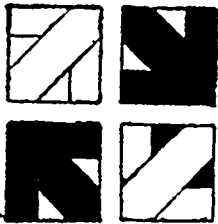
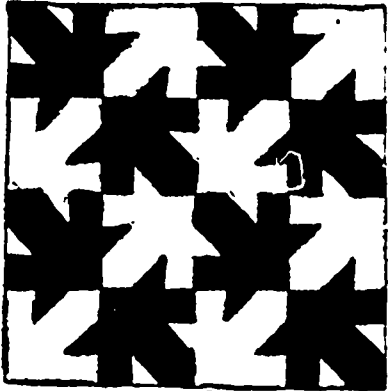


STITCHES

MAPLE LEAF DESIGN.

This pattern is better adapted to small pieces of patch-work than to quilt covers. The blocks should be small, not over four or five inches square, and the labor necessary for covering a large area with solid work from such tiny bits is too great for the design to be considered practical in quilt work. But for cushion covers, crib quilts, sofa puffs and similar small undertakings nothing could be more effective and satisfactory.

Use two colors only. Dark green and pale yellow will make a cover for a sofa pillow beautiful enough to win the appreciation of the most hardened scoffer against the old-fashioned form of



fancy work, patchwork. Dark blue and buff or pale pink, dark brown and yellow or pink, and scarlet and white are artistic combinations of colors that work out well whether the materials are silk, wool or cotton. With white any tint unites well in this design.

The unit or block is a perfect square. Five pieces make up this square and when sewed together they give a square of solid color with two small triangles of the other tint let into it. Half of the blocks are dark with light triangles, the other half are light with dark triangles. How the pieced blocks look and the way in which they are combined are clearly shown in Figure II.

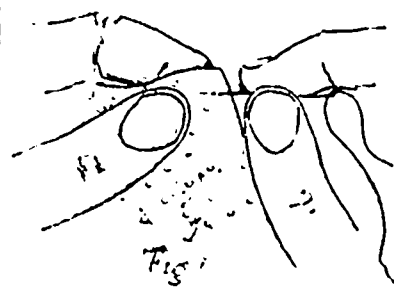
To plan the pattern, draw a square a trifle larger than the pieced blocks are to be, to allow for seams. Divide each side of the square into thirds, and from these points draw lines which shall give a reproduction of the upper left hand square of Figure 2. Cut your working patterns from the square you have drawn. There will be three pieces, the large central section, a small triangle and a four-sided figure whose geometrical name is trapezoid. If at first you keep the design before you as you work, following Figure 2 carefully in uniting the blocks, all difficulties will vanish quickly.—(M. B. Peck.)

A SEWING LESSON—I.

A dear little friend of mine wants to learn to sew so that she can help mamma make things like towels, napkins and pillowcases. But she says she hasn't anyone to teach her. "Mamma is too busy, big sister is away at school, there is no auntie nearby, no sewing teacher at school, and— Now I am going to help my little friend all I can and as many more as she wants to bring with her, for I know there are many little girls, and big ones, too, for that matter, who will be glad of the chance. And all you will need will be a determination to learn, a thimble to fit the second finger of your right hand, a good-sized piece of any old cloth (for we don't want to spoil good cloth while we are practicing), a needle (not very fine) and a spool of thread that will fit the needle. If your cloth is light, bright red or blue thread will be better, for

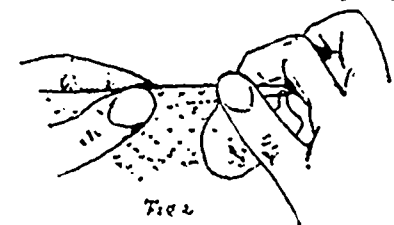
it will show the stitches so plainly that when you do a bad one you can improve on it next time.

