CHAPTER VII

USE AND CARE OF SEWING MACHINE

Sewing machine.—A sewing machine is a valuable aid in teaching sewing. Sufficient handwork may be given in connection with the machine-made garments to afford the practice which will give the necessary skill in hand sewing. Is it not reasonable to teach the girls, while in school, the methods which they must and should use later on? Most of them will be busy housekeepers some day without a great deal of time for hand sewing. It therefore seems unfair, to say the least, to require hours and hours of time to be spent sewing up long seams by hand. Sewing machine companies make special prices to schools, usually quite a reduction. If you cannot persuade the school board to buy a machine for you, you might borrow or rent one the first year until you can demonstrate that the results warrant the expenditure. Possibly you could raise part of the money by a school entertainment or in some such way. If you cannot buy, beg, or borrow a machine, allow the children to stitch the long
seams at home. Be sure the work is carefully pinned or basted in place and also that the child knows exactly what to do before allowing the work to be taken home. There is always the possibility of mistakes when work is done away from your supervision, but in this case it is a question of choosing the lesser of two evils.

There are several good makes of machines and in general it is best to choose one which has an agency in your community. This will give you access to an agent who can keep the machine in good condition. With a number of inexperienced people using a machine it will get out of order from time to time and need the attention of one who understands it thoroughly. The machines having a round shuttle with a rotary or oscillating movement run more quietly than the old-fashioned long variety. The round bobbins hold more than the others and so do not need refilling as often.

Use and Care of Sewing Machine

General Directions.

Keep all attachments in their proper places.

In adjusting attachments see that they are pushed on as closely as possible and screwed tightly.

Before sewing see that every part is oiled and
wiped, and when through clean away all lint and dust.

Do not run the machine rapidly and then make sudden stops.

Do not run the machine when it is threaded unless there is cloth under the foot.

To turn a corner, lower the needle so that it will hold the cloth firmly; then raise the presser foot and turn the work, using the needle as a pivot.

Do not pull the cloth when stitching.

Before removing cloth raise the needle and the take-up to the highest point, then pull the cloth backward under the presser-foot and cut on the thread cutter. Do not pull thread toward you—it bends the needle.

See that the needle is set correctly, and never try to use one with a blunt point. A fine stitch made with a blunt needle will cut the material.

In setting the needle be sure it is correctly placed, shoved up as far as it should go, and that the screw is tight.

Consult your instruction book for means of regulating the stitch.

The stitch should not be longer than three or four threads of the goods.

Test the stitch on small sample before beginning work again if some one has used the machine since you left it. The size of the stitch
should be kept the same throughout your garment.

When finishing a seam, stitch back at least eight or ten stitches. Be especially careful when stitching pockets on aprons or other such points where there is unusual strain.

Be sure the tension is not too tight, especially for wash goods. The strain of washing and ironing will tear the thread. Rather have the tension too loose than too tight.

_Causes for thread breaking._

I. If upper thread breaks see if—
   a. Machine is properly threaded.
   b. Needle rubs against presser-foot.
   c. Upper tension is too tight.
   d. Needle is set properly.
   e. Needle is correct size for thread.
   f. Eye of the needle is sharp or rough.
   g. Point of needle bent or broken.

II. If lower thread breaks see if—
   a. Bobbin is too full.
   b. Bobbin is unevenly wound.
   c. Bobbin case is correctly threaded.
   d. Thread slipped over the bobbin in the shuttle.

_If the stitches slip see if—_
   a. Needle is bent.
   b. Needle is set incorrectly.
   c. Needle is too fine for thread.
   d. Shuttle point is broken.
If the material puckers see if—
a. Tension is too tight above or below.
b. Too much or too light pressure on presser-foot.

Do not attempt to regulate tension without consulting the instruction book.

Before beginning work on the articles or garments, practice on waste material until you are sure of doing the work correctly and neatly.

A good exercise for machine practice is to rule a piece of paper with several parallel lines. Without thread on the machine have the pupils stitch, following these lines as closely as possible.

The larger part of the presser-foot should always be at the left of the line which is being followed.

Design for undergarments.—In choosing the design for a garment, simplicity should be kept in mind. This is especially true when planning those garments which will be worn frequently. The question of laundering is an important one. A simply trimmed garment will stand laundering so much better than the elaborate lace adorned one. The kimono gown, simple princess slip, and chemise, finished with a little good lace or embroidery and possibly some hand embroidery, show much better taste than the type often seen bedecked with yards of cheap lace and ribbon.
The following points should be kept in mind when choosing material for undergarments:

1. Purpose of the garment.

2. Amount of dressing in material (can be estimated by allowing the light to shine through, by rubbing between the hands, or by washing a sample and comparing it with the original).

3. Comparative strength.

4. Width—often wide materials cut to better advantage and avoid piecing.

5. The amount you wish to spend.

6. Transparency—very sheer material for gowns is immodest. Sheer material in a princess slip necessitates an extra petticoat if worn with thin dresses.

Cotton crêpe, which has been used so much the last few years, is well deserving of its popularity because it saves work in ironing. Some object to the serpentine crêpe for nightgowns because it has a tendency to form in uncomfortable rolls under the body. The seersucker crêpe does not do this.

Much of the crêpe on the market at the present time is very sheer, but firmer qualities are also manufactured.

