

Pretty Christmas Gifts of Home Manufacture

Little Things, Not Hard to Make, Which Will Always Be Appreciated.



A Holly Photo Frame. represent moments of thoughtfulness and toil for the recipient. And then, too, one can save many a good penny and give gifts of real worth if one be industrious and a bit skillful. Ordinarily, at the last moment the stores are full to overflowing with feverish shoppers intent on



STRAWBERRY DESIGN TRAY CLOTH.

getting the showiest article at the lowest cost, and because of this pernicious custom our houses become crammed with cheap and useless stuff. Use your heads a little and use your hands, and you can evolve presents that will give pleasure to the recipients thereof.

There are many pieces of handwork that can be made for a reasonable sum, and we offer a few suggestions which we trust may prove hopeful. Some ladies are proficient in embroidery, hemstitching, and lace making; some are especially successful at crocheting; whilst others prefer to ply the knitting needles; then there is a class that do little with "fancy work," but at ordinary sewing are able to accomplish good results. We will try to suit the needs of these different workers.

Embroidered and Hemstitched Articles.

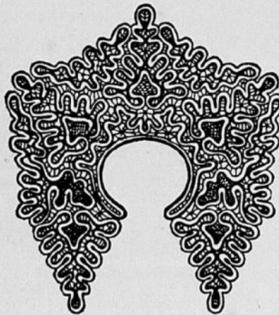
Hemstitched linen pillow-cases make a most acceptable gift to any housewife; a bit of luxury that not



A POPPY SOFA PILLOW.

every one thinks she can afford, but which really need not demand much outlay. The linen is so much more durable than cotton that the needlework put upon these cases will not be expended upon something quickly thrown aside.

A simple gift, simple as to cost if not stitches, is a fancy stock. Handwork is so much in vogue now, and such elaborate work is seen, that the stores charge big prices for the finery in this line. The worker at home can make exquisite collars for but a few cents, a little linen and some wash-cotton being all the material needed. One of white butcher's linen with a little open-work of white cotton, with stars, squares, and circles, worked in light blue bordered with black, edges buttonholed in white, was priced at one of the stores at two dollars and a half. You can readily see most of the cost lay in the work. First get a good pattern of the stock desired, and the rest of the making will be comparatively easy. Those long in front are now



LACE COLLAR OF ARABIAN BRAID.

preferred. Everything depends on the shape and the fit.

A pretty embroidered pillow cover one can be reasonably sure will be appreciated. Those of coronation braid are very popular. A poppy design is appropriate, the poppy being the drowsiest of flowers.

Bits of linen handwork make dainty presents. The strawberry pattern for the tray cloth is extremely pretty, the oval shape a novel feature.

Photograph frames of embroidery on linen are all right to use on bedroom walls, but for articles so con-

spicuously placed as a wall decoration the work must be first-class. Violets and maidenhair ferns, holly, and other delicate designs are best for these frames.

Handkerchief and necktie cases can be made with little expenditure of time or money, and come in handy if one is not flooded with them. Forgetmenots and violets are appropriate decorations.

For Lace Workers.

This is essentially a lace period, every girl and woman must have some lace embellishment about her costume or else look hopelessly unadorned. Much of the lace work is elaborate and requires considerable skill and experience, but there are some simple designs offered for those that like that sort. The lace ties are quite simple and at the same time effective.

More elaborate affairs are the large collars of Arabian lace. These can also be made of Battenburg, and at less cost. In many of the designs none of the stitches are especially difficult, although at first glance the whole looks rather complex.

Other articles that can be made by the lace workers are centerpieces, lace caps for baby, kerchiefs, wigs suitable for either hat or hair ornaments, collars with cuffs to match, vests, bolero jackets, turn-over collars, lace yokes, lace scarfs, and doilies. The turn-over collars make very acceptable presents, cost a trifle,



A NECKTIE CASE.

and can be easily and quickly put together.

Knitted and Crocheted Articles.

