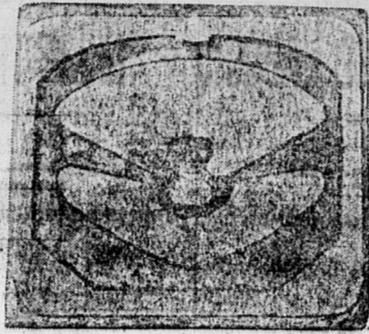
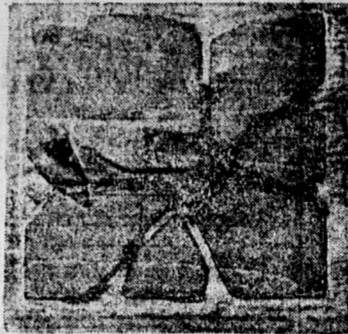


# WOOD BLOCK PRINTING ACCOMPLISHMENT for YOUNG GIRLS

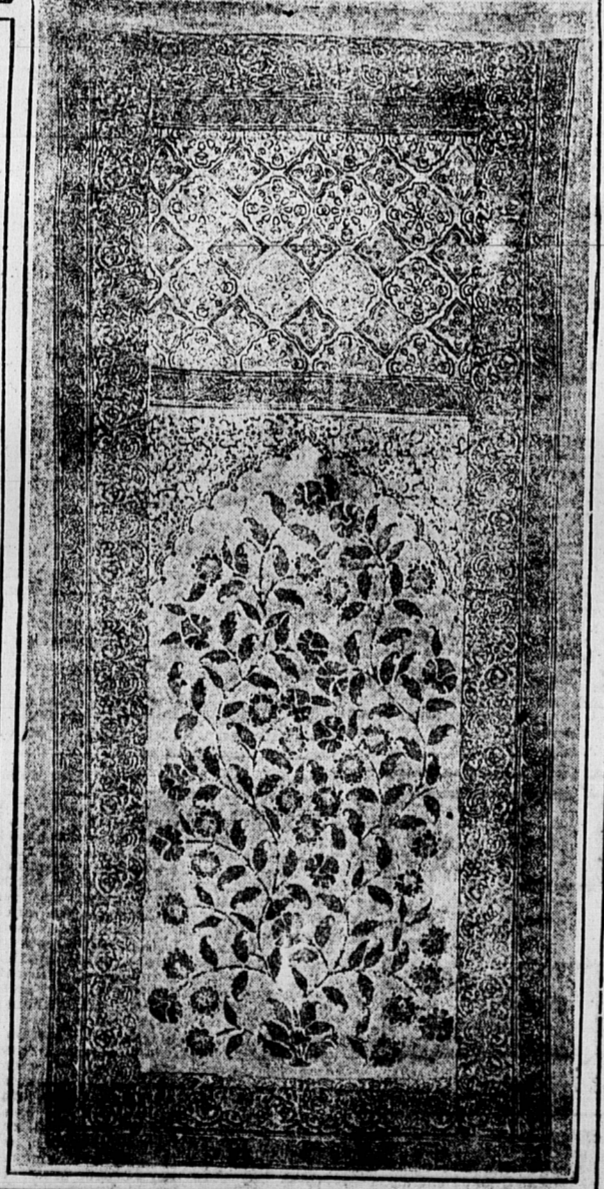
## A PAGE FOR MISSES



A Variety of Block Patterns



Coloring and Placing Blocks for Printing



India Curtain Design Printed with Wood Blocks

**W**OOD block printing as one of the decorative crafts is receiving its full meed of appreciation this winter, and charming table covers, sash curtains, divan pillows, magazine covers, bureau runners and table squares assume new glories when sketched artistically by the new process.

It has taken art workers a considerable time to become thoroughly conversant with its possibilities, but its application to house furnishings is at once so evident and its field so wide that it now needs no champion to further its cause.

One of the first questions asked by those who are a bit unfamiliar with its present adaptation is, How does it differ from stencilling. It is a distinction rather than a difference, for while the block printing does all that stencilling does, it goes further and presents a wider field of usefulness—or so it appears to women workers in the craft.

That wood block printing lends a more commercial value to the material without detracting from its excellence as hand work is one of the claims made for it. The colors are stronger and more definite and the uniformity of the pattern supplies a sense of satisfaction that is frequently wanting in the case of indistinct stencil tracery.

