

Victorian Creative

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



Volume I #26 - September 23, 2022



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ABOUT OUR COVER: Our end-of-summer scene comes from a print from *The Illustrated London Almanack* of 1883. This print is available in our complete collection of full-color prints from *The Illustrated London Almanack*, at www.victorianvoices.net/clipart/prints/ILA.shtml



FAREWELL... FOR NOW?

With this issue, *Victorian Creative* has come to the end of its first full year of publication. It has been an interesting year for us all, I suspect. The old proverb “May you live in interesting times” certainly seems to apply to the many issues we all face today, the pandemic being not the least of our challenges. My hope is that this magazine has brought some inspiration and encouragement in difficult days.

Now, it is time for *Victorian Creative* to take a vacation. I won’t say, at this point, that it is coming to an end; rather, it is going on hiatus. That hiatus may be temporary, or it may be permanent; it depends on where *my* future leads. As I’ve mentioned before, we are in the midst of moving and establishing a new life in a new part of the country. But as I write this, much of that “new life” is still in the “to be determined” stage, with much left to be decided and discovered.

Part of the “new life” that I envision for the months to come includes endeavoring to put together some actual books on Victorian life, based on the vast supply of material I’ve gathered for VictorianVoices.net. By “actual books,” I mean books published by actual, royalty-paying publishers—not just the compilations and anthologies I’ve self-published over the years.

I also hope to add more material to VictorianVoices.net itself. When I first launched the site, I still had quite a few magazines in the archives that were not yet indexed, and since then, I’ve acquired quite a few more. (I had finally concluded that I could either launch the site, or go on indexing magazines forever, but I couldn’t do both.) Now that the site is up and running, it’s much easier to put up the contents of a single volume now and then, so my hope is to slowly get my remaining collection online.

Beyond that, however, part of our goal in moving and going into semi-retirement is simply to “get a life.” There’s much to see and do beyond the borders of our respective computer desks, and our hope is to actually get out there and start seeing and doing a bit of it. My husband and I are both dedicated “mouse-potatoes,” and we’re going to see if we can change that.

VictorianVoices.net will continue on, of course, and one of the possibilities I’m kicking around is adding a blog to the site that would enable other Victorian enthusiasts and experts to share their insights with its readers. With respect to *Victorian Creative* itself, I’ve greatly enjoyed putting it together, and have more than enough material to keep it running at least another year—so if the interest is there in my readership, again, I’m not officially closing the door on the possibility that it will return. (If it does, it will probably return as a monthly rather than biweekly.)

But for now, I’m looking forward to some new projects, new challenges—and new experiences in this new life that we are embarking upon. I wish all of you the very best of everything, and hope that you’ll stay with the site and let me know how your many projects are going.

Stay tuned! We’ll be in touch!

—Moirra Allen
editors@victorianvoices.net



FLOWER DECORATIONS

OCTOBER

By CONSTANCE JACOB.

tunities for taste and originality of arrangement than flowers do. In every ramble, on moors or hills, in lanes or in meadows, quick eyes and fingers can gather an infinite variety of these beautiful dying forms—red, purple, silver, and gold; in gardens it is the same; while even in the kitchen garden the carrot tops and seeding asparagus are brilliant and graceful accessories to hardy flowers.

The virginia creeper has mostly fallen before the month is well in, and other leaves in smoky towns have a way of turning nothing but a dingy unpleasant-looking brown. Still, there is always plenty of bright foliage to be bought.

Japanese anemones look fragile, but really they defy the gathering cold and slight frosts of early autumn with a hardihood which makes them most valuable when other flowers are failing. I have used them, selecting by preference the white kind, in many different ways, and with almost any kind of garden foliage, green or red; always taking care to place them in vases which allow them to stand well up, and show a fair amount of stalk.

In blue-and-white china red leaves go better with them than green. It is hardly necessary to say that for small vases two or three blooms are quite enough for each, and as a rule they are most ornamental without other flowers; but, if something else is desired, fuchsias, late-blooming roses, and—best of all—berries are suitable. The Japanese single rose yields berries (for which it is cultivated more than for its flowers) of a quaint, decided shape, which contrasts in a marked manner with the irregular circle of the anemones.

A plant which puts off changing its leaves until later, and now comes out in bloom, is the tree ivy; and tiny though the flowers are, their greenish-yellow miniature wreaths have considerable decorative value. I have used it with Japanese anemones for a charming table decoration, formed with the aid of a basket of Austrian white and coloured china, letting the anemones rise some inches above their bed of ivy.

Michaelmas daisies—of which there are about seventy different species, all white or purple, but varying considerably in size—are both common and hardy, therefore a great resource just now. They mix agreeably among themselves, and the smallest of all, growing in fine lace-like sprays, is a softening companion to many other bolder blossoms. Faded leaves, as well as their own, are the best accompaniment for all the various kinds, and with the purple-yellow foliage makes a pleasant contrast.

For a dinner-party this month I have used six silver decanter-stands, each holding a fine spray of red rhododendron foliage and some mignonette. These were placed on each side of the middle of the table; while in the squares thus formed, and at each end of the plan, were tall glasses containing large yellow and white cactus dahlias and some sprays of brown beech. Between the two middle decanter-stands was a silver cake-basket, holding for the occasion a group of grapes, bananas, and pears, laid on red vine leaves; between the others two large lamps with yellow shades. To each guest was placed a very small glass, containing a white or yellow (alternately) single dahlia, one or two beech leaves, and a spray of mignonette. This cost about five shillings (everything being bought in London), but might be carried out less expensively by substituting marguerites for the dahlias; or, if these flowers were over, chrysanthemums could take their place, one large one being sufficient for each centre glass. The decanter-stands could of course be replaced by finger-bowls, or celadon pots about their size, to be bought at Liberty's and similar shops at ninepence each, and very useful generally for holding flowers, and an ordinary fruit-dish can take the place of the basket.

On another occasion, when the party was small, and only one lamp used, that having a body of celadon-coloured china, I had two Worcester vases of the same colour and white, filled with red oak and yellow and white marguerites, one towards each end of the table; while nearer the lamp, opposite its four corners, were the little Liberty pots I mentioned above, containing mignonette and fine sprays of the oak. That cost a shilling altogether, and looked very pretty. White phlox, or *Nicotiana affinis* (sweetly-scented tobacco plant) might have taken the place of the marguerites.

In many gardens, blue as well as yellow and white marguerites are grown plentifully, and the three flowers are very pretty, together with some light grass in slender glasses.

White asters look very well in low bowls or baskets with red barberry leaves and mignonette, while the hardy shrub fuchsia may droop over the edges.

I may explain here that I much prefer mignonette or asparagus, with English garden flowers, to the more fragile maidenhair fern, which not only fades quickly in the heat of a room, but seems to me a congenial companion only to delicate orchids or other exotics.

The tuberous begonias, with their bright red, white, and yellow flowers, are pretty for the table in low saucers or troughs, and need no accompaniment but their own quaintly-

MAY be either very rich or very poor in varieties of flowers, according to the weather. If this has continued warm, all the late summer flowers—geraniums, fuchsias, lancifolium lilies, tobacco plants, begonias, asters, sunflowers, dahlias, phlox, hollyhocks, and everlasting peas—will be still in good bloom; but if night frosts have set in, we must rely for cut flowers chiefly on chrysanthemums, Japanese anemones, Michaelmas daisies, and gladioli, all of which are coming in rather than going out. Wild flowers, save for heather and gorse, are scarce; but their place is well supplied by the rich and varied colours of the leaves just about to fall, and the berries, now nearly all ripe. In fact, for country girls these form, for a few weeks, an inexhaustible mine of colour, which gives even more oppor-



shaped leaves. Care must be taken, however, not to mix the shades of red and pink, which do not harmonise.

Geraniums, fuchsias, sunflowers, lilies, and gladioli are less suited for table decoration than for making large groups with the aid of dark foliage, preferably green, in halls or sitting-rooms.

On a low stool or table in the drawing-room an old ginger jar of good colour generally looks well, and is useful for holding the bright foliage and tall graceful flower-heads of which such effective ornaments can be made. Among other mixtures, I would suggest *Nicotiana affinis*, or gladioli, with beech foliage; hemlock, copper-beech, and silver birch, which now turns golden on one side of its leaves; silver birch and pine; bracken and mountain ash; fern leaves and heather.

Every modern drawing-room contains some growing plants in pots, and as long as they are well attended to they are most beautiful ornaments, especially palms, dracenas, aspidistras, and aralias, which seem able to resist the evil influence of gas. Ferns are less long-suffering, and for anyone who has no greenhouse to act as infirmary for delicate plants they are not profitable purchases; nor are plants in bloom, which being generally highly forced before sale, require very careful treatment if they are to live after the bloom is over. Such foliage plants as palms, however, require very little care; only a moderate amount of watering, the leaves lightly dusting every day, and sponging with lukewarm water every week, or oftener if much gas is burnt in the room. In the winter the water given them should be slightly warm, and at no time icy cold,

while in the summer they are grateful for being stood for an hour or so on a balcony or window-sill in a soft rain. They like sunshine, but will do with very little; hence are useful for corners or northern windows, but should on no account stand continually in a draught.

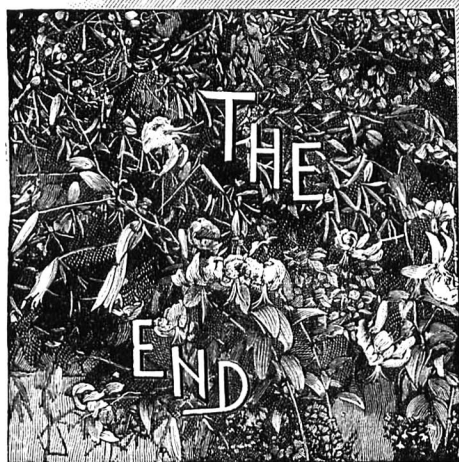
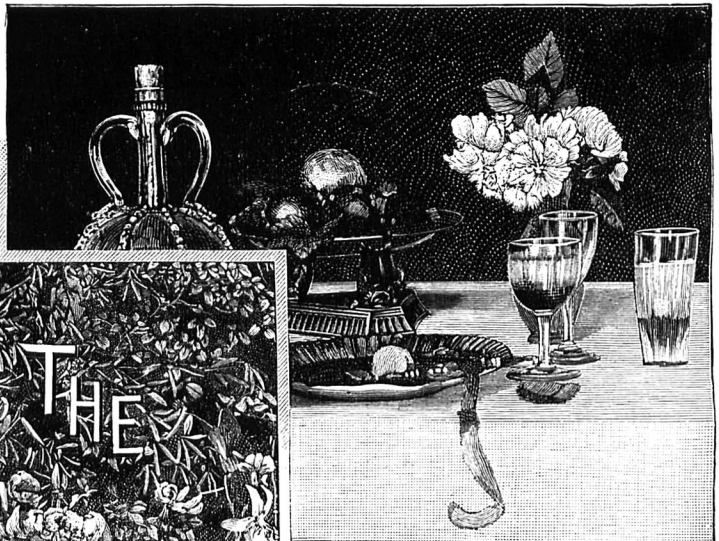
Flower-pots of artistic colours can be now bought in such cheap ware that there is no need to use those terrible and expensive vessels which were fashionable years ago, and still survive in some houses, usually of white or rose-pink china, with gaudy flowers or landscapes painted on them. When buying flower-pots, a good deal of thought should be given to the general colouring of the room, and especially to the wall-paper. If this be dark, our pots should be bright, and foliage plants should be placed out in the room and detached from the shade of the wall by light coloured fans and screens. If it be light, the reverse, of course, holds good.