There is a wide field to choose from here. Look at the list—couch afghans, infant's afghans, golf-capes, shoulder capes, shawls of many kinds, shoulder, circular, and yoke; fasci-ators of various styles; toboggan caps, bicycle caps, riding hoods, child's sweater, misses' sweater, ladies' sweater, gentlemen's sweater, bicycle and golf vests, infant's saques, child's shirts, child's petti-coat, mittens, both crocheted and knit, socks, bicycle and golf stockings, bedroom slippers, bedroom boots, child's booties, child's leg-gings, infant's bands, knee caps—what not, what not.

As sweaters are worn now for other than strictly outing purposes, it is very nice indeed, and convenient, to have one for part of the wardrobe. There are many designs shown at the fancy work counters, and the new patterns are a very great improvement on the first that were offered; those old hideous ones that came way below the waist and looked more like shirts than anything else. I saw a beauty yesterday, a white blousey one that came only to the waist line.

Miscellaneous.

The useful laundry bag is not to be despised, nor the useful receptacle

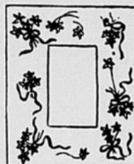


CROCHETED SLIPPERS.

for shoes. These homely articles are now made with quite attractive appearance.

A button bag is a convenient thing to have in one's work box. A really good, soft penholder finds its place on the writing table. A jewel bag and a bag for money come in well for the pocketless woman traveler. The cases made of chamois, with generous flap fastening securely by means of good patent fasteners, are on sale at the stores. They can easily be made at home. I like the cases better than the bag with draw-string.

Lavender bags are a delight to the dainty housekeeper, but usually she is too busy to attend to this matter of perfuming her many closets and drawers. Be careful in purchasing your lavender flowers that you get those well assorted, not all made up of sticks and dust. Cut numberless small squares of cheese cloth, place in each a goodly pinch of lavender, and tie either with baby ribbon or colored floss of lavender shade. Fill a shallow square box with the bags, say have at least twenty-five of these easily constructed sachets, and think what a sweet offering you have to give some friend. I think when she opens the box on Xmas morning, she will bless you; also later, whenever she opens bureau drawers or linen closet.



A Violet Photo Frame.

JANE GRAY.

There Is Money in Commercial Apple Growing.

The Fruit Has Become a Staple in the Markets of the World and Is in Demand.



HE apple is "king of fruits" wherever it may be successfully grown. It is found in almost every country that has a temperate climate. No other fruit succeeds over so wide a range of territory and under such diversified climatic conditions, and no other fruit brings so sure a return to the grower in proportion to time and money expended upon its production. With proper selection of varieties, location of soil, and subsequent intelligent management, there can be but little risk in planting the apple, which is now no longer a luxury, but a staple article of food.

There is scarcely any limit to the choice varieties to select from, beginning with the early ripening Yellow Transparent, Early Harvest, Red June, Early Joe, Maiden Blush, etc., through the list of fall, early winter and late keeping varieties, including the luscious Pearmain, Rambo, Dyer, Grimes, Jonathan, Spitzenberg, Yellow Newtown, etc. Indeed, so wide is the range of season of the apple that it is the only fruit of the temperate climates that may be obtained and enjoyed in its natural state throughout the year. Its period of usefulness is being extended through modern methods of storage, and with rapidly increasing facilities for its transportation, its commercial value is greatly enhanced.

From a hygienic standpoint the apple has but few rivals among cultivated fruits. Its mild and pleasant acid is a panacea for many of the ills that the human race is heir to. What fruit can be more pleasant to the palate or more beautiful to the eye than the rich ripe Golden Pippin when plucked fresh from the tree, or what more luscious when cooked?

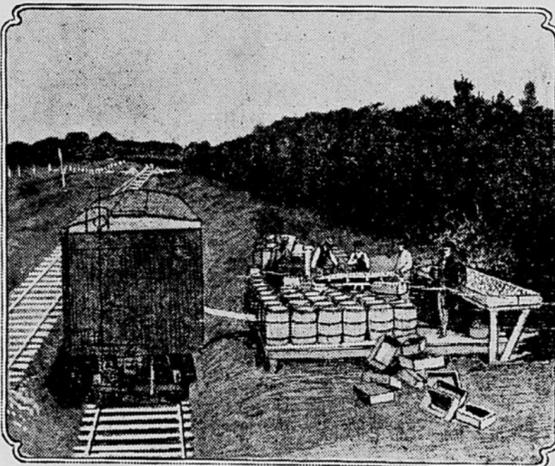
The apple has not, however, until

any. If the crops are rightly handled there will be no difficulty in finding a ready market for choice first-class winter apples.