Geometrical designs are more applicable to the wood block printing than anything else, and as there seems just now to be a revival of everything that savors of Orientalism this is an added element in its favor. At any rate it is having a wonderful rage, and women who are having their apartments or rooms done over are turning them into the hands of decorators in block printing and every studio in town that makes a specialty of it is rushed with orders or with applications from girls who are anxious to learn the art.

It is interesting to remember that wood block printing is hundreds of years old; that way back in China, Japan and India it was made use of as it is to-day, and many of the charming fabrics that come to us from the Far East are decorated in this fashion. For example, from Japan to-day there comes the most artistic chintzes, every bit printed by hand in the finest geometrical designs for which the Loosd of the Rising Sun is famous. But recently the materials used are not the sort either in color or weave that will suit the demand, and then the joy of adapting old ideas to modern textiles is an incentive of its own.

It is good for borders, centres or surfaces, and therefore capable of a variety of applications. There is an almost limitless field so far as materials and textures are concerned, for from such inexpensive stuff as cheese cloth and unbleached cotton quite as delightful hangings can be made as though raw silk, burles or mummy cloth is used.

**A**NY girl that can do stencilling can do the block printing, and if she happens to know a bit about wood carving so much the better, for if one has neither the ingenuity nor the taste to cut one's own wood block—which, by the way, is a very simple matter—it can be bought in certain shops in the city for small sums. Of course, if the block is made there is always greater opportunity for the exercise of originality and artistic taste. However, for beginners, it might not be a bad plan to start with the blocks purchased in the shops, then, when once familiar with the method, it is always possible to go ahead and delve further into the detail of the craft on one's own responsibility.

As in stencilling, great care and accuracy must be exercised in the craft, but that, as a matter of fact, might be a caution that would apply to any decorative work of the sort. While some workers use pine for their block—this on the supposition that if a girl is intending to cut her own block it is easier—others prefer cheese grained wood, like pear. It is an erroneous impression that pine is easier to cut than a wood of harder fibre, for the same fact of its softness gives the knife the opportunity of slipping, so that it requires a well trained hand to manipulate the tool.

Pear wood, therefore, has been found most satisfactory, and small pieces can be obtained at any woodworker's or cabinet-maker's. Blocks may be cut anywhere from one-half inch to one and a half inches in thickness, though the latter depth is preferable, as it is easier to hold firm when making the impression. The surface should be very smooth, so that no inequalities in the grain catch in the fabric and so destroy the uniformity of the design. Plan the surface well before applying the design and sand paper as well.

Select a pretty design, not too large, and trace it on Japanese rice or any firm paper with a semi-transparent surface and paste it to the block. Have the lines well inked, so that when it comes to cutting there will be no confusion. One of the delightful things about this craft is that it is possible with very little equipment to get results. For example, very simple patterns cut simply with a penknife are as effective as though regular wood carvers' tools were used.

If a girl wishes to go to the expense, or if she has already done a bit of wood carving and so has the outfit, more elaborate results can be obtained. The tools she would need would cost in the neighborhood of \$1 and the set consists of three chisels with straight, curved and slanting edges and three gauges, one with a straight and two with curved edges.

Paste the design which has been previously traced on the block of pear wood, then all is in readiness to begin operations. For vertical lines use the straight chisel in outlining the design and the other tools will indicate their uses as the work progresses. Outline the pattern to every last detail. After that the paper pattern may be moistened with water and removed.

Of course the idea is to gouge or chip away the background, leaving the design either in high or low relief, according to the taste of the craft worker. As a rule the block in which the design is in marked relief gives the best results. However, this is a mere matter of taste and can be cut in either fashion. It is the aim, of course, in block printing to press the block on a pad of color and then upon the material, thus getting the precise impression of the design. It is applied at regular intervals over the surface of the textile, and, as may be imagined, the effect is not only highly original but invariably extremely artistic as well.

**E**VEN a very simple block used with ordinary printing ink will produce the most artistic results, and a set of bed hangings of unbleached muslin done for an old fashioned four poster, recently seen, were simply stunning. And the common red ink of commerce if applied to the same material is capable of wonderfully effective results. Formerly bed spreads and bed hangings were printed in this fashion, and it is not at all uncommon sight to see a square of such a spread framed and hung up in a home where old fashioned things are loved for their artistic as well as practical value. Naturally the utilization of colors adds tremendously and is productive of much more artistic results.

