

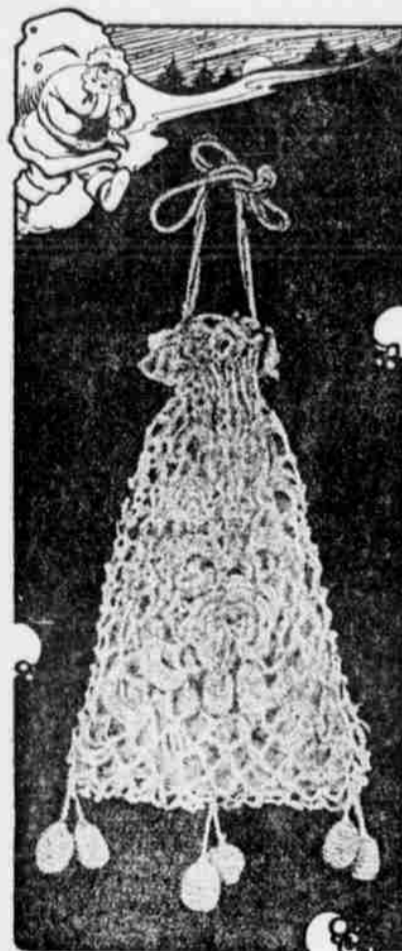
# FOR THE WOMAN WHO CAN CROCHET.

### Christmas Gifts That May Be Fashioned by Her Needle.

The girl who crochets has a great opportunity to display her skill, especially in this day of beautiful handwork.

A young girl will be delighted to receive a crocheted party bag for Christmas. The one illustrated is crocheted of rather heavy cotton and finished at the corners with hand made balls of the cotton.

The bag may be mounted over a lining of silk or satin in any color that is preferred.



CROCHET PARTY BAG.

It is made to accommodate the fan, buttonhook and other dainty trifles that a girl is likely to require at a party or at the dancing class.

#### Charming For a Young Girl.

In crocheting a bag on this order it is not necessary to adhere to this pattern. Any motif used in Irish crochet may be substituted for the rose shown here. By the use of judiciously adjusted chains re-enforced with rows of double or triple crochet made to look like scallops it may be worked out to form an oblong piece of crochet. This supplies one side of the bag.

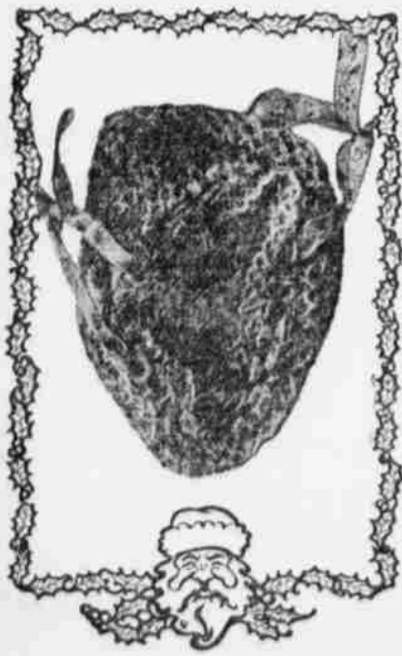
Rows of chains or scallops are run around the edge when the two sides have been drawn together with the crocheting needle in a row of single crochet.

#### To Keep Handkerchiefs Neat.

This little handkerchief case may be made in a short time and will prove a most acceptable gift to any friend, man or woman. It is fashioned of coarse crochet silk. The pattern is a diamond achieved by crocheting a chain of seven and catching it in the center of the chain beneath it.

A square is first crocheted of these chains, and then the sides of the bag are crocheted around and around that. A piece of cardboard padded and covered with silk is tacked to the bottom of the bag. This square is scented and made the same size as a folded handkerchief.

Ribbons are run through the top of the bag so that it may be drawn to-



TRAVELER'S HANKERCHIEF CASE.

gether. Then the handkerchiefs placed inside will be held firmly in place.

Such a bag is a great convenience for the traveler, for the handkerchiefs may be thus compressed into the smallest possible amount of space, and there will be no danger of their wrinkling.

#### Useful Crochet Gifts.

Irish crochet belts lined with a soft white ribbon are pretty accessories to a white toilet. Buckles to finish off a pretty neckpiece can also be crocheted. Handkerchief bags to match the Irish belt are also charming, and opera bags are made of lace.

