

SOME CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

ANNIE ISABEL WILLIS ON SEASONABLE FANCY WORK.

A Pretty Sachet Bag—A Mounted Thermometer—A Hairpin Holder—A Paper Holder or Catchall—Fireboard Screens—A Covering for the Broom.

NEW YORK, Nov. 28.—It is a common mistake to suppose that fancy work is expensive. Some of it is, but it is pos-



SACHET BAG.

sible to make really lovely articles for a very small outlay. Such articles it is my purpose to describe.

The possibilities of ribbon for fancy work are almost unlimited. Let any one who desires to make a very pretty sachet bag, procure a half yard of pale blue and a quarter of pale pink ribbon, not quite two inches wide. The blue should be cut in halves, and one strip overhanded on each side of the pink. This done, fold the ribbons in the shape of a right angled triangle, letting the ends project nearly two inches. Place layers of cotton, scented with violet powder, within, and fasten it in with fine silken stitches. The projecting ends of the ribbon may be fringed, tiny bows may be placed at the acute angles, and the little device may be ornamented with some flowers done in water colors. If the maker can paint.

Three strips of ribbon, a trifle wider than the above and of contrasting colors, may be sewed together so as to form a banner, the ends, top and bottom being



THERMOMETER.

fringed. A small thermometer, which is sold for the purpose of mounting, may be secured at one side, a spray of flowers painted about it, and the whole, fastened to some cardboard and hung by ribbons, will make an attractive wall ornament.

An easier way to mount a thermometer is to fasten it to the longer end of a broad crimson satin ribbon which has been caught up so that the two parts hang down in uneven lengths. The ribbon may be painted or embroidered on both ends, a spray of daisies around the thermometer, and a spider's web on the shorter end and narrow ribbon tied in small loops will conceal the tack which fastens it to the wall.

Fresh flowers, especially if brought from abroad, will be valued for their associations. Pansies, violets, heather and many other blossoms, press very nicely, and little banners, made of single pieces of broad white ribbon fringed at both ends and fashioned to cardboard to keep them from sagging, make good backgrounds on which to mount them. Quotations printed with gold paint, and ribbons to hang the banners by, complete these dainty keepsakes.

Handsome Christmas cards are always in order when one is puzzled to know what to give. The satin-trimmed and silken-fringed ones are too expensive for modest purses, but plain cards, if they are delicate and artistic, may be enhanced by being mounted on ribbon prepared as described in the preceding paragraph.

There is a little convenience designed for those who do not use patent shoe button fasteners, which is made entirely of ribbon.



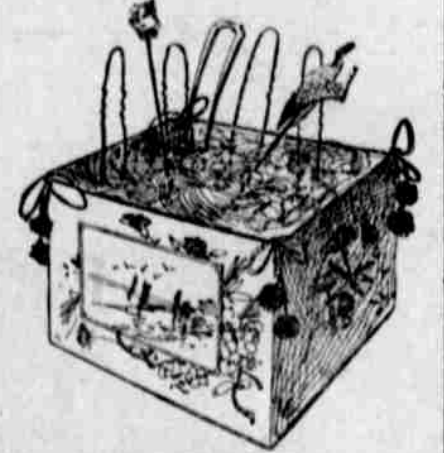
Take two strips of ribbon, with fancy looped or tufted edges, one a rich, dark brown, and the other a golden brown color, both being just the width of a spool of linen thread. Place one over the other, and featherstitch both together with gold silk on the darker ribbon. The stitching should be done just inside the edges of the ribbon. Fringe the ends, and above the fringe put a row of feather stitching, so as to form two tiny bags (or the shoe buttons). Fold the entire strip together; place in the loop thus formed a spool of black linen thread and tie it in with Tom Thumb ribbon

run through it. String some shoe buttons, so that if they fall from the little bags which are to hold them they can be easily put back. Fill the bags with them and hang the whole up with gold-colored ribbon.