As soon as the block is ready then comes the consideration of the color pad. Here there is still another chance of selection. Cheese cloth in many layers is sometimes used as a foundation for the pad, but, generally speaking, several layers of felt are preferred. Best of all is to select a square of wood quite a bit larger than the block and cover with several thicknesses of felt. This should be laid in place, otherwise it will slide about and become annoying. A piece of glass is sometimes used, or even a plate, but

neither is so well liked as the wood for the foundation. Over the pad the color is spread. The wood block is pressed into the color and stamped quickly and firmly on the material. A different pressure will be needed according to the quality of the material used. A light pressure is given a thin material and a firm impression such as fabric as burles or crash. In fact, the latter frequently must be hammered in order to receive a perfect impression both as to line and color. It is the aim to get a good impression well colored without too much paint, so that it is best after pressing the block on the pad to wipe off any superfluous color with a piece of waste cloth that is not to be used for anything else. It is advisable to have at hand a broad flat brush, this plan is adopted

to the final test. Great care should be taken lest the color be in too great quantities on the left, else the block will take up too much and the design be spoiled. Many craft workers prefer to apply the color to the block with a brush, when it is adopted in fact, it is always safest to test the result on some

in the classes at the Y. W. C. A., where some of the best block printing in the city is done by the students. The color is mixed in precisely the same way with gum tragacanth or dextrine and the pad is done away with.

There is a trick in preparing the fabric for printing, for it must be first absolutely free from creases so that the design shall be printed evenly. Some girls take an old ironing board and lay over it several thicknesses of cloth, over which the fabric to be printed is tacked. The depth of material aids in obtaining a correct impression and transfers the paint more evenly to the goods. It is always advisable to take advantage of whatever aids one may, such as using pins to guide the eye in placing the design correctly. Should one block be placed out of align-

ment it will be apt to spoil the whole pattern. In printing stamp quickly and firmly. **T**HIS sort of work is practical, for the reason that if done in oils the bureau covers, cushion covers and the like may be laundered—if carefully done—without injuring the design. A set of curtains done by a young girl which is pictured in the illustration gives an idea of what may be accomplished in block printing by experts in the art. In this case the blocks were of several sizes and shapes, and as there is a block for every color, it can readily be seen what exquisite results can be obtained. The curtains are quite as handsome as any that are imported, and though the preparation of the blocks meant a good deal of work, once cut they can be used indefinitely. The adaptation of designs in another interesting feature, for a girl of ingenuity can pick up pretty patterns almost anywhere if she uses her

eyes and is clever with tracing paper. As a matter of fact, it does not require talent or genius, simply a little dexterity in manual movements and the stick-to-itiveness to persevere to the end. Red curtains, bed spreads, cushion covers and divan covers, kimono, the scarf shawls so popular of late and a thousand and one dainty things for household and personal wear can be decorated in block printing. And if a girl is possessed of really artistic taste, she can go further and copy a scene, a landscape on to a block, touch it up with the proper coloring and make the impression on rice paper and she will have a most charming Japanese print, broad and impressionistic in scheme perhaps, but a truly effective thing that she will not hesitate to hang on the wall or frame it in passepartout fashion for a friend. It is the coming craft and another year will see the number of workers in it not only doubled but trebled.

**F**URS FOR THE SCHOOL GIRL. **E**VEN if strictest economy must be practiced in all other departments of her outfit, a girl should make every effort to procure a pretty set of furs. An old suit will look wonderfully better if good furs are worn with it, while for afternoon a smart bonnet and muff of white fur or lynx will often make a simple tailor costume suitable for the most elaborate wear a school girl could want.

White furs may not be so fashionable for the grown-ups this year, but for young girls nothing is so much in vogue. The collar piece should be quite wide and flat, unless one large animal be worn and the muff be wide and flat to correspond. Instead of plain satin to line a fur collar shawl or tacked chiffon cloth is generally used this year, and in the muff, too, is seen at each opening a narrow ruching of chiffon.

For school wear a small fur tie is excellent. It is warm and looks trim and neat with a severe coat collar. Mink and brown caracul and brown squirrel are attractive made up in this way. The muffs for this style of collar should not be too large. For school wear it is a mistake to have costly furs, for no fur can stand steady usage day in day out without quickly becoming shabby. A school girl, of course, should never wear too handsome furs, but even lynx or pointed fox is too delicate to give satisfactory everyday service. The newest muffs this winter are extremely large and quite flat. For a young girl these so exaggerated shapes are never in good style, but her school caracul muff may measure easily 14 by 12 inches without being at all conspicuous. The long

haired furs look even larger when made up, although in actual dimensions they are not generally as large as those favored with furs of short haired animals.

