakes and under one stake. The result is a sort of wicker cord round the bottom of the basket. It is rather troublesome at first, but you soon get into it, particularly if you work in the right way, which is, to throw the rod in between the stakes with your left thumb, bringing it back with the first finger of your right hand. You must press the rods down well when you throw them inside the basket, and pull them tightly back without "kinking."

The next stroke is the "wail," which is very like the "upset," only easier, because you work with three rods instead of four. Put three rods in, one in front of the other, between the stakes as you did before; bring the first rod—the one to the left—over the two others, and over two stakes, push it in between the second and third stake with your left thumb and bring up again between the third and fourth stakes; over two and under one is the "stroke of the wail," and you must "follow this stroke" all round the basket. Cut the ends of the rods off when you have finished, and poke them inside the basket.

In basket-making, as in knitting, when you join your rods you must work a stroke or two with the old and the new rod—a "stroke" in basket-making meaning what a stitch means in knitting or crochet. So when you finish a row take each rod one stroke over the beginning of the row, so as to have a firm ending. The "wail" finished, it is all plain sailing till you come to the "border," which is difficult. You now work with "skeins," which are not so stiff as the rods, but require soaking well before using.

Take a skein, place the end under a stake on the top of your wail, throw it inside the basket between two stakes with your left thumb, pull it out on the other side of the second stake with your right forefinger and thumb; work in this way in and out, round and round the basket till the sides are the required height. As you work keep your uprights at equal distances from each other, pulling them to either side as they require it. Always keep the smooth side of the skeins on the outside of your basket, and when you piece the skeins always make them overlap each other, so that you have double skeins for a stroke or two at each join.

For the garden basket we are describing, twenty rows of "skeining" will be sufficient, and the simplest border will be the best to describe for our first basket.

Borders are various; as the beginner advances she can puzzle out other patterns for herself from any baskets she may have. For this garden basket we will only use a plain border. Take three rods and work a "wail" once round the top of the skeins to secure them first, and in our next paper we will describe the border.

(To be concluded.)

House-Cleaning

Taking down the pictures,
  Dusting off the wall—
"Not at home this morning
  Should there be a call."

Toast and eggs for breakfast—
  Things turned upside down—
Wife and girl a-jawing—
  Husband skips for town.

Taking up the carpets—
  Tacks and dust for lunch—
Boy, for asking questions
  Gets from me a punch.

Washing off the windows—
  Doors all open—wide—
She with a pail and dust-pan
  Used to be my bride.

No fire in the furnace—
  Bell goes on the ring—
"Cleaning house to-day, m'm,
  First day of the spring."

Night! a doctor calling—
  Wife done up in bed,
Husband scoots for drug store;
  Clerk asks who is dead.

Night reporter's item:
  "Coroner had a ring
For a stiff found floating—
  First one of the spring.

Verdict of the jury—
  Foreman, sly old mouse—
"Suicide from torment,
  Caused by cleaning house."

—*(Chicago Herald)*

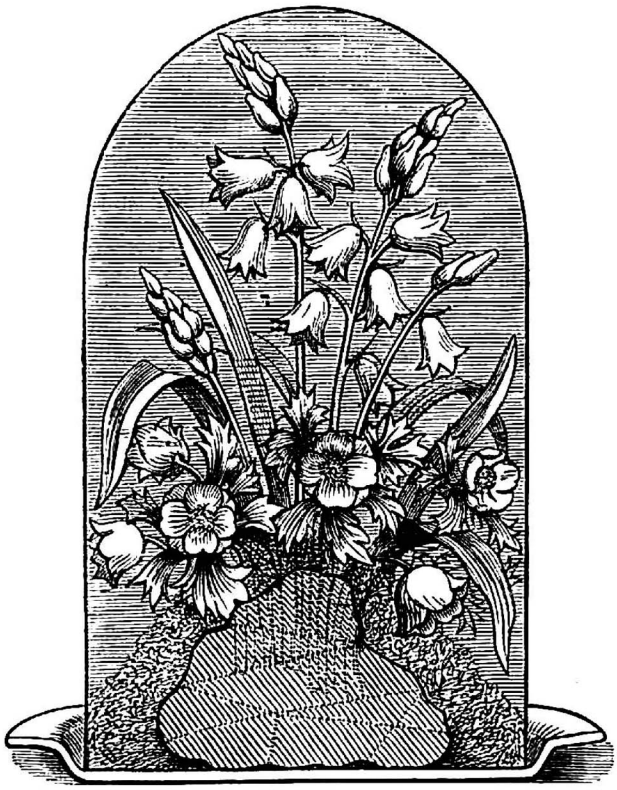
Crewel Embroidery: Dog Daisy.

