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BABY BUNTING'S CLOTHING BUDGET

BY BLANCHE E. HYDE



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*"Bye Baby Bunting,
Daddy's gone a-hunting
To get a little rabbit skin
To wrap the Baby Bunting in."*

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BY BLANCHE E. HYDE

Few babies live where they can place any dependence on wrappings of soft rabbit skin but other wrappings are just as soft. What a pity it is though that the most important person in the house has nothing to say about his own wardrobe! What tales he might tell if he only could, of clothing fussily cut and badly made, with all kinds of collars 'n' everything around his neck, made of material which grows harder with each successive washing, and all lumped up under him so that there is not one other thing to do but express his displeasure in a terrible roar!

Clothes he must have, however, for what is life without clothes! But as for style, he abhors it. Comfort is his long suit, and by long suit we do not mean long dress, for those went into the discard years ago. The nearest approach he makes to style is in the **shortness** of his clothes, for which the regulation length is now either twenty-four or twenty-seven inches, finished. An average baby measures about twenty-one inches on his arrival, and as his little, round, fuzzy head takes up several inches of the twenty-one, the twenty-four or twenty-seven-inch length for the dresses is quite ample.

If Mr. Baby could have his way, his first request would be for simplicity in every way—simplicity in materials, in cut, finish, and decoration.

Beauty in the baby's layette we want of course, but true beauty does not mean long hours spent in elaborate and useless embroidery when the mother would far better be out-of-doors, or when the amount expended for such garments is out of all proportion to the family income. She may prepare a layette fully as attractive by spending only a reasonable amount of money and time. Plain-living-and-high-thinking types of layettes might well be more common than they are, and any superfluous money deposited against the time Baby Bunting marches himself off to college.

In years gone by, the layette consisted of an elaborate outfit of garments made in a variety of patterns and cut so long that as the baby began to use his feet he was greatly hampered. The

layette listed here represents a very different outlay of time, money, and material, eliminating, as it does, what was formerly known as the "first short clothes." From this wardrobe he jumps without further preliminaries into the "romper period."

Essential Qualifications of a Layette.—The materials should be soft and smooth and such as can easily be kept scrupulously clean.

The quality may be as fine as can be afforded, but beyond a certain point costliness does not count.

The size of the layette, that is the number of each garment, depends on two things, the frequency of the laundering and the amount it is desired to expend.

It is neither necessary nor wise to have too large a layette, for in many cases the first clothes are worn for only a short time. This is especially true when the climate is warm or the house thoroughly and evenly heated.

As a baby's washing is done frequently, every day or every other day, there is no real need for a large number of garments.

The following list should cover adequately the needs of even the most particular baby:

List of Necessary Garments

3 Flannel bands.	6 Gertrudes—flannel.
4 Knitted bands.	2 Gertrudes—nainsook.
3 Knitted shirts, silk and wool, or cotton and wool.	4 Blankets.
3 Knitted shirts, silk or fine cotton.	3 Dresses.
5 Dozen diapers.	4 Wrappers.
4 Night gowns.	2 Wraps or coats.
10 Slips.	2 Caps or hoods.
	4 Pr. silk and wool stockings.
	4 Sacques.

Note: This list may be cut down somewhat by buying only one grade of knitted shirts according to the climate, and by cutting the number of slips to six, the dresses to one or two, and the wraps and caps to one each. Each mother will have to use her own judgment as to the needs and frequency of laundering.

While no definite rules as to number of garments can be laid down, it is wise to have a sufficient number to take care of emergencies.

Patterns.—This is almost a case where the less we say about patterns the better. What a joy it would be to Mr. Baby if he could be placed on the floor and have his dress cut around him! No more binding around the armseye or choking about the neck.

A few important requirements as to patterns for these first clothes for Mr. Baby will not be amiss. They should be loose but not so bulky as to cause wrinkles, for wrinkles are most annoying. Garments with few seams are to be preferred to those with a large number of seams. Dresses and slips made with a straight lower edge look very much better, on account of un-