All fruit must be carefully handled, avoiding bruising or breaking of the skin or straining of the stem at its juncture with the apple, for a loosening of the stem at its base will induce rot to set in as quickly as the breaking of the skin. Some orchardists use for a picking receptacle a convenient sized basket, lined or padded to avoid bruising, with an adjustable bale, so as to allow the fruit to be carefully dumped in piles under the shade of trees. To the piles barrels are hauled and distributed for packing, and a gang of sorters and packers follow, sorting and packing the fruit into barrels.

The time for picking the apple must be determined by its maturity or stage of ripeness, and not by any particular date. Some varieties should be picked much earlier than others, for upon the stage of maturity and time of picking depend largely the keeping quality of the apple. Sometimes a difference of one or two weeks in date of picking will show marked difference in keeping. If the apple is left on the trees after it is fully matured the ripening process will go on more rapidly than if taken off and placed in a cool room or cellar or taken to one's cold storage. It is better to be on the safe side and pick the fruit a little before maturity rather than to leave it until overripe. The common practice of allowing the fruit to remain in heaps under the trees for several days is a mistake. The sooner the apple is removed after picking to the cooler or to cool storage the better will it keep.

Careful and systematic sorting is an important matter in handling fruit.



A KANSAS APPLE-PACKING OUTFIT.

recent years been grown in commercial quantities of magnitude. Formerly small family orchards of 50 or 100 trees were the average planting. The apple was then grown more for family use than for commercial purposes. But the vast progress and development of apple culture in area covered, the quantity and quality of product, together with the increased demand for home use and exportation, now places this industry in the front rank of commercial resources. Instead of orchards of 100 trees we now find orchards of hundreds and even thousands of acres each, and capital in large amounts is being invested annually, not only for home markets, but for extensive export to foreign countries in fresh and cured forms. The magnitude of the crop has become such that houses and storerooms, refrigerators, evaporators and places for expressing the juice have been constructed at all points in fruit regions required for economic disposition of crops.

Although the apple may be grown over a very wide range of country more or less suited to its cultivation, there are certain districts especially adapted to its successful growth. For instance, the elevated portion of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas, known as the Ozark region, and the elevated portions of North Carolina and Virginia, where similar conditions exist, are striking examples. The New England, middle and some of the western states are especially favorable for producing fine crops of this fruit of highest quality, and certain sections of Idaho, Colorado, Oregon and Washington are rapidly coming to the front in successful orcharding. Indeed, there is not a state in the union in which the apple, in some of its varieties, may not be successfully grown. In addition to soil and climate the proximity to transportation by railroads and water routes is an important consideration in locating an orchard for commercial purposes.

The financial success of a commercial apple orchard depends largely upon the methods used in picking, sorting, packing and disposing of the crops. These operations involve a large share of the expense of the enterprise; hence the owner should carefully study and investigate the most recent and economical methods in practice by others before he adopts

The old adage, "Honesty is the best policy," will apply in this case. No imperfect, unsound or blemished fruit should be allowed in the first-class No. 1 grade. The grading should be uniform. Any small specimens, as well as oversized ones, detract from the appearance of the whole lot in the package. The standard size should be an average of the variety when well grown; to be first-class it should be in regular form, free from fungus disease, and of clear color, to become attractive in the market. If the sorting and grading is honestly and faithfully done there will be no difficulty in finding a ready paying market for first-class winter apples.

It is quite a common practice among many extensive orchardists to sell their entire crop of apples while on the trees, the purchaser going all the work of picking, sorting and packing. When the proprietor possesses sufficiently good judgment to be able to closely approximate a safe valuation of the crop, and a fair price is offered, this is an economical and satisfactory way of disposing of a crop, as there is much less risk to run in gathering, packing and handling of the crop. But in case the owner chooses to handle his crop, an immediate sale, as soon as it is barreled and ready for the market, is considered the safest and surest way to dispose of it. The holding over for a better price in future is more or less risky, and oftentimes results in loss from shrinkage and sometimes the necessity of resorting and packing, which would require more of an advance in the market price to make the loss good than often occurs.