Besides Doulton and cheaper pots, I have for my palms a large copper water-pail, such as Italian peasants use, which will take a very large pot. Then for very small ferns punch-bowls and old china milk-jugs and sugar-basins are pretty. Many people would object, perhaps, to use their old china in this way, and many have none to use; and for my own part, I see nothing offensive in an ordinary red flower-pot standing on a nicely coloured plate or saucer, provided that it is thoroughly scoured, and *not* painted. A good way of protecting the china from injury by the rougher ware is to put between them a round piece of thin oilcloth or linoleum.

The bright crêpe papers which are now sold for covering ordinary flower-pots are useful, but like the past fashion of silk scarves, may be easily overdone. One is generally enough in a room, and should be of such a colour that it will draw attention to, and not overpower, the more delicate tints of the plant. The most successful of these that I have seen was an orange one, decorating the pot containing a grape-hyacinth, with whose purple and pale-green tints it made a very delightful harmony. I may add that all the bright tones in the room were yellow, and the cut flowers used in its decoration were marguerites and Michaelmas daisies.

Silk bags seem to me to be altogether in bad taste, but if they are used for this purpose, the same rule should be studied with regard to them. On the whole, plants in pots are not suitable for table decoration, their bulk interrupting people's views of one another. Besides, their use involves more monotony than cut flowers; but the first objection does not apply to low-growing plants, like some ferns, and indeed these often make a beautiful centre for small posies of wild flowers; but when I dine at a table whose floral decorations consist mainly of heavy china pots, containing heaths or other shrubby plants, I suspect that the hostess either intends her guests on opposite sides to remain strangers, or thinks such matters altogether beneath her notice.

For the quietest home dinner, or the smartest party, one rule should always be observed—to let the mass of the flowers be either below or above the level of the diners' heads, so that general conversation may be carried on without that uncomfortable dodging about otherwise necessary.



HOUSEHOLD DECORATIVE ART.

LEAF-WORK.

THE art of decorating cabinets, work-boxes, and other small fancy articles of wood with pressed and dried natural leaves is so old, as almost to have passed from the memory of the present generation, yet it is for many reasons well worthy of being revived, and of finding a place in the HOUSEHOLD GUIDE series of "Household Decorative Arts." The effect produced is always pretty and pleasing, the process is simple and easy, and to those who live in the country or are accustomed to take walks in the fields, it affords an interesting pursuit, and leads to an observance of and a pleasure in the beautiful forms of the vegetable world. It consists in arranging and fastening dried leaves to the face of the wood-work in such patterns and borders as may please the fancy of the decorator. These when varnished over are permanent, and when arranged with judgment and good taste are very effective.

The fittest woods for decoration are simple deal or pine, stained black; pine is best, as being most even in its grain, and as being susceptible of receiving the finest stain. If the reader is an amateur carpenter, as are, we trust, many of the subscribers to the HOUSEHOLD GUIDE, he will find no difficulty in making various articles for the purpose of decoration himself; or if not, since for properly showing the beauties of the leaves, such articles should be simple in shape, they may be made for a trifle by any neat carpenter. The best method of staining the wood black, so as to give it a close resemblance to ebony, is with decoction of logwood and iron dissolved in vinegar, and full directions for doing it may be found in our articles on "Wood Carving."

The leaves best suited to the purpose are those which are symmetrical in form, and which are most pleasing

in outline. Deeply serrated leaves are better than those which more nearly approach a plain oval. Very large leaves should be avoided, and even those of medium size should be used sparingly; in decorating a folding screen or similar wide surface they may look well, but generally,

and always for small articles, leaves of a small size look best, and most readily combine into patterns. The selection of the kind of leaves to be employed is, however, rather a matter for individual taste. Many, though not all, should be gathered in the autumn, when deep red and golden hues prevail, for the bright greens of spring and summer cannot be preserved, and the leaves gathered at those seasons will fade to a pale brown tint, not unpleasing in itself, but still needing to be enriched with deeper and warmer tones.

For drying leaves, there is no better contrivance than the "botanist's press," shown in Fig. 1. Such a press, of a convenient size, eighteen inches by fifteen, could be made by any carpenter, and would cost from three shillings and sixpence to five shillings. By taking out the four screws the upper board may be removed, and the leaves laid in between sheets of clean blotting-paper. When the upper board is replaced, and the screws tightened, the blotting-paper absorbs the vegetable moisture of the leaves, which are smoothly and neatly pressed. In default of such a contrivance the leaves may be prepared by laying them between blotting-paper, and then placing them under a pile of books or other heavy weights; but between the pages of books they should never be laid, the moisture will discolour and eventually destroy those parts which it touches, although at the time it

may not appear to injure them, and the bindings also will be strained and forced out of place. Blotting-paper, on account of its porous and absorbent nature, should always be used for drying.

It is well that a considerable number of leaves should be pressed before beginning to fasten them to the wood,

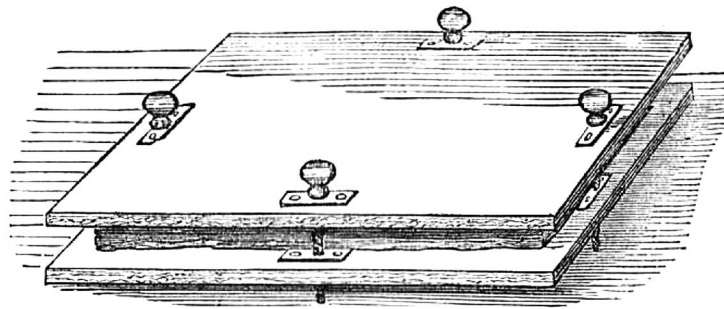


Fig. 1.

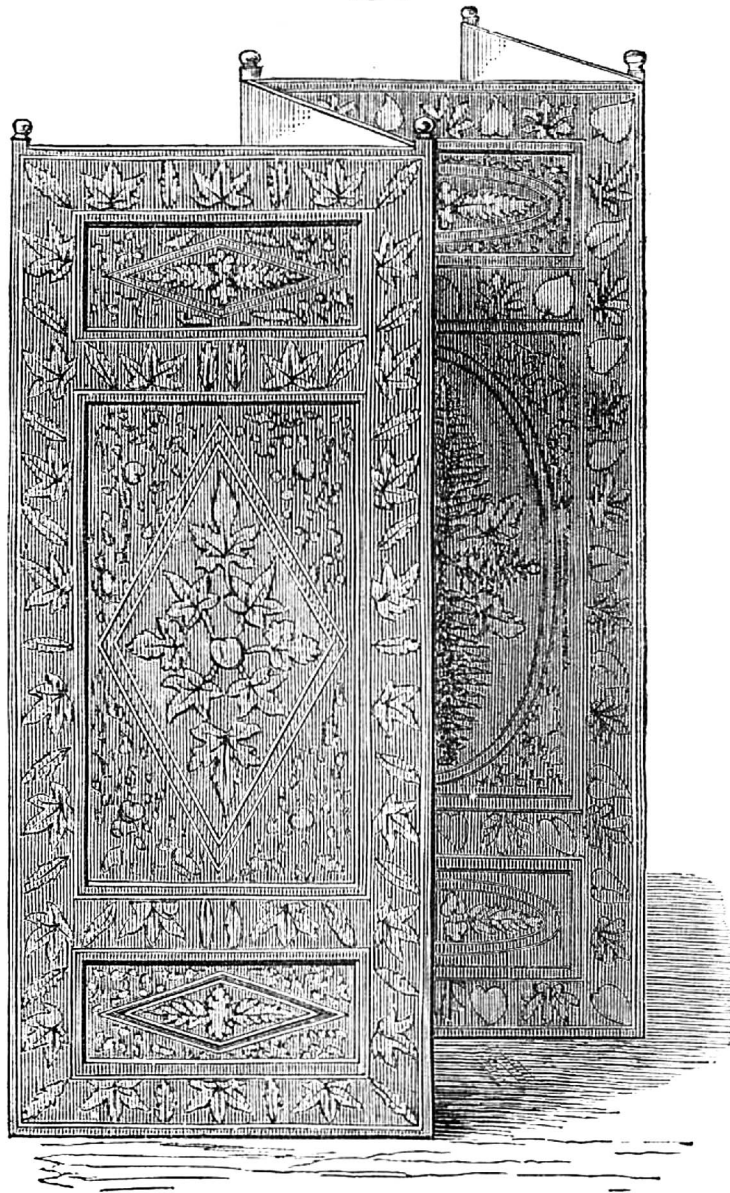


Fig. 4.

that there may be a good variety to select from ; and by spreading on the table a sheet of paper as large as the surface to be decorated, and arranging the leaves upon it, it is easy to alter their positions till a pleasing pattern has been produced. When the eye is quite satisfied with the arrangement, they may be taken up one by one, the back brushed over with a soft camel-hair brush dipped in gum arabic, and the leaf transferred to the same relative position on the cabinet or other article which has to be decorated, when it can be pressed down, and any superfluous gum absorbed by a pad of blotting-paper. The leaves, it must be remembered, are fragile, and require careful handling. After the whole of the leaves composing the pattern have been neatly and securely fastened on, and the gum has become dry, a coat of copal varnish must be laid with a soft camel-hair brush lightly over the surface, and the work will be complete.

The effect of the leaf-work may very frequently be increased by lines and ornamental patterns being traced upon the wood-work in gold before fastening on the leaves ; and our articles on the " Art of Illuminating " will supply information as to the various methods of gilding ; or the lines, &c., may be drawn upon it in brown oil-colour. These lines, as shown in our illustrations (Figs. 3 and 4), will separate the portions left to be filled with leaves, and give greater distinctness, and consequently greater beauty to the work.

The gilding or painting will require some slight accuracy of eye and hand to execute it properly, and if the decorator cannot do it neatly and regularly, he would do better to confine himself to the use of leaves.

In making his arrangements the decorator will not be guided by considerations of form alone. He must also pay attention to the proper gradation of tints ; and much of the effect of his work will depend on the variety and harmony of colour which he thus attains.

Of all things, perhaps, small tables and other cabinets are best adapted to this species of decoration. Work-

boxes, tea-caddies, writing-desks, and similar articles look exceedingly well when new, but the handling to which they are subjected tends to wear off the varnish, and subsequently the leaves. Picture and looking-glass frames may be made in this manner, and look and wear well.

