

BEAUTIFUL HOUSEHOLD ORNAMENTS.

BY GEO. M. HOPKINS.

Now that so many artisans and mechanics are unemployed, and so many are anxious to dispose of their time to some profit, or at least legitimate pleasure, I venture to suggest a plan by which several household ornaments may be made, with few tools, and without expense; and if the directions are faithfully followed, whoever tries will feel well repaid for time and trouble.

A beautiful imitation of the much prized antique bronze vases and urns may be made in the following manner:

Turn a vase of any desired design from well-seasoned maple or other suitable wood. Handles, knobs, rings, pendants, etc., may be turned and added. Give it several coats of black varnish (shellac preferred), rubbing it down with fine sandpaper and for the last time with a well-worn piece. When the grain of the wood is well filled, such places as are to be ornamented with bands of fret, carved or knurled work, are to be fitted with strips of cotton lace or edging. The parts which are to receive this ornamentation are varnished with a thin coating of shellac varnish, and allowed to stand for a few moments, when the cotton lace or edging being pressed on will adhere.

In the centre of the beads, or in the edge of the rim of the article, a groove may be turned and a cord having a well-defined twist fastened therein with shellac. The varnish must now be allowed to dry thoroughly.

A medallion or other fine ornament for the sides may be found in stamped stove ornaments, in brass buttons, or in the so-called sawdust and glue ornaments which are used to adorn furniture, etc. These may be neatly put on or let in, as the case may require.

The lace is now to be well filled by giving it several coats of shellac varnish. When this becomes dry and hard, the whole vase is to receive a coating of quite thin, plain shellac varnish having a sufficient quantity of fine plumbago stirred in to give it a metallic appearance. When this coat is dry, the whole vase is to be polished with fine plumbago, rubbed on dry with a woollen cloth or stiff brush until a fine lustre is obtained. Now coat the article with a lacquer made from plain shellac varnish having in it a considerable quantity of tincture of turmeric and dragon's blood. This gives it a dark bronzed appearance.

Powdered verdigris is mixed with turpentine, and a very small quantity of furniture or turpentine varnish is added (not enough to give the mixture any lustre). This must be brushed into the interstices of the cotton lace and all the creases, and under portions of beads, bands, and ornaments. The verdigris remaining on the projecting portions must be wiped off clean before it can set so as to make it impossible. Should it adhere so as to make it difficult to remove it, a little turpentine may be put on a cloth, and with this it may be readily wiped off. A base-piece to imitate the usual marble base may be turned from wood, and dyed or painted black, and polished in the lathe, and added with good effect.

The subscriber has made ornaments in this manner, which have passed for bronzes under quite close inspection. Very few have recognized the cotton lace even after the article is known to be made from wood.

Among the articles which may be made in this manner are, card-receivers, brackets, match-safes, picture-frames, etc. A host of other articles will suggest themselves, and so also will other plans for ornamentation. For instance: symmetrical paper figures, dried natural leaves, small shells, etc., may be attached and treated in the same manner as the cotton lace. A pleasing variety may be made by using bronze-powders of various shades.

—Scientific American.

DRAINING THE ZUYDER ZEE.—Preparations are going on for the commencement of the long-projected work of draining the Zuyder Zee. A dam, 40 kilomètres (24 miles 1,504 yards) long, and 50 mètres broad at its base, is to be carried across the gulf, built up to a height of half a metre above the ordinary level of high tide. Upon this, pumping machines of 10,000 horse-power will be erected, capable of pumping up from the enclosed sea, and discharging on the outside of the dam 6,500,000 cubic mètres of water daily. Taking the average depth of the water at four mètres and a half, it is estimated that the work of pumping will be completed in about sixteen years from its commencement. The total cost of reclamation is set down at 335,000,000 francs, but, huge as this sum is, the undertaking is confidently looked upon as likely to prove a most remunerative speculation. The success of the scheme will add to the kingdom a new province, 195,300 hectares, or nearly 500,000 acres in extent.

DOMESTIC.

