

QUERIES.

Any queries, domestic or otherwise, will be inserted free of charge. Correspondents replying to queries are requested to give the date of the question they are kind enough to answer, and address their reply to 'The Lady Editor, NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC, Auckland,' and on the left-hand corner of the envelope 'Answer or Query,' as the case may be. The rules for correspondents are few and simple, but readers of the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC are requested to comply with them.

Queries and Answers to Queries are always inserted as soon as possible after they are received, though owing to pressure on this column, it may be a week or two before they appear.—ED.

RULES.

- No. 1.—All communications must be written on one side of the paper only.
No. 2.—All letters (not left by hand) must be prepaid, or they will receive no attention.
No. 3.—The editor cannot undertake to reply except through the columns of this paper.

RECIPES.

POTAGE A LA FAUBOURN.—Cut into thin strips equal quantities of lettuce, sorrel, and spinach, and some celery in summer the best way of having this for flavouring is to sow some in a box and use it when about two or three inches high. If sown closely it blanches itself, and the flavour is particularly delicate; moreover, it will grow anywhere. Blanch some young green onions in salt and water, and lay them in a pan with the strips of vegetable and lot of butter. Toss this all lightly together over the fire for six or seven minutes, then pour on to it gradually sufficient boiling stock, seasoning the whole with salt and white pepper. Now stir in half a pint of fresh pea-purée for this summer the peas, with a sprig of mint, till sufficiently tender to pulp through a sieve, and when the whole is boiling, throw in the red part of a carrot and a small turnip all cut into tiny dice, and as soon as these are tender the soup is ready. Serve with tiny fried croûtons. This is a delicious soup if well made, but it requires care and attention.

RIS D'AGNEAU A LA PARISIENNE.—Blanch and boil the lamb's sweetbreads till tender, cut them into neat but thick pieces, place them in some boiling fat or butter, and fry them a nice golden colour; have ready some good brown gravy with a few mushrooms cut up in it, and as many small china peas as there are people to be served, put a piece of the sweetbread in each, pour the boiling gravy over and serve at once.

STRAWBERRY CHARTEUSE, ETC.—Pick the stalks from a quart of red currants and the same quantity of strawberries, put the fruit into a basin with half a pint of cold water and ½ lb. of castor sugar. Bruise all well together and pour the whole into a jelly bag, filter it thoroughly several times, in order that the juice may be clear, and add a tablespoonful of brandy and 2oz. of Swinburne'sisinglass, previously clarified by being put into a pan with a little cold water and stirred till it boils: a lump of sugar and a teaspoonful of lemon juice. The scum should be removed as it rises. Pour the jelly into an open mould, and when it has set arrange small whole strawberries around the edge of the mould, and pour in more jelly to make the fruit adhere. Let that layer harden, and then add more fruit and jelly until the mould is full. When firmly set turn out on to a dish, and fill the centre of the mould with frozen cream.

JULEPS, ETC.—These are all essentially American. The 'smash,' or smash, and the 'cobler' offer very little from the julep as far as ingredients are concerned; it has a julep on a smaller scale: it is sometimes drunk through a kind of strainer, whereas straws are used for the two latter. The mint julep is best known; it is made thus:—Mix with a spoon one tablespoonful of sifted sugar and two tablespoonfuls of water; press four sprigs of mint in the liquid to extract all the flavour, add one and a half wineglasses of brandy, and fill the glass with finely chipped ice; draw out the sprigs and push them into the ice, stem downwards, so that the upper leaves will form a bouquet on the top. Arrange some berries and slices of orange tastefully over the top, sprinkle them with Jamaica rum, and sift sugar over the whole. Pineapple Julep: Peel, slice, and cut up a ripe pineapple into a glass bowl, add the juice of two oranges, one gill of raspberry sugar, of Maraschino, and of old gin, respectively; then a bottle of sparkling Moselle, and ½ lb. of shaved ice. Mix, ornament, and serve in tumbler. Gin and brandy juleps are made in the same way, minus the ornamentation.—Balm Julep: Mix one wineglassful of peach brandy, one tablespoonful of cognac, and one wineglassful of syrup. Fill up the bowl with shaved ice, arrange the balm neatly over the top, sprinkle it with noyau, dust all over with sifted sugar, ornament with red and white currant berries; serve with straws.—Texas Julep: Mix one wineglassful of claret, one small tumblerful of syrup, some lemon juice; fill up with ice as before, decorate with mint, barberries, shortberries, peaches, raspberries, or any other fruit in season. All cobbler drinks must be well shaken to succeed. To do this, place the opening of an ordinary tumbler just inside the larger one used for the cobbler, hold them firmly together, and shake vigorously after adding the ice. Sherry Cobbler: Two wineglassfuls of sherry, one tablespoonful of sugar, two or three slices of orange; fill the tumbler lemonade glass with shaved ice, shake, ornament the top, sprinkle with port wine, and drink through a straw. Champagne Cobbler: One bottle of champagne will make four goblets of cobbler. Put into each tumbler one tablespoonful of sugar, one piece of lemon and orange peel respectively; fill it one third full of ice, and fill the balance with champagne, shake, ornament and serve. Hock, Sauterne, and claret cobbler are all made in the same way.—L., one teaspoonful of sugar dissolved in one tablespoonful of water, two wineglassfuls of either wine; fill with ice, shake, and ornament.—YANKER DOODLE.

