

## CHAPTER XI

### CONSTRUCTIVE PROCESSES: STITCHES

**Running Stitch.**—Form: A line made by a portion of sewing thread passed over and under an equal or unequal number of threads in the cloth.

Use: (1) Basting, (2) seaming, (3) tucking, (4) gathering.

To make: Take up a little cloth, pass over same amount or more (Fig. 94).

*Basting.*—(Not a permanent sewing; used only to hold edges of cloth together until firmly sewed.) There are two types of bast-

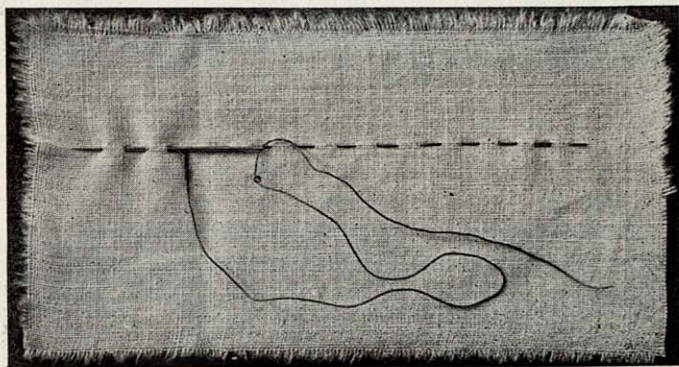


FIG. 94.—Running stitch.

ing, even and uneven. Always use a knot; fasten by taking two or three small parallel stitches diagonally across the cloth above the end of the basting. In removing basting stitches, clip the thread at intervals, to prevent tearing the material as they are withdrawn.

1. *Even Basting.*—Form: Stitches of equal length on both sides of cloth (Fig. 95).

Use: Where there is strain on a seam, or possibility of slipping, as in fitting corset covers, petticoats or gowns.

2. *Uneven Basting.*—Form: Longer stitch on upper side than on under.

(a) *Guide Basting.*—Form: Short stitch on under side of cloth, long stitch on upper side (three to four times under stitch).

Use: Guide for stitching seams and hems (Fig. 96).

(b) *Dressmaker Basting*.—Form: Long stitch on upper side of cloth, followed by two or three even basting stitches; repeat.

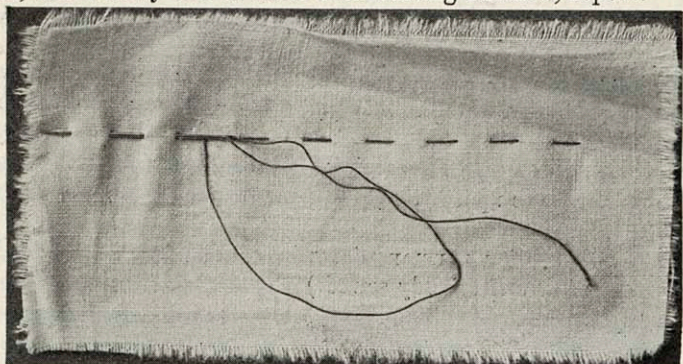


FIG. 95.—Even basting.

Use: Holding two thicknesses of material, wool or silk, securely for stitching seams (Fig. 97).

(c) *Diagonal Basting*.—Form: Short vertical stitch on under side of cloth, long stitch diagonally across upper; repeat.

Use: Basting linings to outside materials (Fig. 98).

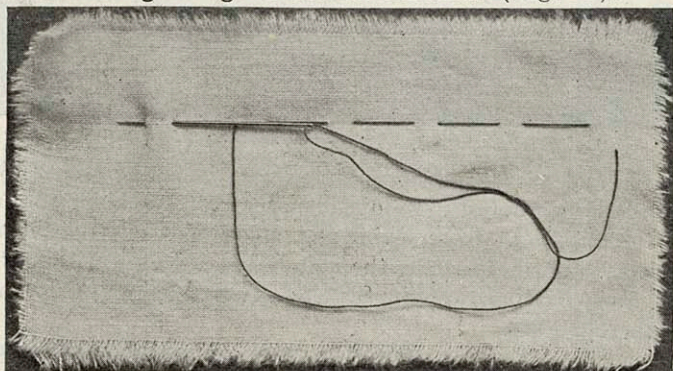


FIG. 96.—Guide basting.

*Seaming Running Stitch*.—Use: Joining two pieces of cloth to form a seam (plain); first sewing of a French seam (Fig. 99).

To make: The work advances from right to left, start by taking a stitch from left to right through upper thickness of material on



line for seam; then, as work advances, from right to left, by making small, even stitches, the end of thread is securely held.

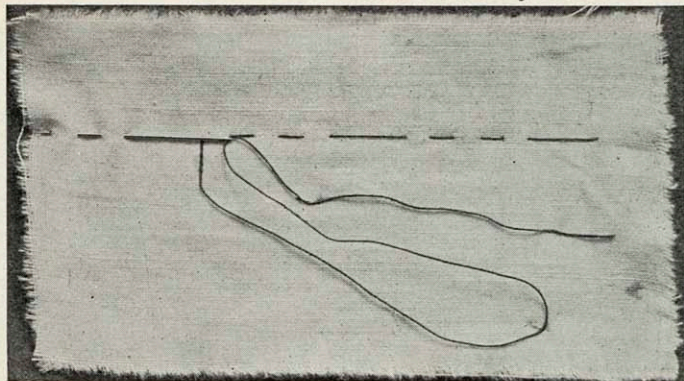


FIG. 97.—Dressmaker basting.

To fasten: Push the needle through to the under side of the cloth, take two stitches, one on top of the other, through one thickness only; bring the needle through the last stitch to knot it.

