

# THE MODERN BASKET MAKER

BY MARY WHITE.

## PART III. (*Conclusion*).

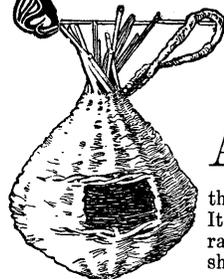


FIG. 16—BIRD'S NEST.

AT the Bird Market in Paris fascinating little nests are sold. They are woven on spokes of twigs, with weavers of rush. Why should not we, who are learning to know and love the birds, make these inviting houses and hang them in the branches of trees for the wrens and other bird-neighbors to settle in? It will be wise to make use of all the natural materials we can find—rush and raffia, willow-twigs and grasses—and when we use rattan let us stain it with dull shades of brown, green, or gray.

RAFFIA AND RATTAN BIRD'S NEST.

*Materials:* Eight 18-inch spokes of No. 3 rattan; one 10-inch spoke of No. 3 rattan; one and a half weavers of No. 2 rattan; a bunch of raffia; a tapestry needle No. 19.

Two groups of spokes—one of four and the other of four and a half—are crossed in the centre, bound three times with a strand of raffia, and woven in under-and-over weaving into a bottom an inch and a half in diameter. Here another weaver is added, and an inch of pairing, woven, forming the bottom into a bowl shape, with sides rounding up from the very centre. A row of pairing in No. 2 rattan holds the slippery raffia firmly in place. This is followed by five-eighths of an inch of raffia in pairing, the sides still being flared. Two rows of pairing in No. 2 rattan are woven, drawing the spokes in very slightly. At this point, the widest, the nest should measure fourteen inches in circumference. A row of under-and-over weaving is started, and at the place chosen for the doorway the weaver is doubled around a spoke and woven from right to left until it comes to the second spoke to the right of the one it first doubled around. It is brought around this spoke, thus making the beginning of a doorway, having an unused spoke in the centre of it. The

weaver then returns to the spoke it first doubled around, where it doubles back again; and this is repeated until the doorway is the desired size. Two rows of pairing in No. 2 rattan are then woven all the way around, forming a firm top for the doorway where they cross it. The spokes are drawn in closer with rows of pairing in raffia until, when two inches and a half have been woven, they meet at the top. They are left uneven lengths, and bound around several times with a strand of raffia, threaded through a tapestry needle. A loop to hang the nest by is made of

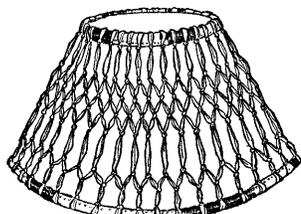


FIG. 19—LAMP SHADE.

two strands of raffia, five and a half inches long, covered close with buttonhole stitch in raffia. The spoke in the centre of the doorway should be cut at the lower part of the opening, just above the weaving, and, after it has been wet until quite pliable, bent and pressed up beside the upper part of the same spoke between the weaving.

FAYAL OVAL BASKET.

*Materials:* Six 5-inch spokes of No. 4 rattan; four 7-inch spokes of No. 4 rattan; one 4-inch spoke of No. 4 rattan; eighty-four 12-inch pieces of No. 2 rattan; two weavers of No. 2 rattan.

The six 5-inch spokes are slit for about three-quarters of an inch in the middle of each. The four 7-inch spokes, with the one 4-inch spoke between them, are slipped through the six slit ones, leaving about half an inch between each of the six. The group of four and a half spokes are held in a vertical position, while the six run horizontally. A weaver is started back of the vertical spokes, and lying along the uppermost horizontal spoke, with its end toward the right. It is brought around in front of the vertical spokes (above the upper horizontal one), then back and down diagonally to the left, coming out below the upper horizontal spoke. Here it is brought around in front of the vertical group, back and up diagonally to the left of the vertical spokes and above the first horizontal one. It is then brought diagonally down in front of the vertical spokes, to the right of them, and just above the second horizontal spoke. Next it crosses diagonally down and back of the vertical spokes, to the left of them, and below the second horizontal spoke, where it is brought over the vertical ones, back and up diagonally to the left of the vertical spokes and just above the second horizontal one—see Fig. 17. The same process binds the other four horizontal spokes, making an ornamental cross effect over each one on the inside of the basket—see Fig. 18. After all six horizontal spokes have been

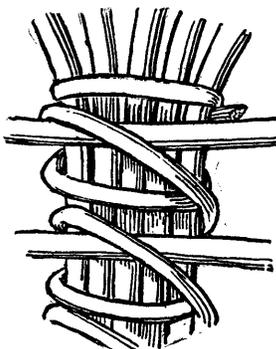


FIG. 17.