All of the crop left after assorting out the No. 1 and No. 2 grades should be classed and treated as culls, and sold to evaporating and canning establishments or to cider makers, unless the owner has all the facilities at hand for working them up. For extensive orchards the profits on the by-products will justify the expenditure for buildings and machinery necessary for working them up. In some instances the by-products of the orchard have been known to exceed in value returned the receipts from the main crop. Of course, such were exceptional cases. It is also true that no permanent profit ever comes to the producer who would compel his good fruit to sell his culls for him.

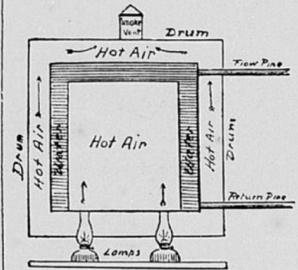
G. B. BRACKETT.



SMALL PLANT HOUSE.

A System of Heating Which Is Quite Effective and Costs But a Quarter a Day.

I have had nearly ten years' experience in heating a plant house measuring about 8x17 feet, and can confidently recommend my method. I use a hot water circulation in iron pipes, and the heating is done by kerosene lamps under two tin boilers. The boilers are bell-shaped and set up with mouth down. The hot air, after having done its work of heating the water, is controlled by a tin drum at the top of which is a smoke pipe, by which all fumes are



HOUSE HEATED WITH LAMPS.

carried off. The lamps were made to order by the tinsmith, and are fitted with common flat-wick burners; four of them can be placed under each boiler. Thus in the severest weather there are eight lamps burning, and they may burn 25 cents' worth of oil in a day. The plant-house walls were built with care to make them warm, and I have a system of screens (made by stretching cotton cloth on wooden frames) which I put up every cold night under the glass and take down in the morning—this operation taking not over five or six minutes each day. Under these circumstances my heating system has worked admirably, and has never failed. At four o'clock in the afternoon I can light as many lamps as I think necessary, and leave them with the most perfect assurance that I shall find everything right next morning or the middle of the forenoon if I am so late as that. If I were to build another house, or two or three small ones I think I should use this same system of heating.—Rural New Yorker.

GOOD COUNTRY ROADS.

National Government Should Foster Improvement of Land as Well as Water Highways.

There is no question that bad roads cost nearly or quite as much as their improvement would amount to. Probably there is no locality which has been to the trouble and expense of improving its own roads, that would not testify that the improvement is worth all that it cost. The market value of Ohio farms has increased but three-tenths of one per cent. in the last decade. Doubtless a large part of this retrograde movement is due to inaccessibility during a large part of the year. It has been estimated that Kansas farmers lost more than \$50,000,000 in one year through bad roads. The plan of building specimen sections as object lessons to communities in which they lie, is perhaps the most persuasive and convincing argument that can be arranged to educate taxpayers to the knowledge that road improvement means money in their pockets eventually, and will be a good investment. And when taxpayers get generally aroused to the equal importance of good roads to good water or rail transportation, then we shall have our congressional committees haranguing and scheming for road improvement appropriations with the same zeal now displayed in asking for river and harbor appropriations. There really is no more reason for obliging the local communities to bear all the expense of road building in their vicinities than for requiring the vesselmen to make all their river and harbor improvements. The former is just as much a public service and public improvement of widespread influence as the latter. It therefore becomes the government's business to foster the improvement of its land as well as its water highways.—Ohio Farmer.

Klondike Crop Exhibits.

Those who have thought of the Klondike as a barren, frozen waste, incapable of growing agricultural products, will be astonished to learn of the fine exhibit shipped from Dawson City, which has been shown at various fairs in the northwest. The land in that region is fertile, and the summers, while short, are warm, affording excellent opportunities for grain farming and grazing. Clover, oats, rhubarb, celery, cabbage, turnips, carrots, beets and potatoes all make marvelous growths in the short season. The timber resources and fisheries are vast. The pine and fir forests afford a guaranty against a wood pulp famine and it is believed that within a short time the output of the fisheries will equal in value that of the gold fields.