A CHRISTMAS SALAD.

The time for this salad comes after the dinner, while we linger around the table, and over the coffee indulge in a pleasant story, sparkling repartee, and the interchange of happy thoughts and tender memories.

The salad bowl is filled with curiously shaped cups, whose five points are fastened together with quaint devices of ribbon or flowers. The cups are of white or delicately-tinted celluloid or cardboard, and are numbered on the under side. A large, fancy dish, laden with small and quaintly-shaped packages, makes its appearance at the same time with the salad bowl.

As the cups are opened they spread out in the shape of a large star whose centre bears a quotation appropriate to the Christmas time. These quotations are called for by number and the reader is expected to give the author's name. Packages, corresponding in number, are taken from the other bowl and are given to those whose memory is accurate. Those who fail pay a forfeit in the way of a story, a sentiment, a quotation, or anything that the hostess may devise.

These stars serve not only as souvenirs of this particular Christmas but as reminders of that wonderful day in Bethlehem, numbered in by star and song, when earth received God's greatest gift of love.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS.

There are many in straightened circumstances who can afford but little good reading, so let us save our home papers and magazines, and just before Christmas make them into generous bundles and distribute them among these lonely ones, who will appreciate them highly.

When all the fancy articles are finished, gather up the pieces of all kinds and colours, and make them into a package to gladden the heart of some one who would like to do a little fancy work but has not the material. If you have some embroidery silk and worsted to put with them it will be still better.

If you are one of those who write much, and so buy your stationery by the quantity, a package of paper and another of envelopes, each tied with a narrow ribbon, will cost you only a trifle and be a very acceptable present to any one who must practise economy.

For the little girl try a doll's-house. It can be furnished for kitchen, parlour, or bedroom, using pieces of carpet and wall paper for floor and walls, velvet or plush to cover the chairs, which are made of spools or blocks of wood, with pieces of thin board tacked on for backs.

Frame a few bright pictures for the walls, also a piece of broken mirror fastened to a piece of pasteboard large enough to cover the irregular edges, and bind all with a wide strip of velvet. Windows may be cut through the box and curtained, or the curtains may be draped over shades which appear to cover windows, but must not be raised.

A doll's wardrobe is also prized. This should have a door hung with hinges, a few shelves in one end for folded clothes, and plenty of hooks to hang all of the dresses and skirts upon. The common screw hooks, about one inch long, are best for this purpose. A round pasteboard box for the doll's hair is necessary.

The boxes can be painted or papered with wall paper, on the outside. Curtains are nicer than a door for the doll's-house, and they can meet in the middle of the open side of the box, and be draped back to the sides with ribbon bows.

For the gentlemen of the family, handkerchief, cuff, and collar boxes are all suitable gifts and can be made at home. Line them with a puff of silk over a thin layer of wadding. Here is an easy way: Cut strips of pasteboard almost as long as the sides and one-fourth inch less in width, fasten them together loosely at the ends, so that they will just touch, then lay on a thin layer of wadding, and on the top of that lay a bias piece of silk one inch wider than the depth of the box and enough longer than the sides to make the desired fulness. Catch the silk together at the back of the pasteboard with long stitches. Make a puff for the bottom of the box in the same way. Cover the outside of the box with plush of a colour to contrast prettily with the lining, then put in the bottom puff, sew the ends of the side puff together and slip it into the box. The puff for the inside of cover may be made in the same way. If the plush is to be put on the top plain, work the monogram of the recipient on it in silk the colour of the lining before putting on the box, cut the corners so that the plush will fit smoothly over the sides of the cover and turn up on the inner side, line the sides smoothly with the silk, then slip in the puff, which should fit tightly, and the box is done. Some nice sachet powder dusted on the wadding improves it.

