

THE HOUSEHOLD.

CHRISTMAS WORK FOR CHILDREN.

BY MRS. JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Little Americans will no doubt be glad to hear what English children make for their parents and friends when Christmas and birthdays come. The value of the gift consists, in the amount of loving thought and painstaking which has gone to make it, and not in the fact of its costliness, and there are many home-made gifts that are within the scope of little fingers. Often two or more children unite in making one present, each doing what is most suitable to its age and sex. Thus a shoe-bag, to hang within the closet door to hold mamma's slippers and shoes, will be cut out and basted by one sister, sewed and bound with braid by a younger one, and then embroidered or braided on each pocket by the elder.

Again boxes of plain white wood are fitted up for different purposes: a clever brother with his box of tools makes a tray with divisions for laces and ribbons, or arranges it to hold small garden tools—hammer, pincers, scissors, &c., being fastened by leather straps inside the lid, and the lower part divided into compartments holding nails, tacks, twine, labels, strips of leather, and so on. A grown-up sister then decorates the outside by hand-painting, or by simply drawing a monogram or initials, and staining the background black. The initials may be left plain white, or painted red or gold, as wished. A good effect is produced by drawing a border and centre piece on the lid, and four medallions on the sides, painting these in Chinese white, with black lines where required in drapery, foliage, &c., and filling in the background with black. The outlines must be kept very distinct, and when well done it looks like antique ebony with ivory inlaying. Sometimes the boxes are lined with silk and covered outside with brocade, hand-painted or embroidered silk, velvet, or plush, cut to fit, and gummed round the edges and at each corner. Chenille cord or ruches of lace and ribbon are nailed round the edges.

Fretwork is used in many ways. A pretty gift made by a son lately was two table-tops of wood of different colors were procured of the proper size; these were pasted together, and on one a large circular design was drawn, covering the surface to within about two inches of the edge; this was then cut out by the fret-saw, the pieces taken out and separated. The two woods were then inlaid into one another, dark into light, light into dark forming a pair of table-tops in reversed colors. These were afterward mounted by a carpenter on deal, and French polished. By using three slabs of wood, say black, white and red, greater variety may be given, and three tables produced with little more labor.

Large scrap-books of brown linen, each sheet three feet by four, the edges bound with red braid, the sheets folded in half like foolscap paper, and placed one within the other to form a book, are never-ending sources of delight to a nursery. The covers may have all the youngsters' names in red braid or wool, and the date. Inside, newspaper and colored scraps suited to infantine taste. A new idea is that of a comical scrap-book. These are usually of small size, and are made by combining bits of many pictures to illustrate well known nursery rhymes. Thus a large Irish potato, cut from the colored illustrations in a gardener's catalogue, was ornamented with the celebrated butcher, baker and candlestick-maker, the opposite page containing the same three little men, with cleaver, rolling-pin and candlestick used as oars, seated in a tub, taken from a house furnisher's list. Little Miss Muffet, the Man in the moon, Jack and Jill, the Cat and the fiddle—all the nursery favorites—give delight to donors and recipients alike. A few water-color touches may be given here and there to help out the picture.

Sets of animals, soldiers, &c., can be made by buying sheets of the beautifully colored chromo animals and figures sold so cheaply, pasting the whole sheet on card-board, and, when dry—they should be pressed under a heavy weight—cutting them out carefully. Behind the figures, at the feet, a small block of wood should be firmly glued. Any carpenter's shop will provide you with hundreds of suitable bits, which can be sawed to the proper size and planed smooth at home. Thus the animals and figures will

stand firm, and can be placed in any desired array.

Model gardens, lawns and farms can be made by little hands with suitable material. Two feet square of stout brown card-board makes a good foundation for any of these, and the remaining materials are dried mosses, grasses, glue, sand, tiny pebbles, a Swiss chalet, box of sheep, cows, farm buildings, palings, &c., such as come in the German wooden toy boxes.

For a private residence, the design is first decided upon, where the house shall stand, what shape the grass-plot shall be, whether the paths shall wind, &c. A sloping hill, with drive winding up to a Swiss chalet on the top, can be made of a block of virgin cork, properly shaped, and covered with stones and moss glued on. For grass-plots a mixture of dyed and plain dried moss is the best, rubbed small and dusted over the desired space, which must be previously coated over with glue. The drives and paths are glued and sanded. While the glue of the lawns is still wet you must not begin making the paths, or else your grass-plots will be undesirably gritty, and would ruin any lawnmower that ever was made.

With a small piece of broken mirror you can form an enchanting pond for toy swans to float upon. A few bits of broken cork, with grasses growing (in glue) in the cracks, will make a fine edge for it. Trees, if not included in any of the toy boxes, may be made of dyed or dried trembling or other grasses, or of tiny sprigs of evergreen, glued on to little round bases of wood, like those on which wooden soldiers always grow.

