ARTISTIC WAX WORK

BY MONICA BASTIN

In all the finer branches of artistic handiwork, originality, precision and a certain deftness of fingers are indispensable to striking success. With these and with the necessary foundation of talent, it is possible to turn the artistic sense (even moderately possessed) to very good account.

Among the novel, and possibly the least exercised of such crafts, may be classed that of mosaic making with sealing wax. Although the idea is not quite unknown, yet it is not often carried out to its fullest

extent. Not only mosaic jewelry may be taken as a pattern, but many kinds of metal work can be effectively copied. Added to this there are plenty of original schemes to be devised with the many shaded wax alone.

The molding of hatpin heads may now be con-

sidered. From a plain, many-colored sphere to the most elaborate style which a large hatpin makes possible, there is an endless variety of design at one's disposal. The shape can be made over the round head of an ordinary hatpin. If, however, it is to be flat or after the fashion of a coin, it must be molded like the beads, over cork. In the latter case, the glass head can be broken away with a hammer, and the piece of cork of the required shape and size substituted. A very pretty rainbow effect can be obtained by dropping patches of colored wax on the head, until a rough circle is made, and then holding it close to the flame, turning it rapidly so that the colors run together. Continue this, until the surface is quite smooth and glossy, and until the circle is regular. Then let the wax dry for a minute away from the flame, still turning the pin round and round, so that it may not drop one side more than another. Finish it off by dipping it first into gum Arabic and then varnishing it after the same process used when making the beads.

Yet another direction in which artistic wax work can be employed is in the imitation of beaten metal articles. Gold and silver bronze of exact tint suitable can easily be obtained for this purpose. Any small boxes or trays will do for covering, though if they be of tin or some smooth material, the surface should be slightly roughened by rubbing over with

as if they were inset with precious stones, such as turquoise, by dropping wax of the right shade in little lumps on the surface of the box before the metal is applied. Let these harden, and then surround them with the gold or silver wax in such a manner that they stand up rather above the finished surface of the box.

Another rather novel method of ornamentation is carried out with odd shaped pieces of colored glass. They are placed at fairly regular intervals on the

Little pin or trinket boxes.

A necklace made with sealing wax slabs and beads. Also two hat pinheads.

Piercing a bead with a hatpin.

Boats were first constructed of reinforced concrete by Gabellini in Rome. They have been described in these columns. Concrete boats are now made in Germany. In April, 1910, a scow intended for use in dredging and similar work was launched in Pomerania. The boat is 33 feet long and 13 feet wide, and has a capacity of 22.5 tons. It consists of four watertight compartments. The end compartments are decked and serve only as air chambers, while the middle compartments are open at the top and can be used for the reception of cargo. The total depth of the boat is about 4½ feet; its weight is 17 tons, and its draft when unloaded is 20 inches. It is constructed like an iron or wooden vessel, of transverse frames, longitudinal beams, and plates. The plates are about 3 inches thick. The frames and beams are 5 x 10 inches. The bulwark is stiffened between the frames by a plate 8 inches high and 1½ inches thick, to which are attached oaken buffers extending entirely around the vessel. According to the Engineering News, scows made of reinforced concrete are also

to be adorned. The spaces in between are then filled up with smooth strips of sealing wax, carefully laid so that the edges of the glass are completely concealed.

Boats of Reinforced Concrete.

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Stamping out the boxes in imitation of beaten metal.

Cutting the cork sections for the foundation of beads.

Covering a box with metal wax.

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bead can be decorated with spangled or metal wax according to individual taste, any device being carefully picked out in tiny drops of wax, and then melted on to the background by again holding the bead close to the flame. When this is done, and the bead is of course quite cold and firm, heat a hatpin and pierce one or more holes through to the other side of the slab, and in the right position according to the design of the finished article of jewelry. This must be done with the greatest caution, or all the previous work will be spoilt. The holes, if not clean and carefully made at the opening, may block again with the half-melted wax. When the required number of beads are finished, thread them on a piece of wire and dip them one by one into gum Arabic sufficiently thick to coat each well. Wipe off any superfluous

sand paper before putting on the wax. Cardboard pill boxes will make pretty little pin cases. The inside and the edges can be brushed over with gold paint in order to hide all traces of the card. The sealing-wax is first dropped on the box, and before it hardens, pressed with fingers previously dipped in cold water, until it is thinly spread. Then another patch is dropped and spread in like manner, and so on, until the whole of the box is covered. The wax is softened again by holding a lighted match or taper close to it. It is then dented all over in little circles with a piece of wood rounded at the end. This is only one method of decoration. Landscapes or designs of flowers can be worked out with wooden instruments shaped according to the requirement of the various strokes. The boxes can be made to look

to be used in the dredging operations of the Panama canal. One of these scows is already launched. It weighs, complete, 27 tons and has a draft of 4 feet.

At the old Eidsfos iron mines, which were worked in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in connection with the ironworks of the same name, trials have been carried on for the last two years with the intention of reopening the mines. Prof. Vogt reports that the expectations have been fulfilled in respect to the quantity of ore present, as well as to the quality. With the view of ascertaining whether the ore might be suitable for mechanical separation, experiments have been carried out at the laboratory of the University at Christiania, which have shown very satisfactory results.