You have all heard mamma or someone say they were going to sew up a seam. Well, that is where we will begin, but we must first "make ready," as you say when you are going to run a race. Take two pieces of cloth of equal



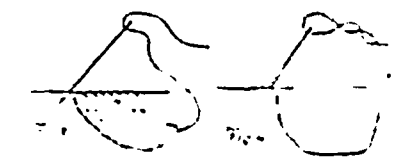
length and if there are right and wrong sides, put the right sides together so that the edges will be even and the ends also. If you should hold one side tighter than the other when you turn your seam on the right side, one side of it will be all puckered. Now break off a piece of thread as long as from the tips of your fingers to your elbow, longer than that will get all tangled and knotted. Thread the needle, make a knot in the end of the thread and take your work in your hands as in Fig 1 or Fig 2. I like Fig 2 best, because you can pin the cloth down to your knee, and that holds it nice and tight. The little girls in school use the position in Fig 1, their desks are in the way for the other. Try both ways and see which you like the best. In Fig 1 the cloth must be held very firmly around the first finger of the left hand.

Before making the first stitches you can see in the drawings, it is better to take long ones the whole length of the seam. This is called basting, and holds the cloth so that one edge won't slip above the other, and it shows you, too, where to put the fine stitches later if you have kept a nice straight line. Don't trust to your eye to keep it straight, though, but have a little paper rule or a notched cardboard and use it very often. Put the needle into the cloth close to the right end one-fourth of an inch from the top edge



(that is the depth for nearly all seams) and bring it through about half an inch farther on. That makes one stitch and all the others are done just the same, with half an inch space between. The fine stitches (sometimes called running) are made the same way, right over the basted stitches, only you can put the needle in and out three or four times (as in Fig 1) before drawing the thread through. But don't try that until you can make the stitches even and fine. When your seam is all done, pull or cut out the ugly basting stitches and it will look so nice that you will be very happy over it.

Sometimes a seam will look frayed on the edges after it is done, but I know a nice way to improve that and make the work stronger, too. The name of the stitch is overcasting, and you can see quite plainly how it is done in Fig 3. The stitches are made right over the edge of the cloth, through both pieces,



and must be even and deep enough so they will not pull out.

The seam you have just learned to make will do very nicely for dolly's clothes or for making quilt blocks, aprons and petticoats. But there is another kind of seam to use when you want to sew selvages together, that is where the edge is not cut off. Pillow cases and sheets are made that way. It is called over and over, or top sewing, and is shown in Fig 4. Do you think it looks like overcasting? It is really, only with a great deal finer stitches and close together. If you

want a very strong seam and your cloth hasn't a selvedge, you can use the over-and-over by turning down the cloth one-fourth of an inch and creasing it, but be sure to baste the two pieces together near the edge because it is very hard to keep this kind of seam from puckering. Do not draw the stitches too tight and always fasten the thread at the end of the seam, or when you take a new thread. Make the knot in the thread as small as you can, but it mustn't pull through on the right side. One more hint and the lesson will be done for this time: Break off the thread a little way from the spool. If too close and broken with a jerk, the end of the thread will disappear, and that will make no end of trouble.—(B. A. W.)

To Lighten Washing—I wish to give my sisters somewhat of an insight as to doing their laundry work easily yet neatly. I use homemade soap. Fill the wash boiler with soft water. If you have a washing machine, it will save time and labor, the clothes will not get rubbed to rags, also the children can rock the machine. Put the warm water in the tub before putting in the clothes. Hot water fastens the dirt and does harm to the washer. Rub your white clothes through one water after the machine, shake each piece before going into the boiler, allow the clothes to just come to scalding, not boiling (this is what turns them yellow), use good hard soap, shaved in the boiler (not too much), lift the white clothes out of boiler into tub of clean, cold water. One rinsing water is sufficient. Use very little bluing and that the very best. Now as to soaking the clothing; don't. It does no good. I have tried all the different ways in order to lighten the work on my washday. Wash colored clothes or any cotton ones, be they ever so delicate, in suds where other clothes have been washed. The less soap the better. Soap and rubbing are ruinous to delicate colors. Sun and high winds are harmful to all delicate fabrics. As soon as your washing has nicely dried, take the basket to the line, take off one piece at a time. Fold it nicely and place in basket, and save yourself much hard work ironing.—[Reader.]

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