For a farm, the fields are made of rather rougher and longer moss than the lawns, and stocked with sheep feeding, cows standing under the trees, farm buildings, hay waggons cut out of cardboard, painted, and filled with real hay or straw, and a hay-stack. Fencing can be made by taking a narrow strip of wood of the required length, and gluing wire netting, twigs, crossed hair-pins, &c., along one edge of it. Summer-houses can be made of small twigs, rustic benches and many other things which will suggest themselves to the ingenious architect and landscape gardener as the work proceeds.

Novel match stands are made of large fir cones. A pedestal is made by three stout twigs bound together in the middle by fine wire, forming a double tripod. The upper one holds the fir cone strongly glued to it. Both the cone and the pedestal are touched up by dashes of Chinese white and vermilion paint, and then varnished. When dry, the cone is stuck full of wax matches, and looks something like a porcupine.

Packets of neatly printed labels, either done with a pen or a toy printing-press, will prove a great blessing to mamma. These should be neatly cut out, and have one or two thick lines ruled around them to give them a finish. Names of jams, preserves, pickles, fish, potted meats, spices, common household drugs, and also poison labels, for the various vessels containing such as are in common use. Yards of tape, with the family name written or printed in indelible ink innumerable times, to be cut and sewed on to garments, are also a boon to a busy mother.

Wooden pails with covers, painted in designs of flowers on a solid color, and lined with quilted or gathered silk, with ribbon ruching at the edge, are used for work-baskets to stand by a chair, or to carry balls on to the lawn-tennis ground. They are sometimes covered outside as well as inside with satin and silk.

Sticking-plaster cases, book-markers, boxes for sewing silks, and many pretty trifles can be made of gold or silver, perforated cardboard and chenille. A collection of sewing silks is always a useful gift, and one within the powers of small people. Simple little cases may be made from a half-yard strip of reversible ribbon three and a half inches wide. A durable color should be chosen for the outside, such as olive green or brown, with pale pink or primrose for the inside. Turn down each side of the ribbon about half an inch, as though for a hem, and stitch down at intervals of an inch and a quarter thirteen times, forming twelve shallow pockets on each side, in which the cards of silk are placed. A small length of ribbon will be left at one end, which must be formed into a pointed flap, with narrow ribbon attached, to wrap round the case and tie in a bow. The case should be folded inward and outward, like a fan, the backs of the divisions coming together and the faces likewise.

Another silk case is made of kid or leather,

silk-lined and ribbon-bound, and shaped like an eight-rayed star-fish, with an octagon body, all being cut in one. The sides of the octagon must be a little longer than the spools of silk, and the rays leaf-shaped. Eighty brass eyelets are button-holed with silk to match the lining, and sewed to the octagon opposite the division of each leaf, and the spools are laid between these eyelets parallel with the bases of the leaves; a narrow ribbon is threaded through eyelets and spools, and tied. When closed, each ray is folded in rotation over the spools, the last being ribbon strings to tie and keep all in place.

Old kid gloves may be used to make respectable rubbers, so welcome to the old folks. Cut four circles of card-board about the size of a fifty-cent piece; cover two with kid, padding slightly with cotton-wool, and two with silk, which may be plain, or have monogram or butterfly painted or embroidered. Sew the circles together, pincushion fashion, kid one side and silk the other; having added a small eyelet to each, attach them, kid inside, by narrow ribbon.

A sponge case may be made of a nine-inch square of leather, lined with oil-silk and bound by braid, with a little coarse embroidery in wools, or chain or feather stitching, ornamenting it. A piece of braid a yard long should be sewn by the ends to opposite corners (obliquely) of the square. Treat the other pair of corners the same way, and suspend the case by these long loops to the end of the towel rail. When required for traveling, fold the case like an envelope over the sponge, and tie the braid round it.

HOW TO TREAT FROST-BITES.

If any part of the body gets frozen, the very worst thing to do is to apply heat directly. Keep away from the fire. Use snow if you can get it; if not use the coldest possible water. Last winter our little boy of five years froze his feet while out coasting at considerable distance from the house. He cried all the way home, and the case seemed pretty bad. I brought a big panful of snow and put his feet into it, rubbing them with the snow. But my hands could not stand the cold. I was alarmed to see him keep his feet in the snow so long, but he could not bear them out of it. It was half an hour before he would take them out, and then the pain was all gone, and when I had wiped them dry and rubbed them a little, he was entirely comfortable, put on his stockings and shoes, and went to play. He never afterward had any trouble with his feet on account of this freezing. His sister got her feet extremely cold, and put them at once to the fire. Her case at first was not so bad as her brother's, but the result was much worse. Her feet were very tender all winter, and she suffered from chilblains. Her toes had a swollen purple look, and she had to take a larger size of shoes.—Faith Rochester.