Among larger articles of furniture nothing is so well fitted as a folding screen to be enriched with, and to show the full capabilities of leaf-work. In Fig. 2 we show a work-box decorated by this process, and in Figs. 3 and 4 a table-cabinet and a folding screen. The ingenuity of our readers will readily suggest other articles to which leaf-work is applicable ; and they can scarcely fail, if our direc-

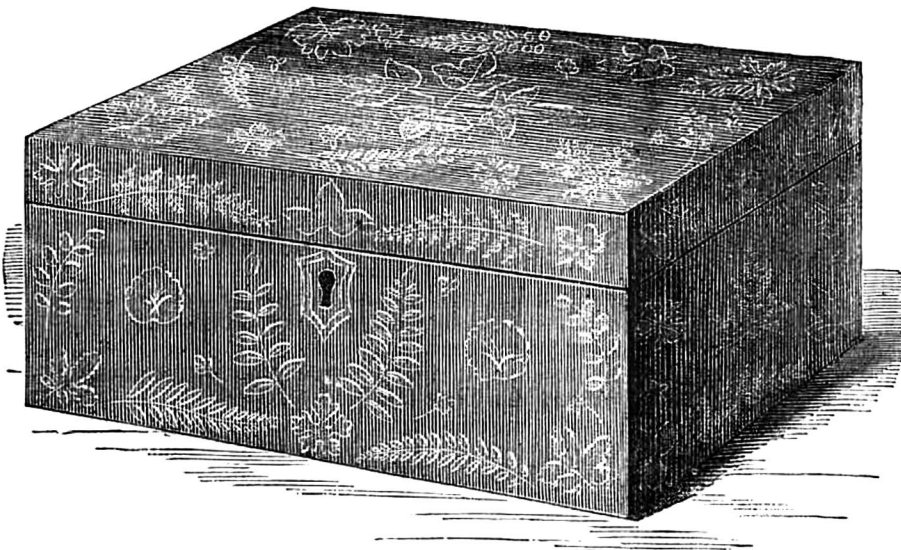


Fig. 2.

tions are carefully followed, to be pleased with the result.

TO CLEAN PICTURE-FRAMES.

THE following is a good method :—Take one drachm (about as much as will lay on a shilling) of soft soap, and mix it gradually with half a pint of soft water — *i.e.*, rain-water, or water that has boiled and been allowed to get cold ; put the mixture into a bottle and shake it well up, then add half a wineglassful of spirits of harts-horn, and again well shake the ingredients. The gilt frame that is to be cleansed may now be brushed over with this liquid, taking care, however, to use for that purpose the very softest camel-hair brush that can be procured. After the liquid has been on

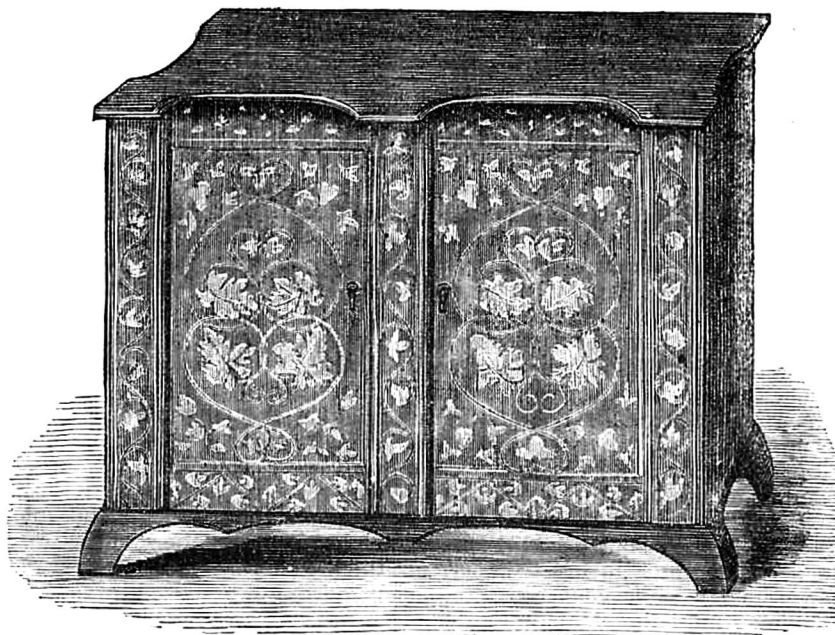


Fig. 3.

the frame a minute or two, using a slight brushing to the dirtiest and most intricate parts of the work, it should be freely washed off with plenty of clean soft water, and allowed to dry of its own accord. The drying should be accelerated by placing the frame in a draught or where the sun shines on it. Next day, the bright parts of the work may be very slightly rubbed with a new wash-leather, which will enhance their brilliancy. It may be necessary to observe here that pictures and glasses should be taken out of their frames during the cleansing process.

DRAWN CANVAS WORK.

THE examples before you are all done upon a new kind of linen canvas, which adapts itself very well to many articles both fancy and useful.

This canvas is made of double linen threads which are rather coarse. It can be had in green, blue, and several art shades. It is one yard in width, and costs three shillings and sixpence per yard, and the fact that it is of fast dye and washes well, is one of its many recommendations.

If you like to do so you can work cross-stitch upon this canvas, and use cotton, flax, wool, or a new kind of pearl cotton if you like to do so. I have not given you any examples of this cross-stitch, nor of patterns which are made by single stitches of different lengths uncrossed, for this reason. At almost any fancy shop you can get a little cross-stitch book, which has also designs for the other stitch named, and as the book costs about twopence all can get it. So it stands to reason that the space which is so valuable should not be wasted upon what any of our readers can get so easily for themselves. I have confined myself to drawn work in these examples, because it is so extremely pretty done on the coloured canvas.

Sachets of all kinds when done in drawn work and lined with a pretty colour, are very charming, the effect being altogether novel.

Small table-cloths, toilet-covers, work-bags, d'oyleys, etc. All can be done on this canvas.

Now there is another reason which I have for giving you the drawn canvas-work.

Many of my readers may have longed, over

and over again, to do the many lovely patterns which can be executed on linen in what is usually termed "drawn linen work." They have got a piece of linen and made an attempt only to meet with failure, and I can sympathise very much with them, for the tyro who tries to learn on linen itself has a bad time of it in nine cases out of ten.

Now let that beginner take heart of grace and try these same stitches on linen-canvas. In a very short time she will know how to do them perfectly, and if she can do them on this linen-canvas, she will, if she is but possessed of enough patience, be quite able to do them on linen. It takes more patience and time for the latter, but that is all.

Punto tirato is such an ancient form of work that it is well worth learning. It may interest some readers to learn what a writer says about it.

"Drawn thread work is lately become extremely fashionable, for the ornamentation of every description of house-linen. It is not by any means a new work, for the very earliest fancy work that ever was invented consisted of drawing certain threads out of linen material, and weaving them with a needle round and about the remaining threads to form a pattern, and there is no doubt that the embroidery of fine linen, of which we read in Scripture as being used for the vestments of the priests and the hangings of the temple, was worked by drawn threads in various fancy stitches. As time went on, drawn work was introduced into European countries, workers became skilful, fabrics were varied and improved, and much

good embroidery was done in Greece, Italy, Russia, Germany, and Spain, under the designation of *Punto tirato* (threads drawn one way of the material), *Punto tagliato* (threads drawn both ways across and across), *Opus tiratum* (fancy open stitches), Dresden point (lace stitches), and other names more especially indicative of the locality in which a particular form of work took a footing. Most of this work was devoted to ecclesiastical purposes. A number of specimens of fine old linen may be seen in the South Kensington Museum, many of which are deftly embroidered with thread drawn from the linen itself, while others are profusely decorated with gold threads and coloured silks, and are so beautifully executed as almost to require a magnifying glass to distinguish the articles."

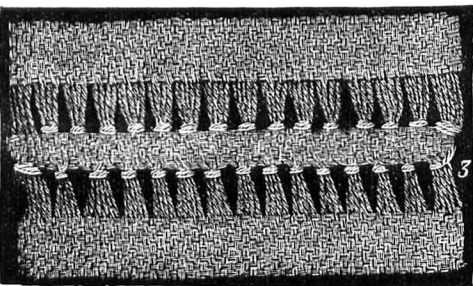
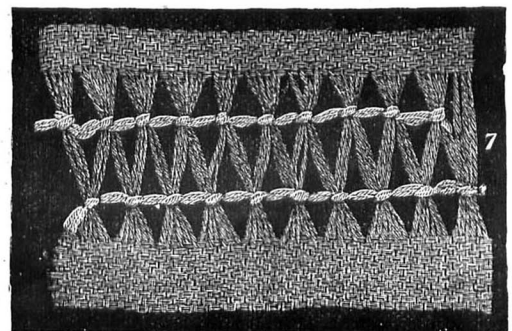
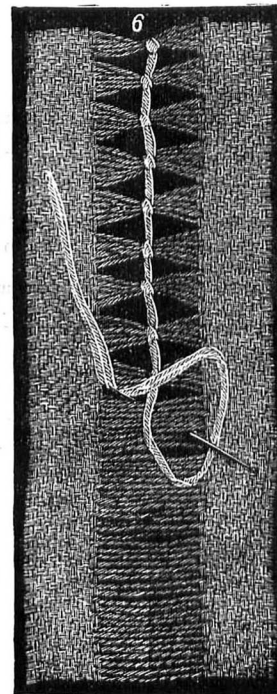
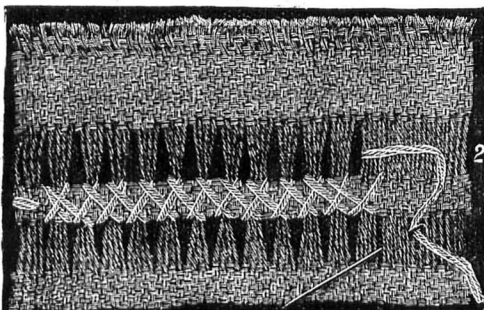
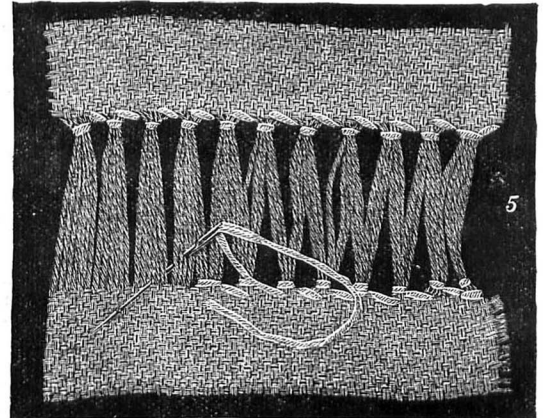
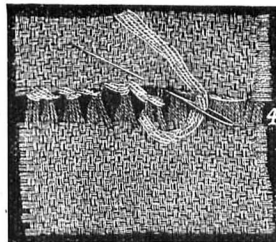
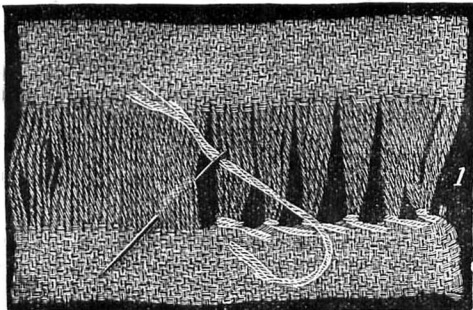
The worker will be so good as to remember that as all the threads here are double that when I say so many threads must be drawn, it is in reality double that number.

