

1922

The Giving of the Gift

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Recommended Citation

Dodge, Alice (1922) "The Giving of the Gift," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 2 : No. 9 , Article 2.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol2/iss9/2>

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THE IOWA HOMEMAKER

"A Magazine for Homemakers from a Homemaker's School"

VOLUME 2

DECEMBER, 1922

NUMBER 9

The Giving of the Gift

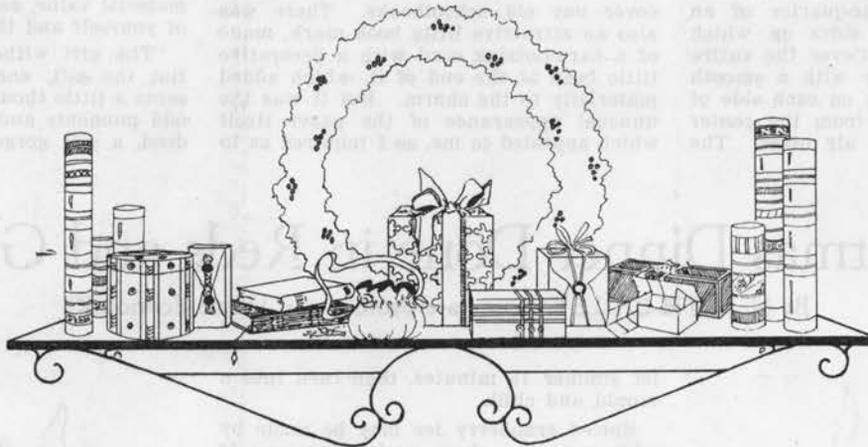
By ALICE DODGE, Instructor Applied Arts

HOW many times have you looked over the stock in a gift shop and been astonished that some very simple articles were priced at as much as two or three times their actual value? That is, if you were to buy these very same articles in a dry goods store, a hardware store, or, perhaps, the "five and ten," you would pay considerably less. You perhaps wondered how anyone had the ability to sell any produce at a price so much beyond its cash value. But your merchant certainly does sell these articles, and there seems to be a steady demand for more from the buying public.

What is it that adds to their actual value?

Let us look into that cunning little shallow box on the gift shop counter. It contains three aluminum measuring spoons fastened together with a ring. It is a useful gift and, strange as it may seem, an attractive one. You would not give a second glance at a common box piled full of them. But they look so inviting in the dear little black and orange box, and then there is a jingling rhyme which makes you feel that you can hardly wait to use them. They form a happy little remembrance for a busy housewife or the girl friend who is planning to get married. But can you imagine slipping them into an envelope or doing them up in wrapping paper and feeling that they are a suitable gift? It is the box, the rhyme and the spoons which together make the gift. You are appreciating and paying for a little thought, a little applied design and the clever little verse.

Home you start with your box of measuring spoons and also a blue and gold box enhancing a not too good ice pick, a beautiful, tiny, flowered box containing a strawberry-huller and the inevitable little verse which makes you feel that strawberry hulling is, indeed, a dainty pastime for a summer afternoon. At the jeweler's you stop to purchase an expensive little pin. How different it looks glistening in the little box with the white satin lining than it would in a jeweler's envelope. At the dry goods store you glance at gloves in long, narrow boxes, handkerchiefs in flat, square boxes, hosiery, perfumery and em-



broidery scissors in boxes, boxes, boxes.

And yet you don't apply this lesson in business psychology! Altho you know you like to buy and receive presents done up in a unique or attractive manner, it is very likely that you yourself do not do them up that way.

You have perhaps spent weeks on Josephine's sweater and yet you finally send it to her done up in a shoe box. Of course she will like the sweater, but think of the added charm that the box might give. The fruit cake for old Mother Tomkins no doubt will keep moist done up in newspapers, but are there not other equally good and infinitely more attractive ways of wrapping it? Just a little thought, a little more time, and a little more tissue paper will perhaps double or treble the pleasure you are giving.

For many years a Christmas package meant a snowy parcel done up in white tissue paper and tied with red or green ribbon. It reminded one of the friends our mothers used to choose for us,—awfully nice, but not very interesting. It is possible to have niceness and interest in packages as well as in friends.