The choice of trimming depends largely on the kind of material to be used. A firm material requires a cambric embroidery or a heavy lace, etc. The trimming should be suited to the material. It should look as if it belonged
with it. The edge of the trimming usually receives the most wear and, therefore, it is important to choose a piece with a good firm edge.

Insist that pupils choose simple, durable, and inexpensive trimming for the garments they make. Help them to see that there is greater beauty in good material, a little nice trimming, and good workmanship than in the overtrimmed garment.

Apply the following questions when deciding between two or more possible methods.

1. Which gives the greatest strength?
2. Which makes the best appearance when finished?
3. Which requires the least time?

That giving the best results in the shortest time should be chosen.

**Kimono Nightgown**

**Pattern.**—The kimono gown could be drafted very easily. It is so simple that it is hardly necessary to buy a pattern. If you wish to, use a commercial pattern, having each girl adjust to her measures, keeping the bottom the desired width. The length from shoulder to floor, bust, and length of arm from neck to elbow should be considered in modifying the commercial pattern.

**Material.**—The kimono nightdress may be
made of a material suitable for summer wear or of outing flannel for use in winter. The season of the year should determine what material should be used.

The amount required will be twice the length from the shoulder to the floor plus the allowance for the hem.

Trimming of some kind should be placed around the neck and sleeves. The amount needed may be determined by measuring these places.

Cutting.—If the drafted pattern is used, fold material crosswise and place pattern at folded edge. Cut out, allowing 2" for hem, if allowance was not made on the pattern. It is well to finish cutting the neck with the garment on the figure to be sure it will be just as you want it. The neck may be round or square or pointed as desired.

Seams.—Either French or felled seams may be used. The seams may be sewed up once on the machine and then felled down by hand. This makes a good combination of hand and machine work. French seams sewed both times on the machine will give more practice in machine work. The kimono nightgown is a good garment on which to begin machine sewing because of the long straight seams. Use pins instead of basting on the long seams. Make seams as narrow as possible.
Finishing.—Finish sleeves and neck with linen lace or embroidery with a finished edge. The latter may be attached with a lapped seam. It makes a very simple, durable finish and is easily put on. Trimming made with a bias piece of the material, caught down at regular intervals, makes an extremely simple and attractive finish for the neck and sleeves of a kimono gown.

Using a cardboard gauge, mark a 2" hem. In turning the hem be sure that the seams are folded back upon themselves. Use tiny pleats to distribute the fullness evenly. Hem down by hand or stitch on the machine.

If desired, three 1/4" tucks may be put in on each shoulder. Baste in place, leaving 1/2" between the tucks. Secure tucks by using some fancy stitch as featherstitching.

Additional problems on an outing flannel gown.—The gown to be worn in cold weather should have a high neck and long sleeves. Finish neck as shown in illustration. Cut out just enough to make it fit comfortably when buttoned at the neck.

Cut or tear an opening on the center front line, about twelve to fifteen inches down from the neck. This opening must be of sufficient length to allow the garment to slip on and off easily. To finish the placket see previous directions. The last suggestion will do very
nicely for this first garment. It is the most simple method suitable for this garment and will look neat if carefully done.

To finish the front and neck as shown in the illustration, baste bias lawn tape, beginning at
the neck ¾" from the center of the finished placket. Continue straight down ½" below the opening. Turn a square corner and run across to the edge and then up and around the neck. The edge of the tape should come just to the edge of the opening down the front. Baste the second row of bias tape so that the space between the two rows will be the same as the space between the two rows down the front. Stitch around both sides of the bias tape and ornament with featherstitching if desired.

*To lengthen the sleeves.*—Attach a piece of sufficient length by using an ordinary seam, catchstitched down on the wrong side. The warp threads in the piece sewed on should run around the sleeve as in the rest of the sleeve.

*To finish the bottom of the sleeves.*

1. Gather the sleeve into a straight cuff about 2" wide when finished, and trim with the bias bands and featherstitching to harmonize with the neck and front. The easiest method, and a very satisfactory one, if carefully done, is to join the cuff to the sleeve before the seam is sewed up. Care must be taken to have the edges of the cuff and the bias bands match when the seam is sewed.

a. Gather the bottom of the sleeve into such an amount as will allow the finished sleeve to slip over the hand easily. Place the cuff to which the bias bands have been stitched with
the wrong side of the sleeve and the right side of the cuff together and baste. Turn to the right side, fold under the raw edge \( \frac{1}{4} \)", baste so as just to cover the gathering thread, and stitch.

b. To attach the cuff after the seam of the sleeve has been sewed, proceed according to directions given above except that the cuff must be sewed together before being turned back and stitched or hemmed down to the right side.

2. The bottom of the sleeve may also be finished as follows:

Baste and stitch as narrow a hem as possible in the bottom. Put in a gathering thread 1 1/2" above the hem. Fasten the thread so that it will slip over the hand easily. Cover with a band of bias tape. Another gathering thread and band of the bias tape might be placed about 1" above the first if desired.

*Buttons and buttonholes.*—Place buttons and buttonholes down the center front three or four inches apart. See directions for making buttonholes and sewing on buttons. Have the pupil make a sample buttonhole on a scrap of cloth before attempting one on the garment. This is essential, as a buttonhole cannot be taken out and done over.

Calculate cost of material used. Keep track of the time spent in making the garment and estimate the value by counting five cents an
hour for beginners and ten cents an hour for a more experienced person.

Compare material, workmanship, style, finish, and cost with a similar ready-to-wear garment. This should be done for each garment that is made.