*Tucking: Running Stitch.*—To make: Small even stitch, being

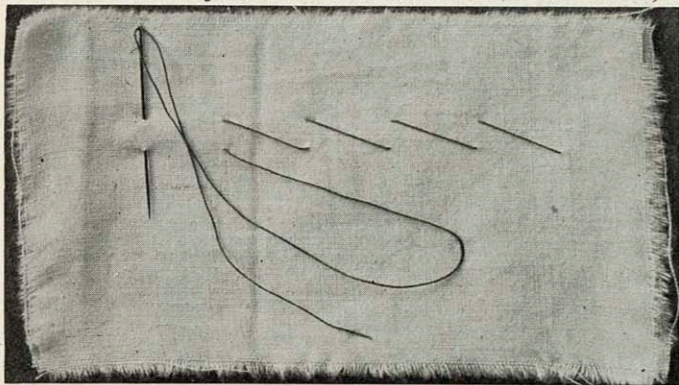


FIG. 98.—Diagonal basting.

careful not to draw the thread tight. Sew on line of pin-pricks or crease. Uneven stitch is used in tucking chiffon or similar materials, the longer stitch on the wrong side (Fig. 100).

*Gathering.*—Even or uneven variety of running stitch; even when pulled, uneven when stroked.

Use: For setting a piece of cloth into a shorter space, as an apron, petticoat, or drawers into a band, or ruffles into spaces planned for them.

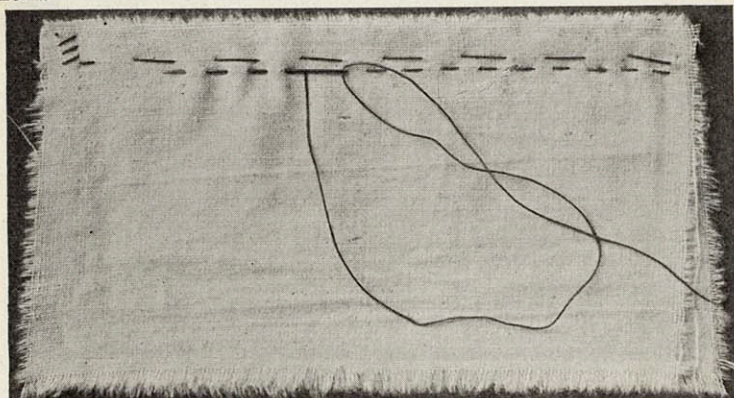


FIG. 99.—Running stitch, seaming.

To work: Divide both the part to be gathered and that to which it is to be applied, into equal parts, eighths, quarters or halves, and mark with thread, either a few small running stitches or a cross-

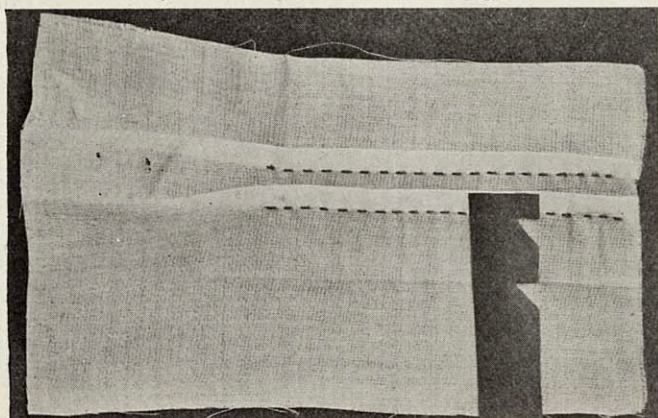


FIG. 100.—Running stitch, tucking.

stitch. The gathering thread should be a few inches longer than the space to be covered. Use either single or double cotton, number suitable to your material. Use a knot, and begin from one-quarter



to three-eighth inch from the edge of material, taking a small back-stitch to prevent possibility of the knot drawing through the cloth. When gathering, do not remove the needle from the cloth until the end of the space to be gathered has been reached. If the needle becomes crowded, push the cloth off at the eye of the needle, but do not remove the needle. The gathers should then be stroked or pulled (Fig. 101).

*Stroking.*—Draw the thread up so that the gathers are very close together, and wind the thread upon a pin which has been put



FIG. 101.—Gathering, material and band divided in sections and marked.

into the cloth. Then holding the gathers between the thumb and first finger of the left hand, with the point of a blunt needle or the eye of a coarse needle, stroke down beside the fold of each gather and press it close against the next, and so on until all is completed. This makes the gathers separate and lie smoothly when ironed.

*Pulling Gathers.*—Place pin in skirt at knee; wind one end of gathering thread securely around pin; then holding gathered piece taut between thumb and first finger of left hand, the cushion of the finger just below and parallel to the gathering thread on the under

side, and thumb on gathering thread on upper side, pull the gathers with the right hand down over cushion and against thumb.

Gathers are made with (1) double thread, one row, or (2) single thread, two rows.

*Plain gathers*, for setting material into bands and ruffles under tucks or folds (Fig. 101).