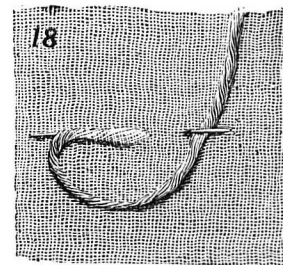
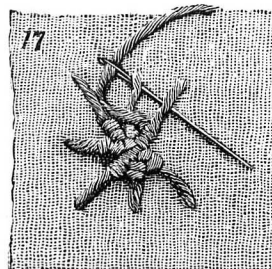
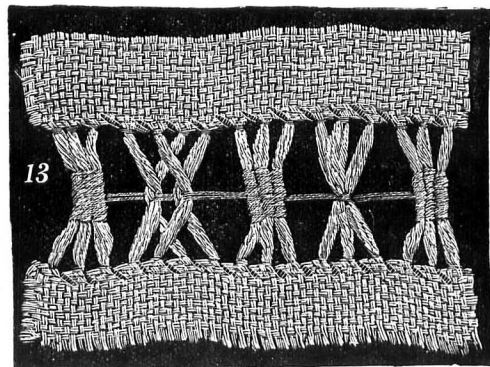
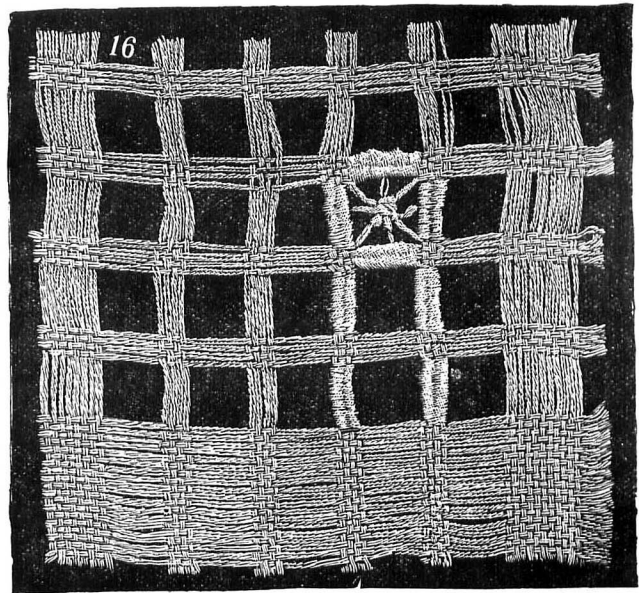
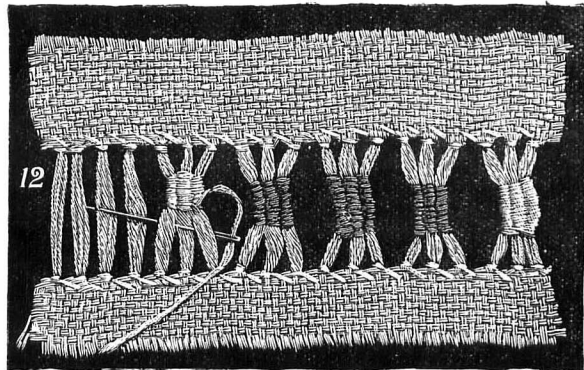
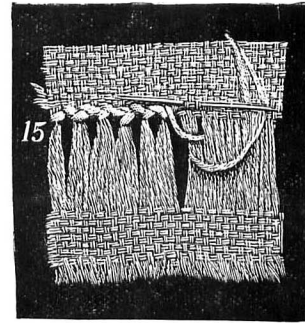
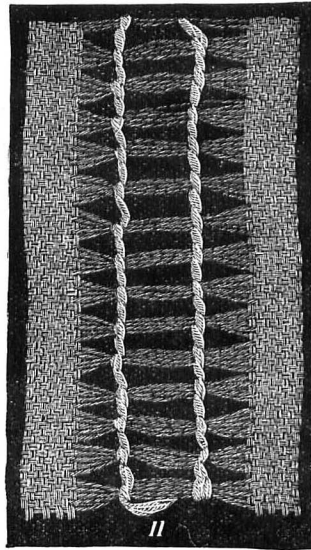
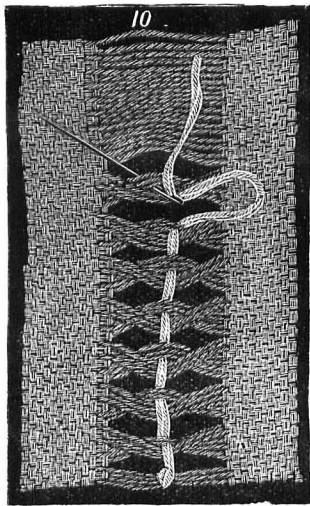
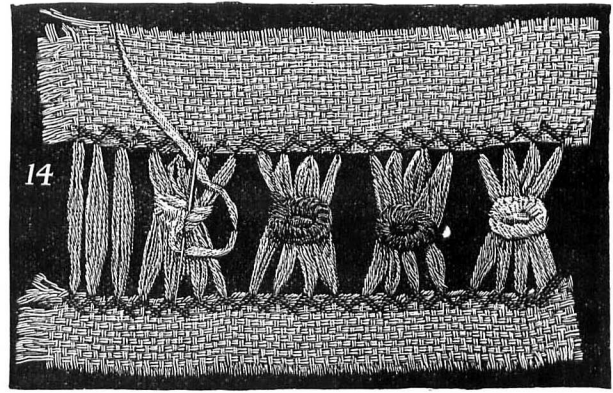
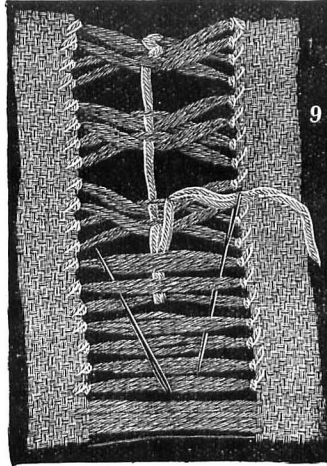
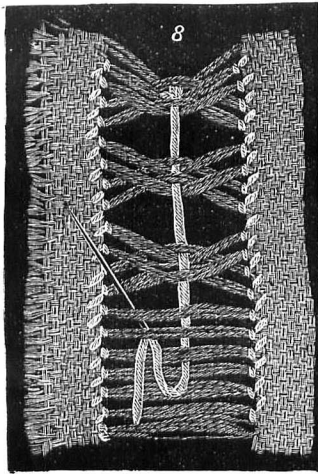
Remember, please, also that when you are going to do any of these patterns upon linen you must be guided by the coarseness or fineness of it, as to the number of threads drawn, and that the numbers given for linen canvas are not always a guide for ordinary linen.

You cannot do much in drawn work without clusters, and these are formed in several ways.

Before beginning the description, I must tell you that filoselle silk of some pretty colour has been used for all these examples, and several threads have been used at a time.

For forming the clusters in Fig. 1 six threads have been used.





About fifteen double threads of the canvas have been drawn. Make your needleful of silk fast at the back of the work. Work from right to left. Pass your needle under six threads of the canvas, and then from the right the set of the threads down two threads lower at the back. Bring it out and then repeat the same thing. If you will look carefully at this example it will show you exactly how the clusters are formed. Of course both sides of the insertion must be done in the same way.

Figs. 2 and 3 show a very convenient and pretty way of making clusters, but it must be borne in mind that it is a plan suited only to stout materials.

On fine materials the thread would draw up the band of insertion between the clusters. Fig. 2 shows you the wrong side and Fig. 3 the right. Really no letterpress is wanted to explain this; however, I will say a few words about it.

Work from left to right. In this example four threads are taken up in each cluster and six left as a band over which the herring-bone stitch passes. In Fig. 3 you see what a neat, pretty row of stitches is formed in the two sets of clusters. It looks well to use the floselle, as you cut it to form the clusters, as the stitches are in themselves ornamental. Unless the weaving of the linen or canvas is very close, it is always better to secure both sides of the insertion, as seen in Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 shows simple hem-stitch. Many people know how to do this, and yet so many others do not, that the illustration is very necessary to make this article complete.

Work from left to right and let the stitches slant in an oblique direction. Draw out about four threads just where the folds of your hem will meet them. Fasten one end of your thread in between the folds of the hem, at the left-hand side of the hem. Bring your needle and thread into the hem above the fold about a couple of threads. Put your needle in from right to left, taking up four threads, and bring your needle out just under the leading thread as it comes out of the hem, and draw through. Examine the example and you cannot go wrong.

Fig. 5 shows how trellis hem-stitch is done. Form your clusters of an even number of threads, and in the next row take half of one set of clusters and half of another.

In Fig. 6 you see how faggots are worked. You can secure your clusters or not according to the material and the likelihood of the threads slipping at the edges.

I will quote from a reliable work the best way of doing these faggots with *Punto tirato* knots.

"Get your needle threaded with sufficient cotton to run from end to end from the row of drawn threads, secure the end of the cotton at the right-hand side of the material with a small invisible stitch into the margin of the linen if there is a margin outside the drawn thread insertion; if not, tie the end of the cotton in a knot round the centre of the three first clusters of threads to form the first 'faggot'; turn the cotton towards the left in front of the three next clusters, retaining it in position by pressure of the left-hand thumb, while with the cotton hanging downwards you bring the point of the needle over the cotton held by the thumb, insert it downwards in the upper part of the space between the faggot you have just tied and the faggot you are in process of working, pass it behind the three clusters that are to form this faggot, and bring the point up over the cotton that is held by the thumb, it thus presents the appearance of a circular loop; draw the needle and cotton through and draw the loop to the degree of tightness necessary to bind the three clusters in the semblance of a 'faggot,' at the same time leaving enough cotton to tie evenly across the space

between the faggots. Every *Punto tirato* knot is formed in the same manner.

"These knots enter largely into the composition of drawn-thread patterns; sometimes they are worked with double cotton, sometimes with cotton five or six sizes coarser than that employed in other portions of the embroidery. Care and practice are required to keep the cotton in a straight even line, and not too tightly drawn, otherwise the knot itself is sufficiently simple to be very easily acquired. In our example four threads have been taken in the duster forming a faggot."

In Fig. 7 you see how the knots can be used in two rows of trellis hem-stitching.

Figs. 8 and 9 show double crossing in two stages of being done.

Four clusters here are crossed. Proceed as follows: Remove a good number of threads, as you must allow sufficient spring for the crossing or else it will pucker.

Begin by firmly fastening your thread at one end, and pass your needle under the first three clusters. Look carefully at the example and you will see how the thread lies.

Then bring your needle up between the third and fourth clusters, just as you see in the example. Next look at Fig. 9.

Bring your needle back over the third, then under the first and second, over the first, under the second, over the third, under the fourth and third, and then after going under the second you go down again to the wrong side under the next three.

Look carefully at the example, and when you have withdrawn the needle which is threaded through, it will be easy for you to know where to go if you follow the above description, placing your needle as you see the unthreaded needle is placed. The latter is only put there to show you where the threaded needle is to go next. It is obvious, I hope, that that is the intention, and that no second needle is required. When you draw the leading thread and you see the clusters fall naturally into their places, you will perceive what a very fascinating stitch to work this is, as well as a very pretty one. You can vary it by using very narrow china ribbon for doing the crossing with, gold cord, or soutache. In any case the leading thread must be strong.

Single crossing is seen in Fig. 10. One cluster is drawing the needle over the other, and then you go on to the next. An examination of the illustration is the best way of learning.

Fig. 11 is a double row of *Punto tirato* knots.

Fig. 12 shows quite another kind of drawn work, which certainly is very uncommon and extremely easy to do on this canvas. Draw about twenty threads and then make some clusters of two double threads in the usual way.

The next thing is to darn sets of three clusters, and in this example the sets are done in green, blue, red and yellow floselle silk, four threads of which are used at a time. Look at the way the needle is placed in the example and that will show you exactly how it is done. You must finish off each set of clusters separately at the back.

In Fig. 13 you will see how faggots and double crossing alternate with darned clusters. This example is worked with cardinal-red floselle silk.