What to do with old fur pieces is often quite a problem. Any kind of work on fur is sure to be most expensive, the price for renovating a muff or stole being often well in excess of the original cost. A long stole or flat collar and even frequently a round bonnet can generally be patched up and attached directly to the collar of the jacket of the walking suits. The new style of opening so far down has brought into great popularity the fur collar fastened directly to the coat. Certainly this fashion is a deliciously warm one, but without a fur collar nothing is more miserably cold in midwinter than a jacket fastened but a few inches above the waist line. By attaching an old stole in this way the worn part of the fur can be dispensed with altogether. Collar and revers on the coat should be finished beneath the fur piece, so that if at any time it is preferred not to wear the fur it can be removed and the coat still be ready for use.

Frequently a fur collar is attached to the coat by clasps, or is simply based on, so that it can be changed from one garment to another, and a coat worn at one time with attached collar, at another with a long fur boa.

From a muff too shabby for further use in its original capacity can be concocted a most attractive small hat for skating, motoring, or, if combined with cloth or velvet, for regular school wear. One small hat will be found of inestimable comfort as a change from the wide brimmed fall that is so conspicuous at the moment in schoolgirl fashions.

Many lovely and artistic articles, such as book covers, picture frames, etc., can be made of odd pieces of old brocade or silk combined with bronze brads, and among the other things suitable for Christmas gifts are the doll work bags described a few Sundays ago. Writing boards covered with brocade or chintz, with positions for paper, pens and so on. Small flat lace candle and lamp shades are also always acceptable.

**PRACTICAL TALKS BY THE APRIL GRANDMOTHER**

**W**HAT a pity that these girls stand so awkwardly!" sighed the April Grandmother, as through her lognette she surveyed several rows of white garbed graduates who were about to receive their sheepskins. "Every one of them might have been made erect and graceful had a small portion of the time that they have been daily devoting to logic or psychology been used to train them how to stand close to a wall in such a way that the back, head and feet would form a straight line against it—a method which tends to straighten the shoulders, force forward the chest and upraise the chin. Then by resting the weight of the body on the balls of the feet, keeping the knees straight and the abdomen flat, the posture cannot fail to be graceful." "Some girls appear to stand awkwardly because they have round shoulders," explained the April Grandmother. "That misfortune may be overcome by persevering in the practice of touching the elbows behind the back. Of course, this exercise is not easy just at first, but it is the best possible for straightening the shoulders and is especially commended to the stout

girl, as it will certainly make her straight and will probably lighten her waist line.

"That plump little girl on the other row," continued the April Grandmother, waving her fan in the direction of a graduate who appeared to be about four feet square, "is taking one of the best means for improving her standing position, as in here efforts to see over the heads of those in front of her she has raised her back upon her toes and is stretching her neck upward."

"The most common fault to which school girls are prone is that of placing more weight on one foot than on the other while standing. This attitude not only makes the hips look uneven but it is injurious to the feet. The best method of overcoming it is to make a daily practice of walking about with a dish of water balanced upon the head. I do not pretend that this is an easy thing to do, but certain it is that the girl who accomplishes this gymnastic accomplishment cannot fail to stand erectly, and if she continues her practice she will retain a graceful bearing years after she has forgotten the principal events of her girlhood."

**Girls' Christmas Presents.** **N**OW is the time of year when the girl with many friends and a small allowance begins to think of Christmas presents. So many pretty, as well as ex-

tremely useful things can be made by the girl who is at all skillful with her needle that it would be impossible to name them all. One of the new ideas is to buy at the stores a small paper covered book of ordinary white steel pins and cover the outside with a pretty ribbon. The latter must be five inches wide, and three-eighths of a yard will be enough to cover two cases. The ribbon is turned under the flaps of the paper cover and then the sides are overlapped neatly together. A piece of baby ribbon put around the case, tacked in one or two places and then tied in a bow, makes a pretty finish.

Another simple and very useful gift is a china silk cover for a talcum powder box. For this a quarter of a yard of silk is required, a quarter of a yard of gold lace and three-quarters of a yard of gold ribbon gauge an inch wide.

First cut two small pieces of cardboard the shape of the bottom of the talcum powder box. Cover each of these with a piece

of silk and then whip together. Next cut a piece of silk twelve inches long and high enough to reach to the neck of the talcum box, allowing for a hem on top and bottom and sew this on to the pieces already covered with silk, shirring it evenly. Of course the silk must be joined at the side. On the top sew a piece of gold metal ribbon and pull in around the neck of the box by a piece of gold gauge ribbon and tie in a bow. These covers look particularly well made of old rose silk, but are preferred silver ribbon and lace could be used.