Mantel scarfs are frequently used in stead of lambrequins, especially when the mantels are of handsome wood or marble, for they relieve the squareness and barousness without hiding the beauty. A very pretty scarf can be made of four strips of contrasting ribbon, each one yard and a quarter long. The strips are overhanded together, within a few inches of the ends, these ends are then turned up to form points, and a silken ball or a little brass figure—a bell or a crescent—is fastened to each. White lace, gathered full, is sewed under these points, falling a little below the balls, and the whole is caught by a brass scarf clasp.

A convenient hairpin holder is made by overhanging four strips of three-inch ribbon together, and then sewing a square piece in for the bottom. The strips of ribbon may be about four inches long. Turn in the top edges and fasten them; to make a neat finish fill the little box-like figure with hair such as is used by upholsterers, and put balls or bows at the corners. If further decoration is desired, one or all of the sides may be hand painted. This hairpin holder has one great advantage which many have not—it will not easily fall over, and, as the hair which fills it is left uncovered, the pins can be out in it without any trouble.

Very inexpensive gifts are mats made of cotton batting. The centers are cut round, and a little violet powder may be put inside the folds and secured by a circle of fancy stitches. Long strips of the cotton can easily be edged with a



BROOM COVER.

chain stitch of pale colored worsteds, every fifth or sixth stitch being caught through the cotton. These are to be box plaited on the centers, and when a bottle or vase is placed on the mat, the plait stand up prettily around its base.

Crotone forms the material for a useful article—a sort of paper holder or catch all. The foundation consists of three canes fastened so that their centers cross. The triangular space between each two of the canes, above the centers, is filled with a piece of pasteboard cut to fit and covered on both sides with crotone overhanded at the edges. These pieces should be slightly rounded at the top, and the three being covered, should be firmly overhanded together, the basket thus formed being fastened to the canes whose ends project about an inch above. Box plaited ribbon fastened along the top edges, and ribbon bows at each corner and where the canes cross, finish the graceful basket. It is designed to hold newspapers or any bit of work on which its owner may be engaged.

A card receiver may be constructed by fastening a straw hat, gilded, to three



"CATCHALL."

canes, arranged as for the paper holder. Ribbon bows may be used for fastenings, and should match the satin or silk lining which should be sewed in the hat.

Pillowsham holders are a great convenience to those who do not use the patent arrangements now in the market. A broomstick, or shade roller, about as long as the width of a pillow sham, is first covered smoothly with red muslin or cloth. Over this is drawn or fastened a piece of white cotton crocheting, which may be made cylinder shaped to fit the stick, or left flat and sewed



FIREBOARD SCREEN.

around it. Tassels of red and white are fastened at the ends, and a red and white cord is used to suspend it. The holder must be hung from a nail in the corner of the room, the ends of the stick thus

resting against adjacent sides of the wall. In this way the stick is left free for use.

Speaking of pillow sham holders reminds me of some dainty shams which are easily made, though not as cheap as the gifts which it is the purpose of this article to describe. They are made of hemstitched handkerchiefs, four being needed for each sham. The handker-



chiefs may be plain or have initials or embroidered edges, as the maker can afford. The four are joined in a square by single strips of linen lace insertion, which cross at the center, and the entire sham is surrounded by lace to match the insertion.

Mounted photographs are acceptable Christmas gifts, and their value is increased if the donor prepares them herself. Procure plain beveled panels of suitable proportions for the unmounted photographs which have been selected. Mount these in the lower right hand corner, and fill the rest of the panel with hand painted devices. These are best presented with little wire easels to hold them.

Fireboard screens are really necessary in old houses whose fireboards are provokingly ugly. There are handsome ones in the stores, selling at handsome prices, too, which can be easily made, with the help of some one skillful in wood working. Let a screen frame be made, of the right size, the center being left hollow. This space may be filled, when the frame is completed, with plain or figured India silk, gathered at top and bottom.

Something that housekeepers would appreciate is a covering to put over the broom when brushing the walls. Cut the cover out of Canton flannel, so that it will fit the end of the broom and come half way to the handle. Sew the pieces strongly together, and arrange tapes by which to tie the cover to the broom. The homely gift may be decorated by outlining on it, with red marking cotton, a pattern of crossed brooms.

ANNIE ISABEL WILLIS.

