CHAPTER IX

INFANTS' CLOTHES

An infant's wardrobe should be characterized by extreme daintiness of materials, trimming and workmanship. Baby clothes are not subject to sudden changes of style, but there are improvements instituted from time to time, primarily with a view to insuring greater comfort to the child in the wearing of the garments and to making the process of dressing an infant a less tedious operation. Buttons and buttonholes are not desirable, except on the dresses, slips and outer garments.

Shirts should be made either of softest baby flannel, or of fine linen, nainsook, etc. Every stitch should be made by hand.

In the flannel shirt it is necessary to exercise great care in finishing all of the seams, hems and turnings as flatly as possible, as otherwise they are likely to render the child uncomfortable. The shoulder and under-arm seams should be pressed open, after stitching, and both seam edges catch-stitched on the inside of the garment.

Double turned hems are frequently dispensed with on the front and lower edges of shirts. In some cases the flannel is turned only once and a loose buttonhole or crochet-stitch in soft Saxony wool or silk floss is made over the edge. This finish is shown in Fig. 140.

A Linen or Nainsook Shirt is made with felled seams. The front and lower edges are finished with a hem, and the neck and armholes with narrow bias facings of the material. Around the neck the facing serves also as a casing for the drawstring. If fine lace is used as trimming, the armhole edges are not faced, but are merely rolled and the lace is whipped to them. (Fig. 141.)

A flannel band for an infant is shown in Fig. 142. It is of flannel twenty-seven inches long and about six inches wide. All the edges are turned over on the outside, one and a quarter inches and catch-stitched. (Fig. 142.)

A pinning blanket or Barrie-coat is used in place of the flannel petticoat. After the skirt portion is cut, the front and lower edges are turned in hems and feather-stitched on the outside. (See Fig. 143 on the following page.)
The body is cut from fine cambric, and though the edges may be bound or faced, it is better to make the body double. Join the shoulder edges of both the outside and inside, and press the seams open. Lay the two body portions evenly together, with the shoulder seams of both toward the outside. Stitch a seam around the upper edge and across the lower edge to the notches. The ends are left open until the tape is inserted. The body is stitched between the notches after the skirt is joined to it. After they are stitched, the two body parts are turned to bring the seam edges inside. The edges at the pointed ends are turned in and the end of the piece of tape is slipped into each opening. Gather the skirt and join it to the body as shown in Fig. 143. Baste around the armhole about one inch from the edge to keep the two portions evenly together. Clip the raw edges and turn one in a seam’s width and baste it; then turn the other edge in and baste it to the first. Stitch by machine or overhand the two folded edges together to finish the armhole. The edges of the body portion should be basted and then featherstitched. Baste about an inch each side of the perforations that indicate the opening to be made at the left side. Cut through the perforations and bind the opening with soft ribbon or silk tape. If preferred, the skirt may be mounted on a straight band, made double, instead of on the shaped body. The straight band can be lapped and hemmed.

**AN INFANT’S PETTICOAT** is finished according to the material of which it is made. *The Flannel Petticoat* has the seams stitched and finished as shown in Figs. 11 or 12, on page 5. The bottom of the skirt may be embroidered in scallops, or the hem finished as shown in Fig. 131, page 39.

A flannel petticoat which hangs from the shoulders and has no separate body or placket is shown in Fig. 144. It is fastened on one or both shoulders by ribbons or buttons and buttonholes. The neck and armholes of this style of petticoat are usually bound with ribbon or tape, though a scalloped edge worked with white embroidery silk makes the little garment much prettier. If it is to be embroidered do not cut out the neck and armholes, but mark the outline of the pattern with a colored thread. The design can then be stamped along the outline and cut out after the embroidery is done.

The under-arm seams are finished in the regulation manner with catch-stitching or featherstitching before the embroidery is begun.

