CHAPTER 15

MATERNITY CLOTHES AND THE LAYETTE

Skirts—Inside Belts—Waists and Blouses—Waist Linings—Coats—Capes—
Suits—Materials—Colors—Corsets—Shoes—Lingerie and
Underwear—The Layette

Maternity clothes have two objects: One is to make your condition unnoticeable, the other is to give you every physical advantage possible. If your clothes make you feel conspicuous and awkward you will shrink from going out and will suffer from lack of exercise and legitimate amusement which would keep you in a happy, contented frame of mind. Under such conditions you would be likely to become morbid, and your depression might seriously affect the physical condition of your child and his character and disposition. If you keep happy and contented yourself you stand a better chance of having a happy, sunny, normal child.

Your clothes must be the right weight so that they will not tire or strain you. They must be the right size so that they give your figure proper support without compressing it or retarding its development.

Clothes that are designed solely for maternity wear are apt to look the part, and call attention to a woman’s condition. At this time you do not want to be conspicuous in any way. You want to look as much like other women as possible so that there will be nothing to draw notice to you. It is much better to choose current styles that can be adapted to maternity wear and use them in preference to the special maternity clothes. Your things will be prettier and smarter and of more use to you later. The slight alterations that you make for maternity use can be changed back to normal lines after the baby is born.

You should avoid anything that is extreme or bizarre or that will enlarge your figure unnecessarily. Skirts with plaits, long soft tunics, or soft fulness are admirable, for they give you the size you need at the waist. You should not use a skirt that is extremely narrow. It might become too small for you before the baby is born. If you select such a style it is advisable to add sufficient width to it in cutting.

Skirts—A skirt can be adapted to maternity use by allowing extra length at the top in front. The allowance should be three inches deep at the center front and slope to nothing to the hip. As your skirt grows shorter across the front you will let out this allowance to keep it even at the bottom. A skirt that is short across the front and pokes out calls immediate attention to your condition. Until you need this extra allowance it can be turned under and its inside edge covered with seam binding.

The Inside Belt of skirts and dresses should be of elastic webbing. New belts should be put in from time to time so that the belt will always be easy. It should never compress the figure. The point of the elastic webbing is not to allow the belt to stretch to your new proportions; it is to allow for the transient changes in the figure, the temporary inflations that come and go during the day.

Waists and Blouses—in selecting waists either for separate blouses or as part of dresses, choose soft styles that do not fit the figure too closely. Long overblouses when in style are very good, because they have plenty of size at the waistline. Surplice waists, especially when they are made with sashes, adapt themselves to your changing figure with the tying of the sash. Waists with soft fulness when they are used as part of a dress made with a soft skirt should be joined to the skirt before either the waist or the top of the skirt is gathered. A casing should be placed at the waistline and the fulness of both the waist and skirt drawn in with the same drawstring. (Chapter 23, page 111.)
WAIST LININGS—It is better not to make dresses and waists with waist linings which would have to be altered from time to time. Instead you should wear a brassière that supports your figure and keeps it neat and trim. A brassière should not be worn at all snug, for it must not compress the figure or prevent its development. Surplice brassières are excellent, for they adjust themselves each time they are put on. Or you can use the fitted brassière with under-arm seams laced with elastic cord which can be let out when necessary.

COATS, CAPEs, SUITS—For the street a long coat or a cape is usually better than a suit. For some seasons suit styles are excellent for maternity wear. The coat should not be close fitting. It should have plenty of width at the waistline, and if necessary it should be cut with extra width allowed on the front edge of each front so that it will not become too small.

MATERIALS AND COLORS—It is advisable to choose materials that are as light in weight as possible especially for coats and street dresses. As far as possible wear the light-weight silks and satins even in Winter in your dresses. Get the necessary warmth from your underwear and your wraps. Coats and wraps of course must be warm for cold weather, but you can choose materials that are warm and light.

Do not choose loud or light colors for maternity use. The quiet colors are less noticeable and the dark colors make you look small. Avoid anything with large figures or conspicuous stripes, checks or plaids. In Summer you will want to wear white and light colors during hot weather, because they are cooler than dark colors, but in other seasons the dark colors are more practical for the street. Use light colors for the house.

CORSETS—As soon as you find that you need them get the best maternity corsets that you can afford. The muscles of the abdomen require additional support at this time and if you wear poor corsets or go without corsets altogether you run the risk of getting permanently out of shape and perhaps losing your figure altogether even after the baby is born. If you keep well corseted the chances are that your figure will come back to its original lines.

