

WORK for the WOMANLY BRAIN and HAND

Again At Christmas Did We Weave The Holly Round The Christmas Hearth



First a Wire Foundation



The Backing of Laurel



Don't Forget the Mistletoe and Ribbon



Then Add the Holly

HOLLY and mistletoe in garlands and wreaths are associated in our minds with this holiday season. Why, even the buttonhole bouquet has taken unto itself the green and red of the holly tree or the colors of the mistletoe! Intertwined with the spirit of the day is the idea of these "greens" that happily are procurable in nearly all sections of the country. But the message of this song is directed to those women who see in

a wreath decorative possibilities of great worth and comparatively little cost. Now, if you price the circlets of green on the street or at the florist's, you will find that holly is not exactly in the orchid class, but surprisingly expensive. You do not wish the flat, thin wreaths that suggest a skimming hand, do you? Well, why not make your own? First procure a wire. This need not be too heavy; in fact, it must be flex-

ible, for you must form it into a ring by winding it on itself for the foundation. In this way you can decide on your own size, and really the larger the better. Do not put the deterring hand on this part of the festivities.

Buy the holly branches in bulk and insist upon the fresh, glistening leaves and the moist, full berries. The laurel strands you can purchase at a very small cost per yard. This is a clever way to attain a beautiful result in wreath-making.

From your long strands of the soft green laurel, or any of the spruce or pine branches if you prefer, take enough to cover the wire. Bind securely over the foundation with twine and knot at the conclusion of this second step.

Now add the holly, branch by branch. Do not attempt to keep any regular outline for your wreath. The more uneven the outer edge the more effective will be the finished circle of green. Tie each sprig upon the laurel foundation with twine or stout green cord. Be generous with the branches.

Do not forget the mistletoe. Place a bunch of it in one part of the green wreath. It is more effective in this way than when scattered around the circle. Tie it in place with a huge piece of red or green ribbon, and if possible pull out the twigs so that a really artistic wreath be the result.

Then hang this green homemade circle of leaves and berries in your home gallery—a fitting frame for the thought and spirit of the season. One is beautiful, and you may be assured that if any more laurel leaves and branches of holly remain, you will not neglect the opportunity to repeat the task. Does not the finished wreath speak for itself?

The Family's Presents



YOU have probably made the selection of gifts for the family, but the question now clamoring for an answer is, in what way shall they be distributed to make the gift-giving an enjoyable event of the day?

There is the gathering around a Christmas tree, tiny if you wish, upon which gifts are hung. The father of the family should present them with appropriate speeches. The baby might be dressed as a special messenger to give the packages to each member of the family circle.

Some families reserve the distribution of gifts until mealtimes. If this be your idea there are some suggestions below that are easily carried out, and that will answer any cry for the unusual. On a wire frame, bent in the form of a star, stretch a piece of muslin and allow a slit in the upper surface. Place all little gifts in it, each one on a red or green ribbon, and print the name of the owner on the end. Draw it out to each plate and have the gifts taken



"gently and in order" from the star. This last admonition is necessary if a tangled mass of gifts be not your aim. This little ceremony may be kept for the family's very best gifts—the silver watch for brother, the gold piece for grandma and the ring for sister.

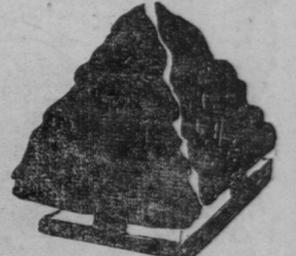
If you do not wish a real tree on the table, why not make a stand of cardboard? Draw on green cardboard four pine trees, connected at the bottom by a two-inch band. Bend this between each two trees and fasten the ends together by clamps or with cardboard.

Let this be a green covering for the



gifts inside. The huge muslin Santa Claus bag is another holder for the family's presents. Make it with a large opening on a drawing string. Then cut out from glazed paper (costing 5 cents a sheet) immense holly leaves, and paste them on the bag. If one of the family can dress as Santa, enter with the pack and leave it for the family, the enjoyment for children will be doubled.

Just another suggestion for holding the family's presents. If you can get bark from a woodpile, make use of it in improvising a yulelog. Fasten strips of bark upon a long pasteboard box, completely covering the sides. The ends are open. Gifts can be placed inside and drawn out from each end by means of ribbons. Mistletoe, holly



or pine boughs add a seasonable touch to the log. The method of giving the gift is just as important as the present itself. Why not do something different this year? Surely it is worth while!