Fig. 14 shows four clusters confined by an oval of button-hole work. Secure your silk to one of the clusters and then run your silk round the four clusters as a kind of guide for the button-hole work. The latter is done all round in the way seen where the needle is left in. The middle between the lines of button-hole has a stitch called "bullion," worked over to hide the unsightliness of the threads which show between the oval of button-hole work. This would make an effective border for a small table-cover, or worked in lines down a sachet lined afterwards with coloured

silk. The clusters for this example have been made in quite another way. You will see how these are done in Fig. 15. It is merely herring-bone stitch done under the threads you wish to cluster, and then the needle taken through a couple of threads in the canvas above.

Fig. 16 shows a kind of guipure made with canvas. Draw out about eight threads and then leave four. Do this crossways again, and then draw in and out the bars and fill in the spaces with wheels, or any case stitches you happen to know.

In Fig. 17 is seen how the wheel is done. Make three long stitches from one extremity to the other of the space to be filled, and stop short in the middle of the fourth. Pass your needle back under the spoke before and the spoke after it. Look at the example and you will see how the needle is placed. For the eighth spoke let the thread come from the centre to the edge. For bullion stitch I will quote some good directions:—

"The stitch resembles a raised roll of twisted cotton lying on the surface of the material; it also is designated "roll picot stitch;" it is effectively employed to represent ears of corn and barley, for veining the centres of leaves, for working entire leaves and portions of flowers, and may be generally used whenever a raised ornamental stitch is desired. To work, bring up the needle and cotton to the front of the material, put the needle in the material in the position you wish the bullion stitch to be, taking from a quarter of an inch to half an inch of the material on the needle according to the length the stitch is required to be, and bring the point well out where the cotton already is, and with the needle standing in this position wind the cotton round the point of the needle ten or twelve times in the manner shown by the illustration; wind the cotton with the right hand and keep the twist from falling off the needle by pressure of the left-hand thumb, then draw the needle through the material and through the twists of cotton, turn the cotton towards the top of the stitch, and pull till the stitch lies in position with the twisted cotton in a close roll upon it, insert the needle again at the top of the bullion stitch and bring it up where the next bullion stitch is to begin."

Enough has been now said, and sufficient examples have been given to show the worker how many charming stitches can be worked on linen canvas.

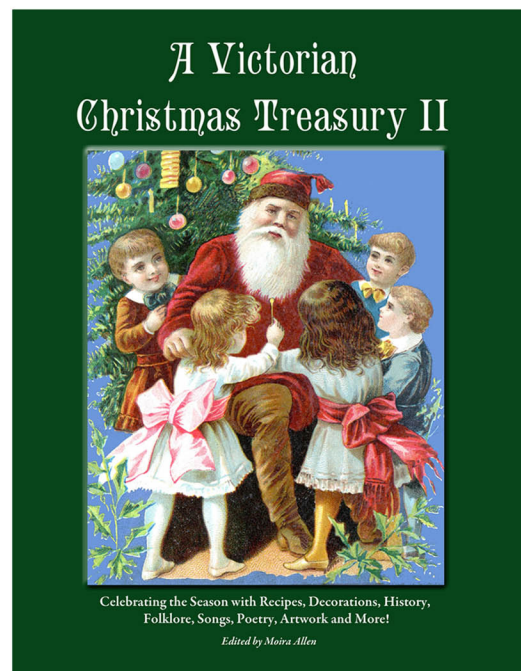
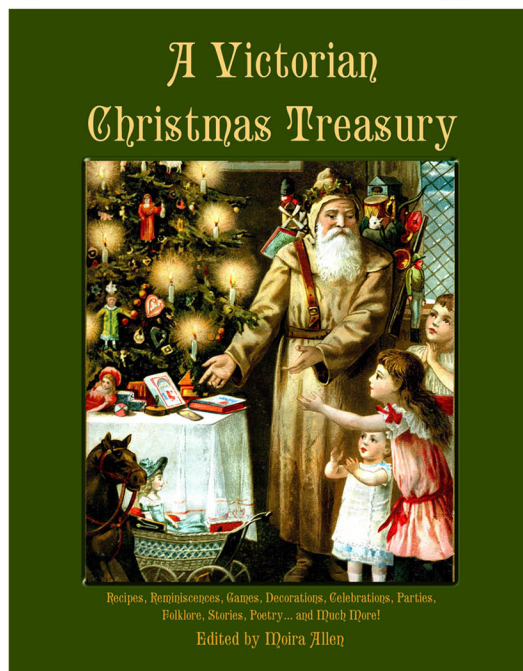
Strips of linen canvas done in this drawn fashion alternating with insertions of lace would, when lined, make a lovely bed-spread, and it would have the advantage of being able to be carried about easily. Many people very naturally dread beginning such a large article as a couvrepied or bed-spread, as the space taken by the piece of work makes it impossible to take about conveniently. Now a strip of work can go so easily into a work-bag when you spend an evening with a friend, is so portable when you wish to use up some of your time on the sands in the summer, and so the article gets quickly finished. I am sure that those who learn this work will be greatly charmed with it. In case any should, after learning it, wish to do the stitches on ordinary linen, I must give a few hints.

Get your linen washed before you begin to work on it. Do not attempt to draw your threads until you have well soaped the part where you are to draw them. This plan greatly facilitates that usually tedious business. Always tack down all hems.

The size of the thread of the material is about the guide for the size of the cotton you work with. Waxing your cotton makes it stronger.

For drawn linen-work great care is required and also good eyesight. Those whose eyes are not strong should not attempt any but the coarser kinds.

Experience the Magic of a Victorian Christmas!

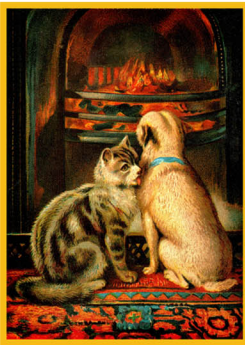


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ART IN THE HOUSE.

PART III.

HOW TO STENCIL IN OIL COLOURS.

ORDINARY tube colours should be used for stenciling on your furniture mixed with a little copal varnish and slightly thinned with turps. Driers are put up in tubes under the names of *sacrum* or sugar of lead, and it is as well to mix a little with your colours as it makes them dry off quickly. The white should be mixed up in a batch with the varnish, driers and turps, and be of the consistency of thick cream. Your tinting colours should be squeezed out on your palette so that you can readily mix up your tones.

Stencil brushes are round and short in the hair, so that they present a flat surface on the stencil. You require three or four, two about an inch in diameter, one five-eighths and one three-eighths or a quarter of an inch. Two or three small flat hog brushes for touching in ties and putting in particular parts of a stencil should be handy. We will begin with the stiles of the door of chiffonier, which is decorated with the ornamental stencil B, Fig. 1 in first article. We put the corners in first and this corner I cut separately as I could not fit in the stencil I was using. Having done this see how your other stencil will work out, for it does not look workmanlike to start at the top and find that you have to end it with a different spacing to what you started with. If you begin in the centre of each stile and work to the corners you will obtain a symmetrical result. Always remember to space out any part of your work which is conspicuous, so that the stencil seems to just fit in the space as though it were cut specially

for it. I find it a good plan to have some pins handy, and just tap in a couple, one at each end of the stencil, to keep it from shifting while you rub on the colour. Both your hands are then at liberty. Or you can get a friend to hold the plate down on the wood, but the pinning does almost better. If you shift the stencil before you have knocked out the impression you will not get a sharp result.

Having tinted your white to the desired tone spread a little of the colour on to your palette and knock your stencil brush on to this colour a few times, so that the brush takes up some of the colour, then begin by gently knocking the brush on to the wood over the cut-out portions until you have completely covered them with colour. Don't try to do this too quickly. Proceed gently, getting the colour out of your brush by degrees, and take up the colour from the palette in the same gentle manner. The reason for this caution is that if you take up too much colour at a time in your brush and knock it violently on the stencil plate, you will find when you lift up the same that the impression, instead of being sharp will be blobby at the edges through the colour having worked under the stencil.

The art of stenciling is in getting sharp, clean impressions, and this can only come of care and



FIG. 1.—Panel of corner cupboard decorated in stenciling. The centre panel is founded on the iris, with the daisy at base.

taking time. On no account get the colour too thin. It should be of such a consistency as will enable you to knock it out of the brush with slight exertion. If too stodgy thin it with a drop or two of turps and linseed oil, and then mix with palette knife, but on no account get turps into the stencil brush or you will get very bad impressions, for the colour is sure then to run under the stencil. Therefore again I say, don't hurry.

I have said nothing yet as to the tones of colour to be used. This is a matter of taste, and is a most difficult subject to write about. Two artists will use the same colours, and yet one with an eye for colour will give us beautiful harmonies, and the other one wanting this delicacy of perception will give us crudity. Form in your mind some tone of colour suggested, say, by the warm mellow colours of autumn, the soberer russet and greys of the winter, or the light, fresh, delicate tints of spring, and carry these suggestions out in your decoration. The corner cupboard, Fig. 1, we might tint in the russet tones, and you will find that such colours as raw sienna, raw umber, yellow ochre, *terra verte*, burnt sienna, chromes Nos. 1 and 2, Prussian blue, French ultramarine, and light red will supply you with a very varied palette. White tinted with yellow ochre, raw sienna or raw umber are all good tones for stencilling in, and each of them can be mixed or toned with one of the others. The addition of *terra verte* or Prussian blue will give you soft tones of green. By using such a yellow as ochre to make greens you obtain softer, quieter tones than if you used chromes. Suppose you have small quantities of the above three tints mixed on your palette, you can take a little of one in your brush and knock that out on the stencil, and then a little of the next tint and knock that out, and so on with the third. In this way you get a variety of tints in the stencilled border and yet a certain "tone" will run all through, which gives one a sense of harmony, and at the same time variety, and so lessens the hard mechanical look which stencilling in just one colour is apt to give. Then, too, when you have knocked out one impression before lifting off the stencil, you can take one of the hog hair brushes or the smallest stencil brush and put in the body and the portion of the wings around it of the butterflies B in the corner cupboard, Fig. 1, in a little darker colour, say more raw umber or sienna. It is very little more trouble and greatly adds to the general effect to give these accents. The idea is to make the butterflies come off the web, so keep the web lighter and the insects darker.

In the border B, Fig. 1, in first article the flowers might be touched in to bring them off the lines of the background.

The pattern on the spaces surrounding the door A, Fig. 1, can still be in the same tones, varied as I have suggested, but the panels of the doors being themselves more *naturalesque*, might be a little more positive in colouring, *i.e.*, the leaves and grass can be put in, in quiet, soft tones of green, while the flowers could be in lemon chrome and white or bluish purple made of rose madder and French blue or Indian red and Prussian blue lightened with white, but don't make the colouring too bright, so that it is in too strong contrast to the stiles. Greens made of blue and chrome are much cruder than if you use yellow ochre or raw sienna. Going back now to the colouring of the chiffonier Fig. 1 (p. 13) in first article. The plinth or bottom D can be in low-toned greens, not too dark but darker than the leaves in the panels, while the daisies can be in grey made of white, raw umber, and a touch of blue, with centres in yellow. Stencil the flowers first and then with a small brush put in the yellow centres. A slight touch of pink at the edges of the daisies might look well, effected by using a small hog brush and a little rose madder. The leaves around the column keep in the quiet greens used in plinth D. The back of the upper part of chiffonier, Fig. 2, with its shelf can be treated like the panels in colouring, and the festoon above the shelf can have the flowers in the grey and the leaves in russet not too dark, and the ribbon in pale blue. As you have a white surface to decorate, be careful not to get your colouring too strong. Use plenty of white with all your colours, for you will find that delicate tones are much pleasanter to live with than heavy ones. A little of the pure colours from the tubes will tint a lot of white, so the colours will not be a great expense. Buy the flake white in half-pound tubes for cheapness.