*The Nainsook or Cambric Petticoat* is finished in French seams. The lower edge of the skirt may be finished with a deep hem or with tucks, insertion and edging. The upper edge is gathered with fine stitches and joined to the body after the placket has been hemmed with a very narrow hem on one side, and one three-quarters of an inch wide on the other. Lap the wide hem over the narrow (Fig. 145), and tack firmly at the bottom.
of the placket with two rows of machine stitching, preferably running slanting.

The body is either cut single and faced at the neck and arm-hole after the shoulder and under-arm are joined in a French seam (Fig. 146), or cut of two layers of cambric, one serving as the lining. (Fig. 147.)

If a single body is used the seam joining the body and skirt is made toward the inside. A bias strip of cambric is placed next to the petticoat in the same seam, which is then stitched, turned over and hemmed to the body.

If made double, stitch the under-arm seams of both outside and lining; place the right sides of the material together and stitch all except the lower edge and shoulder seams. Clip the curved edges, turn the body right side out and crease along the sewing line. It may be stitched again on the outside to strengthen the edges and hold the seams in position. The top of the petticoat is gathered and basted to the lining with the seam toward the inside. Turn this seam up on the body; turn in the edge of the outside piece and stitch it over the gathers, covering all previous stitchings. The shoulders are stitched in a fell seam.

A SLIP is invariably made very plain and loose, of fine, sheer Persian lawn, nainsook or dimity. It should be put together with narrow French seams. In the model shown in

Fig. 148, the neck is finished with a bias binding. A narrow tape is run through the binding so that the neck can be drawn up to the right size when the slip is worn. Make an eyelet in the outside of the neck-binding just in front of the underlapping hem. Pass the ribbon through this opening so that it will meet the other end that comes from the opening of the overlapping hem.

The neck and sleeves, which should be gathered into narrow bands at the bottom, may be edged with a frill of lace. The back is cut down through the

Fig. 148. Binding at Neck of Slip
center to the depth given for the opening in the pattern instructions. Each edge of the opening is finished with a tiny hem. A plait is then made deep enough to bring the opening back one-half inch from the edge. It is held in place by a slanting row of stitching at the end of the opening. (Fig. 149.)

THE KIMONO or WRAPPER is a very practical garment and may be made of flannel, cashmere or any light-weight woolen material. A very pretty little garment may be made of French flannel, dotted or plain, with a shaped band of contrasting silk or flannel. (Fig. 150.)

The garment is collarless, and the neck and front edges, as well as the sleeves, are finished with shaped bands. The band is basted to the inside of the wrapper, along the neck and front edges. After it is stitched on, the band is rolled over on the outside of the wrapper and basted in such a manner that it extends a trifle beyond the joining seam. The other edge of the band is turned in and basted flat to the material and is held in position by a simple featherstitch. When a straight band is used, one long edge is joined to the wrapper with the seam toward the outside; the other edge is then turned under and basted over the seam as shown in Fig. 151.

French knots and various fancy stitches, scallops or little trailing vines of embroidery can be used very effectively in the trimming of these wrappers. Silk or satin ribbon may be used for the straight band. Some of these kimonos wrappers are lined throughout with soft India silk. The wrapper design mentioned above is perforated in the correct length for a house sack. This convenient little garment is made like the wrapper in every particular, except the length.

A dainty little sack is made of white cashmere lined with pale pink India silk. Both the outside and lining portions are cut exactly alike, the seams stitched and pressed open. The sack and lining are then basted together, with seams turned toward the inside. The sleeve portions are gathered separately at the top. Sew the outside material of the sleeve in at the armhole. Turn the raw edge of the sleeve lining under, gather it and hem to the armhole. A tiny turnover collar may be added with the same kind of finish. The edges of the sack may be turned in and secured with a row of featherstitching, or they may be buttonholed together by a scalloped edge. Both finishes are shown in Chapter IV “Practical and Ornamental Stitches.”