*Gauging*.—Used when there is a very great amount of fulness to be drawn into a smaller space. A large stitch is taken on right side

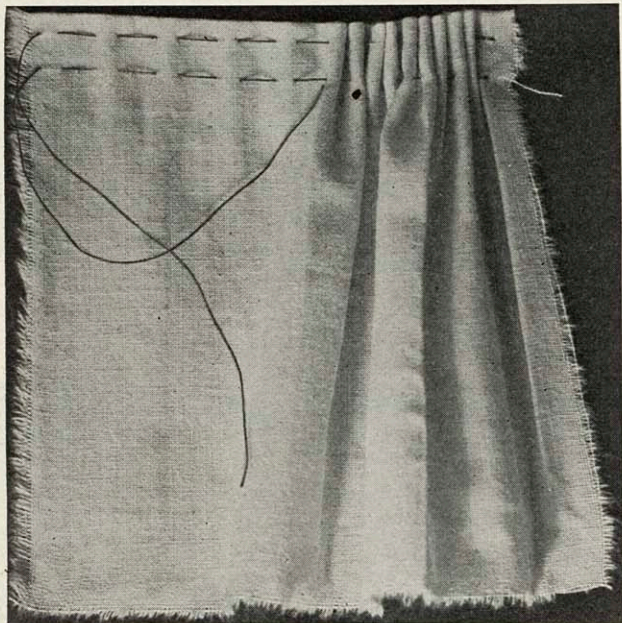


FIG. 102.—Gauging.

of the cloth, a small one on under. Each stitch of succeeding rows must lie directly under the one above (Fig. 102).

*Shirring*.—Several rows of gathers, at various distances apart, drawn up, for the purpose of ornamentation, yoke effect in skirts and waists, etc. Stitches do not have to lie one directly under the other (Fig. 103).

**Stitching**.—Form: On the right side of cloth, a succession of short stitches, the end of one stitch meeting the other; on the wrong side, a succession of stitches overlapping each other.



Use: Where there is need of strength, in seam, bands, and tapes; also for decoration.

To work: Baste seam carefully; begin stitching with a few small running stitches, starting one-half inch from the end of the cloth, and sewing from left to right until one-eighth inch from the end; turn work and take one stitch back to the end of the cloth, pass needle under twice that space on the wrong side, coming

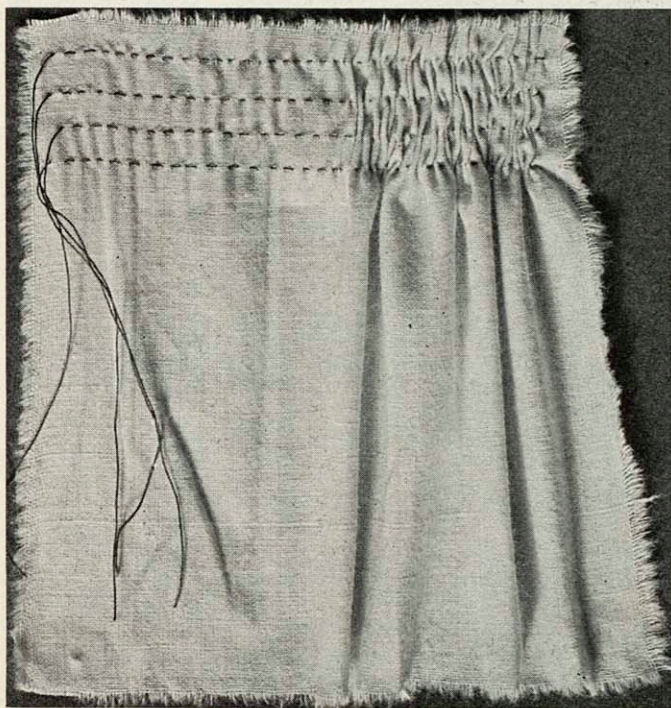


FIG. 103.—Shirring.

through to the right side, and back to the end of the first stitch formed, then through to the wrong side and forward twice the length of the upper stitch; cover running stitches with stitching; repeat (Fig. 104).

To join thread: When last stitch is made, as needle passes to wrong side of cloth, take two stitches directly over last stitch, but only through one thickness of cloth, then draw the needle through

the last stitch to make loop knot for fastening. Begin with new thread as at first, making stitch appear unbroken on the upper side.

To fasten: Same as in joining thread.

**Backstitching.**—Form: Stitches do not meet on right side; there is a space between, like running stitch.

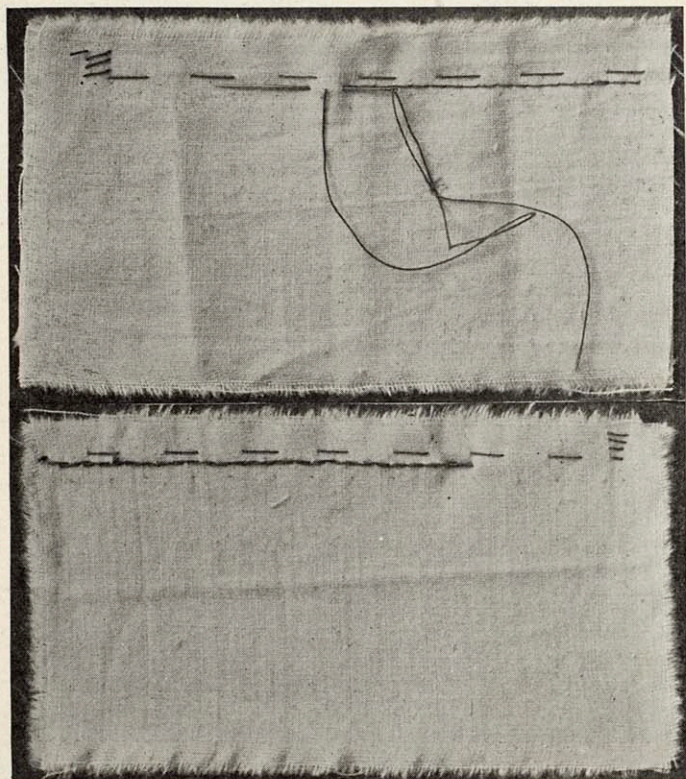


FIG. 104.—Stitching, right and wrong sides.

**Use:** When there is not as great need of strength as in stitching.

**To make:** Same as in stitching, passing needle under three times as much cloth on the wrong side, and coming back half way to the end of the last stitch on the right side (Fig. 105).

