



From Field and Wood.

WHEN well arranged, dried grasses and flowers are always beautiful. As much of their beauty consists in the graceful forms of delicate stems and tiny seed-pods, that arrangement is best which allows this dainty tracery to be seen.

An ornamental panel made of the treasures gathered from field and wood is something new and pretty. It is much to be preferred to the old-fashioned "dried bouquet," where delicate grasses, soldierly cat-tails and everlasting were often packed tightly together, effectually destroying the distinctive beauty of each.

To make a panel like the one illustrated in fig. 1.

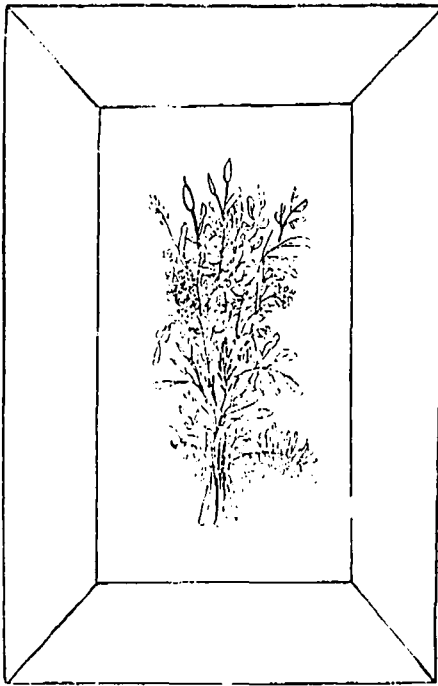


Fig. 1.

there will be required a thin board of the desired size (boards on which certain kinds of dressed goods are wrapped answer nicely, and can be had at almost any dry-goods store for the asking), a cup of well-cooked flour paste, a sheet of wadding, enough pongee or China silk of a cream shade to cover the board, sufficient plush of a bright golden brown to make a border two or three inches wide around the panel, and a paper of the smallest-sized double-pointed tacks.

From the wadding cut a piece the exact size of the board, and fasten it on by pasting along each edge; do the same with the silk; join the four plush strips at each corner with a bias seam and turn the edge under, around the inside of the oblong thus made. It is best to fasten the turn by hemming with long stitches.

The plush must be cut large enough to turn over on to the back of the panel for a quarter of an inch. Carefully put some paste on the border at each corner and along both edges; place it right-side down on a table and put the panel on it, pressing softly in place; cut a square out of each corner of the plush where it projects beyond the board; then turn down the projecting edges on to the back of the board. A piece of heavy brown paper, cut a trifle smaller than the panel, should be pasted over the back to conceal raw edges and give a finished appearance. Drive a tack on each side of the panel near the top, on which to tie a cord to hang the panel by. Great care should be taken that all edges are cut perfectly straight and that all joinings are exact.

The panel is now ready for the grasses, cat-tails, &c., which should be arranged gracefully on it and firmly fastened into position with tacks. These will not show if a leaf or full head of grass is skillfully allowed to droop over them. The panel should be hung almost flat against the wall, and on a level with the eye of a person standing. This is the

manner recommended by artists for the hanging of all pictures.

It is considered very bad taste to color grasses. The bright green and the various shades of red often seen in the stiff bunches offered for sale are simply hideous. No artificial coloring can equal in beauty the numerous shades of bright and dark browns which the various grasses and weeds take in drying. Some of the most common roadside weeds work in nicely when arranging a panel. The cyme of the elderberry, from which the ripened berries have been shaken, is beautiful in form and rich in color. The seeds of many varieties of the clematis are in soft, fluffy bunches, and as a long vine can often be had with its many downy balls, they are very graceful.

To give variety, a banner may be made in place of the panel just described. In order to hang smoothly with the weight of the grasses, ferns and cat-tails, it must be made of heavy material. The brown plush would be pretty, with a lining of satteen and an interlining of heavy linen canvas. It should be trimmed across the bottom with acorns or walnuts. A loop of the narrowest, brown, baby ribbon is fastened to the stem end of each nut with a small tack; the nuts are then sewed at equal distances by these loops across the banner. The rod, fig. 2, is made of a small branch—the more knarled

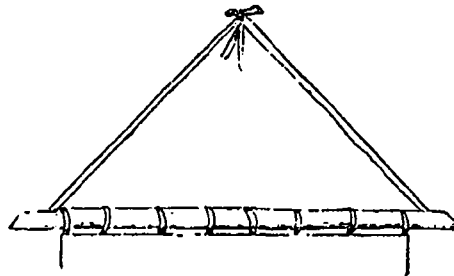


Fig. 2.

and moss-covered the better. To make the rings, cut eight pieces of cardboard about a sixth of an inch wide; sew them into rings that will easily slip over the rod; paint the inside brown and cover the outside with thin pieces of bark peeled from selected twigs. The rings can be made from the twigs themselves, but the shape will not be so true. Put the twigs in hot water, and when they become pliable bend them into rings and sew the ends together with stout thread. The grasses and flowers are fastened on the banner by sewing with strong silk. A heavy brown ribbon, an inch wide, is used to suspend the banner.

