

WORK for the WOMANLY BRAIN and HAND

Bayberry Candles for Christmas.



POUR INTO A KETTLE



SKIM OFF THE WAX



DIP THE THREADS IN THE WAX



TIE WITH RIBBON AND HOLLY

with sealing wax. Or a set of graduated sizes would be a pretty idea. In any case, you may be sure your bayberry candles will be fully appreciated—see if they're not!

Our Voices

I THINK our conversational soprano, as sometimes overheard in the cars, arising from a group of young persons who have taken the train at one of our great industrial centers, for instance, young persons of the female sex, we will say, who have bustled in full dressed, engaged in loud, strident speech, and who, after free discussion, have fixed on two or more double seats, which having secured, they proceed to eat apples and hand round daguerreotypes—I say, I think the conversational soprano, heard under these circumstances, would not be among the allurements the old enemy would put in requisition were he getting up a new temptation of St. Anthony. There are sweet voices among us, we all know, and voices not musical, it may be, to those who hear them for the first time, yet sweeter to us than any we shall hear until we listen to some warbling angel in the overture to that eternity of blissful harmonies we hope to enjoy. But why should I tell lies? If my friends love me, it is because I try to tell the truth. I never heard but two voices in my life that frightened me by their sweetness.—Holmes.

When Bluing Clothes

TO PREVENT spotting the clothes, put some bluing out on a piece of white cloth, gather up the corners and tie together. Dip this bag in the water and squeeze it until the water is blue enough. In this way the clothes will never become spotted.

MOST of us are well acquainted with the bayberry candle, green and fragrant and suggestive of old oak halls and colonial candlesticks. Their flame is the brightest and the steadiest of "all their tribe," and they last indefinitely. So why not make some as Christmas greetings for your friends? They are

the easiest things on earth to make and as welcome to the recipient as they are inexpensive to the giver. Properly speaking, the fragrant berries should be gathered in the summer, but the dried berries obtainable at any well-equipped drug store (and if they do not have them they will order them from the wholesaler's) will do as well. You will need more than with the fresh berries, however. Boil the berries in a kettle for four hours and then set them on the back of the stove to simmer for another hour. Allow the contents of the kettle to cool

off slowly, and by morning of the next day a cake of clear green wax will have formed. Skim the wax off and reheat it by placing it in a tightly covered pan over steaming water. Add an ounce of paraffine, melt both this and the wax to-

gether and blend them well. Finally, either run the liquid wax into candle molds or, better, dip them by tying the round wicking to a long, thin stick. Shape with your fingers. When the candles are cooled and hard tie them in little bundles of three or six with green ribbon, stick a sprig of holly and your card between them and wrap them in tissue paper for Christmas.

The large candles are by an old tradition especially favored for burning on New Year's day. A good idea, however, is to make some of your candles very small and present them for use

STENCILS FOR GIFT DRAWINGS



THE flowers that bloom in the spring, tra la, have nothing to do with the case! Just now, but the holly, mistletoe, Christmas

mere matter of cutting out one of these designs shown, and using a brush with stencil dyes or watercolors. You and I recognize the importance of the setting of a jewel, and it is undeniable that gifts are doubly acceptable if the thought of the donor does not stop at the present itself, but in a spirit of generous love overflows e'en to the box.

Buy a piece of stencil board at any store where artists' supplies are sold. The usual price is 5 cents. If, however, you cannot purchase it, treat ordinary bristol board to a coating of linseed oil to make it waterproof.

The designs for little stencils are easy solutions for the perplexed woman. There's the bell, for instance. Trace this outline drawing on a piece of tissue paper, then transfer the design to the stencil board. Another method is to place carbon paper with the inked sur-

tree and red ribbon have. The cases referred to are boxes in which you are going to place gifts, and the work is the

face next to the stencil board and this newspaper over it. Use a hard pencil when tracing the black lines here shown. This being done, cut out the forms with a sharp penknife. You will notice that the ribbon is broken into different sections. This must be so in order to, hold the stencil board together. With dyes or watercolors apply color through the openings with a stiff brush. The bell and ribbon painted with a few strokes of the brush give individuality



to a white box or to the paper wrapping of a gift. Holly, with its green leaves and scarlet berries, is very effective. Mistletoe and the conventional pine trees are other reasonable suggestions. The two border designs show repeats that may be used over and over again on the top or sides of a box.

You will notice that the holly leaves are not continuous. There is a mid-vein that is suggested by the absence of paint in the final work. The halves are painted in green.



Gold paint is effective with mistletoe. Indeed, any color combinations are acceptable, although red and green seem appropriate. The Christmas box tied and decorated, quickly, mind you, is a joy at first sight. It is in your power to do this. One evening's work will give a supply of cases and boxes for your list. It is time now for home decorators to begin.

