

WOMAN and HER WORK.

There is just one word more that I would like to say on the subject of Christmas presents, to the girls who read this page, and that is—buy or make your present as if they were for yourself! Do not let the fact that a thing is within your means, and looks pretty well, influence you in making your purchases. And above all, do not make some utterly senseless, and useless piece of fancy work, and inflict it on a friend, just because you saw a description of it in some newspaper, and it was easy to make, and cheap! I really do not know of any class of gift that is so abused as fancy work, and when one remembers that the unfortunate recipient is expected to be delighted with a present and profuse in expressions of gratitude I think the giver is under some obligation to make the gift really acceptable.

What abominations I have seen inflicted on men, and the poor souls were supposed to be transported with rapture over them! The penwipers, the worked spectacle cases, the tobacco pouches and the made slippers! It has really made my heart ache. I know it is hard to select a present for a man, but then that is no reason why the first thing that comes to hand should be chosen, and inflicted upon him. Work him a necktie, if you cannot afford an expensive present, but be sure to put your best work, and your best taste, into the choice, and manufacture of it, think of his general appearance, and his complexion, just as you would if you were choosing a hat for yourself, and be sure you get something which will suit him. There are so many dainty ways of working ties for one's male friends now that nothing is simpler than the preparations of a really pretty gift at very slight expense. No man ever had too many ties, and he is sure to be really pleased with a pretty one, which some lady friend has taken the trouble of working for him.

It is a hard, task though a pleasant one, to choose presents for one's friends, but when I take my purse in one hand, and my courage in the other, and start out to buy the small offerings that I can afford to lay on the altar of friendship, I always look for something I would like myself, and if it is within my reach I get it. It may be a narrow way of making a choice, but I have found it rather successful; tastes differ I know, but still what one woman admires and would like to have, is very likely to please another woman; and as for selecting a present for the masculine side of the house, why one only can do their best and trust to Providence.

As for the children, and the girls and boys who are not quite children but still not yet grown up, do buy them something they will enjoy at the time even if it does not last very long. Christmas belongs exclusively to young people, we poor grown-ups don't get very much enjoyment out of it except the pleasure of making others happy, and our Christmas jollity is more than half the time put on, a sort of dreary make believe, with rather a hollow ring about it, like a Britannia metal dish which is trying to masquerade as solid silver. But to the folk who are under fifteen it is a very genuine season of rejoicing and their elders should take care to enhance the delight they feel in looking forward to the holiday season, by every possible means. There is sorrow enough waiting for all those young things somewhere in the world—perhaps just around the corner—and the young feet will have many a thorny path to travel before they are finally at rest. Therefore I believe in parents being just as frivolous as they can afford to be, at Christmas! Unless you are really poor, don't try to give the children good, and economical habits by giving them strictly useful presents! I heard of a sensible and strong minded mother once, who gave her boy a new geography, which he needed at school, and a grand pair of snow excluding overshoes. She was quite well off, but had a theory that children should be taught to be practical and sensible as early as possible, and wouldn't I have enjoyed the privilege of giving her a good slap, it would have aroused some feeling in her even if it was of an uncomfortable kind? most mothers, aunts, and sisters can easily find out what young people would like, and it is just as easy to give them something they wish for, as some present which will be valueless to them.

Unless you know the boy very well, and are sure it is what he would prefer, don't present him with a book! The average healthy boy in his natural state sees all the books he cares about at school, and as long as the shops are full of skates, hand sleds, and mechanical toys he has no use for books. Of course there are plenty of exceptions, and a percentage of studious boys who would prefer a good book even to a pair of skates, but even to such lads don't give "an improving book" at Christmas; "a memoir of the Rev. Norman McLeod D. D." or "Short Studies in Science" may be appropriate as school prizes, though I have my doubts on the subject, but "Robinson Crusoe" or "The Arabian Nights" are more entertaining reading for the Christmas holidays.

For the girls—well I think the best plan

is to look back to the time when we ourselves were thirteen or fourteen, and try to remember what we liked then. Who wanted a new pair of overshoes, or good comfortable pair of kid mittens then for a Christmas present? not we! A bangle, ever so plain a ring, a little pin, or even a bright necktie, any one of them was worth all the sensible presents in the world; while a box of candy, provided the box was highly ornamented, was a source of purest joy. Therefore give the girl something they can display to their girl friends, and be proud of; you want them to have the real Christmas feeling, and take all the good there is to be got out of the holiday.