The Father of Oscar Wilde.

LONDON, Nov. 18.—Lady Wilde, the mother of the erratic poet, was born in Dublin, where she lived most of her life, and there she was married to Dr. William Wilde, a noted oculist. He was an odd and eccentric as he was talented, and that is to say a good deal both ways. His studies and researches resulted in his making some such important discoveries that he was knighted in consequence, and from plain Mrs. his wife was henceforth Lady Wilde.

Sir William Wilde was very absent minded, and to say the very least, careless of his toilet. He absolutely would not take time from his studies to keep himself respectable, and it was the hardest matter to get his hair combed, as it was slightly curly and long. Sometimes when Lady Wilde would see him absorbed in a book she would pounce upon him with brush and comb and polish him up a bit, but before an hour he would look fully as unkempt and neglected as before.

A clean shirt was laid out for him every other day, and he would usually put it on; but if Lady Wilde did not watch him he would put it on above the one he already wore. Sometimes, it is said upon good authority, he would be found to have on six shirts, one over the other. Often he had odd shoes on, and nothing could compel him to wear gloves. Friends had to keep the strictest watch over him the day he was knighted to keep him from doing something or other which would have perhaps caused him to be sent away from the presence of the queen in disgrace, instead of a nobleman.

Dr. Wilde's ordinary dress consisted of a coat which was slimy and greasy from top to bottom, with bulging pockets. A pair of trousers, baggy at the knees, and as dirty as the dirt could hold on them, and a hat that looked as distressed as his clothes.

One day he was called to London for a conference with some of the most noted oculists in the country, and they waited impatiently for his arrival. He reached the house with one shoe and one boot on, and with his old coat and pants, shocking bad hat and unkempt hair, looking little like any of the London and Edinburgh doctors who had reached there before him. He knocked on the door and the servant who opened it thought him a tramp or vagabond and ordered him to be off.

"Here," said the doctor, "I don't want any nonsense. I came here for a consultation, and I advise you to open the door."

The man half hesitated, and Sir William put his brassy shoulder to the partly opened door and sent the lackey reeling back, and then the doctor walked in. The poor servant called for help, thinking that the plate was in danger, when the doctor took him by the collar and said:

"Here, you spalpeen. Lead me to your master's room, or by the powers I'll eat you." "I'm Wilde."

By this time the master came out of his study, attracted by the noise, and he, too, made a mistake, and asked what this meant.

"I'm Wilde, and this spalpeen wouldn't let me in. You sent for me to Dublin, and now your footman won't let me in."

By this time the other saw his mistake, as he had already heard something of the doctor's untidy habits, and he hastened to apologize by saying that the servant must be drunk and should be sent away directly.

MARIE DALHOUSIE.

GOSSIP OF THE CAPITAL.

SOME OF THE LADIES OF THE ADMINISTRATION CIRCLE.

Mrs. Harrison's Horror of Being Stared At—The President's Lucky Physician. The First Lady as a Shopper—S. S. Cox's Library—A Young Woman's Luchon.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 28.—I am sorry to say that Mrs. Harrison is not in very good health. She is now under the doctor's care, and is confined pretty rigidly to a diet of milk and stale bread. She says she has appetite enough, but the cruel doctor will not give her permission to appease it in her own fashion. The trouble is a gastric one, and can be removed only by persistent caution as to diet.

The president has a doctor, too, but does not often have occasion to send for him. "This curious fact that one call to the White House brought, or is in a fair way to bring, a fortune to a Washington physician. Since the president made Dr. Sowers his physician this young gentleman, already popular and successful, has found his practice quickly doubling. He is now the hardest worked man in the city of Washington, his White House patient, probably, excepted. Dr. Sowers is no more than 35 years old, and his income is \$25,000 a year.

Gen. Harrison works like a hired man, and he is likely to kill Lige Halford before his term is half out. The trouble is that the president goes to bed too early and gets up too early. He is rarely up later than 10 in the evening, and then he wants to begin work at 8 in the morning. This habit doesn't at all fit the private secretary, who, as a morning newspaper worker during ten or fifteen years, acquired the habit of retiring a little before other people got up, and of sleeping till the forenoon is half gone. If the president would work all night and eat his breakfast at 3 in the afternoon, as Mr. Arthur used to do, it would just suit Mr. Halford.