If to your pile of white tissue-paper bundles you add some wrapped in red and some in green paper your first spice of interest begins to appear. But why do we cling to red and green and white? It is true that Christmas greens are green, holly berries are red and the snow over which Santa Clause comes dashing behind his eight tiny reindeer is white—glistening white. But Christmas time also means happiness and cheer, so we may express it with a riot of gorgeous, joyous colors.

Ask the paper hanger for old wallpaper books. Many of these samples you will

not be able to use, but some of them will make marvelous wrappings. They may be finished off with plain colored ribbons of a blending hue, or sealed with colored sealing wax.

Ribbons, of course, lend themselves to many novel ways of decorating. As a saucy bow has a piquant charm, so has a smart little rosette, or a bouquet of ribbon flowers. A brilliant bit of ribbon may be fastened onto a parcel with a

dab of sealing wax, changing a plain, unassuming bundle into one of personality and charm. Instead of crossing your ribbon around two sides of the package why not slip it through a ring and so make the turn. These rings may be purchased already painted in various colors for a few cents. But a still cheaper and more individual way is to buy the plain rings and enamel them yourself.

When silk ribbons are found to be too expensive for general use there are many substitutes. There is a paper ribbon which comes in a variety of colors and is both decorative and inexpensive. There are also metal ribbons, gilt cords, bright raffia, brilliant wools and gummed tape, all of which may be put to various uses.

Christmas seals are numerous in design and very inexpensive. Choose conventional designs with gold or bright colors. Always place the seals at points of emphasis; don't paste them all over the outside without thought.

Sometimes an especially lovely thing may be tied in an odd piece of silk and finished off with a little bouquet of artificial flowers.

Boxes always help, and there is such a simple way of making a box for a small gift that I have wondered why it is not more frequently done. Supposing you had something you wished to give away which would just fit in a box $2\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2} \times 1$ inches. Cut a $6\frac{1}{2}$ -inch square out of rather heavy colored paper. Draw two squares on this square, the first one inch and the second two inches from the outer edges, drawing the lines with a sharp hard pencil so the paper will fold easily. You will now have an inner square $2\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with two one-inch spaces drawn around it. Crease on these lines

very accurately. Take your scissors and cut two inches up on one of the folds of each corner. There are two of these two inch folds placed two inches away from the outside corner. Cut but one and alternate the cut with the uncut one. Fold the first inch space over on the second and slip the two-inch loose end underneath this fold. These ends may be pasted if desired. You will now have a box $2\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2} \times 1$ inch. A cover is made in the same manner, only it is cut about an eighth of an inch larger each way so it will slip on easily. The addition of a Christmas seal on the top of the cover will give the desired festive appearance.

Old boxes, no matter what they advertise, if they are not worn at the edges, may be very easily covered. Cut rectangular pieces out of bright or decorative paper, one-eighth to one-quarter of an inch smaller than the sides on which they are to be placed. Cover the entire wrong side of the paper with a smooth paste. Place a rectangle on each side of the cover and press it from the center out so there will be no air holes. The

edges of the box may be colored with water color before the top and the sides are pasted on. Wallpaper may be used for this purpose or plain paper in desirable colors. A child's stick printing outfit may admirably be used to decorate a surface of this kind.

Hatboxes, candy boxes, or hosiery boxes may also be covered with wallpaper, then coated with sizing and shellaced. These boxes are almost gifts in themselves and are useful for various purposes after the cakes, candy, or hosiery have all departed this earth.

It is even possible to make more attractive covers for books. One of the most attractive book covers I ever saw was made out of a decorated paper, folded to fit the book, as we used to cover our old schoolbooks. There was also an attractive little book mark, made of a harmonizing cord with a decorative little bead at the end of it, which added materially to the charm. But it was the unusual appearance of the paper itself which appealed to me, so I inquired as to

the process. It is so amazingly simple I am going to tell you about it.

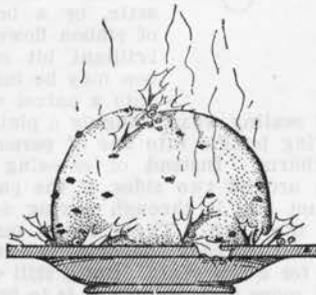
Take ordinary laundry starch and boil it down until it is thick. To this add some *opaque* water color, enough to give the desired color. With a stiff brush, paint this on a large sheet of paper with broad sweeps. Now, while it is still wet, spot out a design with a thimble, a stick, or some other convenient tool. The result is well worth while.

