

A NEW IDEA FOR TREATING A PIANO BACK.

I GIVE myself the credit of having hit upon an entirely new idea for the treatment of a piano back; at least it is new to me and was not suggested by anything I have seen, and yet it is so simple and obvious that I daresay some reader will say, "Surely there can be nothing new in that?" It is not long since a design by me appeared in the "G. O. P." for an embroidered piano back, but there was no novelty in the idea, only in the design. It did not then occur to me that the back of a piano might be made decorative and useful at the same time by having a series of pockets attached to the material used to cover the back, so that music can be kept in them in some sort of order. I mean by that the music which happens to be most constantly in use, for there is no necessity to bulge out the pockets with a lot of old music that is very rarely used. Each pocket could conveniently hold up to a dozen ordinary pieces, and there need be no fear of affecting the quality of the sound, for that would escape as freely as it does where a plain embroidered back is stretched over the thin backing supplied with pianos.

Choose some good strong material, woollen canvas, linen, art serge, damask, or if silk be used it should have a backing of linen or upholsterers' canvas, for then a very thin Indian silk may be used as the strength will be obtained by the under material. Some of these thin Indian and Chinese silks are to be

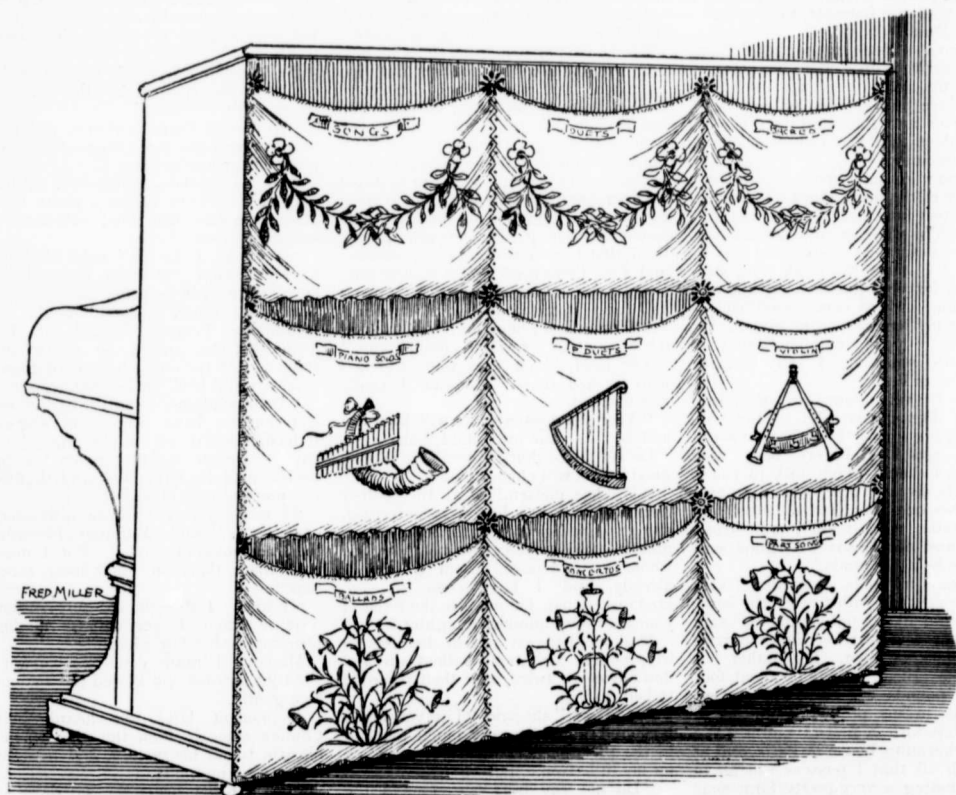
had in most beautiful colours. In my sketch I suggest a pale colour, but those who prefer it might select a deep indigo blue, blue-green, Indian red or amber. The colour of the ground will naturally influence the colour of the embroidery. Thus if an indigo blue were chosen then pale turquoise blues, greys, yellows and old gold would look well for the embroidery; if a red then I should be inclined to keep the work a harmony of reds and yellows instead of introducing a contrasting colour like green; if blue-green then grey-green, reseda and golden browns. If you elect to embroider a whitish or very pale fabric then the festoons might be in tones of grey-green, accented with pale indigo, the musical instruments on the middle row of pockets in old gold and warm russets, and the campanula-like flowers on the lower pockets in grey-greens with pale blue flowers suggested by the colouring of the forget-me-not. But do not introduce too many shades and opposing colours. The whole should harmonise and give the appearance of "oneness."

Those who design their own patterns should always strive to get a harmony between the design and the purpose to which their work is put. I chose campanulas for the bottom row of pockets as the bell flower naturally suggests music. The musical instruments of course are obviously intended to hint at the divine art, and I think it would be better to keep these three pockets in outline embroidery. The

labels on all the pockets should be kept in the same colour, say a russet brown, a tint you would make by mixing raw umber and yellow ochre. I have suggested in my sketch that the pockets be attached to the back cloth by an ornamental zig-zag or herring-bone stitching, and flax would be the material to use as it is stronger than silk. Cut the pockets large enough, so that the music can easily be slipped in. Of course you will plan out the whole so that each of your pockets is the same size and occupies the same amount of space on the back-cloth. The pockets should all be sewn on to the back-cloth before you fix it in position, and this must be done thoroughly so as to insure strength.

By the way it would probably look well to have the pockets in a lighter material than the back-cloth. A good art serge of a soft blue or green with white figured silk pockets would be striking. A damask-like material, that is one in which the pattern is produced by the alteration of the warp with the weft, as in a table-cloth, looks very well embroidered.

In fixing the work on to the piano you will find small brass carpet-pins useful. You must attach it securely all round the edge where the existing back-cloth is tacked, and in many pianos there are wooden struts running vertically which divide the back into three divisions. If these struts exist it would be well to attach



EMBROIDERED POCKETS TO HOLD MUSIC.