

Amateur Dressmaking without Anxiety

New Styles must be Considered

FOR the last four or five years fashions have been so simple and attractive that practically every girl and woman has been able to make her own dresses and achieve considerable saving. By this means she has been able to indulge in a much more extensive wardrobe.

It is a long lane, however, that has no turning, and the pendulum of fashion has now swung very far indeed in the opposite direction. Those who have not already done so will soon be anxiously searching for a waist-line, swathing our hips, and cultivating curves. In spite of the invectives that have been hurled at the trailing skirts of other days, it does not require much foresight to perceive that we shall before long be adopting those also. It is surprising how "un-smart" and behind-the-times a short skirt looks even now for afternoon or evening wear.

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that a survey of the new styles is apt to strike dismay to the heart of the would-be amateur dressmaker, the spade-work, as we may call it, that she has already put in on simpler things, should now stand her in good stead. A little study of the actual details wherein the new differs from the old should enable her to be as successful as before.

Patterns are Important.

A REALLY good paper pattern, happily not difficult to obtain, is a necessity, and should the figure for which the dress is intended not coincide exactly with the measurements of the pattern, alterations should be made to the pattern itself before the material is cut.

To lengthen or shorten a pattern, the amount should be taken out or put in, in equal proportions, above and below the waist. To reduce or add width, the back and front patterns are opened at the shoulder lines, taking out the superfluous or adding the necessary width there, as may be required.

Waist lines are high, and bodices bloused, either by means of lengthwise shirring, or inverted tucks, running across the figure for an inch or two. Hip lines, which are seen on most of the new designs, should, even if swathed, fit snugly, and skirt fullness be introduced well down the figure. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that skirt fullness should not now start at the waist-line, if the correct and new line is desired.

Sleeves Again.

SLEEVES will, perhaps, present a little difficulty to the amateur, who

has so far confined her efforts to sleeveless dresses. Where, as is now so often the case, the sleeve seam exactly meets that of the under-arm bodice seam, a good deal of anxiety can be avoided by putting in the sleeve before making up either sleeve or under-arm bodice seams. Those two seams can then be stitched up at once.

The lighter and daintier the material, such as georgette, crepe de chine, etc., the more difficult it is to handle, and the less kindly the machine takes to it. In this connection, to avoid dragging out of shape, after the garment has been cut out, it is an excellent plan to tack the material to the pattern itself, and put both paper pattern and the material through the machine together. By this means, stretching is eliminated, and the pattern can afterwards be pulled away.

The small electric sewing machine motors are a great boon to the woman who does much sewing. They can be attached to either hand or treadle machines, are operated by the slightest foot-pressure, and do away with turning or the tiring pedalling in the other.

See that the machine needle is the correct size for the work, before starting, and also that it is not blunted. For French seams on thin material, it prevents unsightly dragging if a looser stitch is used for the first or inside row of stitching.

Press as you Proceed.

HAVE an electric iron, an ironing board, or table fixed near your sewing table, and press as you go, when a much more finished and professional appearance will be attained than if the pressing is left until the garment is finished.

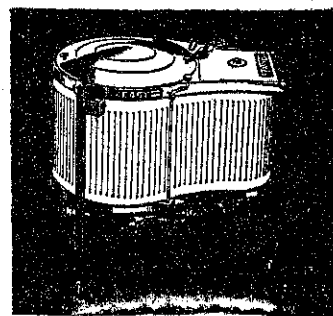
The hems on flared skirts, or those of uneven edges, present a little difficulty. The easiest way out is to have them picot-edged, or bind them. Where neither of these finishes are desirable, they must be turned up with cross-way strips, and it is important that these cross-way strips should be stretched to their uttermost before being sewn on, to prevent them sagging later.

With the necessity for neater, tighter fittings, hooks have come into their own again, and their accompanying loops are firmer if worked in button-hole stitch with a really coarse silk or cotton.

Gloves are worn with the new evening dresses, elbow length or longer, and it is fashionable to allow them to ruck upon the arm. Fans, too, are carried and add a note of distinction to a smart toilette.

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