THE DRESS is made practically in the same way as the slip. Nothing but the finest material should be used, batiste, nainsook or sheer linen. Simple designs with a few hand-run tucks, a bit of embroidery, featherstitching or drawn-work make a far daintier gown than heavy material, lavishly trimmed with lace or machine embroidery. There are many excellent patterns for baby dresses, and one who has the time and taste to spend on the layette will find it a fascinating occupation.
A Dainty Yoke may be made by over-hanging alternate rows of lace insertion and embroidery together. Fine tucking rolled and whipped to lace insertion, also makes a pretty yoke. Narrow veining or hemstitched beading as shown in Fig. 152, joins the yoke to the dress. It is rolled and whipped on, or sewed in a tiny French seam. The shoulder seams are joined by beading, which is also used as a finish for the neck and sleeves.

If the Skirt is made of flouncing with an embroidered or hemstitched edge, the fulness under the arm is usually disposed of in an inverted plait. This plait takes the place of a gored seam and enables one to keep the outlines at the bottom perfectly straight. The edges are joined at the back to a convenient depth for the opening and a placket is finished as shown in Fig. 148.

In Cutting a dress from any plain material, follow the instructions on the pattern. The concealment of the back seam is usually arranged for under the plait. The edge may be hemmed by hand, tucked or ornamented in any way desired. The placket opening is cut and finished in the center of the back piece.

Some of these patterns are arranged so that the material may be cut with a bias seam under the arm, if it should be desired, which gives the garment a curved lower edge.

THE CLOAK and OUTDOOR GARMENTS are made more or less elaborately according to one's taste and needs. White is generally used and daintiness and simplicity are the most desirable characteristics. In summer, pretty little cloaks are made of piqué and cashmere. The lower and front edges may be hemmed by hand or held in place by feather-stitching on the outside, or the hem may be stitched by machine. The same finish is carried out at the neck and wrist. The buttonholed edge is a suitable finish for piqué.

Even for colder weather cashmere may still be used with a warm interlining. Bedford cord and broadcloth make excellent coats. Wool wadding or a soft flannel are best for the interlining. It should be cut without the seam and hem allowance. Instead of making the regular seam, draw the shoulder and under-arm edges together with a loose overhand or ball-stitch, making them lie perfectly flat. The outside of the coat is turned under at the bottom and catch-stitched to the interlining.

The Lining is cut like the outside and seamed in a regular seam, which is afterward pressed open. Place the seams toward the inside and baste the lining to the coat. The lining at the bottom of the coat should be one-half inch shorter than the coat after its lower edge has been turned up. (Fig. 153.)

Place the lining in the sleeves; gather sleeve and lining separately at the top. Stitch the sleeve in the coat leaving the lining loose. (Fig. 154.) Later it is hemmed down over the stitching of the armhole.
The Collar is made unlined, with a facing of the lining material. It is stitched to the neck of the coat, and the lining of the coat hemmed against this stitching. If the coat has a cape it is sewed on like the collar. The edge of the collar, the wrist and the cape may be trimmed with fancy braid, lace or handwork.

The cloak is preferably lined with soft China silk, and if wool wadding is used, the wool is picked away from the cheese-cloth around the seams to avoid bulkiness at these points.

LITTLE SHOES and SLIPPERS made of a washable material are a pretty part of the layette. The piqué or other material is cut according to a slipper pattern, following the directions given on the pattern envelope. The sole is cut from silesia or some other stout lining fabric. The sole and upper part of the shoe should be lined with flannel. The outside material and the flannel lining are seamed separately and the seams pressed open. They are then basted together with their edges even. The upper and lower edges of the slipper are bound with a bias seam binding. The upper part and the sole are overhanded together on the wrong side and the shoe is turned right side out. The ankle straps are lined with cambric. Work the buttonhole in the right hand strap of one slipper and in the left hand strap of the other. Flat bows run through tiny buckles, or rosettes of baby ribbon, can be used to trim the bootees.