And so one might go on naming a hundred inexpensive ways of enrichment. If a bunch of common broom-straws, tied with a ribbon and put in an attractive box, sells for thirty-five cents, don't you see that every moment of thought and energy which you put on the final appearance of your gift will add to the material value, as well as to the pleasure of yourself and the recipient?

"The gift without the giver is rare." But the gift, encased with what represents a little thought, a little taste, a few odd moments and much good-will, is, indeed, a gift gorgeously arrayed.

Christmas Dinner Done in Reds and Greens

By N. BETH BAILEY, Associate Professor of Home Economics



IF YOU are fortunate, you may have turkey or other roasted fowl for Christmas dinner. But even the brownest, juiciest turkey is not complete without vegetables, salad greens, dessert, sweetmeats and the little "fillers" one looks for on the Christmas table.

Christmas, the time of holly and fir trees, suggests red and green for the color scheme of the Christmas menu, and a world of good things may be found to conform to these colors.

Cranberries for Red

Few of us need be told to "eat more cranberries". We just naturally must have cranberries in some form to make this meal complete. But often one feels the need of a new way to serve these gay red berries. Spiced cranberries are a splendid meat accompaniment.

Spiced Cranberry Jelly:

- 1 qt. cranberries
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 cupsful sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold water
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 24 whole cloves
- 6 allspice berries
- Salt

Pick over and wash berries. Add boiling water and let boil until the berries are soft. Rub thru a sieve and add remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil,

let simmer 15 minutes, then turn into a mould and chill.

Spiced cranberry ice may be made by adding to the above recipe one cup of water and the juice of one lemon. Freeze. This is especially good served with roasts or fowls.

Cranberry jelly may be used as a salad if it is stiff enough to hold its shape. Cut the jelly into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes. Place on lettuce, sprinkle with broken nut meats and serve with mayonnaise or cream salad dressing.

Green Peppers for Greens

Green peppers are plentiful and may be put to such a fine variety of uses. They may be used as cases to hold creamed meats or vegetables. To do this, cut off the stem end, and remove all the seeds and parboil. If the peppers are strong, it is well to parboil the peppers in two or three waters. There is a variety of possible stuffings, but some of the most popular ones are: creamed celery, tomatoes and bread crumbs with grated cheese on top, scalloped corn, ground ham with white sauce and bread crumbs, raw ground carrots and nuts with white sauce, or rice and peanut butter.

Peppers are also used in salads, as in cold slaw, apple salad, and other vegetable combinations. A very pretty Christmas salad is made by filling green and red peppers or canned pimento with well-seasoned cottage cheese. Pack the cheese in until firm, and with a thin, sharp knife cut the peppers into one-fourth-inch slices and arrange on a lettuce leaf—two slices of green and one of red or two slices of red and one of green.

A perfection salad is a red and green salad. This is made by adding a tablespoon of vinegar to a lemon jelly rule, then add salted shredded cabbage and chopped green and red peppers. When solid, cut into squares and serve with salad dressing. Grated beets and green



string beans make a good dinner salad served with French dressing.

Harvard beets and buttered green string beans are excellent vegetables for this red and green meal. To make Harvard beets cut cooked beets into cubes. Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. corn starch. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar and boil 5 minutes. Pour over the beets and let stand $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Keep hot. Add 2 tbsp. butter when ready to serve.

Cinnamon Apples

Cinnamon apples may be served hot with the meat, or cold as salad or dessert.

Select firm, tart apples of uniform size. Make a syrup, using 1 cup sugar to 2 cups water, 1 tsp. cinnamon extract and red coloring to give desired color. Use a flat-bottomed pan. Have the syrup come up half way on the apple. Cook slowly. Turn to give uniform color. Let stand in hot liquid to become transparent. Serve hot or cold. These are also made from a syrup of red cinnamon candies.

For dessert, red and green maraschino cherries or a bit of red jam or jelly may be used on ice cream or on whipped cream desserts.

Christmas cakes are made by cutting fruit cake into squares. Frost with a boiled icing and decorate the top with a holly leaf and several small red cinna-