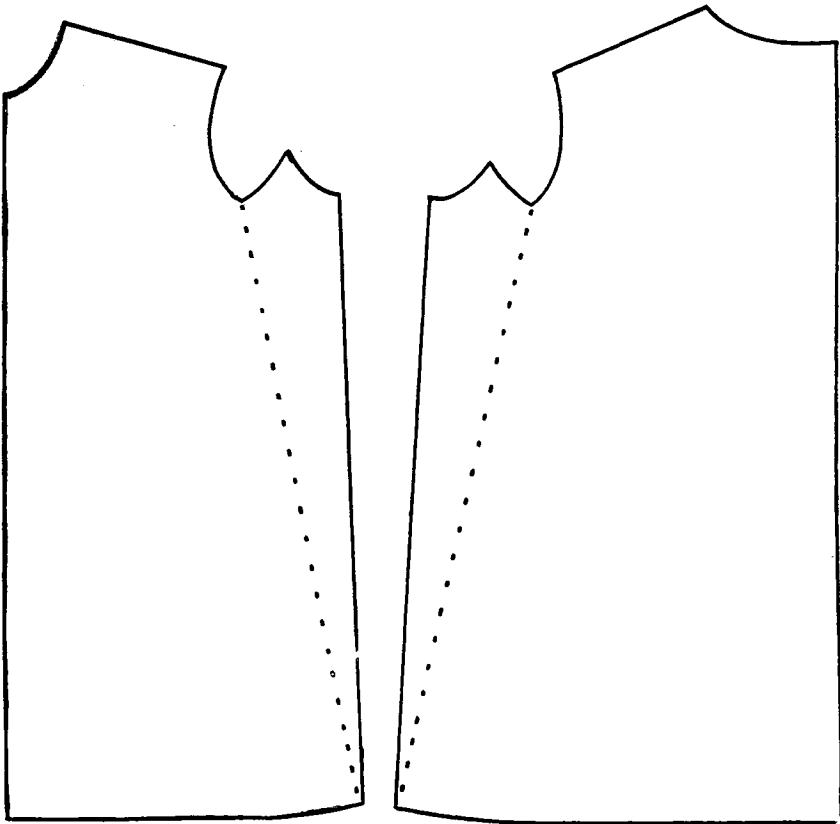
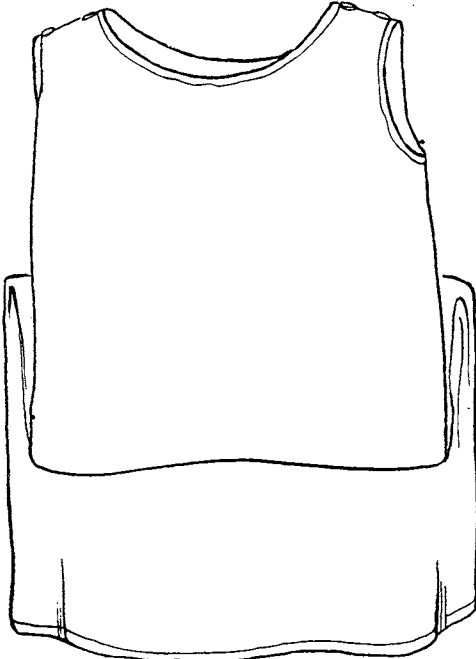


Diagram for dress with inverted pleat at underarm

avoidable fullness in hems at the lower edge of a garment that has gored seams. When such a hem is made in fine sheer material such as is used for infants' slips and dresses the pleats of fullness show through the hem or iron through in ridges, thus spoiling the appearance of an otherwise fine and dainty garment.

The best type of patterns for infants now calls for the little undergarments to fasten on the shoulders. This type of garment which makes it much easier for the mother to dress and undress the baby, and also does away with fastenings down the back, to bother when one is napping, is generally called a Gertrude. Another advantage about a garment cut in this way is that being slightly gored there is no clumsy fullness about the shoulders.

For the slips and nightgowns many mothers like the kimona type. This type of garment has three decided advantages when used for this purpose. The garments are cut in one piece and if a nightgown, slip or dress, have no seam at the armseyes with tiny sleeves to insert. Moreover, the front and back are exactly



A Gertrude

alike, making a garment much easier to iron. Some mothers, however, object to the kimona type on account of the width of the garment across the chest which makes it possible for Baby to get his arms out of the sleeves, and thus suddenly appear as a baby minus arms.

No commercial pattern is necessary for a

kimona slip. A diagram is shown here, from which anyone can easily cut a pattern, with the aid of directions given in the Sewing Handbook. First, decide on the finished length of the garment from the shoulder-neck of the garment to the bottom of the hem. In an infant's dress this measurement is about one inch longer than the measurement from the center front of neck. Infants' so-called long dresses are much shorter now than formerly, from twenty-four to twenty-seven inches being the most popular lengths. This is quite a change from the thirty-six to forty inches of a few generations ago.