Do not forget that an apple that is bruised, if put in with sound ones, may start decay and eventually affect the whole barrel.

DRAINAGE IN ORCHARDS.

Lack of It Is Responsible for the Wasting Away of Thousands of Apple Trees.

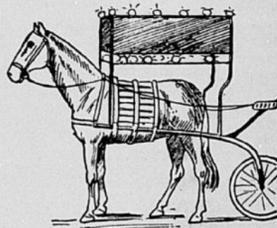
Apple orchards generally do best on clay soils, and clay soils are the ones that need most to be drained, says an exchange. This lack of drainage is doubtless largely responsible for the failure of thousands of orchards. The clay soil, even on hillsides, holds too much water for the good of the tree-roots during wet times, whether those times be in fall, winter or spring. It not infrequently happens that a tree is set out on a clayey hillside. It leaves out well, but after that the leaves dwindle in size and become sickly in appearance. Finally the tree dies. We have seen this caused apparently by heavy rains saturating the clay soil and keeping it full of moisture during the time when the tree was attempting to form new rootlets and root hairs. Examples of this have come to the attention of the writer this year in localities that have had rains every day for about two months. Poor drainage is apparently the cause.

Summer droughts are given as the cause of the death of some fruit trees. Yet if the soil had been thoroughly drained to a depth of three feet the roots of the trees would have struck so deep that drought would affect them but little. When drainage is bad, the roots remain nearer the surface of the ground, and so are more injured in the case of lack of moisture in the surface soil. Droughts are seldom so severe as to dry out the ground to a depth of several feet. A hard pan just below the trees is given as the cause for the failure of some, but in this case it seems to us that it is really a question of drainage. If the drains had been put in at the right depth and the soil broken up under the trees, no hard pan of any consequence could have existed. Also the work of the frost on such drained soil is more complete and way made for the deeper penetration of the roots.

HAPPY COMBINATION.

Road Cart and Insect Catcher to Traverse Orchards and Cotton Fields at Night.

The well-known habits of moths and beetles to fly toward a light has been taken advantage of by Martin B. Gooing, of Vicksburg, Miss., in constructing his combined road cart and insect-catcher, an illustration of the vehicle being presented herewith. The special purpose of the arrangement is to rid corn and cotton fields and other tracts of land of the insect pests which damage the crops and foliage. The vehicle made use of in this instance is a single-wheel cart, constructed especial-



CART AND INSECT CATCHER.

ly for passing between rows of plants without damaging them, and the saddle of the harness maintains the cart in an upright position. Upon the thills of the cart is mounted a metallic frame, with lamps of any desired pattern placed at the top and bottom and a central screen of wire or cloth strung between the rows of lamps. This screen is coated with some adhesive substance, and when the vehicle is driven between the rows of plants at night the lights attract the insects, which, in their attempt to fly about the flame, strike against the net and are trapped in the sticky coating. With a good horse a large field can be gone over in a very short time, and there is little doubt of the saving of many times the cost of the vehicle in the course of a single season.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Chestnut Is Going.

The former millions of wild pigeons of Ashtabula county, O., says the Jefferson Sentinel, are only known to the "oldest inhabitant," and now the chestnut, the king of all nuts for boys, will soon only be known as a cultivated nut. Parties at Harriman, Tenn., are preparing to locate a mill for grinding chestnut timber into pulp for tanning purposes. It is proposed to consume 100 cords per day. At this rate, and with the destruction the hard-headed borer is doing, chestnuts to eat will soon be a thing of the past. In the early settlement chestnuts, it is said by ardent settlers in Tennessee were so abundant that the Indians, after burning the leaves off the ground, would pick them up, roast and sell them at the stores for six and one-quarter cents per bushel.

The man who has ever tried plowing under fruit trees knows that the true way to trim such trees is to cut the lower limbs off so as to give the branches an upward turn. The time to do this is when the tree is young and its shape not yet fully determined.—Farm Journal.

We often hear the advice given to heap earth around young fruit trees in the fall, but we do not favor the idea. Sometimes water gets in at the stem, is held there and freezes, juring the bark.

Open the fruit cellar on cool night but up tight through the warm