### IS SULPHUR A FERTILIZER?

Until two or three years ago sulphur was supposed to be an incidental and practically negligible chemical constituent of the soil. Recently tests and experiments which have been conducted in Germany, France and this country prove conclusively that the above notion is a mistaken one and that sulphur is an important and vital factor in plant growth and that the application of it to soils greatly increases luxuriance of leaf and stem and size of vegetable product. Perhaps the most striking results in the research work referred to have been secured by two experimenters of the University of Wisconsin station, Messrs. Hart and Peterson. While investigating the supply of sulphur in feeds and its relation to wool production these men found it necessary to ascertain the amounts of sulphur in the common crops used as feeds. The old method of determining the amount of sulphur in plants was to burn them and measure the element found in the ash. The Wisconsin experimenters questioned the accuracy of this method and instead of burning the plants and products to be analyzed dried them in the air. According to their analyses, there were removed from the soil in a thirty bushel crop of wheat 15.7 pounds of sulphur instead of 3.55 pounds, according to the old tables. In the case of barley, oats and corn they found that the per cent of sulphur removed was correspondingly greater than the amounts indicated by the former test. In 3,000 pounds of alfalfa they found that there were taken from the soil 4.8 pounds of sulphur instead of 3.78, that with turnips the crop from an acre contained 92.2 pounds of sulphur instead of 44.4 pounds, while with 3,360 pounds of potatoes there were removed 11.5 pounds of sulphur instead of none at all or a trace, as indicated by old methods.

The application of sulphur to the soil by German experimenters was found to reduce potato disease and increase the yield. A French experimenter found that the addition of 1,000 pounds of sulphur per acre doubled the crop of beets and increased the yield of turnips a third. The facts made plain in these experiments prove that sulphur will have to be classed with other needed soil fertilizers, and the tiller of the soil who is interested in the conservation of fertility would do well to bear the fact in mind. Sulphur may be added to the soil as flowers of sulphur, in gypsum (calcium sulphate) and its superphosphates, in sulphates of potassium and ammonium and in stable manures.

### ORCHARD RENOVATION.

A friend who lives in north Iowa, who has recently been in the vicinity of Oswego, N. Y., to pack winter apples, states that there are literally thousands of carloads of apples in New York state in old and neglected orchards that range in size from a silver quarter to a dollar that are not worth anything—gnarly, scabby and diseased. But he also reports that adjoining such neglected orchards are those which have been renovated by pruning and have been cultivated and sprayed carefully, in which there is a nice crop of fruit of good size and fine quality. The writer has never had the privilege of a personal inspection of these New York orchards, but from a knowledge of instances of orchard renovation in central and western states he firmly believes that there is a good opening in the purchase of some of these rundown orchards by men who have the courage to prune heavily and the patience to wait for results. With pruning, fertilizing, spraying, cultivation and thinning of fruit where needed, one would not need to wait long for substantial returns.

### PRUNING SHADE TREES.

The writer has taken note lately of a number of shade trees in the locality in which he lives, which are in bad shape as a result of the careless and faulty way in which large side limbs have been removed. In taking off these limbs more or less of a stub has been left, which in the growing process will probably never be covered. But worse than this is the fact that these stubs are likely to begin to decay and thus weaken the tree and ultimately cause its destruction. When such limbs are removed the final cut should be made as close to the trunk as possible, and if the diameter of the tree is considerable two secondary cuts should be made, one on either side, so as to make the exposed stub or surface more nearly conform to the conical surface of the trunk. When the surface has been properly trimmed it should be given a thick coat of white lead paint to keep out the rot fungus.

### INJUSTICE TO DAIRYMEN.

The makers of oleomargarine bid fair to again put forth a strenuous effort at the coming session of congress to secure the passage of legislation which will make it possible for them to palm off steer fat at a fancy price under the delusion on the part of the consumer that it is dairy butter. If congress sees fit to pass a law that will prevent oleomargarine from masquerading in the guise and at the price of butter, but will give it a plain label which it will bear when it comes into the consumers' hands, well and good. But any arrangement which will enable it to reach the market under the guise of dairy butter should be squelched as simply dishonest and a gross injustice to the dairy interests.

*J. E. Spigg*

## CHRISTMAS AMONG THE MIKADO'S PEOPLE.

WORDS adequate to a description of the festive season in Japan are difficult to command. Even the camera and brush would fall to do justice to a scene of such gay activity and color. As Christmas approaches city, town and village take on a new appearance, and the diversions of the people a new turn and tone. In Japan Christmas is not a mere holiday. It represents a holiday season in the fullest sense of the term.

