

Woman and Her Work

The Easter souvenir is a comparatively new, and distinctly attractive addition to the list of appropriate gifts for different seasons of the year. For years and years, the custom of presenting our friends with brightly dyed and highly decorated Easter eggs has been observed, showing an instinctive feeling that Easter as well as Christmas should be a time for exchanging little tokens of good will between friends. Lately we do not hear much about Easter eggs, even children seem to care very little about the once absorbing occupation of egg dyeing, while Easter cards are less and less in evidence each year, and even the once popular Easter booklet seems destined to remain on the shelves of the enterprising bookseller who is courageous enough to try to educate the public taste in that direction, and so revive the custom.

In place of these perishable, and often expensive tokens of good will, the number of pretty and appropriate trifles shown at this season of the year in all the fancy shops, goes to prove that Easter is now a recognized time of present giving, and that almost as much time and thought are expended in the choice of suitable presents for the church's great festival, as we devoted to our Christmas gifts, a few months ago.

Last year the easter photograph frame was the fancy of the hour, and the proper gift with which to express the season's sentiments to a friend, was a photograph frame in any of the endless varieties of painting, silver filigree, embroidery or stamped leather, containing a portrait of the Saviour the Madonna, or some saint. This season the sofa pillow is the easter gift par excellence and it lends itself so readily to the expression of seasonable sentiment, that it is a wonder no one thought of it before as a messenger of easter greetings.

Some of these cushions are most beautiful and original in design and execution, the Easter emblems being effectively employed in decorating them. For instance—the butterfly which bursts through the dull chrysalis and soars away into the sunshine, gorgeous in all the colors of the rainbow, is emblematic of the soul bursting the bonds of the tomb and mounting to the sky, thus a butterfly pillow is especially suitable as an Easter gift. The foundation of such a cushion is blue upholstery satin with a flight of butterflies embroidered on it, as if flitting about in the sunshine, an occasional one resting lightly upon a spray of field grasses growing up from the lower edge of the pillow. The under side of the cushion bears the monogram of the person for whom it is intended, embroidered in large letters, shades of brown that run into golden yellow being used. The ruff, that finishes the cushion is of double faced satin ribbon four inches wide, of the same color as the cushion itself. Another Easter pillow is of dull green upholstery satin on which is embroidered a group of Easter lilies, held with a bowknot of Japanese fold. The reverse side contains the words 'Easter Greetings' embroidered solidly in white, and outlined with gold. A heavy cord of green silk and gold finishes the edge.

Daintest of all, is a pillow of heavy white satin embroidered with large green palms while the reverse side bears the first line of "The Palms" set to music in notes of gold. Around the four sides is a full soft puff of green silk, laced across with fine gold cord.

A flower pillow, especially a violet or rose one, is especially attractive, but in order to make one there must have been some prethought and preparation, as the flowers are from last summer, and have been carefully dried and preserved until the time came to use them. The cushion is of white bengaline over which is scattered in the most natural manner, a perfect handful of violets embroidered with as much fidelity to nature as possible, and with an occasional leaf or two of green. The edge is finished with a twist of green stems and artificial violets running around the four sides, and the filling consist of dried violets. A rose pillow is almost exactly the same, except that it is embroidered with scattered roses and leaves, and filled with dried rose leaves.

A flight of swallows painted in their own proper colors, on a background of chamois with a church spire, and the top of a telegraph pole showing in the background is another emblem of spring that is appropriate for Easter; such a cushion is finished with a full ruche of brown silk with frayed out edges.

One very great advantage of these Easter cushions is the fact that they are useful as souvenirs for one's gentleman friends, and what an acceptable gift a cushion is to a man, only the man himself knows. It mitigates the hardness of his "easy chair" if he boards, and, supplements the scanty pillows of his bed when he wants to lounge

comfortably of a Sunday afternoon, while, if he possesses a sofa of any kind it is a boon indeed.

For souvenirs of this kind, is the smokers cushion which is worked on art ticking in a new shade of yellow. The bunch of cigars, pipe, tobacco pouch, even the match, all have their place, and all worked in reds, browns and yellows, the inscription "May all your troubles go up in smoke," or some such motto, being worked in brilliant red. A heavy silk cord in shades of brown and yellow finishes the edge.