The lower edge of the garment must be curved slightly from the center front to the center back, cutting off the peak or angle at the seams. The same caution must be observed at the lower edge of the sleeves.

Most of the pattern companies put out sets of infants' patterns which include several garments. If care is taken in selecting these sets

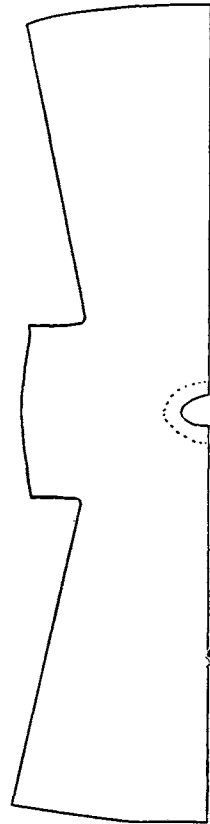


Diagram for a kimona slip

of patterns, a set including all the necessary garments for the first clothing may be chosen, which will answer until time to put Mr. Baby into rompers. With some children the romper age starts at about six months, but it is wiser to postpone the date of graduation a few months longer.

Materials.—The qualities of materials for infants' clothing are fully as important as the appearance of the materials. Softness and ease in laundering are the first prerequisites, and warmth is necessary for some garments, and in some climates for most of the wardrobe. While fineness and beauty are not absolutely necessary in the yard goods, every mother wishes the layette for her baby to be as attractive as her purse will allow and her strength permit.

As for "trimmings," meaning lace and embroidery, the best type of layettes show practically none. Necks and wrists of slips or dresses made of fine sheer batiste are finished with tiny bindings of the same material put on by hand. Hand-run tucks and fine featherstitching are the height of decoration. If time hangs heavy on one's hands the little slips may have the necks and wrists finished with a rolled edge and a tiny lace edge overhanded on at the same time. This lace edge should be less than one-half inch wide and of a fine, simple pattern.

Flannel is a large term, and many young mothers receive their first lesson in differences of material when purchasing flannel. If instead they ask for "baby flannel" they are almost certain to receive a quality suited to Mr. Baby's needs. Flannel is woven of a softly spun yarn in a plain weave. Before cotton became such a factor in the commercial world, flannels were woven entirely of wool. Now a certain amount of cotton combined with the wool is often considered a decided advantage. If the proportion of cotton is small practically no warmth is lost, and a mixed cotton-and-wool material does not shrink as much as one of all wool. The silk-and-wool flannels are ideal for the purpose and, though more expensive in the beginning, give excellent wear.

A flannel known as Viyella, formerly a trade name but now used to designate a cotton-and-wool flannel, woven in a twill weave and with a soft nap, gives excellent wear. French flannel indicates a flannel of all wool and twill weave.

Flannelette and outing flannel are all-cotton materials napped on one or both sides. They are used extensively for infants' nightgowns, and made up with the fleece side out. After making up garments of outing or Canton flannel it is a wise precau-



Kimona slip

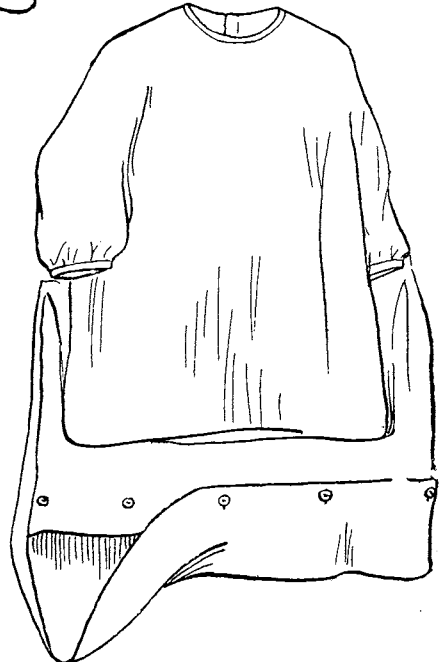
for diapers as much now as formerly. "Stork pants" or bloomers of thin rubber to be worn when taking Mr. Baby on a journey have superseded the clumsy diapers of flannelette formerly used when it was desired to protect the clothing for a considerable period. These rubber bloomers should not be worn constantly, instead the diapers should be changed frequently. For an older baby a flannelette diaper may be used at night, taking care when adjusting that it does not cause the legs to spread out of position.