For weeks before the dawn of Christmas day preparations elaborate in kind and degree are under way. Men in tight fitting costumes, their professions, or the contractors' names printed on their backs, spend day after day decorating the streets and houses. Stands for the lanterns and the festive greening must be erected, and a thou-



THE STREETS RESEMBLE WINDING AVENUES OF CHRISTMAS TREES.

sand little matters have to be seen to before all is in complete readiness for the burst of gladness.

Every house of the many that shelter the fifty millions of the Japanese empire, however humble the abode may be, has some sign of the New Year idea. Before every gate and doorway is placed the chief symbol of the season, what the Japanese call the kadomatsu, or pine tree of the honorable date. At each side of the entrance to the house or garden three short pieces of bamboo tree, cut at an acute angle, stand tied together as a pedestal from which rises the ever glorious pine tree, in shape something like a Christmas tree, for the young pine is the emblem of a loyalty and life that are ever fresh and green.

In addition, over the door of each house is set up a lobster attached to an orange. These are usually the gifts of a friend to express the good wish that the recipient will live till the lobsters are bent up like a lobster. Whether the orange represents orange blossoms and plenty of weddings in the family is not clearly known. Above the ornaments of the doorway is stretched a piece of artistically woven straw rope, the shinto sign of reverence for the ancestral gods. As one goes along the streets they seem gradually to be transformed into long and winding avenues of trees, suggestions of the ancestral hunting grounds, and at night the whole is lit up by innumerable lanterns that shed a varicolored light on the decorations and the crowds that throng the thoroughfares. The blaze of lantern color lends the scene a magic touch that charms the Japanese mind and has no little attraction for the foreigner.

To tell of the endless array of gifts that at this season pass between friend and friend, neighbor and neighbor, would be impossible. Among the more common may be mentioned a basket containing a dozen eggs or oranges, a box of sponge cake, or a cake of soap, the latter gift being in no way intended as a reflection on the beneficiary.—New York Post.

Graphite is of two general classes, natural and artificial, and natural may again be divided into two classes, crystalline and amorphous.

### Hammers.

Hammers are represented on the monuments of Egypt twenty centuries before our era. They greatly resembled hammers now in use, save that there were no claws on the back for the extraction of nails. The first hammer was undoubtedly a stone held in the hand. Clawhammers were invented some time during the middle ages. Illuminated manuscripts of the eleventh century represent carpenters with clawhammers.

The oldest museum in the world is at Nara, once the capital of Japan. It was established in the year 756 and has remained practically unchanged for eleven centuries.

*J. E. Spigg*

### WHEN THEY FALL DOWN.

There is one respect in which a number of experiment stations in the northern portion of the corn belt are open to serious criticism, and this is in connection with the introduction of types of pure bred corn which are entirely too large to properly mature in the sections where they have been introduced. Too much stress has been laid upon size of ear and depth of kernel, when for the northern portion of the corn belt the most vital consideration is not these at all, but whether a given type of corn will mature properly in the growing period between frosts which can be counted on for it. There are tons of thousands of bushels of soft corn this year in the district referred to which will never go to crib and which it will take a lot of time and trouble to sort and feed so as to get a fair return out of it. The average farmer is enough of a gambler so that he ought not to have an encouragement from college professors in the matter of growing corn that can hardly ripen one year in half a dozen.

### SUCCESS ON THE SOIL.

There came to the writer the other day the interesting account of two brothers, one of whom had fitted himself for the law and the other for a medical career. After a short period of practice the doctor concluded that the application of a fair amount of brains and the exercise of a certain amount of faith would give him larger returns if devoted to agriculture, so he quit the pill business and took up farming. His brother, the lawyer, made sport of his change, saying that any old lubber could succeed at farming. The years passed. In the interval the one who changed to farming has become independently wealthy, has traveled all over his own country and made numerous trips to Europe. The lawyer, who stuck to his profession, is just barely making a living and today, when it is too late, realizes that he missed it by not doing as his brother did.

### A HELPFUL DEPARTMENT.

The Kansas Agricultural college has a department that is rendering a service to the apple growers of the state that is worthy of emulation by the stations in other states. Briefly, this is what might be termed an apple clearing house, its object being to find buyers for the growers and growers for those who want to buy. The station representatives also gave directions to the growers as to the harvesting and packing of their fruit, so that it would be in the most acceptable shape possible for the buyers. All too often the agricultural college gives abundant instruction as to the care of orchards, while the grower is left to his own resources in the matter of marketing, and, if a novice, then more than at any other time he needs suggestion and advice. The departure of the Kansas college is surely an excellent one.