In arranging stencils act somewhat on the plan I have observed, which is to keep the more *naturalesque* stencils for such places as panels or other flat, broad surfaces, and as a framing to them the more ornamental patterns, to contrast with the natural ones. The butterfly border on the stiles of the corner cupboard B, Fig. 1, is a good foil to the iris panel, just as the border B, Fig. 1, is a good foil to the daisy panel in the chiffonier.

The conventional grass seemed a suitable pattern for the plinth, and such a purely ornamental design as a festoon not inappropriate to the shaped top.

I have mentioned before that great variety can be obtained by combining portions of different stencils. The plinth D, Fig. 1, of chiffonier, for instance, is a combination of two, the flowers being from one and the grass itself from another. The butterfly and sprig running border, Fig. 1, in second article, I have shown in variation, and the border in corner cupboard, A, Fig. 1, is made by taking the sprig portion only and putting the root in between each impression. When you want only a portion of a stencil cover over the rest with paper, so that you do not get an impression of a part you do *not* require.

Some colours are very fugitive such as indigo, crimson lake, yellow lake, etc.; but the colours I have mentioned may be relied upon for permanency.

When the stencilling is thoroughly dry it will preserve the work to give it a coat of white hard varnish. Apply this freely with a flat hog brush (or regular varnish brush), seeing that you miss no portion of the surface. Keep it from the dust until dry and you will have a pretty and useful article of furniture. Of course you may have some other article to do up than the chiffonier I have sketched, which I took simply because it was to my hand, but you can easily apply these hints to your own necessities.

When your stencils are done with you wash them thoroughly in turpentine, both back and front, and dry them and put them away, keeping them flat.

While you are using your stencils wipe the back after each impression, so that if any colour has worked there you can remove it. Have an old board and some newspaper to lay the stencil on when you clean it.

With the batch of stencils given with these articles endless variations and combinations are possible. Many of the patterns too could be easily adapted for needlework; in fact, you have only to lightly stencil your material in water colour and work over the impressions. Use Chinese white if a dark textile, and lamp black and Chinese white if a light one.

Though I have advised white paint for these two articles of furniture, there is no reason why you shouldn't try dark ones. Stencilling is very effective on dark paint, and a cabinet or cupboard painted a dark brownish green would look well with stencilling in shades of old gold. To get a rich colour the final coat must have very little white with it. For a brownish green use burnt sienna, black, deep chrome, and touch of Prussian blue, with only enough white to make it light enough.

FRED MILLER.

HINTS FOR PAINTING ON TERRA-COTTA.



PAINTING on terra-cotta divides with china-painting the favour of a great many amateurs who, though with skill in handling the brush, and a taste for colour, have not the power, nor perhaps the time, for under-

taking a large picture. There are numbers of articles in white and red terra-cotta sold now, which are admirably adapted for painting on; and I propose, in a short paper, to give a few hints towards their effective

decoration. I think it will be better for those wishing to learn, for me to suppose I have an article before me ready for painting, and the instruction I propose giving will be then clearer and more easy to follow. First, let me say that there are two ways of painting on terra-cotta, in oils and water-colours, the latter aided with Chinese white. The medium most preferred is that of oils; water-colours and Chinese white are more difficult to work, and less satisfactory in their effect when done, and also they are liable to crack and "cake off" in hot or dry weather.

On the table before me I have a round red terra-cotta plate, seven inches across. Very few colours will look as well, and none better, on this red than yellow and green. On this plate I intend to paint sprays of marigold. I take a sable or a camel's-hair brush, dip it into some chrome yellow, using turpentine



with the point of the brush charged with well-mixed colour, taking care not to rake up the colour at the sides. On the plate before me I have painted one spray with two flowers and a bud, and one spray crossing it with one flower and a bud; a small yellow and brown butterfly sufficiently relieves any blank space left: I have painted all over the flowers with chrome yellow. The centres of them now require to be touched up with cadmium and a little Indian yellow, the shadows composed of brown and grey. Blue must be sparingly used in the shadows, and white too. The latter, of course, is required at times, but it is liable to make shadows muddy-looking. The colours should be clean and clear, as they thus stand out better from the ground. The various details of light and shade I must leave to the practical experience of my readers. They vary, of course, according as to whether you wish the flowers to be as if painted in full light or in shadow. The plate, I consider, will be improved if I put a narrow border round the rim, either within the rim or actually on it. As a relief to the yellow and red, I mix a little Antwerp blue with white, and a slight touch—a very slight touch—of yellow. These ingredients compose a soft turquoise blue, and it looks very well as a border to the marigolds. When my design is thoroughly dry, I shall take a clean soft brush and dip it in some picture copal varnish, or mastic varnish, and shall go over the shadows of the whole design. When that too is thoroughly dry, I shall go over with the same varnish the rest of the design, excepting the border. I here warn my readers to be careful in putting

as a medium, paint over all the flowers and buds, but not thickly, then I mix with the yellow some cobalt blue and a little brown, and paint over the leaves and stalks, working in white where the lights are strong. I must take care not to work with my colours too liquid, as when once they have run over the outline it is impossible to rub them out, and there will always be stains, unless the design can be judiciously extended so as to *cover* the stains. The first flat tints will soon dry, the terra-cotta being very absorbent. Some people gum over the design, so as to some extent to fill up the pores, but I find it better to let the pores be filled with the colour. At first it will be found very difficult to work the colour; it is apt to go in little ridges and sometimes to peel off in flakes; this last is occasioned by the medium not being properly mixed with the colour, and it therefore soaks into the plate, and the colour dries too quickly. It is to be avoided by careful mixing and careful working. When it happens, you must fill in the blank spaces by touching them

on this varnish: it must not be put on thickly, as it will then dry in ridges. Where you see a ridge





appearing, you must carefully drag it off if it is moist ; but if it is already dry, you had better leave it or else scrape it off with a sharp knife, and then go over again with the varnish.

Space will not permit me to give long descriptions of designs, but I think it will only require a few lines more to help to put beginners in the way of starting and working for themselves. If your plate is made of the white terra-cotta, I advise you to paint a background on it, as, though the white ground might throw up your design, it is not pretty in itself, and is liable, too, to show the least mark or smear.

The turquoise-blue I have mentioned makes an excellent background for yellow flowers. A background can be put on more liquid than the design, and with a larger brush. An effective design on a long, rather narrow plaque, is the wild yellow iris, the stalks springing from the bottom, and the top flower stopping about an inch from the summit. These flowers look particularly well on a graduated blue background. When you wish to have the design stiff and so-called conventional-looking, you must outline all the details. Vandyke brown is a good colour for outlining. Great



care must be taken in outlining not to let the colour run. I have recommended simple spirits of turpentine as a medium, because I generally use it myself ; but where I have had to put the colour on in thick masses, and I have not wished it to dry quickly, I have sometimes used megilp. However, do not use medium at all unless it is absolutely required.

Be careful always to begin your work with clean brushes. After using, plunge them into a jar of soft



soap and water, the colour will then come off almost immediately, and then, if they are wiped into shape on a soft, smooth rag, they are kept soft and pliable ; be careful, too, that there are no hairs in the brush liable to come out. A pretty, carefully drawn design is often spoilt by not giving sufficient attention to such details.

I do not think heads look well painted on terra-cotta, but small cherubs floating amongst flowers, if they are very carefully and clearly drawn, are

effective, particularly on a vase. Butterflies and birds are suitable also for terra-cotta decorations, but flowers, or flowers and butterflies, are best of all. Be careful never to paint butterflies unlike nature, or butterflies alighting on flowers which in nature they would never alight on. For instance, do not paint a butterfly, which does not make its appearance till June or July, alighting on a snowdrop or a daffodil, and do not paint a bright Robin Redbreast hopping on a crimson summer rose.

I will close this paper by a short list of designs for vases and plates.

For a tall, narrow, white terra-cotta vase: On one side a tall spray of purple monkshood, on the

other side a short spray of same, with a bee flying to one of the flowers. Background: pale yellow, graduating to a light brown.

For a tall, narrow, red terra-cotta vase: On one side, and stretching round a little way to the other side, a straggling branch of honeysuckle; a tortoise-shell butterfly.

A round white terra-cotta plate, twelve inches across: Sprays of yellow jasmine; ground, turquoise-blue, graduating towards peacock-blue.

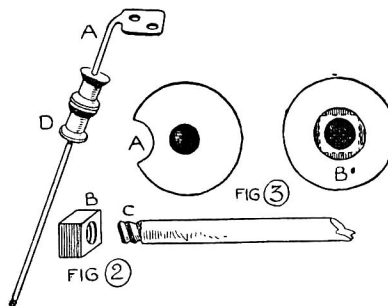
A round red terra-cotta plate, twelve inches across: A group of ox-eyed daisies, nearly filling the plate, also some flowering grass, and a yellow butterfly.
H. C. F.



A TABLE WITH COTTON-REEL LEGS.

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

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



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

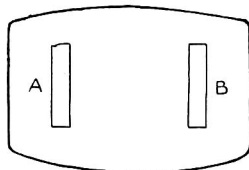


FIG 1

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

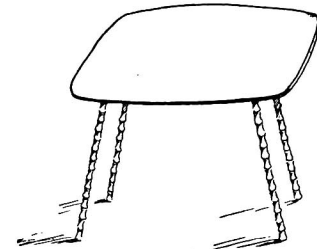


FIG 6

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

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

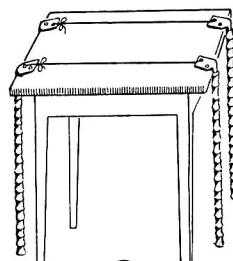
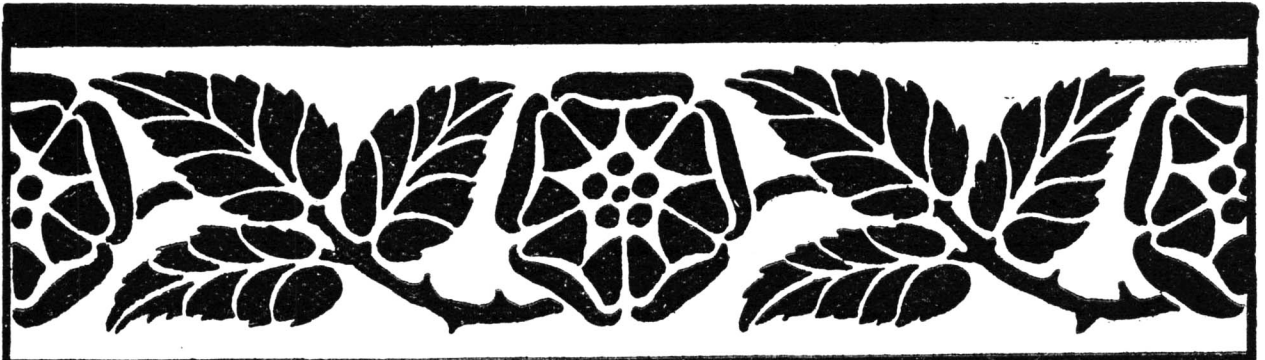


FIG 5

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

"COUSIN LIL."

Practical Church Decoration, by Arthur Louis Duthie, 1907



14TH Cent. Dado & Border.

1906

SCREEN-PAINTING IN OIL COLOURS.

By FRED MILLER.