SIMPLE PUDDING.—Take $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of finely-chopped suet, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of bread crumbs, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of moist sugar, and a small quantity of any fruit syrup or dissolved jelly. Mix the dry ingredients, add the syrup, and a little milk if not sufficiently moist. Put the mixture into buttered cups and bake for half an hour, turn them out, and serve with sauce flavoured with fruit syrup or with dissolved fruit jelly.

PUDDINGS MADE WITH DRIPPING.—Make $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of milk hot, and stir into it 2oz. of clarified dripping; let it cool, and then add 2oz. of powdered sugar, 2oz. of flour, the yolks of three eggs and the white of two (whisked separately), flavour with a little grated lemon peel, and beat the mixture well. Grease some small tins, fill them three parts full, bake half an hour, and serve with sweet sauce. Put a small pot of red currant jelly into a stewpan with a gill of water, boil, and pour round the pudding.

FRUIT PUDDING (COLD).—Put a layer of any kind of fruit (previously stewed with sugar, and allowed to get cold) or jam into a deep glass dish, mix three table-spoonfuls of cornflour with a gill of milk, boil one pint of milk with the thin rind of a lemon, and with sugar to taste; when well flavoured with the lemon, pour the boiling milk through a strainer on to the cornflour, stir, and return it to a saucepan; boil five minutes, or until it thickens, and when cool enough not to break the glass pour on the fruit, and leave it to get quite cold and set. Ornament according to fancy with jam, preserved fruit, or angelica.

YEAST.—The following recipe is in constant use with good results. Peel three potatoes, boil till quite tender, crush with a fork, add $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. brown sugar, three dessert-spoonfuls of flour, a tea-spoonful of salt; mix the whole with cold water to the consistency of butter; next put two quarts of water in a saucepan with two good handfuls of hops, boil for thirty minutes, then add the above mixture, heat again to boiling, take it off and strain into a stone bottle. Let it cool till milk-warm, then add a half-pint of a previous make. In default of this, add a half-pint of brewer's yeast, or a little German yeast mixed with warm water. Allow the stone bottle, with contents, to stand loosely corked in a warm place near the fire till the following morning; then cork tight, and put away in a cool place. The yeast will keep for a month; a half-pint is required for each 14lb. of flour; shake well before using.

BONNE FEMME.—Cut up a good-sized onion into very thin rounds, and place these in a saucepan with a good allowance of butter. Take care not to let the onion get brown, and when it is half done throw in two or three handfuls of sorrel, one lettuce, and a small quantity of chervil, all finely cut; then add pepper, salt, a little nutmeg, and keep stirring until the vegetables are nearly done. Then put in one table-spoonful of pounded loaf sugar, and about half pint of vegetable stock; boil until the onions are thoroughly done. Meanwhile prepare about a dozen and a half very thin slices of bread about lin. wide, and 2in. long, taking care that they have a crust along one of their long sides. Dry these slices in the oven. When it is time to send up the soup, first remove the superfluous fat from it, then set it to boil, and when it boils take it off the fire and stir into it the yolks of two or three eggs beaten up with a quarter of a pint of cream or milk. Pour a soup over the slices of bread, and serve in three minutes.

By exposure to the long-continued influence of moist air certain kinds of glass lose their transparency and become covered with opalescent layers, which are easily cracked off. In the collection of ancient relics exhumed at Cyprus by General Di Cesnola, there are abundant examples of glass bottles, cups, vases, &c., which are said to be as brilliantly iridescent as if carved from pearl shell. There is reason to believe that the ancients were in possession of processes for producing iridiated glass, similar to those in use by the glassworkers of China and Burmah. In April of last year specimens of the Chinese glass were sent to M. Clemendot, a noted French chemist, for examination. According to the *Comptes Rendus*, M. Clemendot has in conjunction with M. Frémy, succeeded in re-producing the iridiated glass, and that numerous fine specimens have been exhibited before the French Academy. The process, which is said to be certain in its results, consists simply in submitting ordinary glass for six or seven hours to the action of water containing 15 per cent. of hydrochloric acid at a pressure of from two to three atmospheres and at a temperature of about 248 deg. Fah.