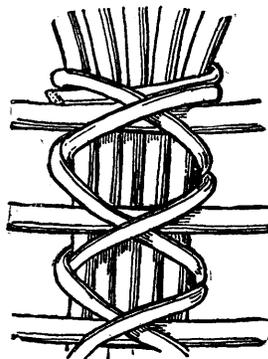


FIG. 18.

bound the spokes are separated and the weaving begins. When a bottom, four and a half by six and three-quarter inches, has been woven, two pieces of No. 2 rattan, twelve inches long, are inserted on either side of each spoke to form the side spokes.

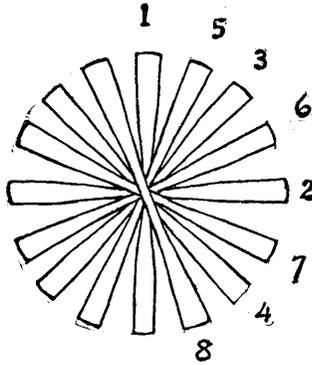


FIG. 20.

They are wet until pliable, and then each group of spokes is brought over the one on the right of it, under the next group, over the next, under the next and out, drawing the groups in (except the first two or three, which are left loose until the last groups have been woven in), so that they will form close sides about two inches high. The ends of the groups are woven into a base as follows: The basket is turned upside down, and the ends of each group are brought over the next group on the left and pressed down inside the base, where they are afterward cut short.

In finishing a basket, all defects of form are corrected while the rattan is still damp. When the basket is thoroughly dry, the little rough fibres are singed off by holding it over a lamp, taking great care not to scorch it. Our basket-maker will have none of the crude and quickly fading aniline dyes. She prefers to dye her baskets and material with permanent and beautiful vegetable colors, such as the Indians use. Dealers in dyes

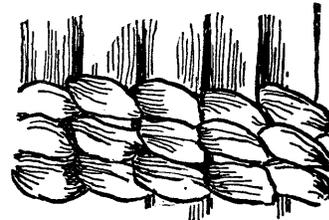
sell the extracts of these dyes, and they are neither expensive nor hard to manage.

**Yellow from Fustic.**—Before the rattan is dyed it should be soaked in a mordant or fixing bath. A solution of alum (three ounces of alum dissolved in a quart of water) is prepared, and the rattan is laid in it overnight. It is then boiled in the extract of fustic, previously diluted with hot water.

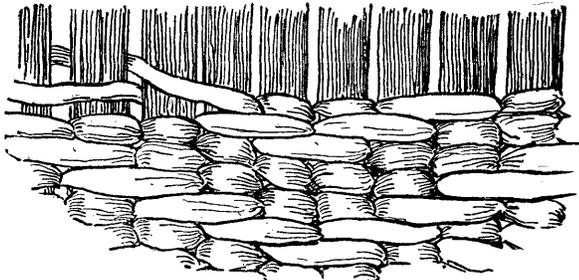
**Black from Logwood.**—Boil the rattan in a decoction of fifty parts of logwood to ten of fustic for half an hour. Remove it and add four parts of copperas. Return the rattan, and boil ten or fifteen minutes.

**Green from Indigo and Fustic.**—Mordant the rattan with alum and dye with indigo (the diluted extract), to which a small piece of copperas has been added. When the desired depth of color is obtained, remove the rattan and dye in a fustic bath to the shade required. Instead of fustic, bark extract may be used.

**Dull Terra-Cotta Stain.**—To five parts of varnish and twenty-one parts of turpentine a few drops of cherry stain are added until a deep enough shade is obtained. This makes a color like the terra-cotta in Indian baskets, and in combination with black is very effective on baskets of natural colored rattan.



