CHAPTER I

SELECTING OF SHAPES AND MATERIALS

THIS little series of lessons is not intended to represent a thorough course of instruction in millinery, but in the simplest way to give the necessary directions for the use of women who must do their own and children's millinery, and are not in a position to see or hear much of the world of fashion.

Every woman rightly has the desire to look her best; to be at least as well dressed as her neighbors when they meet at church or socials, and she naturally takes as great a pride in the appearance of her children.

Materials are not so expensive, it is the work that costs, and the clever mother can make her own hat and two for her little daughters for what one would cost if bought in town.
TO SELECT A SHAPE

The first thing to consider is a becoming shape. No matter how pretty or costly a hat or bonnet may be, it is money wasted unless it is becoming. A becoming hat brings out the best points of the face, and lessens the effect or prominence of defects; a hat that is not becoming does just the opposite. There are a few rules to guide one, but often an unusual face sets all rules at defiance, and so one really cannot tell except by trying on and experimenting with various shapes. Everything we wear should balance our proportions. A face that is very round and full at the lower half must wear a hat that gives prominence to the upper part; but a woman with a large forehead and thin face should wear narrow hats that come rather over the forehead. A round face looks well in a wide brim; if short, a high crown is best; but a tall girl should select a low crown. A girl with fluffy hair can wear a hat that turns away from the head, but hair dressed close to the head should have the hat fitting well over it at the sides. The hat must always look as if it was a part of the wearer, not as if it had dropped on that head by mistake. A little study will soon teach any woman
what is best suited to herself; and the opinion of others is not to be despised.

Remember that the way you dress your hair has very much to do with the becomingness of your hat; if you have a very full forehead, let the hair come a little over the brow, it will soften the entire face; but if the brow is low, draw the hair away from it in a full, easy puff; in no case hide the eyebrows; these give much expression to the eyes, and the eyes are the life of the face.

The hair dressed low at the back is not becoming to many except quite young girls, and requires hats with brims that droop down at the back. A protruding knot on the middle of the head at the back is ugly, and no hat can look well over it. A woman's hair is her chief ornament, and should receive proper care and study; every woman can have nicely kept and prettily arranged locks, and the simplest, cheapest hats will look well on such a head.

COLORS

We say we "look well" in this or that color, and others seem to kill all the brightness in our own color tones; there are, of course, reasons for this, but they need not trouble us here. The thing
to do is to study what brings out the best in us, makes us look younger and generally pleasing. Eyes, complexion, and hair all combine to rule the choice of colors, and, of course, one’s age must be considered. It takes a clear skin to wear delicate gray, lavender, or blue; and the cornflower blues and bluish purples, even if the eyes are gray or blue.

A woman with red hair looks best in all shades of brown, from the very darkest to the richest pale cream; she may wear grays, unless much freckled, dull sage green, flat powder blue, and very light soft blue, but not pink at all in any shade; but she will look well in deep rich garnet or a purplish cardinal, these making her look much more blonde.

Turquoise blue and other blues with green tones are becoming to brown-skinned women, and if they have some color they can wear greens and purples of all shades, but only rich dark reds. Browns, especially the golden tones, are particularly becoming to women whose skins are brown or sallow, and a relief of cream is very good. Pink is more generally becoming than any other color as a trimming.

Women who live in the country are more or
less continually exposed to the elements, and cannot take much care of themselves; consequently they often look older than they really are, and any little thing that will help them to retain their youthful looks as long as possible is surely a boon. Such women must avoid bright colors, as these would overbalance whatever coloring they have remaining in skin, eyes, or hair; and a woman’s face should at all times be the youngest thing about her. Black is even worse than bright colors, as it reflects dullness, and shows up every wrinkle and brown spot. Women of middle age vary as much in their color tones as their young daughters, and must each study for herself what will brighten and bring out her best aspect.

The fair, stout matron with high color may wear soft grayish blues, dull sage greens, faded quiet lavender and purple shades with cream, white, or pale yellow near the face, and a soft pale blue—if she has blue eyes. In dark colors, navy blue, wine red, chocolate brown, and bottle green will be good, and dull rather than shining black; and always some little relief of cream or white near the face.

The colorless skin is not improved by bright
colors; on the contrary the delicate tints alone will bring out the best effects; a delicate pink under facing to the hat is wonderfully good. Soft gray of a pinkish tint and relief of pale pink roses is charming, and in dark colors soft dark red and reddish purple is effective.

Remember that becomingness is the chief consideration; style and fashion are things of the moment only.

FRAMES AND HATS

It is much the best to get frames ready made. A good plan is for a group of women to send to the nearest large city to a good store for a dozen assorted frames, which will cost $3. Among these each will find one or two that will be becoming. Frames are twenty-five cents each usually, and the express on the parcel will add only two or three cents to each. In the same way several women may send for an assortment of felt or straw hats for themselves and their little girls, giving some directions as to colors and prices. The stores will mail price lists on application, but hats run from fifty cents, or even less, up to $2 or $3; but a fairly good quality can always be bought for $1 or $1.50. It is well not to order
materials and trimmings till you have selected shape or hat.