Peterson's Magazine, 1883

THE WATER-BOUQUET.

UNDER the above name an extremely pretty and novel variation from ordinary flower-pots has been introduced, which may well be made to take its place in the drawing-room or boudoir; for the decoration of the dinner-table, or to place in the sick-room. It consists of flowers, leaves, &c., immersed in water beneath a glass basin turned bottom upwards, and owes its peculiar beauty to the sparkling and frost-like appearance which vegetable forms assume under such circumstances, and to the illusive and fairy-like effect caused by the refraction of light, and the magnifying power of the combined glass and water.

Glass shades of any size or shape, which may suit the fancy or requirements of the maker are among the best receptacles in which to make the water-bouquet, the thin quality of the glass in such articles, and the roundness of their forms, being good to show the flowers or leaves within to advantage; but for making one on a large scale a common garden hand-glass may be made to serve, and finger-glasses, when plain, answer the purpose admirably for small ones. In addition, a plate or dish has to be provided sufficiently large to admit of the edge of the glass shade or basin resting smoothly on its flat inner surface.



WATER-BOUQUET.

In the centre of the plate or dish the flowers, leaves, &c., are arranged, and the better plan is to tie them with German wool to a stone. This, or some similarly heavy substance is necessary to prevent the bouquet from floating in the water and rising to the top of the glass, as it would otherwise do; and care must be taken that no loose leaf or other fragment is left, as this by floating would spoil the general effect. Some care and taste will of course be necessary in fixing the materials which compose the bouquet in their places; the stone must be wholly concealed, as must also be the ends of the stems, by leaves, &c., so that everything may appear as though growing naturally beneath the water.

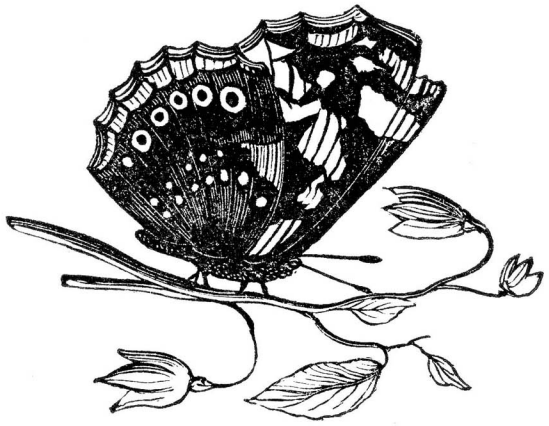
When the general arrangement is completed, a tub or other vessel full of water must be prepared, sufficiently large to admit of both plate and glass being submerged in it. In the bottom of this vessel the plate with the bouquet must be placed, and some little further arrangement of the latter will now in most cases be necessary, to restore any leaves or petals which may have been displaced by the action of the water, and to make such slight alterations as will be suggested by their effect when seen through the new element, and care must be taken that nothing projects so far towards the edges of the plate as to touch those parts on which the edge of the glass will have to rest.

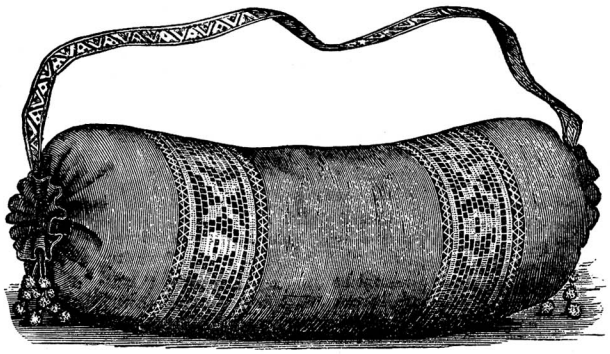
When everything is satisfactorily arranged, take the glass shade, and put it into the water *sideways*, so as to leave no air within it, and then put it in its position upon the plate. The whole may then be lifted from the tub, and the shade will remain full of water, which, as there will be no atmospheric pressure from within, will not flow out, though it will be well to leave a little water in the bottom of the plate round the edge of the glass, to keep it thoroughly air-tight.

