CHAPTER XI

EMBROIDERY AND FINE NEEDLEWORK

Embroidery.—Embroidery, once used mostly as a pastime for leisure hours, has grown into an art of real commercial value. In mastering the technique of the work there are several points to be considered: (a) the material upon which the work is to be done; (b) the purpose for which it is to be used; (c) the design; (d) the choice of stitches best suited to material and design.

Embroidery hoops for general use should be from 4" to 4½" in diameter, and should fit snugly. If they are loose, wind them with clean, white cloth. Should the embroidery come so near the edge of the material as to make it impossible to fasten it in the hoops, baste firmly to it a piece of clean muslin wide enough so that the material may be placed in the hoops and drawn down snugly.

In embroidering, change the place of the needle on the thread often to save wear on the silk. Notice the twist of the silk, tension, and stitch direction.
To transfer patterns.—As the directions for stamping are included in the various perforated pattern outfits, only the use of the transfer or carbon paper need be described. Put the article or cloth to be embroidered upon a smooth, flat surface and lay the transfer paper right side down upon the cloth. Over the carbon paper lay the pattern to be transferred, and, being very careful that it is not moved from its position, trace the outline by going over each line with a fine sharp pencil or stiletto. Remove the transfer paper and the design will be found transferred to the material.

To launder embroidery.—Make a strong suds of Ivory soap and tepid water and wash the article by rubbing and squeezing it in the hands. If the embroidery is in colors do not rub the soap directly upon it. Rinse quickly in clear tepid water, roll the article in a dry towel and squeeze until all the water is out, then shake well and roll up in a dry towel until ready for ironing, which should be almost immediately.

Make a thick soft pad by folding up an old blanket, and cover it with fine, smooth muslin. With a hot iron rub over this muslin cover until it is so hot that the hand cannot be laid upon it; place the article to be ironed upon it, face down, and cover it with a smooth, dry cloth; press with a medium hot iron until the article
is nearly dry, then remove the cloth and the article, and once more iron over the muslin pad until it is very hot, replace the article and press until dry with a medium hot iron. Turn the article over and hold the iron close to the raised parts of the embroidery to dry it out. Keeping the muslin hot on which the embroidery rests brings out the luster.

Embroidered flannel is used most for infants' petticoats and sacks, and it forms a most effective decoration and finish. The most satisfactory stitches for this work are the satin stitch, buttonholing, and outline stitch. There are numerous outline stitches, the simplest being formed in the following manner: Working away from you always, bring the needle up through the cloth at the end of the line to be outlined and take a short stitch forward directly on the line allowing the thread to fall to the right each time; take a new stitch above the last one, bringing the needle out at the top of the last stitch each time, in this way forming an apparently unbroken line on the right side of the material, while the back resembles machine stitching.

Buttonholing on flannel is accomplished in this manner: First pad well, within the outlines of the scallops, by using either an irregular running stitch which leaves most of the cotton on the surface, or by filling in with a chainstitch.
Be careful to keep *within* the stamped outline, using but little padding where the design is narrow. For the buttonholing use a heavy silk and take the stitch from the top to the lower stamped line, working from the left to the right. The satin stitch is a *flat laid* stitch, covering the surface of a figure from edge to edge. It may be made over padding or directly upon the fabric, depending upon the nature of the work. In flower designs the satin stitch may begin at the center of each petal and be worked toward the edge, if desired; in leaves a stitch radiating from the midrib will be found more effective.

In embroidering initials and monograms the work is much more effective if it is well padded. Great care must be taken, however, that the padding is regular and smooth, for much of the appearance of the finished work depends upon it. A short irregular running stitch or a chain-
stitch may be used. Be careful to pad within the stamped outline, and always in a direction opposite to that which will be taken by the embroidery stitch. Where the latter widens increase the number of lines of padding, having one line fit close against the other, and where the letter grows narrower lessen the lines of padding. Finish all the padding before beginning to embroider.

In making the satin stitch it is usually more pleasing if taken straight across the space instead of obliquely. Set these stitches covering the padding close together, but do not crowd them so that any of the threads are pushed out of position.

For embroidering the single lines of the initials either a very fine satin stitch or a fine outline stitch may be used.

