

A NEW TREATMENT OF EMBROIDERED CURTAINS.

ANYONE taking up such an undertaking as the embroidery of a pair of curtains should try to get hold of a design that will be effective when worked, and, at the same time, not occupy too large a slice of one's leisure in carrying out. It is so often noticed that many works are begun and never completed because the interest evaporates owing to the long time occupied in completing them. I am going to direct the reader's attention to a method of embroidery in flax on a plain woollen material, and, for the design, I give one which repeats itself at regular intervals, very much as a wall-paper does, so that when a number of the repeats are wrought, such as would be the case in a large curtain, a "busy" and rich effect is produced, suggesting a great deal more work than has actually been expended upon it. This is what I term producing the maximum of effect with the minimum of effort. There are of course occasions when one can take up a piece of work, regardless of the time occupied in completing it—a work which shall show our patience as well as

double economy to use it. I have seen flax used with considerable effect by the Donegal peasants, who embroider their own woollen frieze with it. Their work can be seen in London in Wigmore Street.

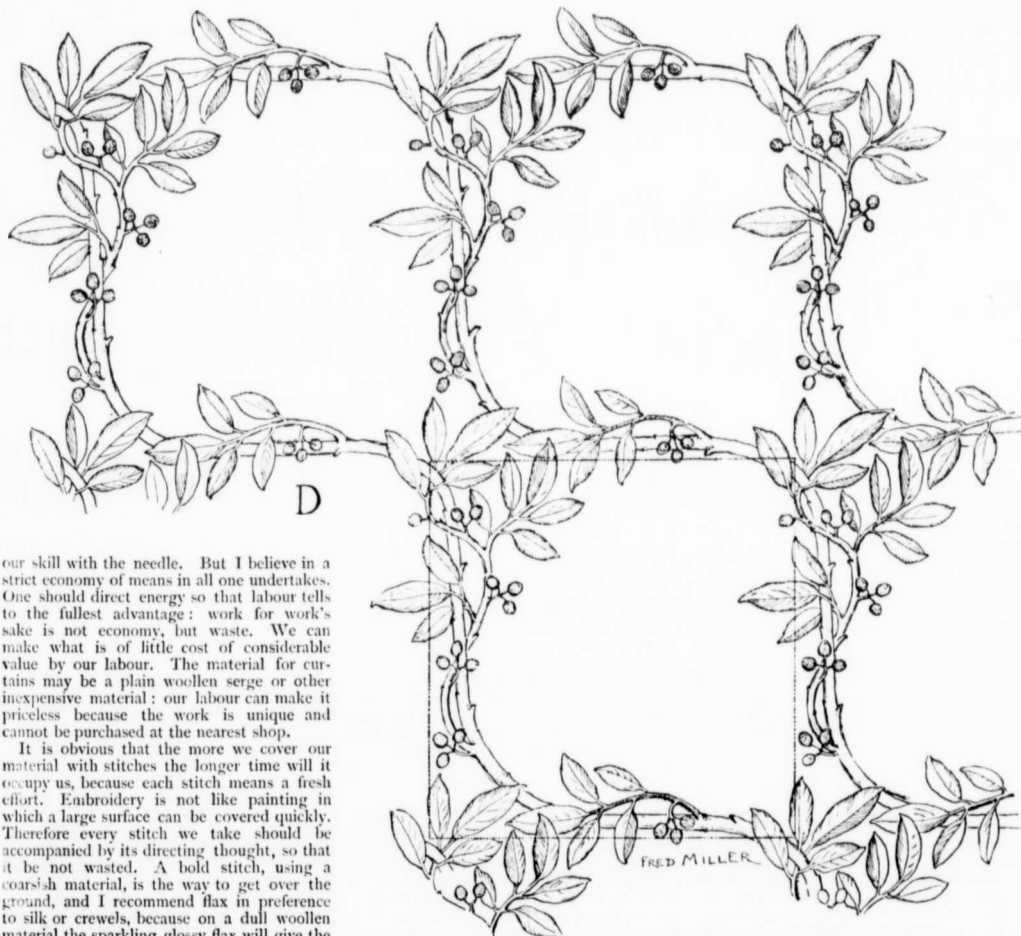
If we embroider a woollen material in worsted we don't get that relief by contrast that we do if we use a sparkling material like flax or silk. That is the reason silk is used to touch up and give accent to crewels; but if we use flax as I am advocating, the whole of our needlework is in contrast to the material wrought upon.

Then again, with flax great variety of colour is obtained by the direction the stitches take, though the same coloured flax be used, for the lustrous nature of flax catches the light and you get the same sort of quality as cutting glass gives that. Flax in fact is in appearance like spun glass.

I have taken the trouble to give details of the design in A, B and C to show how the stitches are to be taken. Thus, in working the fruits, take the stitches across each one at a slightly

different angle, for you will find if you do that each fruit will appear to be in a different shade of colour, though the same coloured flax be used; because flax shows a different tint as the light strikes it at various angles. Thus the stitches taken perpendicularly will appear a different colour to those taken horizontally.

In the leaves I have shown that these are not to be worked all over, which would greatly add to the time occupied in working out our scheme, but in patches—if I may use the term—following the direction of the veins. You will be surprised at the varied effect you will obtain on a large surface by working the leaves in this way. Where one leaf comes over another the upper one can be in little more than outline while those below can be nearly solid. This method is what I term letting the stitches "play" about, and it gives work a sparkle and lessens the tendency to the mechanical, which is in all work such a desideratum; and the saving of time is enormous to what must be expended where every part of the design is worked solidly.



our skill with the needle. But I believe in a strict economy of means in all one undertakes. One should direct energy so that labour tells to the fullest advantage: work for work's sake is not economy, but waste. We can make what is of little cost of considerable value by our labour. The material for curtains may be a plain woollen serge or other inexpensive material: our labour can make it priceless because the work is unique and cannot be purchased at the nearest shop.

It is obvious that the more we cover our material with stitches the longer time will it occupy us, because each stitch means a fresh effort. Embroidery is not like painting in which a large surface can be covered quickly. Therefore every stitch we take should be accompanied by its directing thought, so that it be not wasted. A bold stitch, using a coarsish material, is the way to get over the ground, and I recommend flax in preference to silk or crewels, because on a dull woollen material the sparkling glossy flax will give the work brilliancy by contrast, flax being coarser than silk, as well as infinitely cheaper, it is a

REPEATING DESIGN FOR OUTLINE EMBROIDERY IN FLAX,
FOR CURTAINS OR HANGINGS.