For slips or dresses, soft

tion to wash them several times before using in order to soften, take off any surplus fuzz and also remove any chemicals used in finishing. There is the same danger of fire with Canton flannel as with other napped cotton materials.

Cotton birdseye, cheese cloth, flannelette, and Canton flannel are the materials used for diapers. Experience has proved that cotton birdseye is one of the most satisfactory materials but many prefer cheese cloth because it is soft, easy to wash and dries quickly.

Flannelette is not used



Nightgown

long cloth, nainsook, batiste and dimity are standard materials. Long cloth in the better grades is used considerably for plain slips. It is closely woven, of a somewhat heavier thread



Simple dress with hand tucking

than the nainsooks, and, although soft finished, seems considerably thicker in handling than a nainsook. It is better for winter babies than for summer wear.

Nainsook is the best material to purchase for the slips, as it will stand repeated washings without turning yellow. Nainsook is a broad name under which a variety of soft, white, cotton materials are sold. A good nainsook is closely woven of a fine even thread. The cheaper grades are not so closely woven, and are sometimes made of an inferior quality of cotton, so do not give satisfactory wear. It is really economy to purchase a good quality.

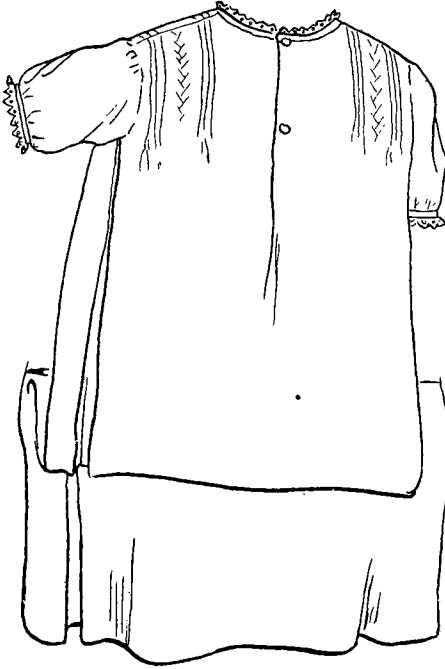
Batiste is finer than the majority of nainsooks and has a mercerized finish. It is an ideal material for baby wear but a good quality is expensive, and a poor batiste never pays.

Dimity is a fine cotton material with stripes or checks made by a slightly heavier thread giving a fine corded effect. It makes very attractive simple slips.

While cambric is popularly supposed to be a material with smooth or slightly glazed finish, the variety known as Jones's cambric is a very fine, soft-finish material, like a very closely woven nainsook, and is an excellent material for slips.

Long cloth, nainsook, cambric and batiste may be purchased by the yard or in ten- or twelve-yard pieces. A ten-yard piece of long cloth or nainsook will cut six plain kimona slips thirty inches long, allowing for a three-inch hem. Twenty-seven-inch material cuts to better advantage but most of the cotton materials have returned to before-the-war widths, therefore there is likely to be some waste at the sides, which may be saved to use later in skeleton under-waists.

One-half yard of fine, soft wool or silk-and-wool flannel will



Back of dress

be needed for the first bands or abdominal binders. This should be torn across, making three binders, each six inches in depth. The raw edges are not finished.

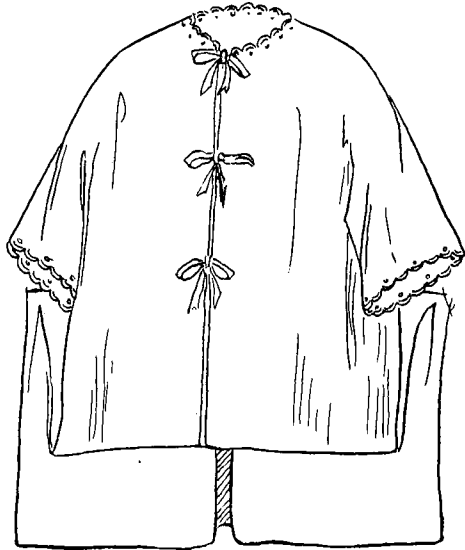
For the little Gertrudes, a cotton-and-wool, silk - and - wool, or a Viyella flannel will be found most satisfactory. These are cut twenty-two or twenty-six inches long according to the rest of the wardrobe, and no hem is allowed as they are finished with scalloping, or a binding of soft ribbon. Of all materials for nightgowns, Viyella flannel should head the list, but if this seems too expensive, Canton flannel or outing flannel are acceptable substitutes.