Then there is the cycling pillow bearing a huge wheel embroidered in delft blue upon white duck, and the yachting pillow, which is in delft blue, bearing a sailing vessel and high waves as a design, and finished with ruffs of delft blue India silk. For children's souvenir Easter pillows there are the ever new Brownies with their fat stomachs, and goggle eyes, the April Day cushion showing three tiny girls huddled under a dripping umbrella in a rain-storm, and with "Rain rain go away, come again another day!" embroidered at the bottom; black, yellow and red are the colors used in outlining the figures. "For Thoughts"—from poor Ophelia's—"Here's rosemary, that's for remembrance, here's pansies, that's for thoughts" is another beautiful Easter cushion. It is of yellow uncut velvet, strewn with purple pansies which have long slender green stems, the flowers are solidly embroidered in their natural colors, and the four sides are finished with a puffing of heavy yellow satin. All, or any of these, make beautiful Easter gifts, and the donor will have the satisfaction of being thoroughly up to date with her souvenirs.

The very oddest looking costume that I have seen this season, illustrated a new phase of the ruff mania. It was a simple little gown enough, made of figured taffeta, and the skirt was plain except for a bias band of silk about two inches broad, and bordered on each side with a ruff of the same with which extended down each side of the front breadth, from the waist, to the foot. The bodice was made in blouse fashion with a perfectly plain yoke of the silk below which, four narrow ruffs of silk well arranged to form a bolero jacket. The sleeves were plain, and very close fitting up to a few inches above the elbows where they blossom out six narrow ruffs which turn upward, instead of downward, and continue to the shoulder, where the last one stands up aggressively. The idea is decidedly new but not very practicable, as the ruff would be sure to fall down, and their beauty depends upon the stiff perkiness with which they hold themselves erect.

It is a fact that the Queen's diamond jubilee is having a very decided effect upon the fashions and the inclinations towards the styles in vogue in the early Victorian era, is very noticeable. We already have the puffs and ruffs, and the evening dresses display straight cut across the neck with the shoulders apparently slipping down over the arms, and only held in place by ribbon straps which pass over the shoulders and support them. Later in the season we are promised that the muslin and organdy gowns will have lace edged ruffles from the waist to the hem. Ruches are also greatly in favor for the trimming of thin skirts and they are placed with the first one directly at the foot, and the others about a quarter of a yard apart. They are very narrowly hemmed, sometimes edged with lace, and, newer still, when the material is flowered, satin baby ribbon in a color that appears in the flowers, is seen on the edge of ruches, or ruffs.

Challies are back again in favor, and very pretty dresses they make for summer wear, having all the beauty and freshness of an organdy without the twin drawbacks of being both perishable and expensive, which place organdies beyond the reach of so many women. Of course an old favorite never comes back in just the same guise, and the challies have been improved a good deal since their last appearance; most of them have a satin stripe in the same tone as the groundwork, and these stripes are usually decorated with flowers. The preference is for light grounds, but one occasionally sees a dark one, just for variety; for instance a dark blue challie shows a satin stripe of the same color, embellished

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with small white polka dots. A cream white ground has a stripe of white satin over which are scattered sprays of pink forget-me-nots and their delicate green leaves. The figures and flowers are rather small in challies, while in organdies they are just the reverse, very large and very close together.

It will be good news for most of us that four yards of organdy is now quite sufficient to make the most fashionable of blouses but as they must be made up over a lining of what the dressmakers call "some inexpensive silk" they are far from being a cheap luxury. In the United States where "silk" for linings can be purchased for the modest sum of nineteen cents a yard, it is all very well to invest in organdy waists, but I usually find that an inexpensive silk means seventy-five cents a yard, so I don't indulge in silk linings to any large extent. Apart from this trifling consideration however an organdy blouse is not only very dressy and pretty, but also very easy to make, and there is nothing to prevent any girl who can sew, from making it at home, after getting a dressmaker to cut and fit it, which she will do for a very small sum. The lining is made to fit the figure comfortably but by no means tightly, as thin silk will not stand a very severe strain; the organdy is then draped over the lining, being laid in small plaits at the waist, to give the necessary fullness. The neck is merely finished off with a straight band, over which any variety of ribbon or lace stock can be worn. The sleeves are cut long and plain until near the shoulder, where there is a small puff of the organdy draped on the lining, and below this the outside material is laid in small tucks which run across the arm down to the wrist where the sleeve is cut into a point that drops over the hand, and is finished with a lace frill.