The satin stitch is most generally used for embroidering initials and monograms, and is also very effective for all kinds of waist and lingerie decoration which is done in white.

Eyelet embroidery is used both alone and in combination with French embroidery, and, if well made, is unusually beautiful. The size of the eyelet and the evenness of workmanship determine almost entirely its attractiveness. Eyelets may be round, oval, or pointed, the stitch in each case being the same.

To open a round eyelet use a bone stiletto,
Set the point of the stiletto in the center of the circle and push gently through until the opening is sufficiently large. With the point of the needle turn the edges of the opening back and under, then with a fine running stitch outline the design; this prevents the edge of the eyelet from fraying. After the eyelet is opened and outlined, set the needle for the stitch just outside of the outline of the eyelet. Bring the point out in the opening and pull through. Repeat until the eyelet is completed and fasten the thread at the completion of each eyelet by running the needle back under the last three or four stitches and pulling through. Clip. The stitch employed for eyelet work is simply the overcasting stitch. It should be pulled up firmly and evenly at each stitch and should take up the least possible amount of material.

**Hemstitch.**—Draw four or five threads where the bottom of the hem is to come. Make a $\frac{1}{4}$" first turning, then fold hem over on wrong side to the edge of drawn threads and baste down carefully, so there will be no danger of the hem losing its position. Much care must be exercised in arranging the corners neatly and evenly. They must be overhanded on the edge. Holding the hem toward you, make the stitch in this manner: decide upon the number of threads to be taken up and keep to that number—the eye is able to determine without count-
ing each time. Four or five threads will usually be sufficient. Beginning at the left side, fasten the thread in the fold of the hem without a knot.

1. Put the needle under the number of threads selected and bring it out without catching it in the threads or hem. Put it back over these same threads and under again as at first, but this time, in coming out, put the needle through the edge of the folded hem beside the last thread, and pull down snugly. Continue in this manner. At the corners more threads will have to be taken up as they are double. Remove bastings when through with the hemstitching.

2. With the thumb on the thread, place the needle under the number of threads selected, bringing it out over the thread, and draw up tightly. With the thread up, take a small stitch in the fold of the hem.

Try both methods on a scrap of cloth, choosing the one you think is the better or easier.

**Featherstitch.**—Knot thread and bring needle up through material. Hold the thread down over the line of direction with the left thumb. Insert needle a little to the left of this line and take a short slanting stitch toward the right, draw the needle out while the thread is held down smoothly by the left thumb; then hold down the thread on the center line and take a stitch of equal length on the right side, slanting toward the left, and draw it out as before. If
the stitches are kept at right angles to each other, it may help to make them regular.

A double or triple combination stitch may be made by taking two or three stitches to the left and right each time.

French knots.—Fasten the thread and draw through the cloth at the point where the French knot is to be made. Hold the needle in the right hand and the thread in the left. Wind the thread around the needle from three to five times, depending upon the coarseness of the thread and the size you desire the finished knot. Keep the loops in place on the needle by holding the thread under the left thumb. Insert the needle very near where the thread was drawn.
through. This brings the thread around the loops, holding them in place.

Chainstitch is worked toward you, holding the cloth over the left forefinger. Fasten the thread at the upper edge and bring the needle through from underneath. Hold the thread to the left with the thumb, insert the needle where the thread comes out and bring it through $\frac{1}{8}$" below, and over the thread to form the loop. Continue in this manner, always inserting the needle inside the loop of the last stitch, and being careful to make the stitches the same length each time.

**Rolled hem.**—Take the straightened edge between the thumb and forefinger of the right
hand; then, with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, roll the material forward, making a very small hem, which securely covers the raw edge, however. Roll about an inch, then hem finely; continue rolling and hemming. The hem easily unrolls so it is better to roll but a short distance; then hem, to keep material fresh.

Rolling and whipping.—This furnishes a very neat method of gathering and finishing a raw edge. It is really a rolled hem secured by a thread which may be pulled up to gather the material into the desired space. Roll the hem according to directions given above. Use a thread which will be heavy enough to stand the strain of pulling up. Fasten it at the right end, and use the overcasting stitch, having the thread go over the hem and not through it. After finishing a couple of inches pull up the thread the desired amount. Proceed as before.