The flannel for the blankets may be all-wool, cotton-and-wool, or silk-and-wool flannel. These blankets are generally made square, thus one yard of yard-wide flannel makes a blanket one yard square.

It is wiser to purchase the knitted bands and shirts ready-made, and in purchasing the latter the second size is a better buy than the first, as a well baby changes in size very rapidly at first.

Several ten-yard pieces of cotton birdseye should be purchased, in eighteen and twenty-two inch widths. Old diapers are softer but failing these

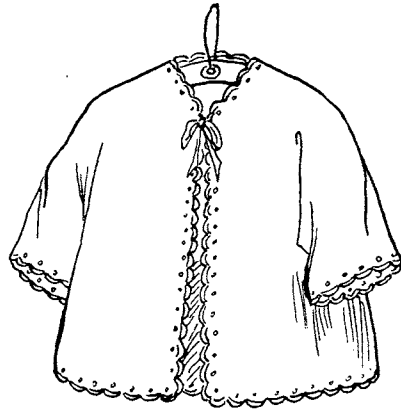
The flannel for the blank-



Wrapper

have the material washed several times before cutting, when it will be much easier to cut straight with the threads of the weave. These should be of two sizes. Eighteen by thirty-six and twenty-two by forty-eight. The number listed should provide a good supply.

For the wrappers and sacques, white flannel, embroidered in colors or bound with colored ribbon is satisfactory. Cashmere, a fine, soft material in a twill weave, is ideal for little wrappers and sacques. Soft China silk in white or delicate colors, with a lining of the same and interlined with a thin sheet of wool wadding makes the most adorable wrappers. Eider down flannel, double or single faced, a knit foundation with a wool nap on one or both sides, is used for sleeping bags and outside wraps. The old type of infants' coat is not so popular now



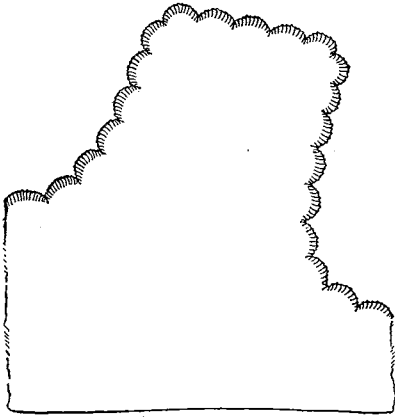
Sacque

as formerly. When such a garment is necessary, cashmere, serge or a fine-twill material are excellent.

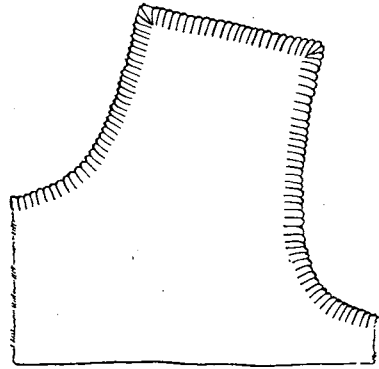


Wrap for outdoor napping

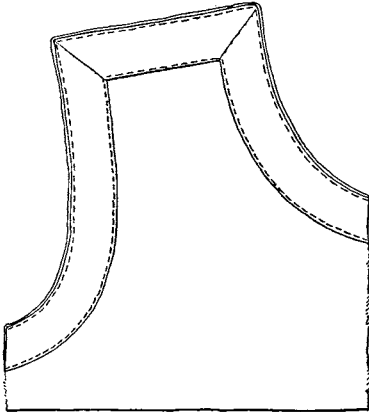
Caps and hoods are generally gifts, and one should never look a gift horse in the mouth! Have a heart, however, and do not insist on a baby wearing what you would not be willing to wear yourself, provided it fitted. All knitted or crocheted hoods should be lined with soft, washable silk, which can be removed.