Any person who makes a water-bouquet for the first time, will be surprised to find how small a number of flowers or other objects are necessary, apparently, to fill the glass. This is owing to the magnifying power of the convex glass filled with water, which increases their apparent size. In summer, flowers will of course be the materials used in making these decorations, and those will be found best suited which are small in size and compact in shape, such as the carnation or verbena. The common blue single clematis always looks well, and such leaves as those of the variegated geranium are good to hide the stone and the bottoms of the stalks. In winter the leaves and berries of the holly, arbutus, &c., look exceedingly pretty; and by those staying at the sea-side a charming water-bouquet may be made with sea-weeds and shells.

Unfortunately, these things possess the disadvantage of retaining their beauty for a short time only. About four days in the summer and eight in the winter, is as long as they can be kept in perfection, for vegetation is found to decompose more rapidly when wholly exposed to the action of water than it does when partially in the air. They are not, however, in their greatest perfection immediately after they are made. On the second day, owing to the gas which they throw off, the flowers and leaves become covered, especially at their edges, with minute air bubbles, which impart to them a beautifully frosted appearance; consequently, when required for special occasions, they should be made up on the previous day.

As a decoration for the dinner-table, it is difficult to make the water-bouquet sufficiently high and imposing-looking for the centre; but for corner ornaments nothing can be prettier. In the sick-room it has an especial use. Flowers are always pleasant for the sufferer to look upon, but the scent of them is frequently too much for his weak nerves, and the water-bouquet can in that case be employed, as no effluvia whatever can escape from it.



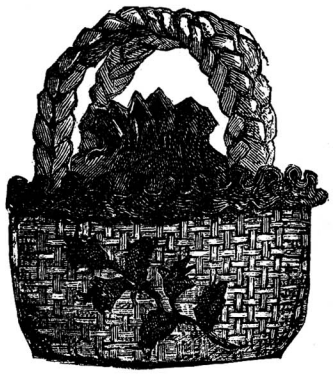


Bolster for Chair.

FOR supporting the head on a large chair this bolster, hung across the back of a chair, is very comfortable.

The illustration is covered with Java canvas, and the stripes are of antique lace, with a color set underneath. Finish the ends like a ruffle, and tie it round with a cord and tassel. The band to go over the chair is of ribbon covered with lace on both sides.

The bolster is cooler if filled with curled hair.



Bags.

MAKE a bag of cashmere and cover two-thirds of it with dark brown Java canvas, on which embroider a spray of rosebuds and green leaves. Finish the top of canvas with a full ruching of satin ribbon the color of the cashmere.

The handles are made of plaited ribbon or straw.

Knitted Pincushion Cover.

FOUR needles, No. 18: Cast 45 stitches on each of three needles, 15 being required for each stripe.

First round.—Begin with the cotton forward, purl two stitches, pass the cotton back, knit one, taking it at the back, purl two, pass the cotton back, slip one stitch, knit one, pull the slipped stitch over the knitted one; knit six, bring the cotton forward, knit one—this increases two loop-stitches; repeat this all round. You will find you have increased one stitch in every fifteen.

Second round.—Begin with the cotton forward, purl two stitches, knit one, taking it at the back, purl two, slip one, knit one, pull the slipped stitch over the knitted one, knit plain until you come to the next purled stitches, and continue as before. In this and every alternate round, no loop stitches are to be made, but the purled stripes and decrease to be done as before, which will reduce the stitches to the original number. Knit these rounds alternately, making the two holes which occur in every alternate round, one stitch sooner each time; that is, knitting five, then four, then three, then two, then one, instead of six stitches as mentioned in the first round. You will then have six rows of holes, which completes the leaf, and you will find the holes brought to the side of the stripe opposite to that on which they began; you must then begin again as at first. Nine rounds of leaves complete a pincushion.