CARE OF YOUR PIANO

LIKE the little girl with the curl on her forehead, a piano can be very, very good or—otherwise. The abomination of an instrument that sounds like a huge tinpan is fortunately sold nowadays for firewood. But just a few suggestions, please, when the new one is admitted to your home.

Careful treatment will result in long life to the good musical qualities of the instrument. It will certainly double the pleasure and decimate the wear on one's nerves. Most of these directions are of the don't variety, but the result proves that next to knowing what to do is the knowledge of what not to do. Here they are:

A piano is almost as sensitive to heat and cold as an invalid. It should not be placed too near a fire, as the heat draws the wood.

Neither should it be near an open window, as on a wet day the damp is apt to rust the keys and wires and take the polish off the case. Always keep the piano closed when it is not in use. The keys should be dusted frequently with an old silk handkerchief, and rubbed occasionally with a cloth moistened with methylated spirits.

If they get very yellow, rub with a very little lemon juice and whiting, and remove it with a damp cloth. But be very careful that none of the dust falls between the keys.

If the case gets clouded and dull looking, give it a good polish with a very little furniture cream and polish with a chamois leather. In towns it is apt to get smoky. To remove this, wipe over with a cloth wrung out of vinegar and water, then polish.

Don't put your piano close to the wall, as it deadens the tone. To keep it in perfect order, it should be tuned about every three months.

And remember that a piano is never heard to the best advantage in a room that is overcrowded with furniture and hung with many draperies.

A Straining Bag

A FLANNEL straining bag is a necessity in any kitchen where jellies are prepared. Instead of investing in an expensive strainer, an excellent substitute may be made of ordinary flannel, which should first of all be hemmed neatly and then soaked and wrung out in boiling water. When it is used, it should be laid inside a large bowl and the fruit or liquid poured into it. The four ends of the flannel should then be tied together, and a stick passed through the knots. The bag can then be suspended over a bowl by means of a couple of chairs and left to drain slowly until all the liquid has passed through. A blanket should be thrown over the top in cold weather, so as to prevent the jelly from setting too soon.

Our Invalid

IT IS only in extreme cases and at inopportune times that visitors are excluded from the sickroom—the tedium of confinement is relieved so much by the smiling countenance and cheery word of a friend.

It may seem almost superfluous to offer any suggestions as to the means of making a call upon the sick acceptable, yet "oftentimes we do offend where most we wish to please." How many, even among those who are the promptest to discharge their duty in such cases, are so welcome that their return is awaited with eagerness?

The failure, or partial failure, of such well-meaning persons may arise from the fact that the sense of duty which has prompted the visit is allowed to make itself too apparent. Calling upon the sick is by no means the pleasantest of tasks, and it is not to be wondered at, perhaps, if the duty is sometimes put off until delay is no longer excusable.

A Nursery Note

"TODDLER" is an autocrat, and a mischievous one. To keep him amused I have presented him with a piece of chalk (white, as he still investigates by means of his mouth), and have made a dado on the wall with brown paper. Three smooth new sheets cost next to nothing, but held in place by drawing-pins they form a wide space on which the boy can develop his artistic faculty. En passant, he is amused and I am at liberty, the price of further liberty being fresh paper now and again.

Useful Hints

MAHOGANY or any other colored wood may be darkened by polishing with cold drawn linseed oil.

To quickly cloud the windows in bath-room, etc., apply with a brush a solution of epsom salts mixed in vinegar. This gives a capital frosted appearance, and becomes permanent if white varnished over.

When two glass tumbler or dishes stick together so that there is danger of breaking in getting them apart, put cold water in the inner one and hold the outer in warm water, and they will separate at once.

Milk will clean piano keys satisfactorily. It will take out ink spots of long standing. Used in starch, it will give a satisfactory gloss. It will remove discolorations from gilt mirror and picture frames. Used with bluing for lace curtains, it will make them look like new.

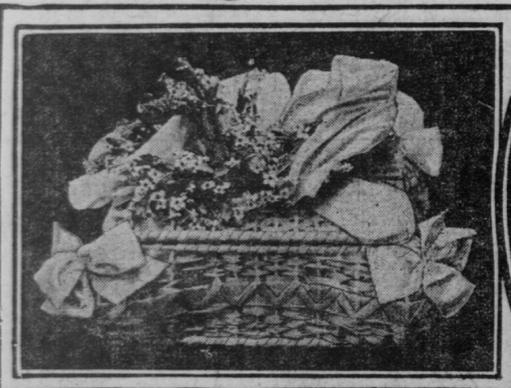
Your Comb

COMBS should not be washed with water. This is apt to split the teeth. A stiff nailbrush is a good thing to keep for cleaning them. After using the brush take a damp cloth and wipe between each tooth with this.