For the little one's give them anything that will make them happy, fill their poor little stockings full to the top, and if you want to inculcate careful habits, and teach them wisdom beyond their years, but them some good mechanical toys, an engine that winds up and runs for five minutes or a bicyclist racing around a pole, and teach them that they must take care of their treasures and not break them. If there is ever any doubt about what to give a child of any age, it is easily solved by a box of candy, which is always sure to meet with an enthusiastic reception.

In short I don't know of any occupation in life, to which the golden rule of doing as you would be done by, applies more closely than in the choosing of Christmas presents for one's friends. I am not speaking of those who are obliged to count every cent before they spend it, and whose poverty compels them to combine all possible usefulness in the gift itself, with the loving care they expend in choosing it, such gifts are sanctified by love and self sacrifice far more often than the most expensive offering that could be purchased. But I refer to those who are in sufficiently easy circumstances to please themselves in the choice of presents.

We are assured by some fashion writers that the possibility of hoops coming in fashion again is by no means remote; in fact that like the sword of Damocles it is hanging over our heads all the time, though I do not know that it is suspended by so slender a support. The latest threat is in the shape of a silk underskirt stiffened with no less than seven rows of wire reaching up to the knee. The dress skirt which is worn over such a petticoat is quite without stiffening and hangs in full soft ripples.

It seems a pity that when such good effects can be obtained from the perfectly cut, full skirts without any trimming fashion should demand a return to trimmed skirts, but I am afraid that is what we are coming to very soon. The thin end of the wedge seems to have been already inserted by the Marie Antoinette effect of front breasts differing from the rest of the skirt and having the appearance of a petticoat and overdress. Panels by way of trimming have followed and the next innovation is to be the cutting of the foot of the skirt into deep vandykes or (square), and setting a finish of velvet under them. This will be most convenient for those whose dresses have shrunk around the foot, or got shabby, and need lengthening; but the plain skirt is decidedly the more stylish, to my taste.

Another indication of the return to skirt trimmings is the appearance of skirts made of flowered materials. Black cashmere sprinkled all over with flowers, such as roses, are shown, made up into plain colored bodices. A skirt of this kind may be worn with a bodice either of black surah silk or satin, or one matching the roses with which the skirt is ornamented in tint, and the dress is often lined with silk of the same bright shade. Such dresses are very effective, and stylish looking without being at all expensive.

It is odd that white satin should continue so popular as a trimming when it is so perishable but it is still used lavishly on many dressy costumes, cuffs, vests, and broad revers of it covered with either yellow, or gray lace, are seen on dresses of dark colored cloth or velvet, and it is always effective.

Full waists of plain chiffon which are of course made up over a silk or satin lining, are seen on many evening dresses, and finished by a rich deep belt of colored mirror velvet, they freshen up a last year's gown in almost satisfactory manner. The sleeves are sometimes of a contrasting material and a very pretty model is a dress of pink satin with black chiffon sleeves, and neck trimming. The sleeves are very short and arranged in a series of deep lengthwise puffs with tiny bands of jet trimming separating them, the frill around the neck is very deep, and caught up at the left side with either a bow of pink satin, or a cluster of pink roses. The sleeves of evening dresses are much shorter than they were last year, and stand out in full round puffs or short double frills. This will rejoice the heart of the girl whose arm is all that can be desired above the elbow but whose forearm does not bear inspection. Many of the sleeves of dresses for day wear are cut very long, and shaped in a long point which falls over the hand and is often finished with the always becoming frill of lace.

A very pretty and striking gown worn recently by a young debutante was a combination of pale blue and crimson cloth. Of course the right shades had to be selected, or the result would have been disastrous. It was made with a little round cornered tight fitting jacket just like a zouave, except that it was finished with one of the high round collars so fashionable now, and which are a sort of revival of the medec collar of a few years ago. This one reached nearly to the tops of the ears at the back, and sloped away in front so as to leave the chin quite free, in fact it was rounded down to nothing in front. It was made of the blue cloth, and its only trimming was a border of short black fur with a light tracery of black stitching above it. The great puffed sleeves were of the crimson cloth with flaring cuffs of the pale blue, finished with the same stitching. The vest is also of the same cloth buttoned straight down the front with very small black buttons; it has little lapels, or flaps like the old fashioned waistcoats worn by the beaux of the eighteenth century, and it is a very comfortable looking little garment. The skirt is crimson and very flaring around the foot, above the hem is a pointed trimming of the blue showing the same delicate stitching as appears on the jacket. The vest is provided with large soft sleeves of blue silk, so that the jacket can be removed at will, and the costume is finished with a crimson felt hat faced with blue, and trimmed with blue and white striped ribbon.

