

In times gone by though a bale was always a very exciting thing to unpack, yet sometimes—shall it be said?—there lurked just a little disappointment if very few of the clothes would fit the children who wanted them especially.

Now it is very different. A nice comfortable bale arrives "for So and So," from "Such and Such a branch" (only one bale came this year without the donor's names,) and inside there is the complete list of what "So and So" particularly needs just then, that branch having taken care, through its secretary, to find out the child's probable wants, and her measurements, in good time. It is the very greatest help and comfort, with so many to clothe.

Though promiscuous clothing is always, we may truly say, "very useful," yet it is very much more satisfactory when branches make clothes just to fit some special child.

Very few seem yet to realise (though there have been some noble exceptions) how many strong, thick winter dresses and boots are required, to say nothing of pinafores! One dress, or even two, will not last an energetic, growing girl all the winter, with the amount of housework, etc., they have to do; while three months is the average duration of the existence of a pair of boots. Now and then careful children make them last four or even five months, but there are some trying little girls who, in spite of everything that can be said, simply wear their boots all to pieces in two months' time, and it is generally the case that these are the very ones who have no boots sent them at all.

We find it is better, on the whole, to have sleeveless pinafores. They are easier to make, to wash and to mend. So often, especially when winter dresses are worn, pinafore sleeves are too tight, or the armholes too small (this often happens), or the unlined yokes would give way. This all led to so much time being required for really remaking garments (they so soon get too bad to mend), that if the branches could kindly put the time and cost of material into the making of one extra dress for their child, and send us the sleeveless pinafores (either sewn into a square yoke, or gathered into a band, with frills at the armholes) their child would really look much tidier, and it would save us a good deal in the way of mending. The band, or yoke, can be sewn up at the back (if the pinafore itself is left open up to the band) so as to slip on over the head. This saves putting on buttons or tapes, and looks very much neater, and everyone likes it better.

If, in sending bales, the name and address of the secretary to whom our thanks might be sent, were always added to the list of clothing inside the bale, this would save a great loss of time in hunting through old correspondence, and letters could be written immediately.

We hope the branches who have been so very good and kind in helping us will forgive our just mentioning these little details.