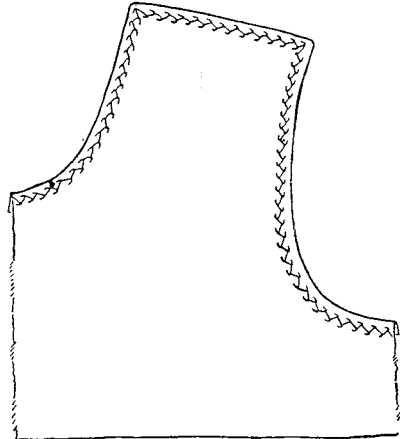
Scalloped finish for Gertrude



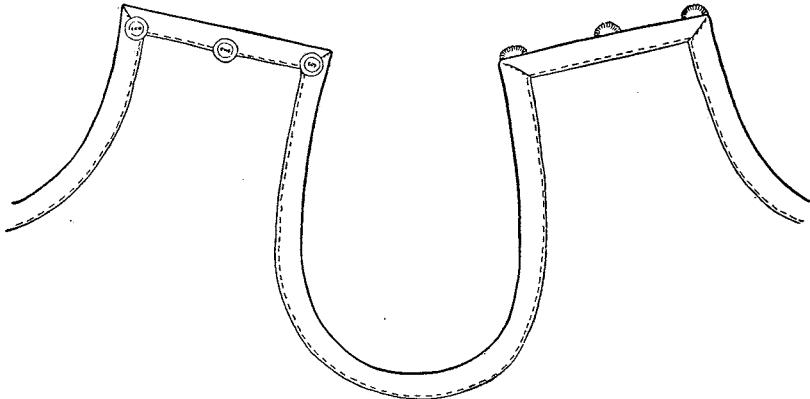
Blanket stitch used on flannel



Edges of flannel faced with silk seam binding



Feather stitching used as a decoration and finish

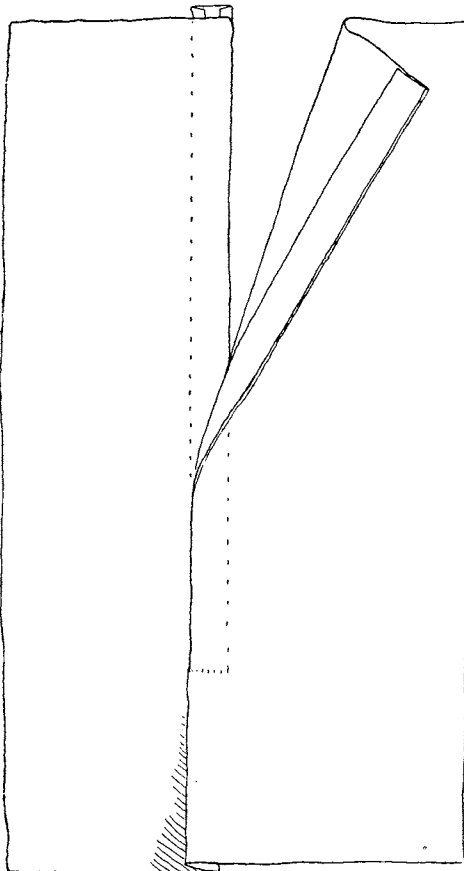


Method of fastening flannel skirt on shoulders. Edges bound with silk binding

Making and Finishing Garments.—The Sewing Handbook gives detailed instructions for seams and finishes.

The first prerequisite in construction is that all seams and finishes shall be as smooth and flat as possible. Some people even go so far as to advise the seams being finished on the outside of the garment. Except on the first little nightgowns, however, this method is hardly necessary if the right sort of finish is used.

Hand sewing instead of machine makes a much softer finish



Placket for dress or slip

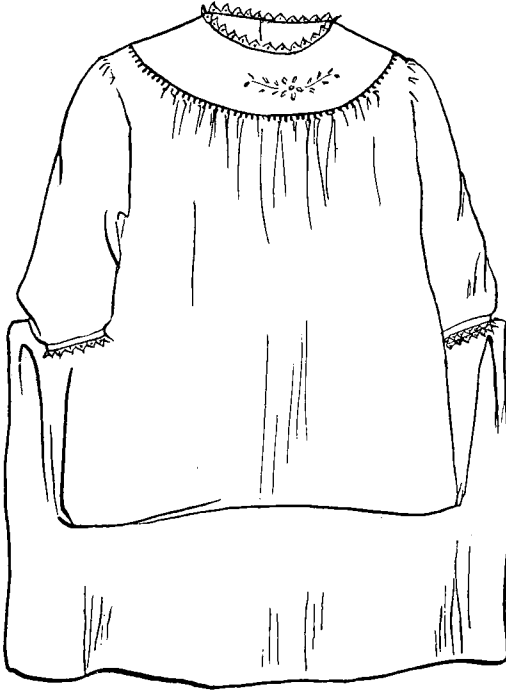
if one has the time and inclination to do it, or the money to pay for it.