Courtesy of Prof. Otis T. Mason.  
FIG. 21.



Courtesy of Prof. Otis T. Mason.

FIG. 22.

LAMP SHADE OF RAFFIA.

**Materials:** A piece of No. 4 rattan 3 yards long; a piece of No. 4 rattan 5 yards 14 inches long; a bunch of raffia; a bunch of black raffia; an awl; a tapestry needle.

A piece of No. 4 rattan three yards long

is whittled to a sharp point at each end. It is then coiled into a circle eleven inches in diameter, and the long end brought around and bound to it with raffia, making the joinings as neat as possible by laying the short ends along the foundation ring and covering them as the binding proceeds. A third row of rattan is laid beside the other two and bound to them with a stitch which passes around the second and third coils, between two stitches. An awl will be a help in this process. When five inches have been covered in the natural colored raffia, a band of black is made by bringing a piece of black raffia over the two lower coils, back of the upper one, over the two upper coils, back of the lower one, and up over the two lower coils again. Two inches are made in black, five inches in the natural color, two inches in black, and so on until the ring is covered with five spaces of each. A larger ring twenty-one inches in diameter is made in the same way with a piece of No. 4 rattan five yards fourteen inches long. The binding in the natural color covers spaces nine inches wide and those in black are three and seven-eighth inches. Forty-two strands of raffia are knotted on the small ring. (See directions for knotted work bag in Part I., March issue of this magazine.) The strands are brought straight down and



A RAFFIA RATTLE.

knotted together again at two inches from the first row of knots. They are then separated and three rows of knotting are made in diamond-shaped

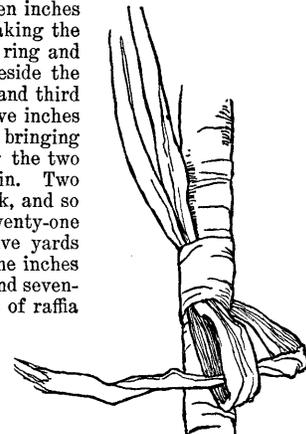


FIG. 23.

meshes. The strands are again brought straight down and knotted together at two inches from the previous row, separated and knotted into two more rows of diamond meshes. The shade is then dampened and put over a paper-covered frame and the large ring attached to the loose ends of the strands.

#### AN INDIAN WEAVE.

In Part II. there is a description of the Indian arrangement of spokes. Where more than four spokes are to be used they are arranged as in Fig. 20. In the Indian pairing or twining two weavers are twisted in the opposite way from ours (see Fig. 21), making a stitch which runs diagonally down from left to right. A half turn is given as in our method, but, whereas in pairing the half turn is made as if one were turning a screw to fasten it, the motion in twining is that made when unscrewing. Usually but one spoke is inclosed by two of these twists, but sometimes, as in Fig. 22, the skip stitch, which incloses two spokes, is introduced to form a pattern.

#### RAFFIA RATTLE.

*Materials* : Sixteen 26-inch spokes of No. 2 rattan ; raffia in the natural color.

The spokes are arranged in the Indian manner described in Part II. A weaver of raffia, doubled in the centre, is woven in two rows of pairing inclosing four spokes with each stitch. The groups are divided into twos and two rows of pairing, woven. They are then separated into single spokes and the rattle formed into a bowl-shape five inches in circumference at an inch and a half from the centre. From there it is drawn in gradually until, at about two inches and a quarter from the centre, the narrowing is begun by cutting a spoke to quarter of an inch from the weaving, whittling it to a point and binding it in with the next spoke. Three or four spokes may be cut out in the first circuit and more in subsequent ones. At three and a half inches from the centre there should be twelve spokes left. These are laid together and bound closely with raffia into a handle three inches long. Half of the spokes are then cut off. The remaining ones are cut four inches long, whittled to a point, and bent over to form a loop at the end of the handle. It is bound fast to the handle and wound with raffia till it is covered. At about a quarter of an inch from the end of the binding a loop of raffia is laid on it with the loop turning down and bound in with it as the winding continues (see Fig. 23). The end of the raffia is slipped through the loop and drawn up through the binding, where it is cut short.