When Washing Woollens
PREPARE soapsuds by boiling a pure white soap in rainwater. While the soap is melting in the water it should be stirred constantly.

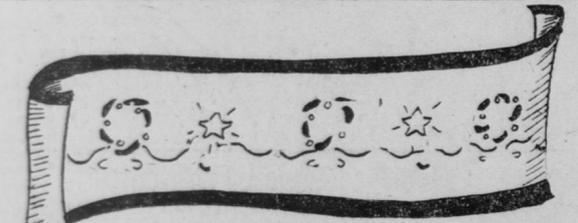
First soak the woolen shawl or scarf in warm clear water. Press with the hands without wringing.

New give it the bath of soapsuds, and rinse in soft, clear water.

The next step is the dissolving in three quarts and a pint of water two spoonfuls of pulverized gum arabic. Mix well and when a thick liquid is obtained place the article in it and press well with the hands.

Dry the snowy result by fastening the whole length upon a tablecloth or towel and covering it with another cloth.

Packing the Xmas Gift



IT is all very well just to wrap an ordinary package in paper and tie it securely with string, but with a Christmas gift it's different. Somehow the Christmas sentiment oozes out even to the outside of the package, and we must take just as much care in "doing up" our parcels as in making or buying them in the first place.

Let us be practical, however, first of all. Let us wrap the parcels, especially the ones which have to go by mail or express, very securely indeed, registering them if they are valuable. Tissue paper first, and then good, strong wrapping paper, tied with stout cord or heavy elastic, is the best method. Reserve ribbons and fancy cards for the inside of the package, and remember that putting a seal over the fastening of a parcel prevents its being sent third class. For perishable objects use cardboard boxes.

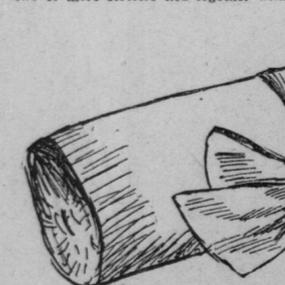
As for the packages, which are to be delivered in person, however, or the inside of those to be sent by mail or express, you may exhaust your ingenuity to make them pretty. With a box, of course, it is always easy to use holly tissue paper and green and red ribbon and a sprig of holly or mistletoe; but a wrapped parcel always looks more clumsy. The drawing given here will show how this bulkiness may be avoided. Wrap the gift first in white tissue paper; then roll it in white bristolboard, and then cover it with green or red crepe paper. Tie around it a bow of ribbon in the contrasting shade, stick through this a sprig of holly and a card



of good wishes, fasten at the ends with Christmas seals, and there you are! These seals, by the way, although they may be purchased very cheaply, still have a further touch of individuality when made at home. Do them on glazed paper and coat them, before cutting out,

with mucilage that can be allowed to dry and then wet again when necessary. Three suggestions for designs are given here—the bell and star, the Christmas tree with presents and Santa Claus with his pack. Many more to be drawn, touched up with watercolor and cut out, will suggest themselves to the reader.

The very ribbon with which your gifts are tied can be stenciled with a design more original than the inevitable holly of the shops. The red border and the mistletoe wreaths and stars shown here make one pretty pattern. The process is the simple one of ordinary stenciling. With your gift send some pretty card expressing your affection for the recipient. A good idea, especially with a book or some other gift of the sort, is to send instead of a card the little blotter calendar shown here. It consists of two or more blotters tied together with



The Parish Visitor

IT is hardly necessary to say that in the sickroom itself sympathy ought not to be carried to the point of evident anxiety. Courage and hope for a better day are what the sick one most requires, and the face of the visitor is sure to be scanned for a trace of disappointment or alarm. It is easy to inspire confidence by the look and the grasp of the hand, and no medicine is better.

There is an easy manner, also, which is admirable in itself, and which relieves the constraint that the sick one may naturally feel in not being able properly to care for guests. The outer wraps have, of course, been removed before entering the room, and it is not imperative to wait for an invitation to be seated. Above all, be seated comfortably. For a visitor to be, or to seem, uncomfortable, is to insure the discomfort of the others in the room.

a bow of holly ribbon, a calendar pad for 1911 and a picture (a postcard will do, but the subject must be suited to your friend's tastes), fastened to it on the other side. The fastening may be done by clips or by sealing wax. A slip of paper with a Christmas greeting should also be added. The blotters may be red and green or they may give the colors of some club or college in which the donor or the recipient is interested. Finally, do not forget to weigh all packages you mail.