One very important "don't" is regarding the neck finishes. **Please don't plan any colors or embroidery for the little tender chin to rub on, nor a lot of gathers to get into his mouth,** but finish the garment to an easy neck size perfectly flat with the exception of a tiny edge of the softest lace.

In making the Gertrudes, press the side seams open and catchstitch over each raw edge flat to the skirt portion. The lower edge, neck, and armseye are finished with a scallop—that around the upper part of the garment being very small. In embroidering the scallops it is a good plan to make a fine running stitch with a loosely twisted embroidery cotton on both inner and outer edges of the

scallops. This is done instead of padding, as heavily embroidered petticoats are no longer with us. In embroidering the scallops, work from left to right, holding the outside edge of the scallop towards you. Keep the thread at the left of the needle

and under the thumb of the left hand, bringing the needle out through the loop. This is called "buttonhole embroidery," but is different from the real buttonhole stitch. The scallops should



Dress finished with entre deux and embroidery

be pressed before cutting away the outside edge of the material.

The seams on the Canton flannel nightgowns should be finished in the same way as those on the Gertrudes. The opening is in the centre back. It is cut nine inches in depth and both neck and opening are finished with the raw edges turned onto to the right side and catchstitched flat. A narrow tape or linen bobbin to tie at the neck is all that is necessary, but very tiny flat buttons and loops may be used instead. Turn up one inch around the lower edge and catchstitch.

One of the most attractive finishes for a "full-dress blanket" is to bind with a two-inch wash ribbon. Baste one edge of the ribbon flat onto the right side of the square flannel, mitering the corners, then featherstitch. Fold and baste the other edge to the wrong side and hem by hand to the line of featherstitching. The ribbon is not so likely to pucker done in this way as if featherstitched through both edges.

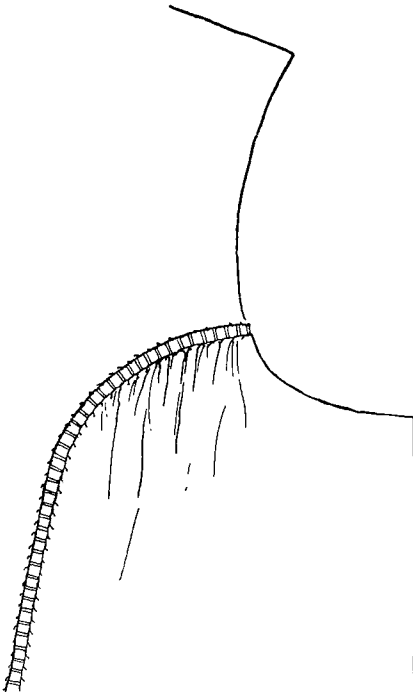
If the little slips are made of fine, soft material, it is quite permissible to use a tiny French seam on the wrong side, but this should be less than one-eighth of an inch in width. It is much easier to make a tiny seam by hand than by machine, and it will also be much softer.

Cut an opening in the centre back nine inches in depth and finish with facings on each side of the opening. Lap the right hand facing its full width over the other and fasten firmly at the bottom. Two small flat buttons and buttonholes will serve to

fasten, with the addition of tapes to tie at the neck, or another button and loop if preferred.

The neck edge may be finished with a narrow binding of the same put on by hand, or a narrow hem done by hand. A soft lace may be overhanded to the binding or rolled hem around the neck but many prefer them plain. Finish the wrists to match the neck. Directions for all of these finishes are given in the Sewing Handbook.

For the other garments listed, materials and finishes are as the sands of the sea, but by bearing in mind that softness and smoothness in fabric, finish, and decoration, are the rule, and that the less there are of layers of material the better, Mr. Baby will weather his first few months and advance to the romper age a strong advocate of "standardized dress for infants."



Detail of entre deux used in princess pattern

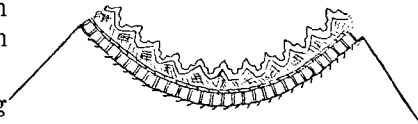
SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT POINTS

Baby's Clothes.—1. Should be loose, but not so bulky as to wrinkle.

2. Should be warm enough to prevent chill, but not so warm that the baby perspires.

3. Should have no irritating seams and be especially soft in finish at neck.

4. Should be simple, fine in workmanship, with no fussy decorations, ruffles, bows or furbelows.



Detail of neck finish