THE illustrations accompanying these few notes are reproductions on a very small scale of a four-fold screen I recently painted. The original was some 6 feet 6 inches high, and the illustrations, being necessarily on a very small scale, are apt to appear somewhat confused, especially the side painted with the reeds. But there is a very decided advantage in having illustrations of this character reproduced from actual work, for the amateur gains a much clearer idea of what the original screen was like from whence the cuts are taken than if I had redrawn the screen merely for the purpose of illustration.

Photography helps one greatly in these matters, for having a camera I photographed

both sides of the screen, and the result is now before my readers.

The use to which the owner of this screen has put it strikes me as a very good one. He uses it to put round the seat of the piano, and so keep the draught from the performer—a most useful purpose my readers will allow, for too often the player is exposed to all the breezes that blow in a drawing-room. As a draught excluder, a screen is most valuable, and therefore always have the bottom of the screen close to the floor, and not elevated on knobs or castors, which may look elegant, but which allow the wind playing along the carpet far too much scope.

The framework of this particular screen I

had made for me by a cabinet-maker works for the trade, and its cost was £4. The panels, which are of pine, would be worth at least another £1 or 25s., and they do not want priming, so that the actual outlay in producing such a screen would be some £6 or 7. The framework, I must mention, was stained black and polished. Of course, a much cheaper article can be had. A good carpenter would make the framework of deal; instead of having it stained and polished might be painted white. A screen could be made in this style for, I should say, £3. You might do the painting yourself by purchasing some colour ready mixed or in tins, for colours of all shades can be purchased in tins ready



A FOUR-FOLD SCREEN. FRONT VIEW.

use at many places. Aspinall's enamel seems a good thing, judging from work I have seen done with it, or there is the *Chez-lui* enamel. In priming the panels purchase some white lead ground in oil (to be had of any good oilman), and by diluting with turpentine and straining through canvas or muslin, and with the addition of a very little copal varnish just to harden it (be careful to put very little varnish, or the ground colour will dry with a gloss which is objectionable to paint upon), a very good grounding colour is at hand. You will require to put two coats at least upon the panels, as the wood is very absorbent and sucks up the first coat. In the screen I am referring to the whole surface was painted; that is, instead of using an arbitrary colour for the sky and other parts not decorated, I painted in the sky, etc., round the work as it progressed, and in such cases a white ground is the best, for you treat the panels in much the same way as you would canvas.

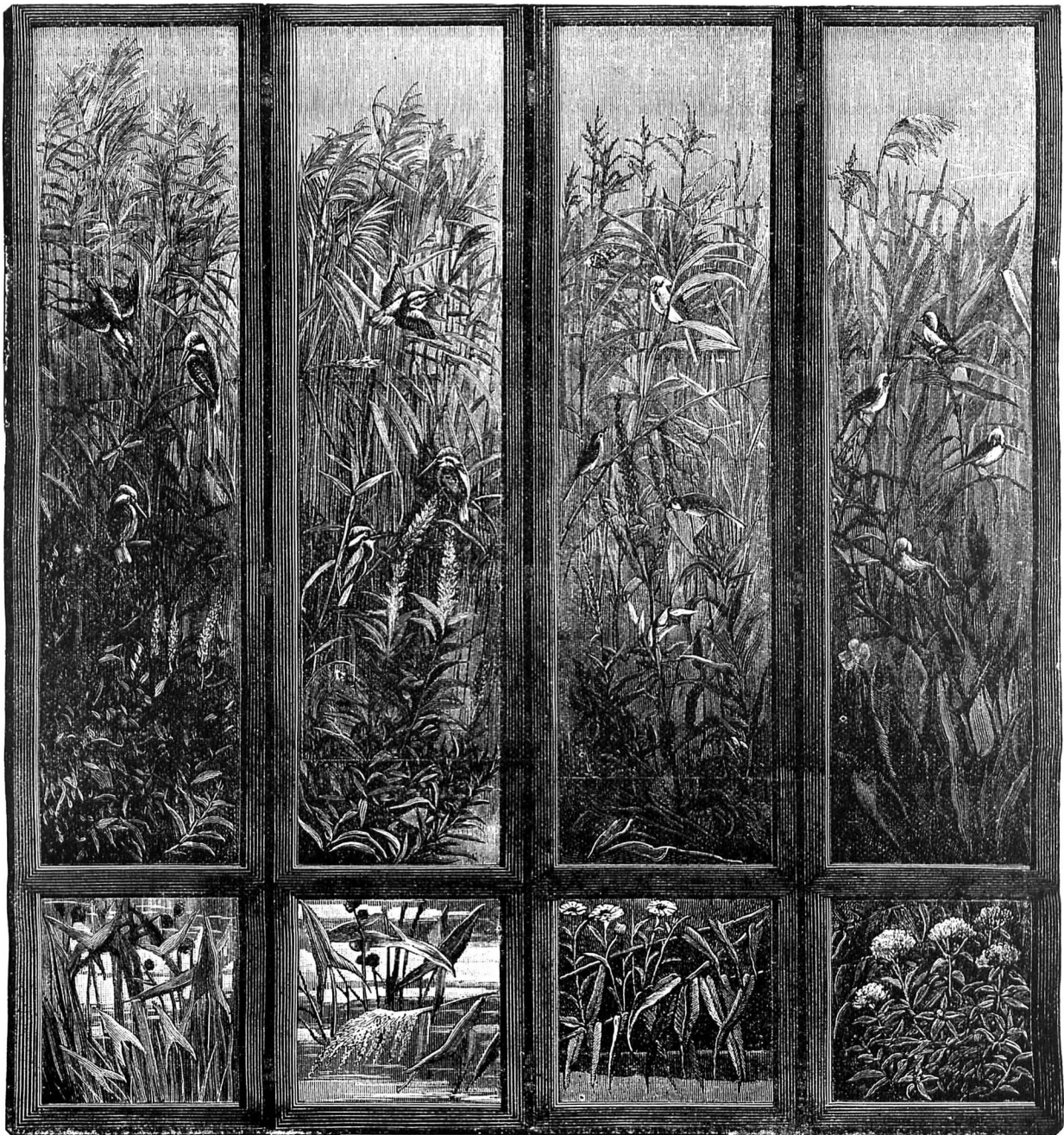
But many very effective screens can be

worked in the Japanese style by having the panels painted, say, some agreeable grey, and just throwing the work across it in a very "decorative" spirit. The screen figured here is more realistic than decorative in character, but in former volumes of *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER* illustrations of a decorative character have been given.

Another form of screen which is cheap is to have a comparatively rough framework made and then stretch over this stout tough brown paper, putting strips of leather or other material on the edges, and nailing with brass-headed fancy nails. Brown paper is a capital material for painting on, as it is absorbent. Japanese gold-leather paper is also an admirable material to use, and the plainer varieties (there are some with little or no pattern upon them) are very effective when decorated. Canvas such as used in oil painting can be purchased by the yard, and this might be used. The cheaper kind will be good enough, and that with a coarse grain is to be preferred. We are

nothing if not practical in *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER*, and that must be my excuse for so far digressing from the actual subject of these notes. But as the old cookery book says "First catch your hare," and so here, first have your screen to decorate, and then think about the decoration.

My main idea in painting *this screen* was to suggest a river bank, and to use only such subjects as would be found in close proximity to water. I have always been charmed by the beauty of waterside foliage, and have often made studies of single growths. The side treated with reeds I actually painted in the autumn on the banks of the Ouse, near St. Neots, though of course it was finished in the studio. Those who live in the country might paint the whole screen out of doors, and each panel might be treated separately, and not made to form part of the whole scheme as I have done. This side of the screen I call the autumn side, as it was painted in September and October, and I attempted to reproduce some



A FOUR-FOLD SCREEN. BACK VIEW.

of the gorgeous tints that are only to be seen in riverside foliage. The purple loosestrife, for instance, is to be seen in every shade of scarlet and purple. The dock, too, is gorgeous in colour, as are the willow herb, meadow sweet, and sedge.

The difficulty in painting direct from nature is in selecting the various groups and arranging them effectively. One is apt to be dazzled and confused by the wealth of the material, and, in endeavouring to get this effect in one's work, to simply produce a confused jumble of foliage, formless and uninteresting. This comes of not knowing what to leave out. You must fix your attention upon some one object, and give that prominence by making all else subsidiary. In the lower portion of the upper panels I have massed the reeds at the back, and treated them more as a background of colour than as individual forms, in order to give prominence to the loosestrife, dock, and meadow sweet. This is what artists term "breadth," and is essential if we would make our work effective when viewed from a distance. Look at nature with half-closed eyes, and paint with half-closed eyes. By this means you will see only the most essential things, and nature will mass itself, for much of the detail will be lost. One sees too much of nature in fact. The trained eye only sees what is important and what can be represented. It is knowing what to leave in the ink-pot makes the writer; as knowing what to lose in breadth makes the painter. I would advise my readers to make individual studies of the different plants, though there is no reason why a suggestive background should not be employed as well as an arbitrary one. Suppose you want to make a great feature of a clump of loosestrife with a background of reeds. Treat the reeds as a mass or wall of colour, and in a lower key—that is, greyer, so that they do not interfere with the loosestrife. Keep out all strong lights and darks from the back-

ground, reserving these for the foreground objects.

In getting many of the tints associated with autumn, recourse must be had to glazing. Scarlets are best obtained by glazing rose madder, raw sienna, burnt sienna, and Indian yellow over lighter tones of these colours. Rose madder glazed over cadmium produces a gorgeous scarlet. So it will when glazed over vermilion. In glazing, use a little varnish, say copal or amber, rather than megilp or medium. The underneath colour should be quite hard, and I would advise my readers to paint in the dry method, using turpentine or spike-oil of lavender to thin the colour, and no medium or varnish. When the work is finished and has stood some time, varnish carefully with mastic or other good varnish (or Sohnee's spirit varnish), and your work will be permanent.

The following is a list of the colours I used in painting my screen:—

Yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, vandyke brown, raw umber, black, light red, Indian red, vermilion, rose madder, cobalt, French ultramarine, Antwerp, ceruleum, viridium, cadmium pale, cadmium orange, Indian yellow, lemon yellow.

This is a complete list, and suffices for all requirements. It will be noted that I leave out all the chromes. Delicate tints cannot be obtained by their use. Yellow ochre is the finest colour for greens; with cobalt it makes delicious greys, and with ultramarine and Indian yellow rich juicy greens. Avoid greens made of bright yellows and blue. They are always crude. Emerald green might be added to the above list, as it is useful for toning with blues and gives with them a fine peacock blue such as is wanted in kingfishers, but avoid it in greens, and never mix with any of the fine yellows, as it destroys them.

The other side of the screen, painted with yellow flags and swans, speaks for itself. The

distant reeds are only just indicated. The swans are here the feature, and must be carefully drawn if introduced. There are some good photographs of swans taken instantaneously to be seen in photograph publishers' windows, which are very useful for painting from, if one has studied the bird from nature as well. There is a danger of getting the swans out of tone—that is, too white for the rest of the work. You must always set toner into your work, so that every object seems to fit in harmoniously. Tone in painting is very much what the "key" is in music. This side of the screen I kept grey in colour, for when one has much green to deal with, great care must be exercised in avoiding crudeness and vulgarity. Nature is full of grey, and you have only to put a crude green in comparison with nature to see the truth of this.

The lower panels are treated with smaller flowers, such as forget-me-nots, but there is no reason why the panels should be divided as I have done. This is simply a question of individual caprice.