### A BOGUS ARTICLE.

A whole lot of stuff that passes under the guise of piety and religion is not religion in the best sense at all, but mere hypocrisy and sham, just a form that adheres to the letter, but denies the spirit and essential principles of religion. It finds expression in some instances in long prayers and due observance of church services and regulations on the Sabbath, but ignores the fundamental qualities of kindness, consideration, forbearance and common courtesy on Sunday and the other days of the week. While passing under a different name today, there is little question that this type is the same Pharisee that was roasted so roundly by the Man of Galilee in one of the bitterest invectives contained in any literature. All folks who seek to be truly religious should aim to realize what these traits were that the Master condemned.

### CARE OF HOUSE PLANTS.

If any of the house plants become spindly, unthrifty and hidebound, as it were, much may be done in way of renovating them by pruning them back rather heavily. They may be further helped by fertilizing with manure water, ammonia water or with commercially prepared plant food, which may be got at the drug store. Sometimes a cause of unthriftiness with plants that have been a long time in the pots is that the roots have so completely filled the space they have little room in which to develop. In such cases it is well to repot and before resetting cut away a considerable portion of the roots. One of the secrets of success connected with the care of plants in greenhouses is the continuous and heavy pruning given them to produce rankness and thriftiness in plant growth and size of blossoms.

### WIND OR GASOLINE.

Windmill power under favorable conditions, which include a tower that is not more than forty feet high, is without question the cheapest power to be had for pumping water. But where the power generated is wanted for grinding feed, sawing wood and doing other jobs the gasoline engine is much to be preferred. The advantages of the engine power are that its efficiency does not depend upon the caprice of the wind. Neither is it put out of commission as a result of a heavy windstorm, as is so often the case with the windmill. More than this, the gasoline engine is a good developer of patience for the fellow in charge.

## YULETIDE GIFTS FOR THE BABY.

### Pretty Things That Will Delight the Heart of His Fond Mother.

Do not fail to remember the baby even should it be his or her first Christmas. Nothing will delight the hearts of parents more than some trifle bestowed upon their darling. So many inexpensive toys or dainty trifles may be fashioned out of bits of silk or lace and other odds and ends that accumulate in the scrap bag that so far as expense is concerned baby's Christmas need cost nothing.

A handy bag in which may be tucked a few toys to amuse the little one when traveling is illustrated here. It may be lined with tiny pockets in which baby's small toilet accessories can be slipped.

### Doll and Bag Both.

The bag looks like a doll, the head and arms being dressed in a tiny coat of Dresden ribbon. The lower part has a round flat section of cardboard cov-



A DOLL BAG.

ered with wide watered silk. The upper part is made of the watered silk or of ribbon stitched to the round of covered pasteboard. A casing with ribbon run through it finishes the neck of the bag, and the two ends of the ribbon are passed through the coat so that it may be drawn down over the bag and tied in place when baby wishes it for a plaything. Being collapsible, the bag may be slipped into a satchel and will take up less room than an ordinary doll.

### A Hoop Rattle.

A homemade rattle may be fashioned of ribbon, an embroidery hoop and several tiny tinkling bells. Ribbon is wound around the hoop, crossed from side to side several times and tied in tiny bows, the center of each bow having one of the bells tacked to it. When baby shakes the hoop joyous music is heard and baby is happy.

A sachet cushion of ribbon is a novelty if woven in the birth month colors of the recipient of the gift. This color is combined with white, narrow widths of satin ribbon being used and interlaced as the children make their kindergarten mats. When squares for the top and bottom have been woven these must be stitched together and a silk cord used to outline the edge of the pillow. The pillow may be filled with cotton sprinkled with sachet powder.

### Crochet Bottle Cover.

A pretty and useful gift for the baby is a crocheted cover for the nursing bottle. The glass surface of the bottle is very apt to slip away from an infant



BABY'S RATTLE AND SACHET.

that is too young to hold the bottle in place, but if it is covered there will be no difficulty in making it rest comfortably by baby's pillow while he or she is taking food.

Select fine, soft zephyr—white is best—and, using a simple stitch, crochet a case that is long and wide enough to fit over the bottle. Draw up about its neck with a narrow ribbon run through the top. Such a cover can be made of silk or cotton yarn if you wish.

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