BIRD CAGE COVER.

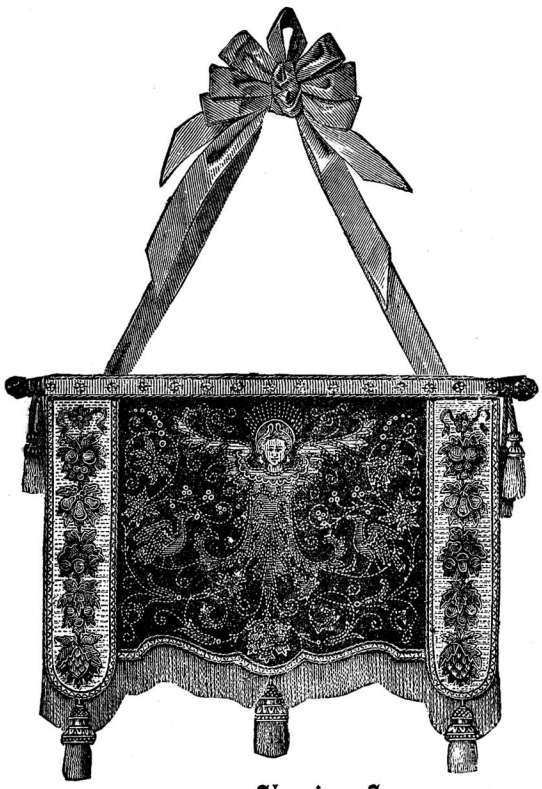
Bird Cage Cover.

THERE are so many birds that take cold from being left by an open window at night, we would suggest as a preventive, our cage cover. Measure the size round the bottom of the cage, and cut five pieces the shape shown over the cage in design. Dress bunting is the best material to use, as the air can readily pass through it. Have the sections stamped, and braid with bright colors; scollop the edge and bind with braid or ribbon. Put an elastic at the top and bottom to hold it firmly over the cage.

Rugs.

INEXPENSIVE rugs can be made of gray and brown blankets worked with worsteds, in an open floral pattern. The easiest mode of fixing the pattern is to trace it on tissue-paper, pin it on the blanket, and with white cotton run round the outline; then tear away the paper, and the pattern will be found easy work. If not familiar with the shading of flowers, roughly paint a flower, and keep in front of you while working. These blankets can be made very elaborate, and with the addition of different colored tassels or fringe around the edge, can be used as a table-spread.

Split double Berlin wool will be found to work better than crewels.



Shaving Case.

