

With Needle and Thread

Any Woman Has the Means to Make Her Clothes and Household Doubly Attractive.

The Secret Lies in the Little, But Important, Accessories to Dress That Women Make for Themselves

The attractive woman is the woman who makes use of the little accessories to the toilette that add charm to dress and appearance. No matter how simple and inexpensive one's attire may be, a little attention to small details will give an appearance of elegance that can be procured in no other way. Fortunately, the means are simple and at every woman's hand. With an embroidery needle and a bit of floss, one can adorn all manner of small dress accessories with attractive designs. Any woman can add the finishing touches to her dress and household goods and secure the desired impression of refinement, costliness and style.

Hand embroidery is always desirable and always possible, for even children quickly learn to accomplish it. There is a distinction about it which always makes itself felt. Never has embroidery had such a vogue as now, and, among all forms of needlework, nothing is at once so practical, so beautiful and so easily achieved.

THE SIMPLE MEANS AT HAND

Happily for the woman who cannot afford expensive dress accessories, those things which are most important in the completion of a gown are most easily and quickly made. The amusement of leisure hours spent in embroidering supplies the wardrobe with its prettiest garnitures. One scarcely realizes a collar set begun before it is ready for wear, and what is so attractive as a collar, belt and tie worked with a corresponding design and proclaiming its handmade, and, therefore, elegant origin at a glance? In some sets cuffs are included, adding further to the charm of the dainty articles.

Simple and somewhat small figures are the mode for present day embroidery designs, and, where scallops are possible upon collars and the ends of ties, they are not only particularly pretty, but exceptionally smart. The custom of edging belts with scallops serves a double purpose of beautifying the belt and making it cling more closely and symmetrically to the lines of the figure. A belt finished with a strong, straight line is apt to wrinkle lengthwise, something which never happens in the case of a belt with scalloped edges.

In working belt scallops it is well to use more filling and stronger outline threads than are necessary or desirable when working scallops on the edges of collars and ends of ties. Run a strong outline thread along the edge of the belt scallops to be worked, and add a soft, strong filling thread of linen or cotton floss. Work the belt with closely laid even embroidery stitches, taking care to place each stitch exactly over the edge of the outline thread so that the work may be perfectly even. Some persons buttonhole belt scallops for greater strength, but this is not necessary if outline threads are run strongly and smoothly in the design before it is worked.

SELECTING THE MATERIAL

The thickness of the embroidery cotton or linen thread should depend upon the quality of the material to be worked. Always state the texture of the article to be worked when purchasing threads.

Linen collars, cuffs and belts require a coarser cotton or linen thread than do lawns and mulls, which are best worked with number 25 and 35 cotton, in French, mercerized qualities. Very sheer mulls and handkerchief linens take an even finer thread. In any case, it is well to use as fine a needle as will work easily with the thread used, because the finer the needle the more closely may stitches be laid, and close stitches are the charm of well made embroidery.

It is a pretty fancy to work one's favorite flower into the design employed upon dress accessory sets. In the butterfly bow or dainty

tie, for example, which finishes an embroidered collar, it is attractive to find a bud or blossom worked in the center of the design. It is easily drawn in, and gives an air of individuality to the article. It is so much the fashion to embroider one's favorite flower upon dress accessories that it is done upon hosiery, in silk floss, in the natural colors of the flowers.

Another useful manner in which to use embroidery is the charming method of making a white shirtwaist match a colored costume. Stamp upon the waist, collar, tie, belt and cuffs or wristband the design to be worked, and then work it in a color to match that of the dress with which the set is to be worn. There is a dressiness and prettiness about such a waist set not to be achieved in a waist made of the dress material. White gives a cool expression to the costume, no matter what its hue may be, and the colored embroidery stamps the waist and its little belongings as a part of the costume, and not a separate garment donned for the sake of convenience.

HAND WORK HAS VARIOUS USES

Not only is it the mode to give, by means of hand embroidery, such a touch of completeness to the little things worn with a dress, but it is extremely fashionable to add all the embroidery compatible with its style to the dress itself. Pretty "jumper" dresses, where the belt connects low-cut waist and skirt, have the belt worked in the same design embroidered upon the band around the low neck and brief Japanese sleeves of the dress bodice. If a high waist is worn, this design is repeated upon the collar and cuffs, but it is prettiest applied to the white collar and tie worn with some sort of little white guimpe. Every woman looks her prettiest in a white guimpe, whether it be cut round, square or pointed, and when the band which borders the neck of this guimpe is worked by hand in some simple and charming embroidery pattern, the woman not only looks pretty, but elegantly attired, as well.

Now that buttons are so lavishly employed as decorations upon gowns of all sorts of character it is the mode to embroider these. This work is rapidly done, for it does not require the care necessary upon more conspicuous articles, but the charm of an embroidered button may not be overestimated, particularly when a black or dark dress depends for its color touches upon the hues worked into the button designs and upon sleeves and collars. In this connection embroidery is also employed upon bows and tabs for the neck, which are worked in the colors shown upon the buttons, and bits of similar embroidery are frequently effectively disposed in the bodice of the dress.

WORKING FLOWER DESIGNS

It is the fashion to make such designs in raised—but not too highly raised—satin stitch. This is the easiest of all embroidery stitches and merely requires care to keep the edges even and the stitches close together. Where a floral design is to be worked, run a filling thread along the stem and outline every edge of flower and leaf with this thread. Twice around, making the stitches alternate with each other, forms a strong outline for a pattern to be raised quite distinctly, but once around is enough for the average pattern. Fill in the flower petals and leaves with lengthwise stitches of soft cotton or linen floss, not too tightly drawn. If the design is to be raised quite high put in several thicknesses of the filling stitches. Then work the design with embroidery cotton, linen or silk—according to the material which is being decorated, over and over the filling threads, drawing smoothly and evenly over each stitch and taking care to put the needle exactly in the outer line of the design. Where an open space is to be worked run a thread around the space for the hole, fill in the edge and pierce the center with a stiletto of ivory or metal. Work over the edge as over the edges of the design. It is customary, where a hole is rather large, to fill it in with a fancy lace stitch, such as fillet or herringbone stitch.

Slender stems in a design are best worked with stem stitch; thicker stems and spirals should be outlined with a thread run along each edge and then worked over and over with solid stitch, such as is in general use at present in all embroidery. Sometimes one finds it easy to work over the edges of a butterfly's wing or the petals of a rose in this fashion and then fill in the wing or petal with French knots. The effect is very pretty and the work rapidly done.