With your corsets you must wear hose supporters. A round garter is very dangerous, for it checks the circulation and might induce varicose veins.

SHOES—Your shoes should have flat, rather low heels so that you will not run the risk of turning your ankles and getting a fall. In wet or slippery weather be sure to wear rubbers. If you fall or wrench yourself you might bring on a miscarriage.

LINGERIE AND UNDERWEAR—For maternity wear you will probably need lingerie at least two sizes larger than the underwear you ordinarily use. Instead of petticoats it is advisable to wear princess slips, for the weight rests on the shoulders instead of at the waistline. If you use combination drawers and corset cover you must allow extra length in the lower part in cutting them. Slash the pattern just below the hip and separate the pieces about three inches before you cut your material. In your envelope chemises you will need extra length at the end of the tab. Make a three-inch allowance on the tab in cutting. Nightgowns should open down the front.

In Winter wear wool or part wool union suits, and many doctors advise long sleeves and drawers that come to the ankle. It is very important to keep the body an even warmth. If you take cold at this time it is likely to go to the kidneys and cause trouble later.

You should place yourself under the care of a good physician as soon as possible and follow his advice in regard to exercises, diet, etc. Under normal conditions a certain amount of exercise is very desirable. It keeps you in good general condition.

You ought never to lift heavy things, or reach up for anything that might strain you. Violent exercises of course are taboo.

THE LAYETTE

All baby clothes should be white, and as fine and dainty as possible. Pale shades of baby pink and blue can be used for ribbons on dresses and caps, for linings in lingerie caps and for the linings of Summer coats of batiste, handkerchief linen and crêpe de Chine.
Pale pink and blue are also used for baby jackets, sweaters and bootees, and for afghans, blankets, shawls, etc. But the actual dresses, slips, caps and coats, petticoats, etc., are always white.

The layette given below is absolutely complete and large enough to keep a baby fresh and dainty if one can have constant laundry work done. It is, however, the smallest possible layette that is safe to start with, and if possible it would be desirable to enlarge it especially in the matter of diapers, bands and shirts. With as small a layette as this you might be tempted to put on a band or shirt twice without washing them first, or put on a diaper that had not dried entirely. A little baby must be kept absolutely clean, warm and dry. You must have:

4 abdominal bands, soft flannel strips unhemmed.
4 knitted bands with shoulder straps
4 shirts size 2, wool and cotton, or wool and silk, not all wool
4 dozen diapers
4 flannel petticoats or 4 barrie coats
4 cotton or lawn petticoats
6 simple slips of thin cambric or nainsook
2 dresses
2 wrappers

The baby’s basket should contain:

An old, soft clean shawl or blanket to receive the baby at birth
4 dozen safety-pins, different sizes
A roll of sterile gauze
Squares of old linen to be thrown away after using
Absorbent cotton

BANDS—The flannel bands are worn to protect the navel-cord dressing until the baby is six weeks old. If they are tight they will prevent digestion and cause hernia. They must be smooth and firm, but not tight. You can make the flannel bands with raw edges or turn the edges on the right side and catchstitch them. (III. 115.) When the baby is six weeks old he begins to wear the knitted bands with shoulder-strap. They protect him from cold and colic. The tabs at the front and back are pinned to the diapers to keep them in place.

SHIRTS—If you buy the baby shirts, get the second size, for they outgrow the first size almost immediately. It is much less expensive to make them yourself from fine white flannel. Every stitch should be made by hand with great care in finishing all of the seams, hems and turnings as flatly as possible, as otherwise they are likely to make the child uncomfortable. The shoulder and underarm seams should be pressed open, after stitching, and both seam edges catchstitched on the inside of the garment.

Double turned hems are frequently dispensed

3 pairs of bootees
4 pairs of stockings, silk and wool or cotton and wool
4 nightslips, or nightgowns of flannel
1 coat and cap, and 1 veil
2 cashmere sacks
2 blankets
1 bath apron
1 rubber sheet
6 soft towels
3 knitted wash-cloths
6 piqué bibs

2 ounces of boracic acid
4-ounce bottle of olive-oil or sweet-oil
Talcum powder
Hot-water bag with flannel cover
Infants’ soft hair-brush; jar of vaseline; small pair of scissors
Cake of Castile soap
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 Ill. 116.