A lovely creation in black and white, is of short napped velvet, of the kind known as silk velvet. The bodice is a sort of blouse drawn down with very little fullness into a low round belt of velvet and finished with a very high, round, and flaring collar. The sleeves are narrow and tight fitting at the shoulder, but a balloon like fullness at the elbow, and tight and smooth from hence to the wrist. The rest of the gown is composed of a cream white cloth skirt with a long black coat opening over it. The coat tails are fastened on at the waist, and are removable, so that the costume can be transformed into a white cloth skirt and black bodice, at a moment's notice. The novel feature of the dress is its trimming of white leather, which consists of straps of white leather with a slight design of black silk stitching upon them set in the sleeve puffs, and again at the waist where the points turn upwards. The effect is very striking against the black velvet. A narrow strip of fur lines the collar.

Roast Turkey.

To roast a turkey, singe, draw, and wash the fowl, wipe dry, and rub the inside with a little salt. It may be filled with a stuffing made with stale bread crumbs, half a cup of butter, one egg, salt, pepper, and herbs to the taste, and moistened with a little hot water; or an oyster stuffing made as follows may be used: Break into pieces half a loaf of stale bread and mix with it salt and pepper and half a cup of melted butter. Drain off the liquor from a pint of oysters, heat it and pour over the bread crumbs; add an egg and mix all well together; if the stuffing is rather dry add a little sweet milk. Put a spoonful of stuffing into the turkey, then three or four oysters, and so on until the turkey is filled. A chestnut stuffing may be used. To make it boil the chestnuts, remove the shells and brown skins, and mash them. Mix them with a few grated bread crumbs, and moisten with sweet cream; add a little butter, and season with pepper and salt. In filling the turkey do not crowd in the stuffing. Sew up the openings and tie or skewer the legs and wings in shape. Rub thickly with butter and salt and dredge with flour. Place in a dripping pan, and put half a cup of water in the pan. Use a moderate oven, and cover the turkey with another pan for the first forty minutes. Baste frequently and turn the bird occasionally to expose all parts to the heat. It should be tender and moist and a golden brown all over when done. Garnish the dish with small balls of fried sausage or fried oysters and parsley. Serve with a gilet dressing and cranberries.

The meat of the wild turkey is drier than the domestic fowl, and not nearly so fat, and the turkey should be larded and fat pork chopped fine should be used in the stuffing. In the South the giblets are always served whole, one placed under each wing.

Boned Turkey.

Many consider that the only proper way to cook a turkey is to boil it. To do this singe, draw, and wash the turkey thoroughly wipe with a soft cloth and rub the inside with salt. Make a stuffing of one quart of bread crumbs, a tablespoonful of butter, salt, pepper, and chopped parsley, and mix the ingredients together with an egg. Fill the breast of the fowl with some of this stuffing and put the remainder into the body. Tie the legs and wings close to the body and place it in salted boiling water with breast downward. Boil rapidly the first half hour, then draw it to the back of the stove and cook slowly until tender. Serve with celery or chestnut sauce. If oysters chopped are used in the stuffing serve with an oyster sauce. An old-fashioned custom was to serve ham or smoked tongue with a boiled turkey.

Boiled Turkey.

To make creamed turkey, pick the meat from the bones of a roasted or boiled turkey and cut into small pieces. Allow one pint of meat for the following dressing: Put in a double boiler one pint of cream or rich milk and place over the fire; rub together two tablespoonfuls of flour with one of butter, and stir into the milk when boiling; add salt and cayenne pepper and stir until it thickens like custard; mix the meat with the dressing and fill buttered individual shells with the mixture; sprinkle cracker dust over the top of them with bits of butter and bake in a hot oven fifteen minutes.

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RIPANS

ONE GIVES RELIEF.

Turkey Rechauffe.

