

About the House.

Christmas Gifts.

1. If a young girl is on your Christmas-box list, where could you choose a more suitable gift for her than one of the pretty little muslin or Persian lawn aprons, such as that shown in our illustration? These were originally called "chafing-dish" aprons, but proved so dainty, so becoming, that they have been seized upon for a variety of uses beside that of presiding over the chafing dish. They may, of course, be trimmed in any way that one's fancy dictates, but should never come below the knee. A tiny "bib" may be added, if preferred.

2. Fig. 2 shows a very useful work-bag, or spectacle and handkerchief bag for an old lady. It is made of strong black ribbon, trimmed with beads, and is to be pinned to the belt when in use.

3. A set of sachets, made of ends of ribbon, with batting liberally sprinkled with some good perfume powder, makes a very dainty Christmas gift. The sachets may be kept among linen or lingerie in the bureau drawer, or may be pinned to the corset cover, and worn inside the dress.

4. If you present any petticoated friend with a set of hangers, say two for coats and four for skirts; accompanying the gift with the suggestion that she have a slender pole or strong rod, upon which to suspend the hangers, placed across her clothes-closet, she will have reason a thousand times to arise and call you blessed. The number of garments that may be hung along such a pole without danger of being crushed is simply a revelation to anyone who has not tried the plan. These hangers may be bought at almost any clothing establishment or notion store, and at some of the hardware stores, for 5 or 10 cents apiece. As the gift is for Christmas time, it will be necessary to give it a "Christmassy" look. This may be done very nicely by tying a bow of cherry-colored ribbon on top of each hanger.

5. A fancywork bag, which your friend will appreciate when she wants to take her work out for an afternoon's visit, is made of pasteboard and Dresden ribbon. Cut an oblong of the pasteboard, say 7 or 8 inches long and four wide. Cover it neatly with the ribbon, then gather ribbon all around to form the bag. Finish the top with a drawing-string of ribbon long enough to form loops through which the arm may be slipped.

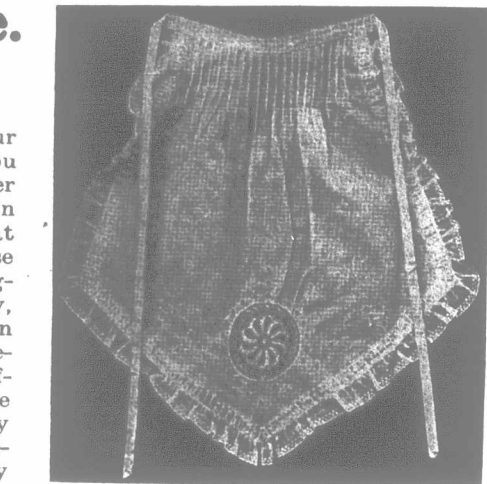
6. Very dainty strings of beads or watchguards may be made of tiny "gold" or steel beads and whole allspice. Take a strong double thread, slip on three beads then an allspice, and so on until the string is completed. Finish with small brass clasps.

SOME COLD-WEATHER SOUPS.

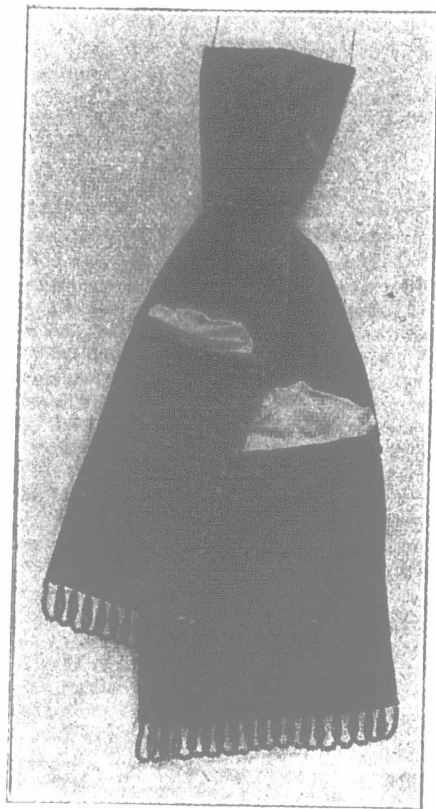
Soups are, of course, "the proper thing" for the introduction of dinner; nevertheless, if you have never tried them as your supper hot-dish during cold weather, and will just venture upon a few of the following, we think you will not be slow in adopting soup in some form for supper almost as an institution while winter lasts:

Cream of Potato Soup.—Boil 1 pint of water and 1 quart of good milk together. Add a piece of butter, salt and pepper, and two heaped tablespoons mashed potato. Beat yolks of 2 eggs light, add to them a tablespoon flour mixed smooth with a half cup of water, and pour into the boiling soup, stirring well. Just before serving, if you choose, add a small cup of whipped cream.

Bean Soup.—Soak 1 pint of beans in water over night, and next morning drain, and add 2 quarts water. Cook very slowly for three hours, stirring often. When soft, put through a sieve, having only the skins in the sieve. Return to the



1. A Persian Lawn Apron.



2. Handkerchief and Spectacle Bag.

kettle, season with butter, pepper and salt, and serve with toast.

Delicious Soup.—Fry one tablespoon of chopped onion and 1 tablespoon chopped parsley in 1 tablespoon butter for 5 minutes. Stir in 1 tablespoon cornstarch. Put half a can of tomatoes, or its equivalent of stewed tomatoes, in a saucepan or double boiler, and add to it one pint boiling water. Add 1 tablespoon (scant) of sugar, pepper and salt to taste, and 4 cloves. Add parsley, etc., and simmer twenty minutes. Add a tiny bit of soda, and serve with croutons. To make the croutons, simply butter and slice bread, cut into small squares, and brown slightly in the oven.