**DIAPERS**

There are three kinds of diapers—bird’s-eye linen, cotton diaper cloth and stockinet. They are twice as long as they are wide and are finished with narrow hems at each end. You will need three pieces of the diaper cloth, eighteen, twenty and twenty-four inches wide. If you like, you can buy the diapers ready made, sterilized and ready to use.

**PETTICOATS**—An infants’ petticoat is finished according to the material of which it is made. The princess petticoat is the best style for the baby, for it is the easiest to put on, the weight hangs from the shoulders, it keeps the body an even warmth and it is loose at the waistline. (Ill. 117.) Some women prefer a petticoat gathered to a band or body, but the princess style is safer and is used at the best baby hospitals.

**FLANNEL PETTICOATS**

should be made of fine flannel. The seams should be stitched and finished as shown in Illustrations 138 or 139 on page 83. The underarm seams are finished in the regulation manner with catch-stitching or feather-stitching.

The bottom of the skirt may be embroidered, scalloped or trimmed with feather-stitching, or the hem can be finished as shown in Illustrations 173 and 174 on page 92.

The princess petticoat is fastened on one or both shoulders by ribbons or buttonholes. The neck and armhole edges may be bound with ribbon or tape or finished with a scalloped edge worked in white embroidery silk. (Ill. 117.) If the petticoat is to be embroidered don’t cut out the neck and armhole but mark the outline of the pattern with a colored
thread. The design can be stamped along the outline and cut out after the embroidery is finished.

The petticoat joined to a body is shown in Illustrations 119 and 120.

The petticoat is finished in French seams. 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 (Ill. 118). Lap the wide hem over the narrow (Ill. 118), and tack firmly at the bottom of the placket with two rows of machine stitching, preferably running slanting (Ill. 118).

The body is either cut single of flannel or cambric and faced at the neck and armhole after the shoulder and underarm are joined in a French seam (Ill. 119), or cut of two layers of cambric, one serving as the lining (Ill. 120).

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 (Ill. 119).

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 (Ill. 120). 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 (Ill. 120). The shoulders are stitched in a fell seam. (Chapter 17, page 86.)

A BARRIECOAT OR PINNING BLANKET is an open front petticoat made of flannel and sometimes used in place of a flannel petticoat. Its ends can be turned up and pinned to keep the baby’s feet warm. Hospitals and doctors do not approve of it, for it prevents the baby from kicking and strengthening its legs. The front and lower edges are turned in hems and feather-stitched on the outside. (See Ill. 121.)

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 part of the lower edge not sewed to the skirt. The ends are left open until the tape is inserted. The body is stitched where it is sewed to the skirt 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 Illustration 121. 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 or overhand the two folded edges together to finish the armhole. The edges of the body portion should be basted and then feather-stitched. Baste about an inch each side of the perforations that indicate the opening to be made at the right 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 pinned.

WHITE PETTICOATS—Here again the princess style is the best though the petticoat gathered to a band or body is also used. White petticoats are made of batiste or nainsook
or cambric, and are trimmed with tucks (Chapter 20), feather-stitching (Chapter 25), French knots, or with ruffles edged with lace or with ruffles of embroidery (Chapter 27) or a deep hem (Chapter 18).

**SLIPS**—Day slips are made of batiste, nainsook, lawn, fine cambric or cross-barred dimity trimmed simply with a little narrow lace at the neck and sleeves. Babies wear them in place of dresses most of the time, for under afghans and blankets a dress shows very little.

Night slips are made like the day slips but without the lace and are usually of fine cambric (Ill. 122). Many hospitals use a flannel nightgown which is worn in place of the nightslip and flannel petticoat.

A slip should be put together with narrow French seams. In the model shown in Ill. 122, 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 (Ill. 122).

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 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 (Ill. 123). It is held in place by a slanting row of stitching at the end of the opening.

**DRESSES**—The baby will need a handsome dress for christening robe made of lawn, nainsook, batiste or handkerchief linen. The christening robe is generally made with a yoke and panel in front and this part of the dress can be of all-over tucking, or very fine embroidery. The simpler dresses are made of lawn, nainsook, dimity and batiste and are trimmed with smocking, hemstitching, featherstitching, French knots and tucks. Fine little dresses are made of batiste, fine nainsook and handkerchief linen usually with a small embroidered yoke and with an embroidered or lace-trimmed ruffle at the bottom.