ENGLISH OATMEAL PORRIDGE AND GRUEL.

—English oatmeal porridge is made by mixing equal quantities of oatmeal and flour together before adding them to the milk or water used for making the porridge. The same mixture of flour and oatmeal makes an excellent gruel, the proper proportions being one dessert spoonful each of meal and flour, mixed with half a pint of cold milk, and then stirring these ingredients into a pint of boiling milk, slightly salted, and boiling the gruel in a double kettle for twenty minutes, stirring it often enough to keep it smooth.

PHYSICIANS' FORMULA FOR OATMEAL GRUEL.

—Boil one ounce of oatmeal in three pints of boiling water, until the water is reduced one-third in quantity; then strain and cool the gruel, let it settle and pour it carefully away from the sediment; use it hot or cold, with sugar and wine, if desired. Sometimes the physician permits the addition of a couple of tablespoonfuls of raisins to the gruel while it is boiling; the effect of a few raisins is gently laxative, and if they are used in excess they frequently cause indigestion and flatulence.

A GOOD RECIPE FOR BUNS.—One pound of flour, quarter pound of butter, half pound of lump sugar, half pound of currants, quarter of a candied lemon, one dessert spoonful of baking powder, one gill of cold milk, two eggs. Rub the butter into the flour first, and then mix all together.

PUZZLES.



PICTURE PUZZLE.

The centre represents a poem; the initials of the surrounding objects, its author.

ANAGRAMMATIC SPELLING LESSON.

Arrange these letters so that they will form words agreeing with the accompanying definitions:

- Lossinhe—Goodness.
- Caalibm—An Old Testament prophet.
- Baarleenct—A place of worship.
- Millaage—A member of the Sanhedrim.
- Baahukkk—A prophet.
- Tiimluyh—Lowliness.
- Iraaams—A city of Palestine.

DIAMOND.

1. A consonant.
2. To speak falsely.
3. To burn with unsteady light.
4. A precious stone.
5. Vast.
6. The close or conclusion.
7. A consonant.

BEHEADINGS.

- A vessel and leave a passage.
- Fat and leave a cluster.
- Lustre and leave damage.
- A mineral and leave a disease of the back.
- To baptize and leave to push.
- A boat and leave a tool.
- A slow insect and leave a small measure.
- A pledge and leave beard.
- Gaping and leave a sun-screen.

TRANSPOSITION PUZZLE.

Four little letters me compose,  
And firstly, I'm a place;  
You find me on some people's clothes,  
And on the sun's bright face.

Now, read me backward, and you'll find  
That I delight all boys;  
Twist round my letters, and a word  
You say to check their noise.

This last read backward, you will find  
In kitchens where you go;  
Twist round again, and but for me,  
This puzzle you'd ne'er know.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES OF DECEMBER 1.

Personages.—Robinson Crusoe, Rip van Winkle, Ferdinand and Isabella, Sir Walter Raleigh, Diogenes.

Transpositions.—I, Ebal. 2, Labe. 3, Bela—changed to Zoar (Gen. 14: 2; 19: 22). 4, Elba. 5, Abel. 6, Ebla. 7, Bale. 8, Able. 9, Blea.

Accidental Hidings.—Ruth, Dora, Diana, Lena, Nora.

Phonetic Charades.—1, Cat, are—catarrh. 2, Nap, kin—napkin. 3, Mere, sham—meer-schaum. 4, Abess, in, Ia—Abyssinia.

Metamorphoses.—I. Dusk: 1 Rusk. 2 Rust. 3 Rest. 4 Nest. 5 Neat. 6 Seat. II. House: 1 Horse. 2 Corse. 3 Curse. 4 Crust. 5 Burst. 6 Burnt. 7 Burns. 8 Barns. 9 Bares. 10 Bores. 11 Cores. 12 Coves. 13 Cover. 14 Hover. 15 Hovel. III. Warm: 1 Worm or Ward. 2 Word. 3 Wold or Cord. 4 Cold. IV. Curd: 1 Cord. 2 Corn. 3 Coin. 4 Chin. 5 Thin. 6 Then. 7 When or They. 8 Whey. V. Dog: 1 Don. 2 Dan. 3 Hen. VI. Cloth: 1 Clots. 2 Coats. 3 Copts. 4 Copes. 5 Capes. 6 Caper. 7 Paper. VII. Pond: 1 Pone. 2 Lone. 3 Lane. 4 Lake. VIII. Coal: 1 Cool. 2 Wool. 3 Wood. IX. Awake: 1 Aware. 2 Sware. 3 Swart. 4 Swapt. 5 Swept. 6 Sweet. 7 Sweep. 8 Sleep. X. Boy: 1 Toy. 2 Ton. 3 Tan. 4 Man. XI. Seas: 1 Leas. 2 Less. 3 Lest. 4 Lent. 5 Lend. 6 Land.