The private secretary is one of those rare men, a Christian editor. He has carried his piety into politics, too, and is as fond of the church and all that pertains to it as he was when an Indianapolis editor. Nothing pleases him better than a chance to sit down and talk with a bright, sensible minister of the gospel. Such an one you may often see in the big red leather chair that stands between Lige's desk and the door to the president's library.

Mrs. Harrison is fond of the church, too, but she has given up attending, and for a rather novel reason. It is not the condition of her health that deprives her of one of the pleasures of her life, but her dread of being stared at. It is an actual fact that the people gaze at her so much in church that she can never tell whether the minister is preaching on foreign missions or infant baptism. So she has resolved to stay at home. She goes occasionally to the theatre, which she wouldn't do but for the protection from curious eyes afforded by the curtains of the box, which she invariably occupies.

Mrs. Cleveland never objected to being stared at; at least, she never tried to get away from the crowds. She had a way of smiling at masses of people as much as to say she recognized and sympathized with their curiosity. Besides, she was woman enough to take a little delight out of the consciousness that some admiration was mixed with the curiosity. Even the receptions, out of which Mrs. Cleveland used to derive so much pleasure, Mrs. Harrison is looking forward to apprehensively.

Mrs. Cleveland was fond of shopping in Washington. Everybody knew her, and hundreds of eyes followed her every movement, but what did she care? Mrs. Harrison, however, never goes to the shops unless it is absolutely necessary, and she prefers doing her shopping in New York or Philadelphia, where her face is not so well known.

The first lady of the land is as sensible and practical as she ever was. The glitter of power has not made her the least bit dizzy. Even in shopping no false pride is allowed to govern her actions. She was in Rohr's infants' outfitting establishment not long ago, buying a cap for one of her grandchildren. The only thing in stock of the sort she wanted Mrs. Rohr asked \$3 for, but Mrs. Harrison said that was more than she cared to pay.

"We can make you up a very pretty cap at \$2.50," said Mrs. Rohr.

"No," replied Mrs. Harrison, "I had thought \$2 was enough for a cap, and I'll not pay any more."

She didn't. Nine women out of ten would have been too proud, in Mrs. Harrison's place, to decline to buy a baby's cap or any other article simply because a dollar stood in the way.

Mrs. Cleveland's closest friend in Washington was Mrs. Whitney, wife of the secretary of the navy. Mrs. Harrison's closest woman friend is Mrs. Clark son, wife of the first assistant postmaster general. A genuine, earnest friendship has sprung up between these genuine, earnest women. Mrs. Wanamaker is also a member of the little coterie. Both Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. Clark son are in love with the wife of the postmaster general, who has, in the opinion of Mrs. Clark son—surely a competent judge—the sweetest, most perfect home in America. "It is rich in all that money can buy," says Mrs. Clark son, "and richer in that which money cannot buy—perfect love and peace and a hospitality which fills the heart."

These ladies of the administration will have ample opportunity to wonder during the coming winter why their husbands ever left their prosperous businesses and perfect homes—for Mrs. Clark son has a beautiful home in Des Moines, Ia.—to work for that hard, ungrateful taskmaster, Uncle Sam. The postmaster general and his first assistant go to work at 8 in the morning. They are busy with callers till 5, and unable to get at the accumulation of business on their desks. Often it is 8 or 9 in the evening before they go home to dinner, and Mr. Clark-

son would not quit often then if his wife did not go after him and metaphorically take him by the ear and lead him to the carriage.

Speaking of the president's physician reminds me that the daughter of the late Dr. Bliss, the famous old physician who was the medical adviser of several presidents, and whose name has been a household word in the capital for forty years, is one of the rising physicians of the city. She is a fair type of that large class of brainy, earnest women who take up the battle of life practically alone, but with unflinching courage. Dr. Clara Bliss-Hinds is not only winning popularity in Washington as a practicing physician, but is becoming famous throughout the country as an advocate of woman's life insurance and of the systematic collection of statistics bearing upon the birth, life and death of the human race. At his death Dr. Bliss, after a long and very successful practice left little except an account book containing \$20,000 of unpaid bills. I have heard it said that Dr. Bliss prolonged the lives of a greater number of public men than any other physician of his time. The late S. S. Cox used to say Dr. Bliss had saved his life a half dozen times.

