

## CHRISTMAS NEEDLEWORK

**T**HE most pleasant pastime for this season of the year is the making of holiday gifts for loved ones. The token made by one's self and presented at Christmas is so much more appreciated than a gift purchased all ready made because, in the hand-made gift love breathes from every stitch.

Acceptable Christmas presents are generally those which are both useful and ornamental and under this head come handkerchief cases, pen-wipers, safety pin books, and shaving pad covers.

A heart-shaped needlecase is easily made by cutting two pieces of cardboard in the shape of a heart, overseaming a piece of white muslin over each, for the sake of padding, and arranging holes, or a ribbon at the top to fasten the two pieces together after the entire work upon them is completed. The embroidered cover is put on last and, between the two covered pieces of cardboard are laid several bits of flannel, pinked around the edges and, preferably, of the color of the flower embroidered upon the outside of the heart. The ribbon, which ties the heart and forms a loop by which to hang it up, should match the flower in hue or else tone in with the colors of the embroidered design. Wherever ribbon is used upon the articles described it should always be chosen with reference to the color of the embroidery.

There are many ways of embroidering the flowers offered in these embroidery designs, and any of the stitches described may be employed.

A rapid and pretty way to work foliage is to outline the leaf with two rows of running stitches, one row a little distance from the other, but coming together at the top and bottom of the leaves. Fill in the space with long stitches to make a padding for the embroidery. When the leaves have all been outlined and filled in, begin to work, with silk, crosswise, over and over the padding, laying the stitches closely and evenly over the outline stitches until the outer part of the leaf stands out in bold relief. It is pretty to work the tips of the leaves in a lighter shade of green than the lower portions. Indeed, shaded foliage and flower petals are always more rich in effect.

The inexperienced worker will do well to work without shading until some degree of expertness has been reached in embroidering with single colors, but a charming effect may be obtained in foliage by filling in the centers of the leaves with a different shade of color.

After the outlines of the leaves have been embroidered the center may be filled in with briar stitch, herringbone stitch, couching, seeding, darning, weaving or long-and-short stitch. All these methods are far more quickly accomplished than satin stitch, the favorite embroidery stitch for all fine work, and which, when combined with other stitches, conveys a richness of design not otherwise obtainable.

Seeding is done much like French knotting, by filling in a space with tiny knots. Seeding is always effective when combined with French embroidery, or satin stitch, and is handsome when used as a filling for spaces between outlined lettering. It is extremely fashionable, this season, to make a background of seed stitches to a monogram design, or some small medallion pattern.

Another way to fill in the leaves and petals of flowers is with French knots, made large, so as to stand well out upon the material. This kind of knotting is best when the design is a large one, the silk or crewel used coarse in quality, and the effect to be produced bold, rather than delicate. The long-and-short stitch is intended for rapid work done with coarse silk or cotton. It consists of a long and then a short stitch, alternating, and is particularly useful in outlining the edges of flower petals and foliage. When this stitch is used the centers of petals have no other filling and leaves are merely veined with rope-stitch, outline stitch, or snail-trail stitch, unless the leaf is a large one, when a broader treatment is desirable, and herringbone and feather stitching form attractive fillings.

All the lettering in these designs should be done in satin stitch, first outlining the letter with a running thread and then filling it in with long padding stitches.

The shaving case cover is worked with a daisy pattern and these

dainty blossoms are best worked in satin stitch and padded well, so that they seem to bloom out from the material. The petals are very easily worked because they are narrow. All narrow petals and foliage should be embroidered with padded satin stitch, as the relief thus insured adds greatly to the beauty of the design.

The daisies are first worked upon the top for the shaving case and then the embroidered circle is stretched over a circle of cardboard. A second piece of cardboard is covered for the back of the case and both pieces are finished with eyelets at the top through which ribbon is laced and tied in a pretty bow. The shaving paper is held between the leaves of the case by the ribbon.

The safety pin holder is also furnished with eyelets at one end through which ribbon may be laced. But, if one pleases, the eyelets may be eliminated and the ends of the book overseamed and trimmed with ribbon.

Embroider the outer side of the safety-pin case with any of the stitches described and lay between the leaves several layers of fine flannel, cut just a trifle smaller than the outside leaves. Pink the edges and fasten the safety-pins in parallel rows across the flannel leaves.

White flannel is used with delicate embroidery and tinted flannel with white or bright colored embroidery.

The same stitches are used in making the butterfly design upon the cover for a penwiper. Thoughts that fly are prettily exemplified in this design and nothing is lovelier, worked in colored silks, than a butterfly.

The outer edges of the butterfly's wings would look best worked in satin stitch, or long-and-short stitch. The wings may then be filled in with seeding or darning or weaving stitches, all of which are very effective for filling in a design of this shape. On top of these fillings work the spots, seed upon butterfly wings, in rich colors in satin stitch. Run a thread around the spots just as though no embroidery were beneath, fill in the little circle with stitches from edge to edge and then work crosswise of the filling threads with close satin stitch. The effect of the colored spots raised above the wing embroidery is very beautiful. The spots should contrast with the other coloring used in the wings, as butterflies offer vivid contrasts of coloring in their wings.

The body of the butterfly must be outlined and padded with long stitches so as to stand out higher than the rest of the design. Then work across the padding with satin stitch and use a darker color of silk for the body. The feelers may be worked in outline, rope, snail trail or satin stitch, just as one pleases. The satin stitch takes longer and does not look any more effective for this purpose.

When the design has been worked the cover is then stretched over a cardboard form and fastened to bits of chamoise skin by means of a ribbon at the end. Usually a back, or bottom to the penwiper is made of stiffer cardboard than the top, and is covered with any attractive material which will harmonize with the embroidered top. It is well to use rich, rather than light colors, for embroidered articles which cannot be laundered.

Everybody knows how to make a handkerchief case so it is only needful to say that the one illustrated is made like a large envelope with an embroidered flap. It is best to work this embroidery design with satin stitch over a filled-in outline, and the lettering should also be worked with satin stitch. White linen, worked in washable colored silks makes the best cover for a handkerchief case since the top may be ripped off and washed constantly. Still, colored silk, of not too light a shade, will remain fresh for years, even though some of the design is worked in very light colors. Ribbon, with which to tie the envelope in place, after the case has been finished, should be of a tint to harmonize prettily with the embroidery. The scalloped edges must be buttonholed or embroidered with satin stitch.

For working on linen, mercerized cotton floss is more desirable than linen threads, and the thickness of the floss should be regulated by the weight of the linen to be embroidered.

For bold designs and heavy embroidery there is a choice of desirable working silks of considerable thickness, such as Mountmellik (used a great deal in Mountmellik embroidery), Roman floss, rope silk, lustrous silk, and several loosely twisted, thick working silks that go by the names given them by their various manufacturers.