HELPS IN ENTERTAINING.

When there are so many societies, leagues, organisations, clubs and the like, it is an excellent idea to have in reserve a number of suggestions for entertainments, as these are very frequently required. Those suitable for schoolrooms or private houses, where church organisations of various sorts meet for social entertainment, are much in demand. Costume pictures, tableaux, stereopticon views, either with or without lectures, character choruses, old folk concerts and plays are very amusing.

A novel feature of an evening, not long since, was a costume chorus. The performers were arranged behind a canvas or curtain which had openings just large enough to show the head and shoulders. Some of the people were seated on chairs; the others were mounted on high stools or boxes. These made the figures of marvellously contrasting height, some appearing to be but two or three feet tall, others seven or eight feet, the canvas concealing the chairs or pedestals on which they were perched. In another case, frames were set at irregular heights. Around the frames were draperies which also filled in the intervening space. In a large frame near the ceiling, at one corner of the room, appeared a stout woman, while in a small one, away down near the floor, was a tiny, wizened-faced individual, while other performers were grouped about in a similar way, and each sang with his or her might. A dialogue was indulged in by similarly grouped participants, very stout persons making every effort to tone down their voices to the thinnest piping note, while the tiny figures tried to give forth as great a volume of sound as possible.

Extremely interesting and amusing results may be achieved if one can select performers who are good in dialect. Bits of conversation, songs and the like, of old date, with costumes to match, are taking.

It is well to follow not only the dress and manner but the habit of speaking, the modulation of the voice, as far as can be ascertained. In many instances, colonial and foreign personages of note indulge in highly stilted conversation and many mannerisms. These add greatly to the interest of such an affair.

THE WORK CORNER.

CHRISTMAS FANCY-WORK.

BY M. M. UNDERHILL.

In these days of elaborate needlework it is often hard to find simple pieces that come within the scope of youthful ability; but the following suggestions may be helpful, as the articles mentioned are easily made.

It is a fashion nowadays to use small cushions. A dainty and pretty one is made of a four or five inch square of Turkish embroidery, which need not cost very much. Edge this with a lace ruffle, and put it cat-a-cornered on a cushion, which should be six inches square, and neatly covered with silk. Fasten on each corner of the cushion a butterfly bow made of silk like the cushion, and ravelled in fringe at the ends. The lace ruffle should fall over these bows. In buying the square pick out one in which the colour of the cushion you wish to use is predominant; such as a blue and olive square on a blue cushion, or a pink and green on a pink one.

There are several attractive little things that can be made by girls who have learned to embroider even in the simplest stitches. For instance, a useful gift for a gentleman is a pocket pin cushion. To make it, take two round pieces of cardboard, each two and a half inches in diameter. Cover them with heavy white linen, and on one embroider in Kensington stitch a tiny wreath of blue forget-me-nots tied with a bow-knot of ribbon in outline stitch. Overhand these round pieces together, and stick the whole edge thickly with pins.

A dainty case in which to lay handkerchiefs is a thirteen inch square of white linen which has been neatly hem-stitched. Turn over the four corners to meet in the centre. In one of the corners embroider in outline stitch the word 'Mouchoir'; in each of the other three corners a bunch of flowers—rosebuds, clover, or blueets, using silks of natural colours.

A simple table cover is made of blue, yellow or red butcher's linen, with a large effective pattern of flowers or foliage worked in white linen floss in the centre and corners, or else as a running border all around. These are very useful, as they can be readily laundered without injuring them in the least.

A little case for holding grandmamma's eye-glasses is made by cutting two pieces of card-board the shape of a pair of glasses. Cover them both neatly with chamois on either side. Then lace them together with fine silk cord, or with flosselle of a contrasting colour leaving one end open to slip in the glasses.

A dainty gift for a baby is a long-handled powder-puff thrust in a case. To make the case, cut a round piece of cardboard three and a half inches in diameter. Cover it neatly on both sides with a piece of ribbon to form the bottom of the case. Then take half a yard of ribbon of some colour four inches wide, join the ends, gather one inch, and overhand it around the bottom piece. Half an inch from the top of the ribbon sew a casing of narrow ribbon, and run in a drawing-string of baby ribbon.

A serviceable hat brush can be made of four strands of Manila-rope, each three-quarters of a yard long. Braid them together, double them, and tie with a bright ribbon bow. The ends of rope are then fringed out and rubbed with beeswax to stiffen them.



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