**A DAINTY YOKE may be made by over-handing together alternating rows of lace insertion and embroidery insertion.**

Fine tucking rolled and whipped to lace insertion also makes a pretty yoke.

Narrow seaming or hemstitched beading may be used to join the yoke to the dress. The material on each side of the seaming should be rolled and whipped (Ill. 311, page 134), to the yoke on one side and the dress on the other. Or the seaming can be joined to the dress and yoke with tiny French seams.

The shoulder seams may be joined with the seaming in the same way, and the seaming may be used as a finish for the neck and sleeves. The material on the lower edge of the seaming should be joined to the neck and sleeve edges as described above. The material on the outer edge of the seaming should be cut away close to the seaming and a narrow French valenciennes lace whipped to the seaming to finish the neck and sleeves. This makes a dainty finish.

Baby clothes should be made entirely by hand and in the dresses the seams should be put together with narrow French seams or fine entre-deux. (Chapter 27, Ill. 307.) For
special occasions the baby’s dresses can be trimmed with shoulder bows and rosettes of blue, pink or corn color.

COATS—Even in Winter very little babies go out of doors when the temperature is 40 degrees or over. For Winter the coat should be of silk or wool Bedford cord, silk or wool cashmere, Henrietta or very fine corduroy. In these materials the coat is trimmed with stitched bands of taffeta, swan’s down, embroidery or suitable lace. It should be lined with soft silk, China silk or fine sateen and for cold weather or a cold climate it will need an interlining of fine wool or fine silk or a soft flannel. These coats are always white.

If wool interlining is used the wool is picked away from the cheese-cloth around the seams to avoid bulkiness. It should be cut without the seam and hem allowance. Instead of making the regular seam, draw the shoulder and underarm edges together with a loose overhand or ball-stitch, (page 147, Ill. 351) making them lie perfectly flat. (Ill. 124.) 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. (Ill. 124.) Place the lining in the sleeves; gather sleeve and lining separately at the top. Stitch the sleeve in the coat leaving the lining loose. (Ill. 125.) 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.

For Summer very dainty coats are made of batiste, dotted swiss, handkerchief linen or crépe de Chine over a lining of white, pale pink or pale blue China silk. They are trimmed with hand embroidery in small fine patterns and with lace.

Piqué and henrietta could also be used for Summer baby coats. The lower and front edges may be hemmed by hand or held in place by machine stitching on the outside. The same finish is carried out at the neck and wrist.

CAPS—For Winter the cap matches the coat in material and trimming, or if you prefer you can use lingerie caps over a padded silk lining of white, pale pink or pale blue China
silk. The cap-strings are always separate and are made of hemstitched lawn, batiste or handkerchief linen. They are pinned on with baby pins and changed every day. In Winter a baby will need a ready-made veil of fine knitted silk or Brussels net edged with satin ribbon.

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. (Ill. 126.)

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 (Ill. 126) and is held in position by a feather-stitch. 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 Illustration 127.

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 kimono 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 feather-stitching, or they may be buttonholed together by a scalloped edge. The feather-stitching is given in Chapter 25, “Trimming Stitches.”

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 and upper part of the shoe may 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 then 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.
BLANKETS, AFGHANS, ETC.—The blanket should be 45 inches long and the width of the material. The handsomest blankets are made of double-faced eider-down, the edges bound with wide satin ribbon with the sewing line covered with French knots or feather-stitching. Blankets and afghans are always white, pink or blue, or white with pink or blue, or pink and blue together. The knitted afghans are made of wool. Two thicknesses of Shetland wool in pink or blue, or white with pink or blue, put together with a satin ribbon binding makes a dainty afghan for Summer. There are always new and charming ideas in afghans and the best ones with directions for making them will be found in Needle-Art. A very nice blanket can be made with two thicknesses of cheese-cloth with one thickness of cotton wadding between them. The edges are bound together with ribbon or scalloping and the three thicknesses are caught together with satin bows or knots of baby ribbon.

The baby will need little jackets, wrappers, saeks and bootees. You will find an excellent collection of them in the Butterick catalogue and publications and very exquisite French designs for embroidering them are given in Needle-Art. These things, however, should be left toward the last, for you are very apt to receive them as presents. They make interesting work for the last few weeks when you are more or less confined to the house and do not feel like doing other things.