**To join and fasten:** Same as in stitching.



**Combination Stitch.**—Form: Right side, three stitches meeting, space, three others meeting, space; repeated.

Use: Where not a great deal of strength is required, fells, French seams, etc.

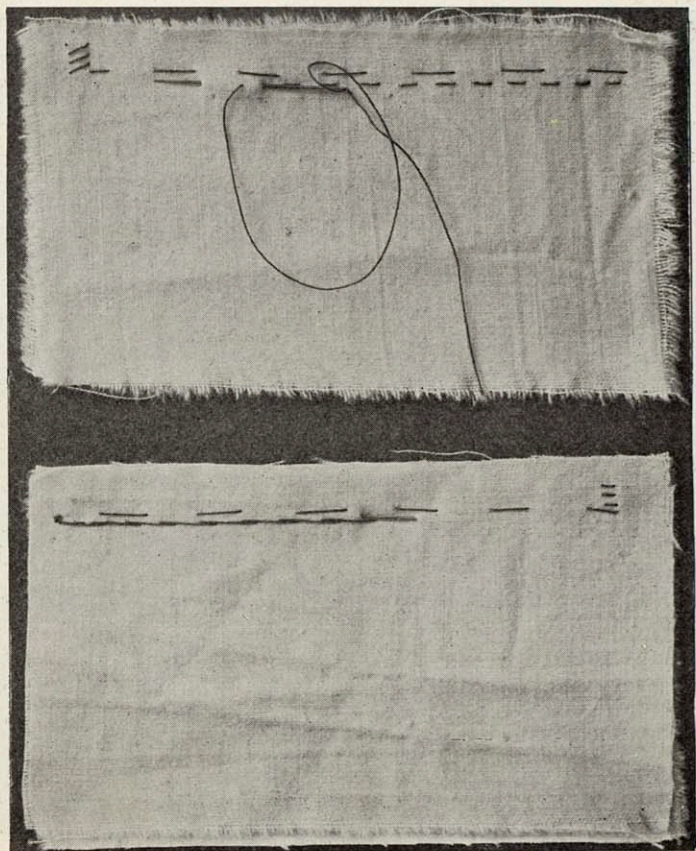


FIG. 105.—Back stitching, right and wrong sides.

To make: Begin same as stitching and backstitching; take two running stitches, let needle come to right side of cloth, as if to take another, but pass the needle back to the last running stitch, and through to wrong side of the cloth, passing under the last stitch on

the wrong side and up through the same hole through which the thread passed last. Take two running stitches and repeat (Fig. 106).

**Overhanding.**—Form: Slanting stitch on the wrong side, straight stitch on the right side.

Use: To make flat, strong, but almost invisible seams in under-

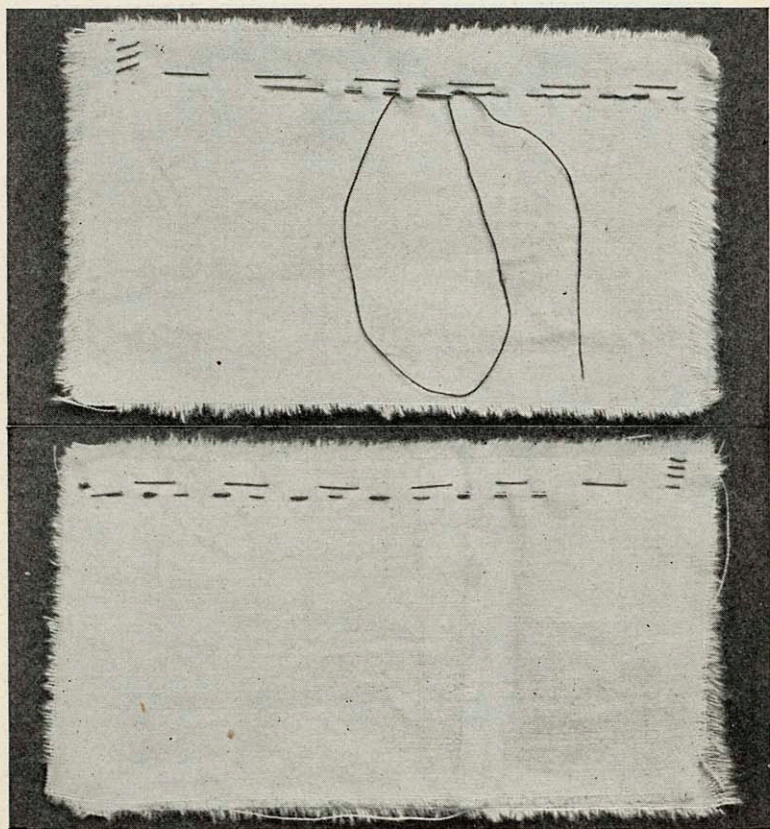


FIG. 106.—Combination stitch, right and wrong sides.

clothing and bed linen, hemming table linens and sewing on lace, and patching. It is sometimes done on the right side, when finishing the ends of hems or bands, or pillow cases.

To make: Crease a fold in raw edges. Baste, having folded edges together, or two selvages together. Hold cloth between the first



finger and thumb, against the cushion of the first finger; hold in place with thumb and second finger. Draw needle through the edge of the upper thickness of the cloth, leave a short end of thread; then put needle through two thicknesses of cloth, and sew over the end of thread, pointing the needle toward the chest. This gives the proper direction to the stitch. Take stitches that are not deep; do not draw them tight, nor crowd them (Fig. 107).

To join: Let the end of the old thread come out through the under thickness of cloth. Draw the new through the upper thickness. Let short ends extend, over which the overhanding can be done.

