CHAPTER 18

HEMS

Hems—Napery or Damask Hem—French Hem—Square Corners—
Mitered Corners—Circular Hem—Plain Hem

A HEM is a finish for the edges of garments, household linens, etc. It is made by turning the edge of the material over twice. (Ill. 167.) The first turning should be narrow and must of course be perfectly even. The depth of the second turning depends on where the hem is used and the effect you want to give. Mark the depth of the second turning on the material with pins, using as a marker a card notched the desired depth of the hem. Fold the material on the line with the pins and if the hem is wide, baste it at both the top and bottom.

A NAPERY OR DAMASK HEM is used on napkins and table-cloths. Turn under the edge of the material twice for a narrow hem. Fold the hem back on the right side, crease the material along the first fold, and overhand the fold and crease together. The needle is inserted straight, as shown in Illustration 168. Open and flatten stitches with the thumb-nail. If a square is used, turn the opposite side in the same manner. Hem the sides before folding back on the right side. No basting is needed for this hem. Take small stitches so that the work will look well when the hem is turned down. Directions for hemstitching will be found on page 120.

SQUARE CORNERS are used in hemming squares or oblongs. Turn under the hem on one edge and then turn under the hem on the edge at right angles with the first. Crease the line where the fold of the second hem crosses the first hem. Open both hems and cut away the first hem to within a seam’s width of the crease and the fold of the hem. (Ill. 169.) Turn under the hems again and hem the overlapping edges of the second hem to the under side of the first hem (Ill. 170) but not through to the right side. Finish all square corners in this way.

MITERED CORNERS are made by joining two bias edges to form an angle. Turn the edges as for hems, and crease. Open the material, fold the corner toward the center, and crease where the lines cross. Cut the corner off, allowing
a narrow turning (Ill. 171). Fold the hems down all around, bring the mitered corners together, and hem the side (Ill. 172). Hem the corners, but do not catch the stitches through the material underneath.

**FRENCH HEM** The seams must be stitched to within twice the depth of the finished hem, as shown in Illustration 173. Clip the seam at this point to the stitching, turn the lower edges toward the right side and stitch the remainder of the seam. Press open, turn the hem to the right side, baste and feather-stitch (Ill. 174), or finish in any desirable way.
A CIRCULAR HEM is often used on a skirt or garment that is not straight at the lower edge.

If the material is soft in texture, the top of the hem is simply turned under and a gathering-thread run in close to the turning. (Ill. 175.) Draw the gathering-thread till the top of the hem is the same size as the part to which it is to be sewed. (Ill. 175.) Blind-stitch it or machine-stitch it to the garment.

If the material of the garment is of heavy weight the upper edge should be gathered without turning it under (Ill. 176) and the raw edge should be covered with a strip of seam-binding. (Ill. 176.) The lower edge of this seam-binding should be sewed to the hem but not to the garment.

Before sewing the top of the hem in place slip a piece of muslin cut the shape of the bottom of the garment under the hem and press the hem flat, shrinking out as much of the fulness as possible. The piece of muslin will prevent the fulness in the hem from making marks on the garment during the pressing. The piece of muslin need not be the full width or size of the garment or hem. It can be a comparatively short piece and can be moved as the pressing is done.

After the hem has been pressed in this manner, hem the upper edge of the seam binding to the garment with invisible stitches.

A HEM FOR A SLIGHTLY GORED OR STRAIGHT SKIRT. The hem edge is turned under in the usual way. If an invisible sewing is desired, the turned-under edge of the hem is stitched close to the turning and then blind-stitched neatly and carefully to the garment.