The magazines contain many good designs that can be copied at home, and it is a good plan to cut out what one likes and send it to the store, asking them to send the nearest they can get to that shape. In that case you may be able to get the trimmings at the same time, setting a limit price to the whole.

One of the most difficult things for the amateur is to calculate the quantity of materials required for the copying of a picture of a hat. A simple guide is the nose, which is on an average two inches long; judge then of the relative length of the bows or other parts of the hat by the nose of the picture, and from this calculate the whole; remember that the loops of bows are double.

TO MAKE SIMPLE FRAMES

For those who are unable to obtain frames we will give an easy, simple method of making, which any woman with average intelligence will be able to use as the foundation for a number of variations.

Take the measure of the head to be fitted above the forehead and around the back of the
head, not too low. Heads, with their various arrangements of hair, vary much, and a child's head will be found larger in proportion than that of an adult.

Decide by the shape of the face and features how wide the brim must be; for a child it is best the same width all round, and this is the easiest frame to make first. Draft and cut it in stiff paper first. Let us say the brim is to be 5 inches wide, and the head measures $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches round, the diameter of $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which is the measure across the head size; add to this twice 5 inches for back and front brim, and you have the entire diameter of the hat. Cut a square of paper measuring $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches along each side; fold it over in half, and in half again, making a quarter size square (see Fig. 1); fold this over in a three-

![Figs. 1 and 2.—Making Perfect Round from Square.](image)
cornered wedge and over once more, and slope off in a curve all that is above the shortest
fold. (See Fig. 2 A.) Measure from the wide end toward the point of the wedge 5 inches, mark in the middle and at each side, and cut out in a curve from edge to edge (see Fig. 2 B); when the paper is unfolded you should have the correct pattern of the brim; if there are any little corners, trim them carefully off so as to get a perfectly even line, as also at the head line (Fig. 3).

To get the pattern for top of crown, use the piece cut from the middle, flatten it out, and by it cut another perfect pattern. The piece for side of crown cut 17½ inches long and 2 to 3 inches wide, a perfectly straight strip; this is the simplest form of crown.

If the brim is wanted narrower at the back, fold the pattern lengthwise from front to back; mark the back the width desired and with a pencil trace a curve forward, gradually running nearer
to the edge till it meets at the side, or nearer the
front if the brim is to be narrower at the sides.
(See Fig. 4.) If one side is wanted wider than the
other trace the two sides separately, or add on a piece,
curving it to the desired shape and size; this must, of course, be
done in the pattern.

Buckram and wire are needed to make frames;
these can be got at any good dry-goods store;
buckram is sixteen to twenty cents the yard, which
will make two frames; the wire—a medium size—is twenty-five cents for a ring of thirty-six yards,
but small rings, enough for one buckram frame,
are sold for five cents. You will also need wire
cutters and small pliers, obtainable at a hardware
store.

Lay the pattern to the best advantage on the
buckram. (See Fig. 5.) Pin with strong pins and
trace around with pencil or chalk, and remove pat-
tern. (See Fig. 5.) Draw a second circle three
quarters of an inch inside the head line and cut
round there; then snip, at one-inch spaces, all
round from this cut line to the head line; this is to turn up into the crown. (See Fig. 6.) The outer edge is cut along the line without any margin. Cut the top of crown without any turnings, taking care to have a perfect round without any little angles; cut the strip for side of crown eighteen and a half inches, which allows for a one-inch lap, as the circumference always takes up a little.

To make a saucer brim from this simple frame, draw a circle two inches within the edge and slit from the edge to this line at one and a half-inch
spaces, and lap each snipped section a very little, sewing firmly (Fig. 6). A mushroom or turned-down shape is the saucer brim reversed, and the crown put on with the brim drooping from it instead of rising around it (see Fig. 7). If a turban is wanted, lap the pieces till they stand upright, or cut off at the two-inch line and, after wiring, sew on a straight strip two inches wide. (See Fig. 8.)

To wire and put frame together, sew the wire around the edge of brim with buttonhole or "blanket" stitches three quarters of an inch long, lap the ends two inches and secure firmly. (See Fig. 9.) Buttonhole sew a wire flat on the brim at the head line. (See Fig. 7.) Buttonhole sew a wire round the crown top (see Fig. 7), lap the wire ends two inches and secure firmly. Now sew the side of crown to the top by another line of but-
tonhole stitches, holding the two edge to edge; thus
the one wire does for both; backstitch down where
the side piece laps; set it on the brim and button-
hole the lower edge to the wire which you have set
around the head line, turning the snipped part up
inside the crown and securing this with long
stitches inside and short backstitches outside.

In the saucer and mushroom brims sew a wire
along the inner circle two inches from the edge;
and for the turban, wire the cut edge, sew the two-
inch strip (with buttonhole stitch) to this wire,
holding it upright, and then wire the upper edge.

Save the paper patterns, as you will need them
for covering the frames.

Bandeaux, which are set under hats to lift
them becomingly, are made of buckram cut to the

Fig. 10.—Side Bandeau; Sewing on
Wire with Buttonhole Stitch.

Fig. 11.—All-Round, or
Crown Bandeau.

required shape and wired round in the same way
as the frames (Figs. 10 and 11).