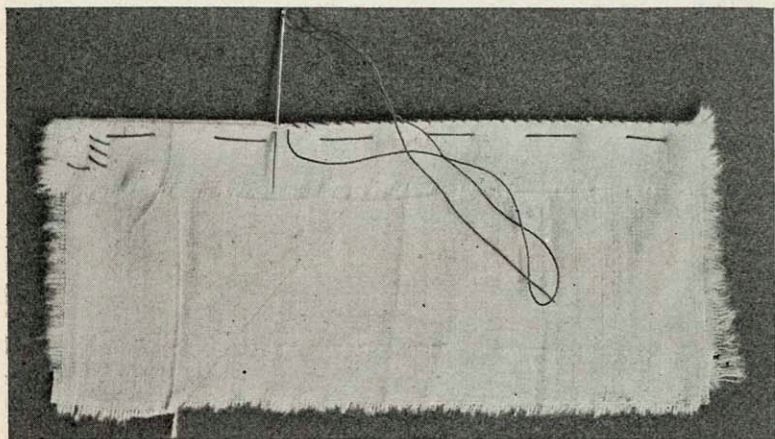


FIG. 107.—Overhanding.

To fasten: Turn the work and overhand over the last few stitches taken.

**Overcasting.**—Form: Loose, diagonal stitch taken over the raw edges of cloth to keep them from ravelling.

To make: First trim the edges evenly. Use a knot, but in double seams, conceal it between the edges; in a single seam which will be pressed open, it can be hidden on the under side of the seam. Hold the cloth over the first finger of the left hand, using the second finger to draw the material through and the thumb to hold it in position. Point the needle toward the left shoulder, bringing it through from under to upper side, and working from right to left. The stitches should be regular in size, not drawn tight, and are usually twice as

far apart as they are deep. In turning corners, take two stitches through same hole to form a V. If gored seams are being overcast, begin at the bottom so as not to work against the ends of threads at the edges (Fig. 108).

To fasten: Two small stitches on under side and second stitch knotted.

To join: Fasten and begin as at first.

**Hemming.**—A hem is a finish for the edges of garments, etc., secured by making two folds at the edge, narrow or wide as need may be. The first turn for a narrow hem, may be one-eighth inch

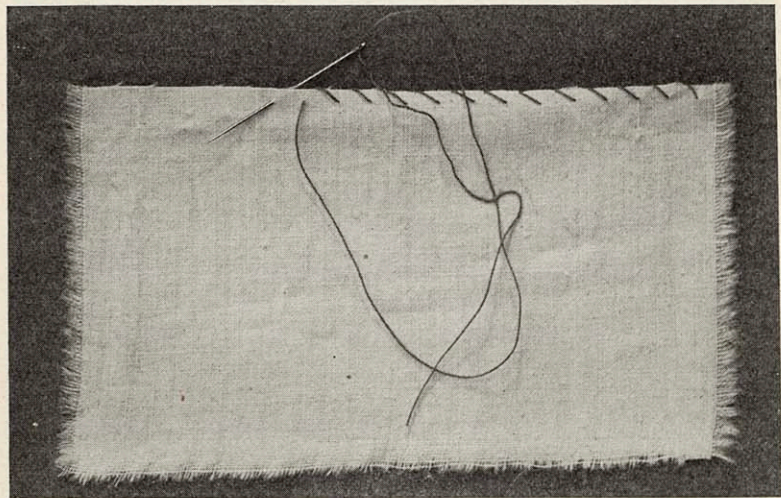


FIG. 108.—Overcasting.

or less; for wider hems, usually one-quarter inch, rarely more. The width of narrow hems in turning, may be gauged by the eye, but wider hems must be measured, pricked in, on undergarments, turned on the pricks and creased. Hems on outergarments may be measured and creased at end of marker, or marked with pins or tailor's chalk. In measuring, use a marker made of cardboard, with carefully measured spaces. Flannel necessitates the basting of the first turn, as otherwise it will not hold (Fig. 109).

**Plain Stitch.**—Form: A slanting stitch through the cloth and fold. Stitch slants on right side also.



Use: To hold folded edges in place, as hems, facings, fells, lace, etc.

To make: Conceal end of thread under a fold by passing needle

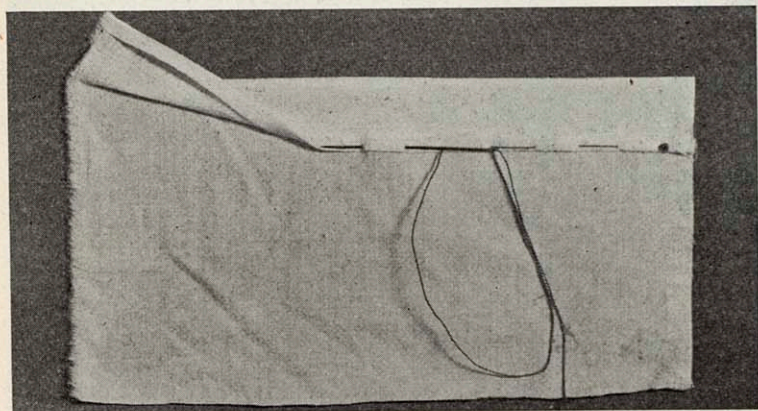


FIG. 109.—Laying and basting a hem.

through fold from left to right, then turn needle and passing to left, take up some threads of the cloth and of the fold; repeat. Hold work over first finger of left hand and keep end of work out of the

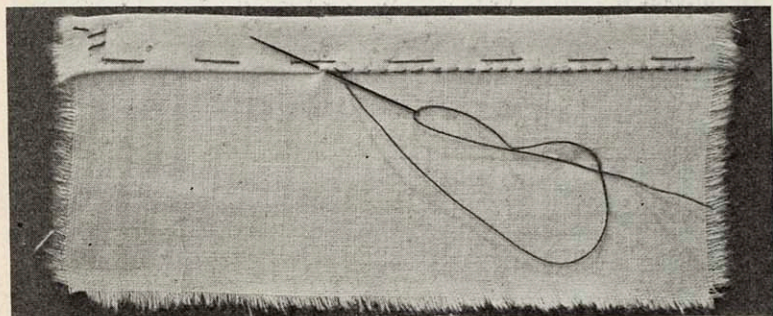


FIG. 110.—Hemming stitch.

way with the second finger. Each stitch slants on both right and wrong sides (Fig. 110).