One word as to bird drawing. I have made a great feature of birds on both sides of the screen. The Natural History Museum offers fine field for work in this direction. Among the new cases may be seen many waterside birds, such as reed warbler and bunting, kingfisher, ducks, gulls, and tits, and as they are very finely stuffed one might paint direct from them. It will be necessary to write for student's ticket before permission to draw is granted. The Booth Museum in the Dyke Road, Brighton, contains, I suppose, the finest collection of stuffed birds in England, for Mr Booth is both a naturalist and sportsman, and he has had the cases set up under his own supervision, and the habits of the various birds are strictly adhered to, so that looking at a case is like reading a chapter of natural history or looking at the book of Nature herself.

THE SHELL BASKET.

BY MRS. JANE WEAVER.



This is an exceptionally beautiful affair, and very easily made. Procure a sea-shell of almost any kind except the very commonest, and cover the lower side with plush appliqué, which is itself to be covered with embroidery *au passé*. The lining is plaited satin, and the handle is twisted with cord, terminating with tassels.

MY WORK BASKET.

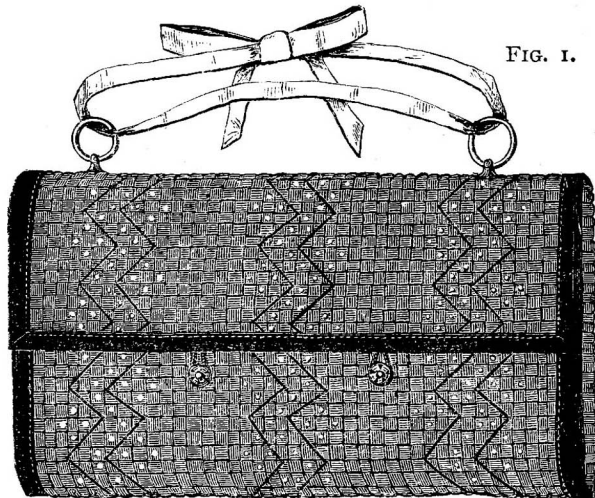


FIG. 1.

A PORTABLE WORK POCKET.

The outside covering of the pocket is made of coarse checked *écru* canvas, worked with a fine blue silk cord and steel beads. A couple of steel rings are fastened to the upper edge of the turned-over fold at the top, through which a blue ribbon is passed to form the handle. The pocket is kept closed by two large steel buttons and elastic loops.

Fig. 1 shows the appearance of the pocket when closed.

Fig. 2 indicates the manner in which the work is done. A wool needle, sufficiently large to thread the cord, which must be cut into rather long pieces, so as to have as few joins as possible, is passed through one of the squares, as shown in detail, making an insertion of vandykes with a row of steel beads in each of the centre squares between the lines of cord. The beads are sewn on with silk the same colour as the canvas. Begin by working the middle row of vandykes; then the outer ones, leaving sufficient margin for the edges at the sides.

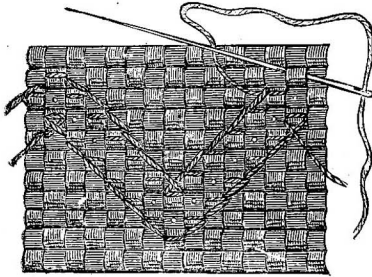


FIG. 2.

Fig. 3 shows the pocket when open. The length of the pocket is about eleven inches, the length from the edge of one flap across to the other is also eleven inches. The pockets for the needles are two inches,

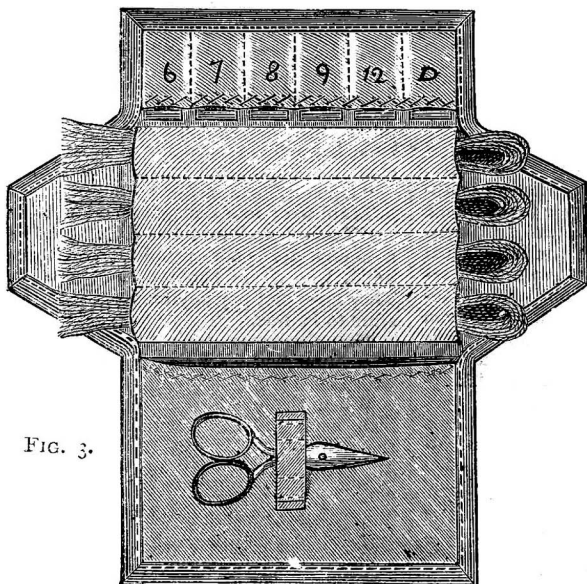


FIG. 3.

the lower pocket and runnings for the skeins of silk and thread are each four and a half inches deep; the width of the pocket when closed

is six and a half inches. The lining is of blue flannel cut to fit the canvas. A second piece of flannel is divided into three parts. The strip for the needles is separated into six compartments. The open edge hemmed with a row of coral stitch in coarse white silk, and the divisions stitched and marked with the sizes of the needles; the letter D for darners. The four runners for the silks and threads are also stitched, and worked with coral stitch. The pocket has a firm piece of cardboard between two pieces of flannel, so as to keep it flat when closed; this is also worked to match, and a strap stitched on for the small pair of scissors. When the lining is made it should be firmly sewn round the edges of the canvas, and then bound with a strong blue ribbon, stitched with white silk on the canvas, and neatly felled on the inside with blue silk to match the colour of the flannel.

SMALL PIECE BASKET OF BRAIDED CRASH OR COARSE HOLLAND.

Cut a band of holland twenty-four inches long and about eight inches deep, leaving sufficient for seams. Cover a cardboard of six



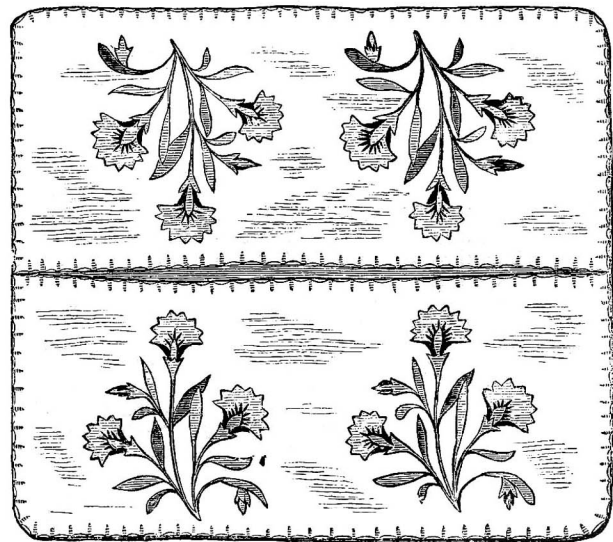
inches square with the same material for the bottom. Divide the band into four parts, and draw a pattern to be braided on each part, both bottom and top of the band, reversing the pattern according to design, the small part of upper design being placed just above the deepest part on the lower row.

Braid these designs with narrow black or coloured braid (coloured is better for washing). The scollops are formed of a ruche of woollen

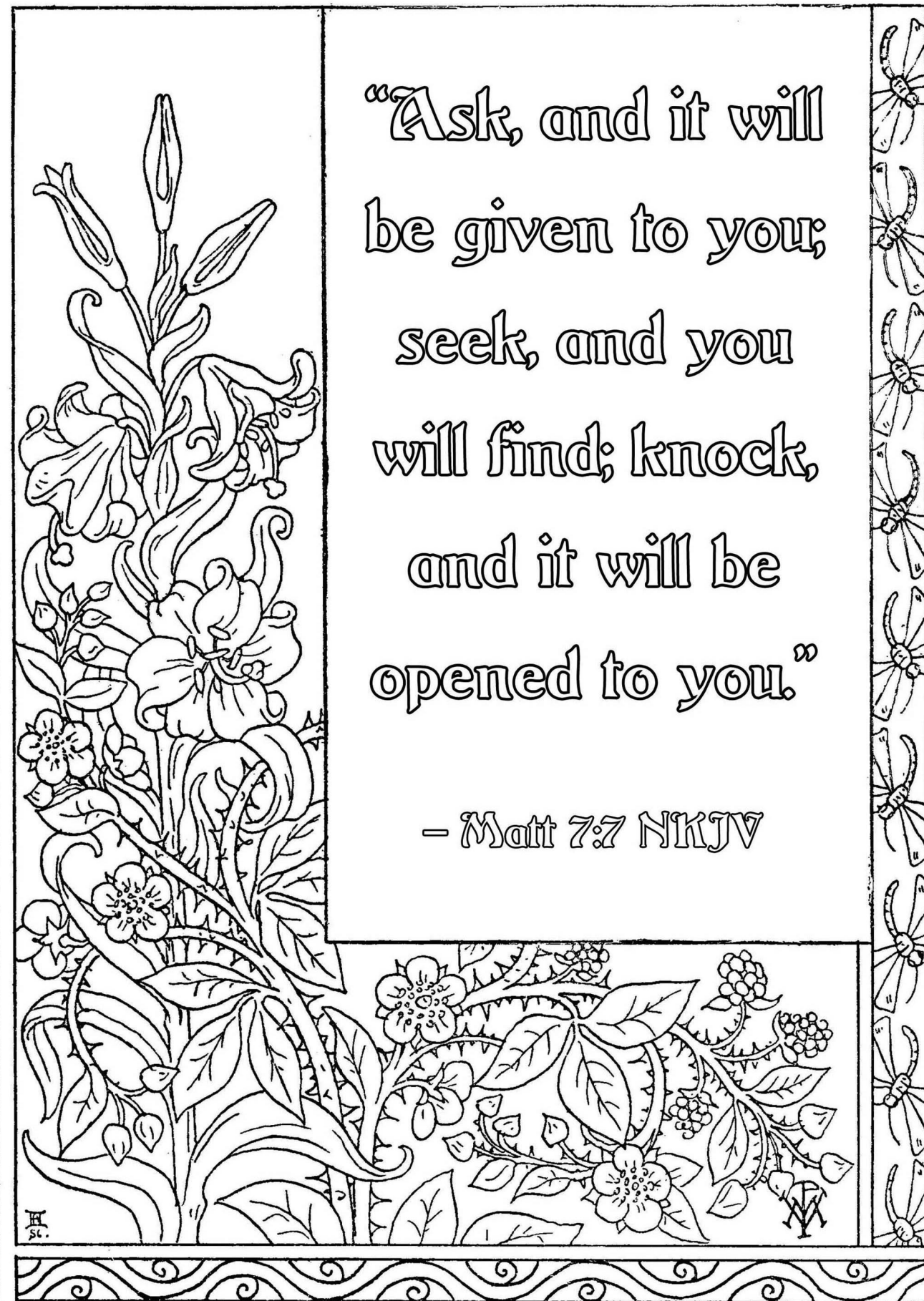
braid to match that used for braiding, and tacked on the band, which should be lined with stiff foundation muslin; this is then sewn on the bottom square, and a bag of holland, with a frill drawn with braid, attached to the top. The join is covered with a ruche, which forms the heading of the *lambrequin*.

NIGHT-DRESS CASE OF COARSE, UNBLEACHED HOLLAND, WORKED WITH CREWELS.

The case is made about fourteen inches long and twelve inches



deep. Fold the holland so that the opening is in the middle. The four corners are embroidered in bouquets, and the edges of the case are worked round with silk arrasene, in "post and rail" stitches.



“Ask, and it will
be given to you;
seek, and you
will find; knock,
and it will be
opened to you.”

- Matt 7:7 NKJV