Oil Them

IF A PAIR of shoes has become stiffened with walking in the wet, they should first be washed with warm water and then have oil well rubbed into them.

Decorating Baskets for Christmas



FORGET-ME-NOTS AND RIBBON



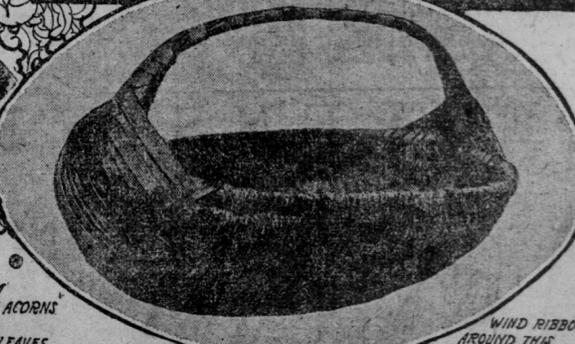
THE APPROPRIATE HOLLY



TRIM WITH ACORNS AND OAK LEAVES



READY FOR THE MISTLETOE SPRIGS



WIND RIBBON AROUND THE HANDLE

IF "the gift without the giver is bare," the gift without all the proper accompaniments of receiptacle and wrapping is bare also. The merest trifle gains tenfold in value by the pretty thought that wraps it in tissue paper and fastens a sprig of holly on with a bit of silver thread, and the costliest ornament seems to be bestowed ungraciously when it is hastily thrust into a box and the giver's card is thrown carelessly upon it. Now, the prettiest of all receiptacles for the Christmas gift is the decorated basket, and this is especially true when the present itself is some proof of housewifery—a fine mince pie, for instance, or a well-baked layer cake. The woman of slender means, who worries because she cannot return her wealthy

friends' presents in kind, should remember how welcome is some bit of real home cooking to the dweller in hotel or apartment, and how more than welcome it is when inclosed in a pretty basket whose dainty ornamentation shows taste and thought and affection. You can buy these decorated baskets in the stores, but you will have to pay a pretty penny for them, and even then they will not have the sentimental significance and when else in the year can we more afford to be sentimental?—which comes with the home-decorated product. The undecorated basket is very inexpensive—even the five and ten cent store need not be searched in vain—and the cheapest of millinery counters will supply whatever trimmings you need. Better still, a walk in the De-

ember woods, a trip to the park or the open country, according to whether you be a dweller in city or in country town, will bring you home laden with treasure trove. As an example of the prettily trimmed basket which uses artificial flowers, let me recommend the forget-me-not one. This is a light blue straw basket—if you cannot obtain the color you want, you can easily dye, with pyroglyph or photograph stains, the natural colored straw—trimmed with bows of thin blue ribbon. Among these bows at the top is caught a cluster of artificial forget-me-nots, while the ribbon is fastened off by stitching tightly to the under side of the lid. If you wish, you can line the whole basket with blue silk, but if anything eatable is put inside of it

there must be a further lining of oiled paper. Either real or artificial mistletoe would make a pretty decoration for the basket with the twisted spiral along its sides. Perhaps the artificial would be better, as mistletoe fades in time. Get light green baby ribbon, and twist it in and out the square holes behind the spirals. Then fasten your mistletoe under the handle, with a big rosette of the baby ribbon. This basket, which is of sweet grass, can be used afterward as a handkerchief case. Of course, holly is the most appropriate decoration of all. The festive-looking little basket with the high double handle shows a good way to use this bright berry. Green ribbon is pretty here also, or red may be used if

the proper shade can be obtained. Ribbon can be bought stamped with the holly berries, but it is just as well not to use this, as it never matches the real article very well. Twine the holly around one of the handles and fasten the ribbon loosely down the other, catching it at the rim of the basket with a big loop and a spray of holly. Where the two handles meet, put a large, loose bow of ribbon, with a bit of holly falling over it. Silver or gold tissue ribbon makes the prettiest decoration for the oval basket with the straw diamonds at the ends. The ribbon, of a rather narrow size, should be wound around the handle, so that it covers the places where the sweet grass shows. When it reaches the diamonds at the side, catch it by a

stitch or two inside, and then make a wired rosette at each end. A single line of tiny silver or gold flowers strung on millimeter wire may connect these rosettes. Natural effects are best again in the odd little basket that looks like a hornet's nest. Oak leaves and acorns are a good idea, twisting the leaves around the round handle and letting them hang over the lid. Attach the acorns by their stems to the little rings so that they fall over the oak leaves. Two or three tiny leaves and acorns may be fixed also to the lower part of the basket. The fastening is done by fine wire. Here is a good assortment of ideas; take your pick, and make your Christmas gifts more beautiful through the manner of their giving.