To join thread: Take stitch in cloth with old thread and stitch in fold with a new thread, tuck ends of the thread under fold, and sew over them.

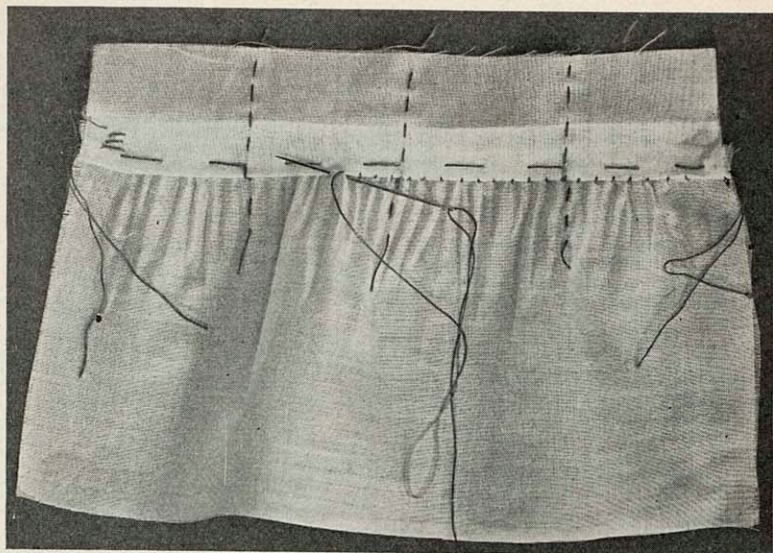


FIG. 111.—Vertical hemming.

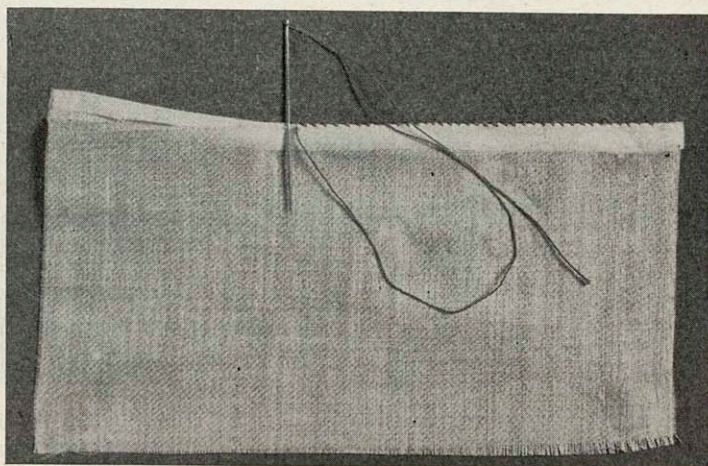


FIG. 112.—French hem.

To fasten: Take a few small running stitches in fold, and out through hole of hemming stitch.

*Vertical.*—For sewing gathers to band.



To make: Start as in plain hemming; then take a slanting stitch through gathers into band; carry the needle straight down and repeat, so making straight stitches on upper side (Fig. 111).

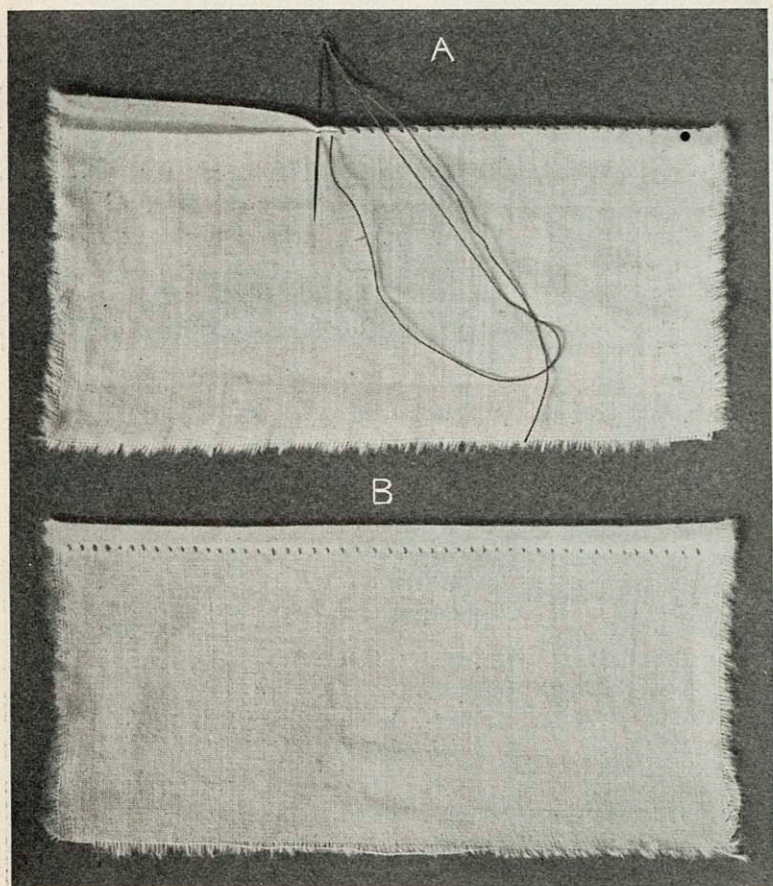


FIG. 113.—Napery or damask hem; A, wrong side, hem turned and overhanded; B, right side, finished hem.