Either the panel or the banner would make a very appropriate Christmas present, something that one living in the country could send to a city friend, feeling sure they would not see anything in the art stores better of its kind.

Practical and Pretty.

A DICTIONARY is a heavy book to lift, and one that if left on the table occupies a deal of space and is apt to have other things placed on it. That it is a book which should have its place in every family has been said over and over; also that the children should be taught to use it often.

A practical "dictionary holder" that has been in use for many years in a family, where the worn

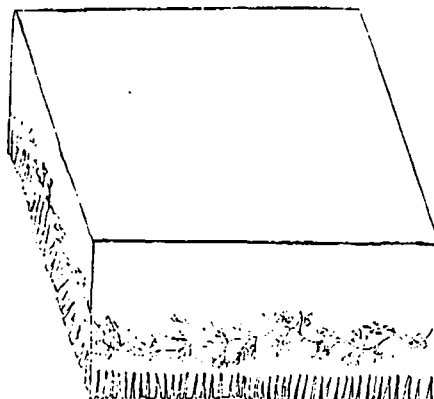


Fig. 1.

cover of the book bears a strong, though silent, testimony to its constant use, is illustrated by fig.

1. It is a shelf made of an inch-thick, well-seasoned board, 13 by 15 inches. It is supported by two iron brackets, such as are sold at any hardware store. The brackets are screwed both to the board and the wall, making all very secure.

The cover is of dark-red felt. The lambrequin is ornamented with a vine embroidered in crewels. Fig. 2 gives a pattern for the embroidery. The



Fig. 2.

stems and leaves are shaded green silk, and the star-shaped flowers in yellow. The edge of the lambrequin is finished with a fringe made by cutting the felt into narrow strips for a depth of three inches.

To make this holder perfect, there should be a law as unchangeable as those of the Medes and Persians, that under no circumstances should anything but the dictionary be placed there.

Some convenient place to put the odds and ends that will collect where work and play is going on during the day is a great saving of steps to the busy house-mother. A dainty, ribbon-trimmed basket is hardly suitable for the apple-core little Bess is so anxious to dispose of, or the damp, pasty papers left from Ned's kite. The scrap jar (fig. 3),

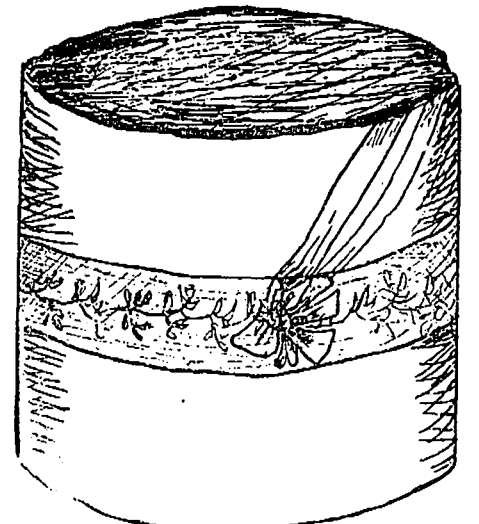


Fig. 3.

is both ornamental and decidedly practical. A common four-gallon jar—one without handles if possible—is selected and fitted with a round wooden cover. Several thicknesses of soft old newspaper is wrapped around the jar. The jar and lid are then covered smoothly with red felt. A strip of brown felt 4 inches wide, on which is embroidered a vine, is fastened around the jar near the centre. The joining of this band is concealed by a bow of red and brown ribbons, the ends of which are carried up over the edge and fastened inside the jar. If desired, a similar bow can be placed on the cover.

The pattern given for embroidery on the dictionary holder would look equally well on the brown felt, only it would be well to work the flowers in red instead of yellow.

This scrap jar should have the contents removed every morning, and all dust wiped out with a damp cloth.

In Holiday Time.

At Christmas time a few decorations well placed do much toward giving the house a holiday look. Simple materials can be used, and the children will enjoy, not only the result, but preparing it.

Evergreens come first in the choice of material. A few small evergreen trees of symmetrical shape placed here and there in pots through the house are effective. Ropes of evergreen can be placed over windows, doors, pictures and mantel, brightening the evergreen with clusters of red berries. In lar-