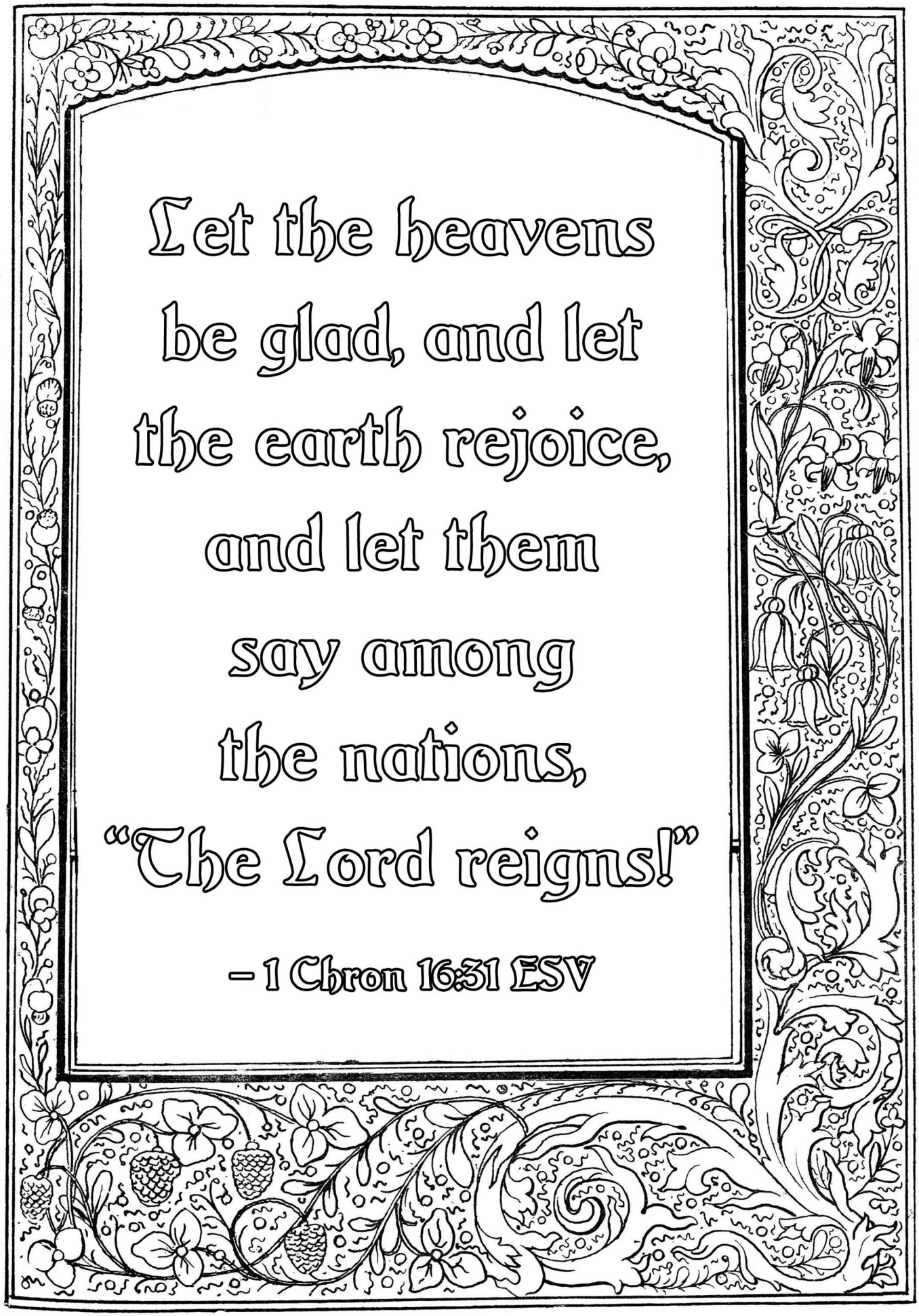
CUT four pieces of cardboard the shape of design, cover two of them on one side with black velvet, embroidered in colors, and on each end put a strip of light blue fancy ribbon; cover the two remaining pieces on one side with blue silk, and overhand a silk and velvet piece together.

Take a hoople stick and cut it the desired length for the bar at the top, and wind it with blue satin ribbon studded with beads.

Finish the bottom with bullion fringe and tassels, and hang it by a wide satin ribbon and large bow.

Stitch for Square Crochet Shawl.

THE following is an extremely pretty stitch, if eis wool is used; if Shetland, not quite so clear, but still uncommon. A large needle is required, No. 2. Make a chain the length you require the size of the inside of shawl.—1st row, 1 treble long stitch on the 1st chain, 3 Ch., take the wool round the needle, draw it level with the long stitch, insert the needle in the 3d Ch., draw through and work 4 Ch., take the wool on the needle again, draw through the next chain stitch on the foundation, 4 Ch., take the wool on the needle again, take up the next chain of the foundation, and make 4 more chains; you now have on the needle the last stitch of 4 separate loops of chain and three loose threads, draw the wool through all at once, and make 4 Ch., miss the next 3 Ch., and repeat from * to the end of the row, work 1 long, and fasten off. Commence again with a long on the 1st long of last row, * take the wool on the needle, draw through the 1st of the next 3 Ch., 4 Ch., the wool on the needle, draw through the 2d Ch., 4 Ch., the wool on the needle, take up the 3d Ch., 4 Ch., draw through all at once, 4 Ch., repeat from *, work 1 long on the last long stitch. Repeat these 2 rows the size required, working the end in at each side of the work.



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