To join and fasten: Same as plain hem.

*French Hem.*—Turn a very narrow hem toward right side of garment, then fold hem back to wrong side, and crease. Where the fold of the hem meets the fold of the cloth, sew with overhanding

stitch. When sewed, hem remains on wrong side of garment (Fig. 112). Used on neck of corset covers, etc.

*Napery or Damask Hem.*—Turn narrow hem to wrong side of

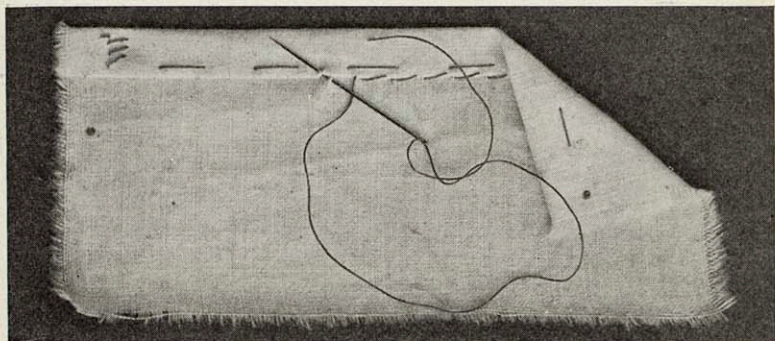


FIG. 114.—Blind hemming.

damask, fold back to right side and crease. Then overhand the two folds, when completed, open hem out and press flat (Fig. 113).

*Blind Hem.*—Used for sewing hems of silk, wool, or cloth when invisible sewing is desired.

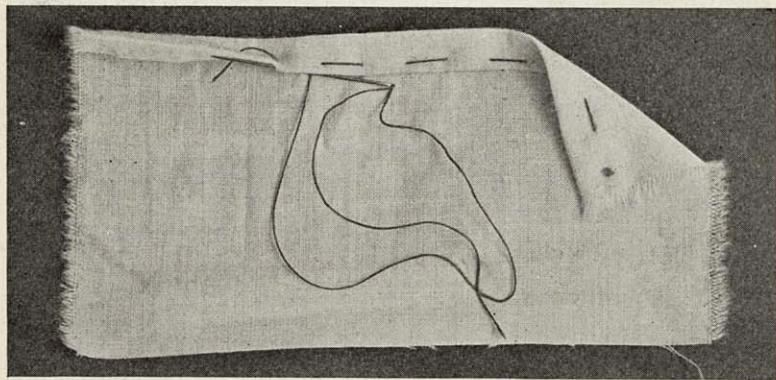


FIG. 115.—Slip-stitching.

To work: Instead of taking stitch through cloth to right side, take up enough of the thread to hold, but not through to other side, and then through fold of hem. Take a longer slanting stitch between hemming stitches than in plain hemming (Fig. 114).



**Slip-stitch.**—Used where an entirely invisible sewing is desired for fastening hems, folds, facings, etc.

To make: Use a small knot, take up very small stitch on under side of fold of hem, and only part of the thread in the cloth. Looks like a running stitch, if edge of hem is turned back. Not a strong sewing, but desirable for exquisitely fine finishing (Fig. 115).

**Whipping.**—Use of plain hemming or overcasting stitch in joining lace to a rolled or finished edge, or as a means of gathering a rolled edge.

To work: Hold strip for ruffle with the wrong side toward the worker, turn edge and roll between thumb and first finger of left hand, rolling only about an inch or two at a time. Stitches pass

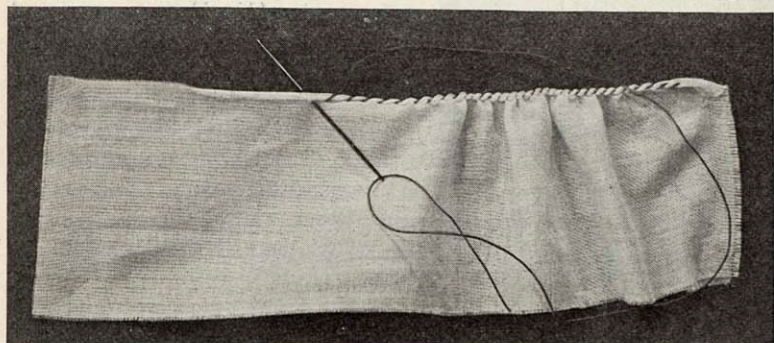


FIG. 116.—Whipping.

under roll, not through. Use short threads. Ruffles which are whipped are afterward overhanded to the garment. Each stitch should take up one fold or gather made in the whipping (Fig. 116).

**Feather, chain, catch, cross, blanket-stitch,** see under “Embroidery.”

**Buttonholes** (Fig. 117).—The following points must be considered when making buttonholes: (1) marking; (2) size; (3) cutting: (a) with buttonhole scissors; (b) with ordinary scissors; (4) working: (a) overcasting; (b) buttonhole stitch; (c) fan; (d) bar.

1. The position of the buttonholes should be marked on the garment with a pin or basting, giving due regard to the spacing between the buttonholes and the distance of each from the edge of hem or band.