Squash or Pumpkin Soup.—For this soup the mealy Hubbard squash is best. Boil until soft, put through a sieve, pour in milk to make a rather thick soup. Season with butter, pepper and salt, and serve very hot. A little cornstarch or tapioca may be added, if desired.

Come, Let us Go Into the Lane.

By Alfred Austin (Poet Laureate).

Come, let us go into the lane, love mine,
And mark and gather what the autumn
grows:

The creamy elder mellowed into wine,
The russet hip that was the pink-white
rose;

The amber woodbine into rubies turned,
The blackberry that was the bramble
born;

Nor let the seeded clematis be spurned,
Nor pearls, that now are corals, of the
thorn.

Look! what a lovely posy we have made
From the wild garden of the waning
year.

So when, dear love, your summer is de-
cayed,
Beauty more touching than is clustered
here

Will linger in your life, and I shall cling
Closely as now, nor ask if it be spring.

Exiled.

It comes to me often in silence,
When the firelight splutters low—
When the black, uncertain shadows
Seem wraiths of long ago;
Always with a throb of heartache,
That fills each pulsive vein.
Comes the old, unquiet longing
For the peace of home again.

I'm sick of the roar of the cities,
And of faces cold and strange;
I know where there's warmth of welcome,
And my yearning fancies range
Back to the dear old homestead,
With an aching sense of pain,
But there'll be joy in the coming,
When I go home again.

When I go home again! There's music
That never may die away,
And it seems the hands of angels,
On a mystic harp at play,
Have touched with a yearning sadness
On a beautiful broken strain,
To which is my fond heart wording—
When I go home again.

Outside of my darkening window
Is the great world's clash and din,
And slowly the autumn shadows
Come drifting, drifting in.
Sobbing, the night wind murmurs
To the splash of the autumn rain;
But I dream of the glorious greeting
When I go home again.

—Selected.

The Eternal Goodness.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod;
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

Yet in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed stake my spirit clings,
I know that God is good.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured of one, that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

And so beside life's silent sea
I wait with muffled oar:
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fringed palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

—J. G. Whittier.

Let Something Good be Said.

By James Whitcomb Riley.

When over the fair fame of friend or foe
The shadow of disgrace shall fall, in-
stead

Of words of blame, or proof of thus and
so,

Let something good be said.

Forget not that no fellow-being yet
May fall so low but love may lift his
head,

Even the cheek of shame with tears is
wet,

If something good be said.

No generous heart may vainly turn aside
In ways of sympathy, no soul so dead
But may awaken strong and glorified,
If something good be said.

And so I charge ye, by the thorny crown,
And by the cross on which the Saviour
bled,

And by your own soul's hope of fair re-
nown,

Let something good be said.

The Uncaring.

Full many keep for those they love
The bitter word, the tear,
And lavish on a careless crowd
Their benison of cheer.
With laughter light for passing guest,
Who soon from them must roam,
They wound the ones they love the best,
And dim the light of home.

—Lalia Mitchell.

No Use.

What's the use o' kickin'
When the air is soft an' warm,
An' the sky is blue above you
Without a hint o' storm?
When the waves are softly singin'
As they sparkle in the light;
What's the use o' kickin'
'Cause the fish

don't
bite.

The fun of goin' fishin'
Is to find a good excuse
To sit and watch the ripples
When the line is hangin' loose.
To feel the breezes blowin'
An' feel such calm delight
That you never think of kickin'
'Cause the fish

don't
bite.

There's many an ambition
Which is but a fruitless quest.
But this world is full of sunshine
An' of beauty an' of rest.
An' we've had the fun of livin',
Though we ain't successful quite,
An' there ain't no use o' kickin'
'Cause the fish

don't
bite.

—Washington Star.

Failures that are Good for Us.

To fail to attain our ideals is not a wicked or shameful thing. Our highest ideals are still far in advance of our attainment, and will always be in our present life. It is only wicked and shameful to accept our failures as final, and to cease from all further effort to attain. Indeed, our failures are meant to teach us much which otherwise we could not learn. And they are the best guarantee of ultimate success.

What I essayed to be
And was not, comforts me.

It comforts us because it shows us that we are meant for more than we have realized. And it assures us that we have something yet to live for. This sort of failure is good for us.—R. E. Speer.

The Four-leaf Clover.

I know a place where the sun is like
gold,
And the cherry blooms burst with
snow,
And down underneath is the loveliest
nook,
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.

One leaf is for hope, and one is for faith,
And one is for love, you know,
And God put another in for luck,—
If you search, you will find where they
grow.

But you must have hope, and you must
have faith,
You must love and be strong—and so,
If you work, if you wait, you will find
the place

Where the four-leaf clovers grow.

—Ella Higginson.

"Just for Fun."

One song lost to the summer day,
Ah me! Ah me!
One pair of flashing wings the less
In the apple tree.

Four moaning babies, motherless,
In the home nest,
A dying bird upon the ground
With wounded breast.

Who can in such a peaceful place
The wrong have done?
A little thoughtless-hearted boy—
And just for fun.

Something Profound.

Some Gottingen students who had a keen admiration for Klopstock, the German Milton, once found one of his stanzas unintelligible and begged him to explain its exact meaning to them. The poet read the stanza—then carefully re-read it—then read it again, while all looked on with bated breath. At last he spoke: "I cannot recollect what I meant when I wrote it, but I do remember that it was one of the finest things I ever wrote, and you cannot do better than devote your lives to the discovery of its meaning."