Nothing is more annoying than to have to pay for a package sent one by some careless friend. And keep a card catalog of your Christmas presents. Then you will avoid the two pitfalls of forgetting some one or duplicating a gift—both terrible to contemplate.

Above all, wrap your presents with a kindly thought—or do not give any at all.

Hints for Good House-keeping

HANG up a pincushion in the kitchen. One keep-clean is worth a dozen make-cleans.

Apply a drop of oil to the door hinges to keep them from creaking.

A cork soaked in oil makes a good substitute for a glass stopper.

Flowerpot stains may be removed from window sills with fine wood ashes.

Try a little baking soda and hot water when cleaning kitchen utensils.

Rub ivory knife handles that have become yellow with age or use with No. 00 sandpaper or fine emery.

Green blinds that have become faded may be renewed by rubbing them with a rag saturated with linseed oil.

The most effectual remedy for slimy and greasy drain pipes is coppers dissolved and left to work gradually through the pipes.

Kitchen tables may be made "white as snow" if washed with soap and wood ashes. Floors look best scrubbed with cold water, soap and wood ashes.

The mica windows of coal stoves can easily be cleaned with a soft cloth dipped in vinegar and water. This should be done when putting the stove up.

Knives should never be dipped in hot water, as it loosens the handles. The blades may be placed upright in the water in a mug, by which plan the handles will be kept dry.

Steel knives that are not in general use may be kept from rusting if they are dipped in a strong solution of soda (one part water to four parts soda). Then wipe dry, roll in flannel and keep in a dry place.

Colors for Mourning

WE ARE accustomed to think of mourning as necessarily black, though we know that the Chinese wear white instead. But there are other colors as well worn for the purpose of expressing grief for the dead.

The kings of France, for instance, used to wear purple and sometimes scarlet. Purple is also the mourning color for cardinals.

In Egypt and Burma yellow is worn, probably to signify the "wre and yellow leaf" of hope. Widows' caps among the peasants of Brittany are also yellow.

In Turkey violet is the regular color of mourning, and deep blue is the Bokhara color. Brown seems an appropriate color, when we think of earth and ashes. Light brown is worn in Persia and grayish brown in Ethiopia and Abyssinia.

Really, looking them all over, doesn't black seem the saddest and most hopeless shade of all? It ought to mark us Americans and Europeans as the least civilized of peoples.

Customs in Sleeping

THE Russian lies on a rush mat on the floor, with a square block of wood under his neck.

The Chinaman has an exquisitely carved low bed of ebony or other precious wood, which is strewn, again, with rush mats.

Many African tribes curl themselves up in one end of a hammock and sleep in this inverted position.

The Russian peasant loves to sleep on top of his big soapstone stove. Every morning it is blistering hot, and so he takes a cold plunge in a nearby stream, even breaking through the ice to do so.

The German sleeps both on and underneath a feather bed—sometimes two or three of them. But it covers his shoulders at the expense of his feet, which sometimes almost freeze.

Some Household Odds and Ends

THE question of stockings is always of great importance to women, for upon them devolves the task of buying, repairing and overseeing the cleaning of them. Some points then are worth considering.

Always insist upon fast black. It is a matter of economy and health. Any stocking that parts with its black at the first washing you may be sure has been carelessly dyed, and the "running" tendency endangers health. Besides, if you wish green stockings, why not buy them at first?

White soles are considered by many to be more restful than black.

Do not buy stockings too short. The ending on the other side is just as bad.

If you have a limited purse, do not indulge in silk stockings, unless of very superior quality. The little "rivers" caused by a break in the fabric have a wonderful ability to rush on to the end, if not stopped immediately.

Do not use soap when washing black thread stockings. Make a suds of a teaspoonful of bran, enclosed in a muslin bag, stirred into a bowl of warm water. After washing the stockings in this preparation, press out the water, roll in a towel and dry near a fire.

If you wish to restore color to black stockings, boil them in one quart of water into which a few chips of logwood have been thrown.

When darning stockings, do not neglect to reinforce the worn places by continuing the darning stitches quite a distance beyond the hole. A stitch in time is a labor-saving device in hosiery.