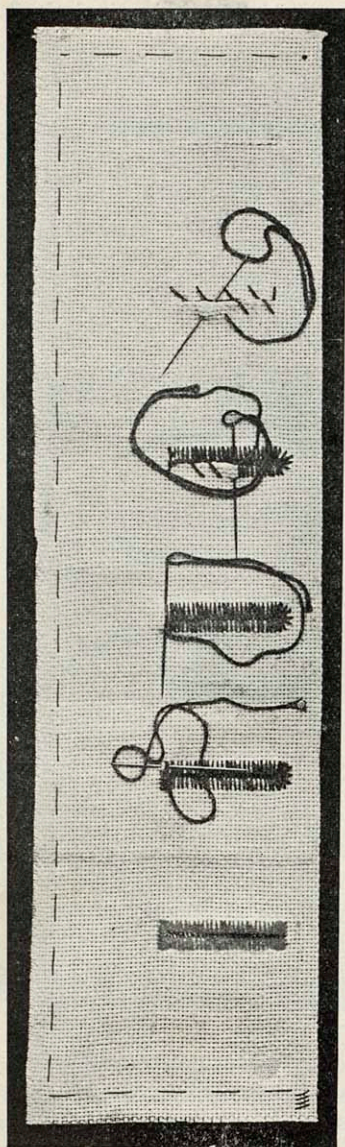


FIG. 117.—Buttonholes.

2. The size should be about one-sixteenth inch more than the diameter of the button which is to pass through the hole.

3. The buttonhole must be cut exactly along the thread of the material, otherwise the edge will be uneven and hard to work and the finished buttonhole unsightly; (a) if the holes are to be cut at right angles to the edge of garment, buttonhole scissors may be used; (b) if these are not available, the extreme ends of buttonhole may be marked with a large pinhole, and the buttonhole cut by inserting the sharp point of a small pair of scissors in one pinhole and cutting toward the other one. If the buttonholes are cut parallel to the edge of the garment, as in the box-plait on the front of a shirtwaist, the second method of cutting must be used.

4. Working: Buttonholes must be worked from right to left. (a) Overcasting: Since buttonholes are always cut through two or more thicknesses of material, they must first be overcasted in order to hold the edges evenly together and to prevent their fraying while being worked. To work: Hold the slit diagonally across the cushion of the first finger of left hand; at the inside right hand end of the buttonhole, insert the needle between the two layers of cloth and bring it out



exactly below the end of the slit; the distance from the edge will be governed by the size of the buttonhole and the kind of material. From three to five overcasting stitches should be made on each side of the buttonhole, according to its length. (b) Buttonhole stitch. The last overcasting stitch (Fig. 117) will be exactly opposite to the first one; now bring the needle through immediately below the first overcasting stitch, which should bring the thread into position for the first buttonhole stitch at the inner end of the slit (if the latter is cut at right angles to the edge of garment); pass the needle through the slit and bring it up through the cloth exactly beside the last stitch; while the needle is still in the cloth, pass the double strand of thread from the eye of the needle around the point of the needle, from right to left, then pull the needle through the cloth and straight up from the edge of the slit (not at an angle) in order to place the stitch properly with the purl or twist right on the raw edge of cloth, being careful not to pull cloth too tight, which would pucker cloth and make the edge of buttonhole uneven. Repeat the buttonhole stitch until the first side has been worked. (c) The outer end of buttonhole may be finished as a fan by continuing the buttonhole stitches around the end (usually five or seven to complete the turn), letting the purl of each stitch lie very close to the preceding one in the end of the slit, and the other ends of the stitches radiate from the end of the buttonhole like the stick of a folding fan, the center stitch should extend straight out from the end of slit. Now the buttonhole stitch may be continued along the second side of buttonhole toward the inner end, which is to be finished with a bar. (d) When the last buttonhole stitch has been made, bring the needle through as if for another buttonhole stitch, but do not pass the thread around the point of the needle, pull it through and put the needle down in the hole made by the first buttonhole stitch on the opposite side of slit, thus laying a straight stitch across the end of the slit; make two or three stitches the same way, exactly on top of each other, then turn the buttonhole around so it lies straight across the cushion of first finger and work tiny blanket stitches (Fig. 117) over the long stitches just made; so that the twist or purl of the blanket stitch is toward the buttonhole, catch each stitch in the cloth behind the bar, and work them close enough together to completely cover the bar; fasten the thread by running it back under the stitches on the wrong side of the work. The buttonholes (unless very long) may be worked with one thread throughout, but should it be neces-

sary to piece the thread, run the old thread back under the stitches on the wrong side; then run the new thread forward under the same stitches and bring the needle up through the purl of the last buttonhole stitch, so as to keep the finished edge of the buttonhole unbroken.

**Buttons.**—To sew on a garment, conceal the knot of the thread (which should be double) under the button. Place a pin on top of the button, and sew back and forth across this in order to keep the thread loose enough beneath the button to wind the end of thread around when the sewing is complete; this forms a neck around which to draw the buttonhole. Fasten thread by taking two stitches on top of each other; complete with a buttonhole stitch.

**Hooks and Eyes.**—Sew all around the small circular ends of both hooks and eyes, tack across the ends of the hooks to keep them in place; also across the eyes at sides to hold them firmly. When a very neat finish is desired the hooks and eyes may be sewed on with a buttonhole stitch.

**Snap fasteners** are sewed with several over-and-over stitches, taken in each hole on the edge of the fastener.

**Tapes** are turned in on one end, hemmed to the garment, and one-quarter inch from the turned edge, finished with a row of stitching. The loose end is hemmed or finished with blanket stitch.

#### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What is the form of a running stitch and for what is it used?
2. Name and describe the varieties of basting.
3. Describe the process of gathering.
4. What is the difference between gauging and shirring?
5. For what is stitching used? Describe the method of making.
6. Wherein do overhanding and overcasting differ? What is the use of each?
7. Name and describe the varieties of hemming and the process of making the stitch.
8. Name and describe the processes in buttonhole making.