I regret to say that the skirt of the blouse is to be worn outside the dress during the coming season, and many of the new skirt waists are finished with a fine knife plaited flounce at the waist. It is in every way prettier, and neater to let the skirt be invisible but I suppose a change is what most people are looking for, and in that case anything new is welcome.

The revival of the Eton jacket is something astonishing, because in many cases it is absolutely unchanged from the jacket we wore three years ago; in fact anyone would be perfectly safe in bringing out one that had been laid away since they went out of fashion, and donning it this spring, provided it was in good preservation. Wide belts sometimes folded, and sometimes of plain ribbon are worn with these jackets as are also full bloused vests.

There are rumors abroad that the reign of the cape is over, and even the jaunty little combination of chiffon and lace which reached only to the shoulders, and was such a charming finish to a street costume, will soon be numbered with the slain. I suppose it is only what might have been expected when the large sleeves went out; the cape came in as a necessary accompaniment to the gigantic sleeve, and when once its day was done there was no further need for the cape. Most of us will regret the convenient cape, for even with moderate sized sleeves it is always more or less of a struggle to clamber into a jacket unassisted.

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THE QUEEN'S CHORISTERS.

How They are Dressed and Incidents of Their Lives.

Boys are not, as a rule, given to being proud of their clothes, but a lad whose Sunday suit costs two hundred dollars, and is of so striking a character that it is not considered safe for him to go out walking in it alone, might perhaps be excused for being a trifle lifted up.

There are ten boys in London who are thus expensively and brilliantly habited every Sunday, and on state occasions beside. They are the ten choristers belonging to Her Majesty's private chapel in St. James's Palace, and truly gorgeous they are when arrayed in their 'state suits.'

Scarlet cloth is the foundation of the costume, and bands of royal purple between rows of heavy gold lace are the adorning of it. Grandest of all, old lace ruffs are worn at the neck and wrists; but these are so valuable and difficult to replace that it has to be a special occasion on which they are donned, white lawn bands being substituted as a rule. A boy has to take care of his state suit, for it must last him three years, while his undress suit is replaced every eight months.

The choir of the Chapel Royal, St. James's, is one of the historical institutions of England, and many of its old-time customs—including the dress of the boys—are retained to this day. It has numbered among its singers Sir Arthur Sullivan, Edward Lloyd, Sir John Goss, Dr. E. J. Hopkins, the veteran organist of the Temple Church, and many other famous English musicians.

Some curious customs, peculiar to St. James's chorister's, are mentioned by Mr. F. Klickmann in the Strand Musical Magazine. The most interesting of these, perhaps, is the right of the head boy to demand one guinea, as 'spur money,' from any officer entering the chapel wearing spurs. It is said that when Sullivan was head boy the Duke of Wellington would always come to the chapel in his spurs, in order to have the pleasure of paying the forfeit to his favorite chorister.

A new boy at St. James's had some of the same sort of experiences that come to all new boys, only from the nature of things his mistakes are apt to be a little laughable.

"That seems to be a nice old gentleman," remarked one such new-comer to an older boy, as the two stood in a corridor after the service, and was greeted with, 'A happy New Year to you, my lads,' by the gentleman in question.

"A nice old gentleman, indeed! Don't you know who he is?" was the response. "Well, you must be a greenhorn! I say, you fellows, he doesn't even know Mr.

Gladstone!" and the nine waxed derisive over the mistake of the unlucky new boy.

This unfortunate wight still further impaired his reputation when, a few days later, he meekly inquired why they had all raised their hats to a certain officer whom they had passed on horseback in the street. The head boy merely ejaculated, "Who in the world does the duffer know, if he doesn't know the Prince of Wales?"

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