There are many dainty ways of using bits of cold turkey. To scallop turkey cut the meat from the bones of cold boiled or roasted turkey, remove the skin and cut the meat fine. Put in the bottom of a buttered dish a layer of bread crumbs moistened slightly with milk—or if it is a boiled turkey, use some of the liquor it was cooked in—then spread a layer of the minced turkey, with bits of the stuffing, some pieces of butter, and pepper and salt, then another layer of crumbs, and alternate them until the dish is filled. Pour over the whole whatever dressing may have been left, and if there is not enough add a little hot water to it and season with a teaspoonful of Worcestershire sauce. Spread crumbs over the top and scatter bits of butter over them. Cover the dish with a plate and bake in a brisk oven. As soon as it is thoroughly heated remove the plate and brown. Serve at once.

Devilled Turkey.

An appetizing way of using bits of turkey cold is thus: Take the pieces of turkey and free them of bone and skin; if there are any good sized pieces cut them in half. Put the meat in a saucepan with whatever stuffing and dressing may have been left and a tablespoonful of butter. Season liberally with salt and cayenne pepper. Place over the fire, and when the mixture boils break into it an egg and stir thoroughly. Turn into a buttered mould, and when cold turn it out on a dish and slice nicely.

Creamed Turkey.

To make creamed turkey, pick the meat from the bones of a roasted or boiled turkey and cut into small pieces. Allow one pint of meat for the following dressing: Put in a double boiler one pint of cream or rich milk and place over the fire; rub together two tablespoonfuls of flour with one of butter, and stir into the milk when boiling; add salt and cayenne pepper and stir until it thickens like custard; mix the meat with the dressing and fill buttered individual shells with the mixture; sprinkle cracker dust over the top of them with bits of butter and bake in a hot oven fifteen minutes.

Boned Turkey.

To bone a turkey, slit the skin down the back with a sharp knife, and, raising one side at a time, with the fingers separate the flesh from the bones until the wings and legs are reached, unjoint these from the body, and, cutting through to the bone, turn back the flesh and remove the bones. The flesh may be reshaped by stuffing. Stuff with force meat made of veal and a little pork chopped fine, and season with salt, pepper, sage, or savory, and the juice of a lemon. Saw in shape, and press the wings and legs close to the body, and tie all firmly so that the upper surface may be smooth and plump. Lard the breast with narrow strips of firm fat pork, and bake until thoroughly done, basting often with salt and water and a little butter. Serve with a gilet dressing, to which has been added a cup of strained tomatoes.

To Boil a Boned Turkey.

When it is stuffed roll the fowl tight in a piece of cheese cloth and tie firmly with

twine to keep secure and shape. Place in a stock previously prepared by putting the bones in cold water with some herbs, an onion peeled and stuck with a dozen cloves, a carrot, and a turnip sliced. Boil the turkey gently four hours at least, then take it out and remove the cloth and place on a dish. Strain the stock, remove the fat, and set over the fire. And two ounces of gelatine dissolved in cold water. Strain the liquid jelly through a fine sieve over the turkey. When cold, garnish with parsley or cress and sliced lemon.

To make a gilet dressing for roast turkey, put the giblets and neck in a saucepan with cold water and add an onion, salt and pepper, and a slice of dry bread that has been made very brown in the oven. Boil until the giblets are done, then strain the stock. Chop the giblets fine and put them and the stock back into the saucepan dredge with a little flour, add the brown gravy from the bottom of the pan in which the fowl was cooked, after skimming off the fat. Serve hot in a gravy boat.

Sauces for Boiled Turkey.

Chestnut sauce: Shell and blanch three dozen French chestnuts. Boil in water enough to cover them for thirty minutes. Drain off the water and pound the nuts to a paste. Add one tablespoonful of melted butter, half a teaspoonful of salt, and a dash of cayenne pepper. Stir gradually into the paste one pint of milk. Rub the mixture through a coarse paper sieve, and place over the fire in a double boiler to cook for half an hour.

For celery sauce, cut one quart of celery into small pieces and add one quart of milk. Put in a double boiler with an onion in which four cloves have been stuck, add a blade of mace, and cook until the celery becomes tender. Remove the onion and spice and thicken with a little flour that has been moistened with some of the stock that the fowl was boiled in. Season with salt and pepper and boil for five minutes. It should be as thick as custard.

To make oyster sauce, put one pint of small oysters, with their liquor, into a saucepan and heat them to boiling point. Skim out the oysters and add to the liquor one and one-half cups of milk, and when it is boiling add one-third of a cup of butter creamed with three tablespoonfuls of flour. Season with salt and cayenne pepper, and let the sauce boil up once. Then add the oysters, and it is ready to serve.

ASTRA.

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