

NEEDLE WORK FOR THE HOME

NEEDLEWORK for home decoration takes many forms now, each beautiful, and some of great novelty and charm. The great demand for decorations in embroidery has inspired needleworkers all over the world to originate new stitches and combinations of stitches, while America has scoured the globe in search of new forms of embroidery.

The result of all this effort has been the assembling of an infinite variety of needlework patterns, with stitches suited to the knowledge and skill of every worker, from the small child to the dim-eyed old grandmother who is no longer able to embroider with filoselle upon satin, but must work bold designs with rope silk or Roman floss.

Poland furnishes a new and fascinating arrangement of needlework designs in a sort of delicate cob-web embroidery, which is made up largely of outlines, exquisitely traced, and with borders embodying a kind of cross-stitch. The work is so simple that one is astonished at its beautiful effect. In general the patterns take on a stained-glass form of designs, which is altogether different from anything else we have. This Polish method of designing is known as Szszchek embroidery, because that is the name of the village in which the work originated. It is adapted particularly to bedspreads, pillow and bolster shams, scarfs, table cloths, doilies, centerpieces, carvers, runners, and hangings for doors and windows. It is worth while trying this style of work, because a woman can outline designs for a whole room in no time, and the effect is wonderfully airy, delicate and attractive.

In doing embroidery for the home one becomes interested in the fascinating ribbon embroidery which, with its French designs and coloring, is particularly adapted to a period when French fashions dominate the world of dress and the inner portals of home.

Needles come especially for this form of embroidery, and the ribbon with which it is accomplished is different from any other sort of ribbon, and was, in ancient times, called "lute string."

Ribbon embroidery is rapidly accomplished, and it is exceptionally beautiful for house decorations. All the figures are raised in tiny puffs and loops of ribbon, and a bunch of forget-me-nots may be worked in a jiffy, with one ribbon loop to each petal, and with the result of appearing to stand out from and blossom upon the article adorned in this manner. Little roses and buds, too, acquire a charm when built of ribbon embroidery and, for such articles as dressing table and boudoir sets, nothing compares with it in point of smartness at the moment, nor does anything surpass it in beauty, although raised French satin-stitch embroidery is just as beautiful.

It is the mode to decorate glove boxes, collar and cuff boxes and bags, necktie boxes and cases, and handkerchief and nightgown cases, with ribbed embroidery, worked upon some form of silk, satin or velvet, and stretched over the box or case. Narrow single or double quillings of ribbon, or bands of dull gold gimp are used to finish off edges of articles so constructed.

Ribbon embroidery is used also upon cravat, collar, laundry and whisk broom bags and holders for men, as well as upon the picture frames in which they tuck the photographs of their best girls. Even the homely rubber shoe takes on a sublimated air when confined in a roll of handsome material lined with rubber and decorated on the outside with ribbon or some other form of colored embroidery.

Embroidery finds its way into every corner of the home, leaving a beautifying and homelike touch upon everything within it. The writing desk becomes a thing of loveliness when upon it lie blotting pad, calendar and memorandum tablet, as well as telegraph blank and bill and letter stands all charmingly embroidered in the same decorative pattern. Any woman can construct, out of bits of cardboard and tinted linen or satin, these useful and handsome

desk-ornaments. It is also quite the fad to make these, as well as other articles of use in the household, of the new colored linen cloth with figures darned in thick silk or yarn in the mesh of the material.

This, as well as ribbon embroidery, is much seen upon sofa pillows, which, to be really fashionable and really tasteful, should always be decorated with needlework, and not with stamped and printed figures. These serve their purpose to amuse college boys and the nursery babies, but the boudoir and bedroom should have their satin-stitch and ribbon embroidered pillow tops; the library and hall should possess cushions worked in darned work or long-and-short stitch; the parlor and drawing room should have their pillow tops, scarfs, and needle-adorned articles embroidered in satin-stitch, and all these pretty garnishments of the house beautiful should be made of good materials and without undue elaboration.

Even a laundry bag becomes lovely when the material is good—however inexpensive its kind—and the work upon it is of needlework that will stand washing. Pincushion tops, bureau scarfs, wash-cloth cases, powder puff bags, hair receivers, pocket shoe bags and darning bags, are all more acceptable to the recipient and in better taste when they are worked in wash silks or mercerized cottons, and made so that they may be removed from the objects which they cover, and laundered occasionally. It is easy to make these lovely things in removable form, and a woman loves to have them so. Nobody wants to throw away a piece of fine embroidery merely because it has been worked upon an unwashable piece of material or with unwashable silks.

In the case of hangings for the home such care does not have to be taken. There are ways of cleansing the most delicate and color-running draperies which makes it possible—if one is able to pay the price for such cleansing—to own every sort of needlework in every variety of color tint known to fabrics and threads.

A new and very fashionable embroidery for the dining room and table is known as Madeira work. This is a form of eyelet work, only the figures are smaller and more scattered. Madeira work mingles satin-stitch French embroidery with the open portions of the designs, and, like all the different forms of embroidery mentioned, it may be worked with any good embroidery pattern as a guide. The same design will serve equally well for darned work, satin-stitch, long-and-short stitch, Mountmellik, outline stitch and Madeira embroidery. True, some designs fit one form of embroidery better than others, and darned work is better when done upon bold and large decorative patterns; but, as a general thing, when one wants to use Madeira work with embroidery one has only to snip, with a pair of embroidery scissors, such parts of the pattern as will look best in openwork, and then work the rest of the design in solid stitch.

It is very fashionable to edge a lunch cloth, with its accompanying doilies, carving cloth and centerpieces, with scallops in broken or irregular patterns. A scallop an inch across will be edged with a number of tiny scallops and alternate with a barely curved-out edge, embroidered smoothly up to the beginning of the next scallop. The effect is very attractive and new.

Broken scallops of all widths are particularly smart this winter, and inside these scallops is a border of small blossoms, such as daisies, where the petals are of open Madeira embroidery, and the leaves and centers of satin-stitch.

Madeira embroidery comes in some very new and modish individual designs. One of these is a large bunch of grapes in conventional design, often springing from a basket of delicate French pattern, worked in outlines of satin-stitch embroidery. Another design consists of garlands and trailing sprays of small foliage with little flowers, done in openwork, sprinkled effectively along the vines. Garland effects are particularly effective and fashionable upon bedspreads of sheer linen, where a space is left in the center for the monogram, and a long, scarf-shaped pillow sham is similarly decorated with trailing vines, accompanied, sometimes, by initials, or a monogram to match that in the spread.