A room about which sad memories cling is the library of Mr. Cox in the handsome home built by him in this city a few years ago. Mrs. Cox never goes into the library when she can help it, for that apartment reminds her of the many long evenings spent there in her husband's company as his secretary and companion; for Mrs. Cox was one of those women who helped their husbands with every detail of their work. Mr. Cox's library table stands just as he left it. Not a paper or book has been disturbed. Still it is the acme of orderliness. Sam Cox, with all his brilliancy, was a man of method, of application, of toil. Not alone his wit, but his persistency, his mastery of all the subjects which came to his hand, won him success.

Cox was known as one of the best informed men in the house. His knowledge was fairly encyclopedic. A hint of the method by which this reputation was won lies upon his library table. It is an atlas so full of clippings from newspapers and magazines that the book is swollen to thrice its original proportions. At the map of Nicaragua, for instance, are fifty newspaper cuttings about that country, its politics, statesmen, army, navy and commerce. So with Chili, Brazil and all other countries, particularly the western nations, in turn.

If Mr. Cox had not been a man of careful method, not even his great industry would have enabled him to keep abreast of modern thought and literature, and at the same time to perform the prodigious amount of labor which fell upon him as a representative, as one of the leaders of his party in the house, and as the friend and champion of many worthy interests and measures. For several years he devoted to the letter carriers alone an amount of labor equal to all that performed by the average congressman, and now the grateful letter carriers are to build him a monument.

Of his habits of work Mrs. Cox said a day or two ago:

"When I came to look over Mr. Cox's desk, I found no unfinished business. Everything was done up to the day of his death, excepting three letters which he had promised to write for friends who were seeking places in the New York city government. For these three letters I had addressed the envelopes, as I was in the habit of doing for all his correspondence, but he was too sick to write the inclosures."

Mrs. Cox added: "Few people know what a hard worker Mr. Cox was, and how much he was able to accomplish. I once asked him to sit down and make me a memorandum of the important legislation in which he had borne a part, simply by way of record of his life work. He replied: 'No, I cannot do that. The present is too lively and the future too tremendous to bother with the past.'"

Secretary Blaine was one of the guests at the dedication of the new Catholic university in the outskirts of the city. Among the newspaper correspondents present was a young woman society reporter who has not been long in the business, though she is as bright as a new silver dollar. Fearing that she might not be able to get anything to eat till her return home at night, she put up in a very small and very neat parcel a slice of bread and meat, with one piece of cheese and two pickles for relishes. To her surprise and delight she was invited to the dinner given the notable guests, and chanced to occupy a seat directly opposite Secretary Blaine. But what to do with that luncheon! The absurdity of carrying a bread and meat lunch to a banquet so impressed the young woman that she laughed immoderately, and finally, becoming desperate, she tossed the now obnoxious parcel under the table at her feet. As the dinner was concluded and the guests were rising, the secretary of state hastened round to the young woman's side. Smilingly he held out to her a fragment of her own bread and meat and pickle, saying, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye:

"Better put this in your pocket to eat on the way home if you get hungry. I have tried the bread, and it is very, very good. Who made it?"

WALTER WELLMAN.

The Lead Pencil Sharpener. A gentleman who admired this wonderful inventive faculty, and who, with all, was of a speculative turn of mind, once suggested that if, following the example of the man who first tipped lead pencils with india rubber erasers and thereby made a fortune, she could similarly attach a pencil sharpener, a fortune might also be made. Before the conversation was finished, this genius, with a bit of cardboard and a pair of scissors, had fashioned a scroll like contrivance not larger than her little finger, and in a couple of days a worker in metals had reproduced in steel the model of a sharpener that is now everywhere popular in the stationer's stores.—F. G. De Fontaine.



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